REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOYDER

GOYDER South Australia's Heartland	***COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY***	**Department**	Governance
		Version No:	V1.0
		Adopted:	July 2026
		Reviewed:	
		Next Review:	1st July 2028
		Minutes Ref:	159/26
		Responsibility:	CEO

1. INTRODUCTION

Council is committed to open, accountable and responsive decision making, which is informed by effective communication and engagement between Council and the community.

Including communities in decision-making processes is important to the successful development of appropriate and informed decisions and policies by Council.

Council's community includes people who live, work, study, own property, conduct private or government business, visit or use the services, facilities and public spaces and places of Council. Council recognises that a community may be a geographic location (community of place), a community of similar interest (community of interest) or a community of affiliation, practice or identity (such as industry or sporting clubs).

Section 50A of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act) requires Council to prepare and adopt a policy relating to community engagement for the purposes of the Act. The policy must be consistent with and comply with any requirements specified by the South Australian Community Engagement Charter **(the State Charter).**

This Policy is also supported by Council's Community Engagement Charter (Council Charter).

2. POLICY OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Council meets its legislative obligations regarding public consultation by:

- Meeting the requirements set out in the Act and the State Charter.
- Using appropriate and cost effective engagement methods which are relevant to the specific circumstances of each decision, activity or process.
- Providing for appropriate participation by the local community, key stakeholders and interested parties.
- Using feedback to enhance decision making.
- Providing information on the reasons for decision or actions of Council, where reasonable and appropriate.

This policy is a statement of Council's general position in relation to community engagement (public consultation), as required under the Act and the State Charter.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to decisions, activities and processes undertaken by the Council, a delegate of the Council or a person exercising power on the Council's behalf, where public consultation is required to be undertaken in accordance with the Act, the State Charter, or this policy. A reference in this policy to 'Council' includes a reference to a delegate or other person exercising power on the Council's behalf.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for the implementation and application of this policy, and where necessary reporting the outcomes of consultations to the Council. The specific delegations made under this Policy are outlined in part 8 of this policy.

This policy does not apply where the Council is exercising powers and functions under any other Act. Where there are consultation requirements under other legislation, e.g. the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*, those specific processes take precedence over this policy.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The preparation and adoption of this policy fulfil the Council's obligations to prepare and adopt a policy under section 50(A) of the Act. The following principles in the State Charter have been considered in the preparation of this policy:

- community members should have reasonable, timely, meaningful and ongoing opportunities to gain access to information about proposed decisions, activities, processes of councils and to participate in relevant processes;
- information about issues should be in plain language, readily accessible disability inclusive and in a form that facilitates community participation and complements Council's Disability Action and Inclusion Plan (DAIP);
- participation methods should seek to foster and encourage constructive dialogue, discussion and debate in relation to proposed decisions, activities and processes of councils;
- participation methods should be appropriate having regard to the significance and likely impact of proposed decisions, activities and processes; and
- insofar as is reasonable, communities should be provided with information about how community views have been taken into account and reasons for decisions or actions of councils.

Council will undertake public consultation in accordance with the Act, the State Charter and this policy.

Council may, in its absolute discretion, determine to undertake a step or steps in addition to those set out in this policy in relation to a matter for which it is required by the Act and/or the State Charter to undertake public consultation.

However, Council is not required to give prior consideration and/or to determine whether or not to undertake any additional step or steps in relation to such a matter. A well-intentioned engagement that does not generate the anticipated level of engagement is not a breach of this policy.

Council may, from time to time, alter or substitute a new policy, following public consultation.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CHARTER (Council Charter)

Council has developed a Community Engagement Charter, which outlines our guiding principles on how we work with our community to shape our region's future. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Council Charter. The Council Charter outlines our commitments to how Council will engage with the community when making decisions, plans, or projects that affect them. The Charter and Policy are guided by the following principles.

The Council Charter guided by the following principles:

- To be respectful
- To be genuine
- To be inclusive
- To be responsive

When undertaking community engagement, Council recognises the need for various engagement methods to support the principles of the Council Charter to recognise the diverse needs of our community and create inclusive, accessible opportunities.

6. PUBLIC CONSULTATION CATEGORIES

The State Charter addresses minimum mandatory community engagement activities for matters where the Act requires public consultation to be undertaken.

