

SHIRE OF
MERREDIN
INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

October 2018





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

The 'Community Engagement Toolkit' is intended as a resource for Shire employees to assist in planning for community engagement. It contains templates and useful information including:

Appendix 1: Barriers to Participation

A look at common barriers to participation in community engagement and how these can be overcome.

Appendix 2: Communication Plan

How will you let the community know that the engagement is taking place? How will you keep them informed through the engagement process?

Appendix 3: Risk Assessment

A process to determine the risks for undertaking the engagement with the community.

Appendix 4: Engagement Plan Template

A step by step guide to planning your community engagement.

Appendix 5: Example Engagement Methods

Examples of engagement methods that can be used at each level of the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum and consideration of the potential benefits and pitfalls of each method.

Appendix 6: Evaluation Template

A useful tool to help summarise your evaluation of the community engagement activity.

Appendix 7: Feedback & Reporting

A guide to providing feedback to participants and reporting to Council.





APPENDIX 1

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

When developing an engagement plan it is important to consider factors that can impede the ability of different community members/groups to engage and to address these in the plan.

| COMMON BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION | |
|--|---|
| BARRIER | MITIGATING ACTIONS |
| The accessibility and neutrality of the location where the engagement will take place | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ensure venues are accessible for people with disabilities <i>e.g. ramps, accessible parking and toilets</i> ▶ Whenever possible utilise public facilities that are not affiliated with a particular group/person ▶ Consider transport options to/from the location |
| Geographic considerations including the distance and capacity to travel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Hold engagement in multiple locations across the Shire ▶ Investigate remote involvement through technology ▶ Consider transport options and work with providers (e.g. HACC) to enable access |
| Availability of information and communication technologies <i>e.g. telephone and internet</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Adopt multiple engagement formats <i>e.g. online, print and in-person</i> ▶ Use online tools with minimal data usage requirements |
| The time at which the engagement will take place <i>e.g. during school or work hours, during harvest or holiday periods, etc.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Identify limitations/barriers to community members/groups participation and plan engagement to take place at times when most will be available <i>e.g. after school/work hours, on weekends, etc.</i> |
| A lack of trust in the process or the initiator of the engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Be clear and upfront about the purpose and scope of the engagement ▶ Be clear about the level of influence community members have over a decision and the constraints to adopting their views and ideas ▶ Ensure confidentiality of responses by allowing for anonymous contributions |
| Cultural or religious customs and conventions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Consult with relevant community groups to understand customs and conventions and determine together, the best way to ensure inclusion in the engagement |





| | |
|---|---|
| Other responsibilities <i>e.g. work, family, volunteer commitments</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Be clear in expressing the importance of getting involved in the engagement to encourage busy people to still make the time to contribute ▶ Adopt a multi-faceted approach to engagement that allows people to participate at a time that suits them <i>e.g. surveys, feedback forms, comment periods, etc.</i> |
| Special needs of people with disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ensure venues are accessible for people with disabilities <i>e.g. ramps, accessible parking and toilets</i> ▶ Consider using multiple formats to accommodate people with hearing and vision impairments <i>e.g. visual representations and audio formats</i> |
| Literacy level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ensure the process is simple and that language used is easy to understand ▶ Assist people with low levels of literacy to contribute verbally ▶ Be clear in your engagement promotion that you are interested in a diverse range of opinions and ideas and that specialist skills are not required to get involved |
| Need for language translation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Arrange for a buddy or translator who can speak both languages well |





APPENDIX 2

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Communication is critical throughout an engagement process. It allows you to inform community members that the engagement is taking place and how they can get involved, provide updates on progress and delays and be proactive in addressing concerns as they arise.

| COMMUNICATION PLAN | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| Name | What will you communicate? | Medium | Schedule | Responsible Person |
| <i>Executive Manager Engineering Services</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Invitation to participate in steering committee ▶ Project updates ▶ Strategies/ suggestions ▶ Issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Written invitation ▶ Meetings ▶ Email ▶ Formal reports | <i>Project initiation and then monthly</i> | <i>Project Manager</i> |
| <i>e.g. Community Members</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Invitation to participate in engagement ▶ Details of engagement ▶ Output from engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Advertise in print media ▶ Flyer/poster on notice boards ▶ Newsletter ▶ Social Media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Project initiation ▶ Project completion | <i>Project Team Member</i> |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |





APPENDIX 3

RISK ASSESSMENT

It is imperative that prior to any engagement being undertaken, an appropriate Risk Assessment is carried out. The Shire of Merredin's 'Risk Matrix', 'Measures of Likelihood' (refer to pg. 16) and 'Measures of Consequence' (refer to pg. 17) should be utilised to carry out the Risk Assessment. Examples of engagement risks include not being able to source enough community members/groups to engage with for the project, injury to participants and/or staff in the engagement process, failure to yield adequate results from the engagement process, etc.

