



CITY OF VINCENT

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION POLICY NO. 4.1.5

Adopted by Council on 22 July 2014

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

OBJECTIVES

The City of Vincent will ensure

- That members of the community are informed of matters that affect them;
- That members of the community are provided with sufficient information to enable them to make informed comment on those matters;
- That it is easy for members of the community to comment;
- That all comments received are given due consideration by decision makers; and
- That all members of the community who provide comments are informed of the outcome.

INTRODUCTION

1. WHEN WILL COMMUNITY CONSULTATION BE UNDERTAKEN?

1.1 The City of Vincent will undertake formal community consultation when:

- (i) a decision is likely to have significant impact on a particular individual or group in the community;
- (ii) there is, or is likely to be, strong community concern or interest in the issue;
- (iii) the proposals before the Council are anticipated to have a significant impact on the economy, lifestyle, amenity and/or environment of the City or its residents;
- (iv) government agencies, other than the Council, have a stated interest in any policy or plans being considered;
- (v) the resolution of an issue or implementation of a proposal is likely to require a substantial redirection of ratepayer funds either by up-front or ongoing costs;
- (vi) the future use of a significant area of land within the City is being decided;
- (vii) information is needed by Council Members or Officers about community needs, priorities or values to ensure planning is appropriate and responsive;
- (viii) the Council has statutory obligations to consult with the community; or
- (ix) the Council wishes to ensure that minority or disadvantaged groups have information about, and access to, the Council's services and programmes.

1.2 While the Council will consult with the community wherever possible, it may not be practicable where:

- (i) The Council must make a decision quickly in the interests of the City (e.g. public safety);
- (ii) the Council is bound by legal, commercial or legislative constraints; and
- (iii) the decisions concern minor "day-to-day" matters.

2. KEY PRINCIPLES

2.1 The Council will make decisions based on the views and needs of the Vincent community by:

- (i) ensuring the Vincent community is involved in the review of policy, planning and service development and has ownership of the outcomes;
- (ii) taking into account the issue, community interest and needs, and cost; and
- (iii) ensuring that Council is responsive and accountable in its decision-making, resource management and expenditure.

2.2 The Council will work towards maximum community participation by:

- (i) making participation as easy and accessible as possible by considering people's different needs;
- (ii) ensuring public consultations are widely advertised in a range of media;
- (iii) ensuring a wide range of consultation strategies are provided to meet individual needs.
- (iv) ensuring public consultation venues are consistent with Disability Service Commission Guidelines.
- (v) ensuring everyone who is affected by or interested in a particular issue has the opportunity to have their say;
- (vi) allowing sufficient time for maximum participation of interested parties;
- (vii) encouraging groups to select their own representative(s) to work with Council;
- (viii) providing an environment where people feel safe to express their views;
- (ix) providing the necessary information so that people can determine if the issue affects them and to enable them to make an informed comment; and
- (x) employ staff with appropriate skills and/or ensure staff who participate in community consultation are adequately trained or where required, receive adequate training.
- (xi) consultations are evaluated for accessibility for broad representation where possible.

2.3 The Council where possible will demonstrate a clear focus and purpose by:

- (i) advising the community of the reason for the consultation and what it aims to achieve;
- (ii) explaining Council's role in the consultation, and that of the other participants;
- (iii) making available relevant, accurate, accessible, easy-to-understand background information in sufficient time for people to be well informed, while giving due consideration to commercially sensitive or personal information;
- (iv) where possible working towards outcomes that have broad community support;
- (v) advising people how their feedback and comment will be incorporated into the decision making process; and
- (vi) using information only for the stated purpose, unless the community or individual has given prior approval.

2.4 The Council will listen and respond to participants by:

- (i) respecting and valuing Vincent's diverse community and the wide-ranging views and interests that may be represented;
- (ii) being receptive and responsive to new ideas;
- (iii) making all reasonable attempts to resolve conflicts and reach acceptable solutions;
- (iv) allowing sufficient time to debate and investigate any unexpected and important issues that arise;
- (v) advising participants of Council decisions (where practicable); and
- (vi) informing participants of the decision making process where possible.

2.5 The Council will be efficient, responsible and accountable by:

- (i) balancing the commitment to engage effectively with the need to manage ratepayers' monies and community interests prudently; and
- (ii) evaluating feedback from participants and decision-making process is documented where appropriate, to assist with planning for future consultations.

3. RESTRICTION ON CONSULTATION AND ADVERTISING

- (i) Consultation to avoid mid-December to mid-January period

In recognition of the special nature of the holiday period of Easter and between mid-December and mid-January, advertising or consultation required for any Planning proposal other than development applications, will not be undertaken during this period. Any such advertising or consultation shall be timed so as to conclude prior to mid-December or alternatively, not to commence until mid-January.

For development applications, an extended duration of consultation is prescribed for the period between 18 December and 8 January, as shown in the following Table:

HOLIDAY PERIOD	COMMENT PERIOD
Weekends	Comment period includes weekend days
Public Holidays	Comment period excludes public holidays. Where a consultation period prescribed by this Policy includes declared public holidays, the consultation period shall be extended by the number of public holidays
Easter Festive Period	Comment period excludes the weekend days and public holidays during this period
Period from 18 December to 8 January inclusive (including Christmas-New Year Festive Period)	No consultation or advertising is to be carried out in the period from 18 December to 8 January inclusive. Where advertising has commenced, but has not completed been prior to this period, the portion (days) of the comment period that falls within this period is to be added from 9 January, excluding any public holidays

4 AUTHORITY TO VARY THE EXTENT OF CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive Officer;

- (i) shall determine the type and extent of community consultation, in liaison with the Mayor, where it has not been prescribed in the Policy, Guidelines and Procedures.
- (ii) has the discretion to increase the extent, method or duration of the consultation provisions of this policy, due to specific exceptional circumstances relating to a matter, including, but not limited to:
 - the unique scale and nature of a proposal or significant development;
 - where the existing proposal or significant development has received substantial opposition, concerns or complaints; or
 - the proposed significant development has a substantially greater potential to cause undue impact on the locality compared to a similar 'standard' development; or
 - where a Local Planning Policy may have significant implications on a specific sector of the community.
- (iii) has the discretion to require an Applicant for a proposal/significant development to hold one or more public meetings/forums, at no cost to the City, to explain the proposal to the community where in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer the proposal/significant development may be of a complex nature, or may affect a broader area or be of considerable interest to the community.

Any such meetings/forums should be:

- held prior to or in the very early part of the proposal or significant development being advertised for public comment;
- held in a convenient location (preferably within the local community that is most likely to be impacted by the proposal);
- held at a convenient time; and
- adequately promoted or advertised to the community, including through a combination of:
 - the use of leaflets/flyers;
 - letters;
 - a prominent sign on the site; or
 - advertisements in the media, to the satisfaction of the Chief Executive Officer.

Date Adopted:	25 September 2001, 22 July 2014
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