The State Charter establishes different categories of consultation for matters, as follows:

- **Significant – Annual business plan and rating policy**
    - Adopting an Annual Business Plan - section 123(3)(b)
    - Changes to basis of rating, declaring differential rates, imposing a separate rate, service rate or service charge, or changing the basis on which land is valued for the purpose of rating - section 151(5)(e)
- **Significant**
    - Representation reviews - section 12(7)
    - Development and review of Strategic Management Plans - section 122(6)
    - Changes to use of differential rating - section 156(4a)(b)
    - Revocation of classification of land as community land - sections 194(2)(b)
    - Community Land Management Plans - adoption - section 197(1)
    - Community Land Management Plans – significant amendments - section 198(3)
    - Alienation of community land by lease or license - section 202(2)
- **Standard**
    - Opening hours and place of principal office - substantial changes - section 45(3)
    - Community Engagement Policy - section 50A(6)(b)
    - Council behavioural support policies - section 75F(6)
    - Access to meetings and documents - section 92(5)

- Power to make orders - section 259(2)(b)

- **Local**
  - Proposed permit or authorisation for alteration or use of a road for business purposes when there are works and traffic impeded for more than 48 hours (with a detour in place) or where no detour will be available - section 223(1)
  - Proposed planting of vegetation on a road – significant impact - section 232(b)

- **Inform**
  - Opening hours and place of principal office – minor changes - section 45(3)
  - Proposed permit or authorisation for alteration or use of a road for business purposes when there are works and traffic impeded for less than 48 hours and the Council ensures that a detour is in place - section 223(1)
  - Election information - section 13A (2) of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*

The table in Part 6 of this policy sets out the engagement activities that Council will undertake to meet the requirements of each matter for which public consultation must be undertaken in accordance with the Act and the State Charter.

7. CHARTER ENGAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Council will comply with the minimum mandatory public consultation requirements for each category of matters set out in the State Charter.

The following table sets out the engagement activities that Council will undertake to meet the public consultation requirements in the Act and the State Charter.

In circumstances where more than one engagement activity is specified, there is no obligation on Council to utilise all engagement activities in respect of each State Charter requirement.

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category					Engagement activities
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
Website	Publish information about the matter that can be easily found on a Council website.	X	X	X	X	X	Information published on a Council website
News publication	Publish information about the matter in a local news publication (print where available, but otherwise digital) that circulates in the Council area and is not produced by the Council.	X	X				Information published in a print or digital newspaper, community newsletter or other (non-council) publication circulating in the area of Council
Consult with the whole Council area	Consider appropriate forms of notifications to the Council area. Consider whether additional information or notification should be made available to the	X	X	X			Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category					Engagement activities
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
	community to bring their attention to the matter and to support participation.						Information made available at Council offices, libraries and/or community centres
Invite submissions	Provide information about how the community can make a submission, including timeframe.	X	X				Engagement material provides information about how the community can make a submission, including the minimum 21 day timeframe for submissions.
Explain decision making process	In material prepared explain what the Council proposes to do, why it proposes to do it, and what it seeks to achieve. Explain how community feedback will inform the Council's decision.	X	X				Engagement material explains what the Council proposes to do, why it proposes to do it, and what it seeks to achieve. Information published explains that feedback received will be taken into account by the Council before making a decision
Seek and consider feedback from	Consider how best to invite feedback from the community.	X	X				Feedback will be invited by (e.g.) • Written submissions

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category					Engagement activities
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
the community—significant matters	Provide a minimum community engagement period of 21 days to enable the community to provide feedback. Include a summary of community engagement feedback to the Council ahead of the decision.						• Completion of survey or questionnaire • Community Listening Post • Attendance in person, by representative at a Council meeting or public meeting • Attendance in person, by representative or electronic means (if available) at a workshop, focus group or interview Community Engagement period open for a minimum of 21 days Summary of community engagement feedback considered by Council ahead of decision
Public Meeting	Hold a public meeting where the community is invited to provide submissions (written or verbal) on the matter.	X					A public meeting will be held either as part of a Council meeting, or as a separate event, for the making of written or verbal submissions.

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category					Engagement activities
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
	The public meeting may be part of a Council meeting or a separate event.						
Council meeting invitation	Invite people who have made a written submission to attend a Council meeting to speak to their submission before the decision is made.		X				People who made written submissions will be invited to attend a Council meeting and speak to their submissions before a decision is made
Seek and consider feedback from the community	Consider how best to invite feedback from the community Provide information about how community feedback will inform the Council's decision. Ensure an appropriate period of time is provided to enable communities to provide feedback.			X	X		Feedback will be invited by (e.g.) • Written submissions • Completion of a survey or questionnaire • Community Listening Post • Attendance in person, by representative at a Council meeting or public meeting • Attendance in person, by representative or via electronic means (if available) at a workshop, focus group or interview Information published indicates that feedback received will be

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category					Engagement activities
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
							taken into account by the Council before making a decision Community Engagement period open for a period of 21 days or such other period as determined by Council
Consult with local community	Consider appropriate forms of notifications to the area within the Council affected by the Council decision or action. Consider whether additional information or notification should be made available to the local community to bring their attention to the matter and to support participation.				X		• Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council • Information made available at Council offices, libraries and/or community centers in the area within the Council affected by the council decision or action • Community Noticeboards
Information to the whole Council area	Provide information to the whole of the Council's community if it may be					X	• Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category					Engagement activities
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
	directly affected by the Council decision or action.						• Information made available at Council offices, libraries and/or community centers
Information to local community	Provide information to the local community that may be directly affected by the Council decision or action.					X	• Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council • Information made available at Council offices, libraries and/or community centers in the local community that may be directly affected by the Council decision or action

8. OTHER DECISIONS, ACTIVITIES AND PROCESSES

Council recognises there may be decisions, activities and processes where the Act and State Charter are silent in relation to community engagement, but for which community engagement may nevertheless be appropriate.