** Note that both staff and participants should be considered when completing the Risk Assessment.*

| RISK ASSESSMENT | | | | | |
|--|--------------|-------------------|---|---|--|
| Risk | Likelihood | Consequence | Risk Rating <i>Prior to Treatment/ Control</i> | Principal Risk Theme | Risk Action Plan <i>Controls/Treatment proposed</i> |
| If engagement is not activated with the community, hard to identify if supported | Possible (3) | Insignificant (1) | Low (1-4) | Reputation (3 - Moderate) Substantiated, public embarrassment, moderate impact, moderate news profile | Accept Risk |
| Financial loss to council should grant funding not be achieved | Possible (3) | Moderate (3) | Moderate (5-9) | Financial Impact - 3 Moderate - \$250,000 - 500,000 | Accept Officer Recommendation |

When the Risk Rating is classed as 'Extreme', a reason must be given for the proposed Controls/Treatment for the Risk Action Plan.

Outline Reason:





APPENDIX 4

ENGAGEMENT PLAN TEMPLATE

Successful community engagement relies on a systematic and consistent approach. An 'Engagement Plan' should be completed before any community engagement is undertaken.

An 'Engagement Plan' needs to articulate why you are engaging, what issue you are engaging on, who needs to be involved in the engagement and the level/type of interaction required for meaningful participation. The engagement plan also needs to outline how you are going to evaluate the effectiveness of the engagement activity and how you will provide feedback to participants.

| ENGAGEMENT PLAN | |
|---|--|
| PROJECT | |
| Project Title | Redevelopment Apex Park |
| Project Description <i>Expand on the details of the project</i> | To redevelopment the Apex Park with aspects of new play equipment. Up to 5 new playground equipment identified. Council has \$150,000 to utilise for this project to date. |
| Project Outcome <i>What do we need or hope to find out?</i> | The concept needs to be supported by the community to see if the need is required to meet the outcomes and ideas of what 5 items have been identified as options. |
| Project Constraints <i>What are the limitations of undertaking the engagement? e.g. resource or time limitations or decisions that are outside Council's sphere of influence/control.</i> | Funding constraints may be of concern. The full project may cost up to \$500K which will require a substantial amount of grant funding to achieve these outcomes. |

| PROJECT DETAILS | |
|---|--|
| Project Manager | Executive Manager Engineering Services |
| Team Members | Executive Manager Engineering Services - (Design & Construct) DCEO - (community engagement & grant funding) EMCS – (budget and reserves if required) |
| Project Start Date | March 2019 |
| Project Completion Date | Yet to be determined |
| Reports to Council <i>When? What purpose?</i> | Redevelopment of Apex Park (Presented to council March 2019) for consideration May 2019 – OCM – community engagement & assessment of funding and reserves etc |

| IAP ₂ PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM – LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT | | |
|--|----|---------------------------|
| Do you need to let the community know about the project? | No | No engagement is required |





| | | |
|--|-----|---------------------------|
| | Yes | INFORM |
| Do you need community input to help develop the draft project, proposal or plan? | No | Consider other strategies |
| | Yes | INVOLVE |
| Do you need to get community comment after the draft project, plan or proposal has been developed? | No | Consider other strategies |
| | Yes | CONSULT |
| Do you need consistent community input at all stages of the project or for an on-going issue? | No | Consider other strategies |
| | Yes | COLLABORATE |
| Do you need to allow the community to make decisions that are implemented? | No | Consider other strategies |
| | Yes | EMPOWER |