Council may undertake community engagement activities for community participation in relation to other decisions, activities or processes of the Council not specified in the State Charter at its absolute discretion, and which reflects Council's Community Engagement Charter. However, Council is not required to give prior consideration and/or to determine whether or not to undertake any such steps in relation to these matters.

9. DELEGATION

Specific engagement activities to be undertaken in relation to any particular decision, activity or processes shall be determined on a case by case basis, by:

- Council, by resolution;
- the CEO;
- a delegate with the power to undertake community engagement under the Act, the State Charter or this policy; or
- a delegate with power to make a decision or undertake an activity or process that requires community engagement under the Act, the State Charter or this policy.

Council, the CEO or a delegate is not required by this policy to undertake, or to consider or determine whether to undertake, additional engagement activities or engagement methods. Such a decision is at the absolute discretion of the decision maker.

10. RECORDS

All records should be treated in accordance with Local Government GDS40.

11. REVIEW AND EVALUATION

This document shall be reviewed by the Council every two (2) years (or on significant change to legislation or aspects included in this policy that could affect the health and safety of workers).

12. FURTHER INFORMATION

A copy of this policy can be obtained from the Council office listed below during ordinary business hours on request for a fee (as per Council's Fees and Charges Policy). It may also be downloaded from Council's website: www.goyder.sa.gov.au

13. REVIEW HISTORY

Document History	Version No:	Issue Date:	Description of Change:
	1.0	19/05/26	Draft endorsed for public consultation.
	1.0	21/07/2026	Following public consultation policy updated and Council adopted 21.07.2026 Minute Ref 159/26

Community Engagement Charter

One Goyder:
A united and vibrant community that embraces change and is characterised by strong and responsible leadership.

Our Vision

Identifies the importance of buliding and maintaining an engaged and connected community that works together to achieve common goals.

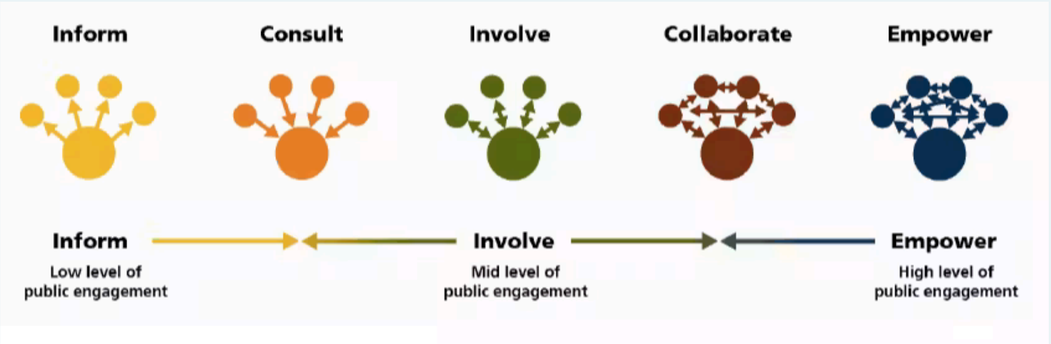
Our Community

Includes people who live, work, participate or contribute to community life as well as access services in the Goyder Region.

Our Engagement

Is underpinned by the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) Spectrum.

Our Role:



Community Role:



GOYDER
South Australia's Heartland

Our Community Engagement Commitment:

Council is committed to ensuring that community engagement is integrated into Council activities to support decision making, build relationships, and strengthen communities.
Community engagement is the responsibility of all Council service areas, teams and employees.
Council will advocate for its community and ensure that the community's views, needs and concerns are raised with other levels of government or relevant stakeholders.
We will undertake evaluation process to continually improve our approach to community engagement.

To be RESPECTFUL

We will actively listen to your views and ideas to support decision making.

To be GENUINE

We will clearly explain the purpose for our engagement and we will demonstrate how your involvement will be used to inform decision making.

To be INCLUSIVE

We will use a diverse range of methods to engage with you to increase accessibility.
We will seek out the participation of those in the community whose voices are not often heard.

To be RESPONSIVE

We will endeavour to plan, respond and act in a timely manner.

Community Engagement is a two-way street. How can you engage with Council?

- Visit the Council website or facebook page
- Subscribe to Council's community e-newsletter
- Participate in local events and activities
- Attend Council meetings
- Speak with your elected members
- Join your town's community management committee
- Provide feedback: in person, writing, or online

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