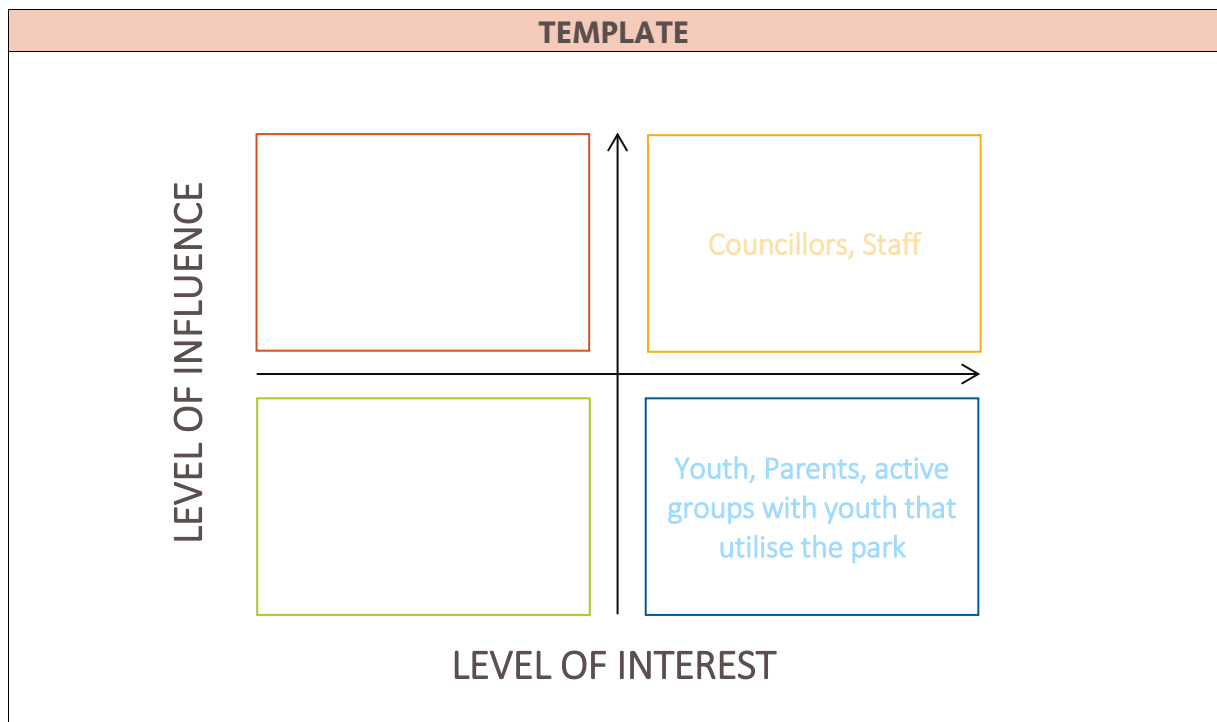
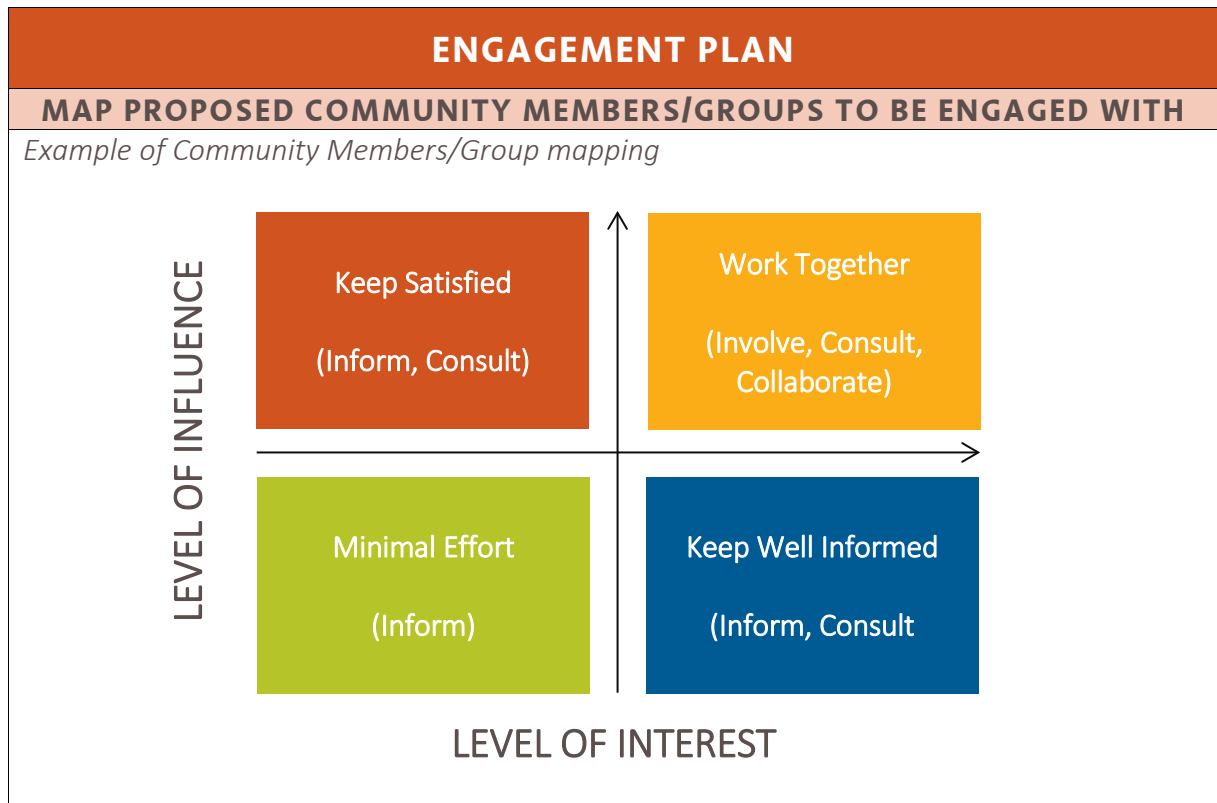
ENGAGEMENT PLAN

IDENTIFICATION OF WHO TO ENGAGE

| | |
|---|--|
| Organisation Name | Community |
| Primary Contact | Ratepayers |
| Key Issues/ Areas of Interest | Scope to see if the community would be engaged to activate Apex Park redevelopment and for Council to spend funds to achieve this outcome. |
| Value <i>e.g. skills, knowledge or influence</i> | Public perception is of high value to support this for the community and increase tourism within this region. |
| Best Methods to Engage | Social Media & Merredin Show |
| Barriers to Participation | Nil |

| | |
|---|--|
| Organisation Name | Youth |
| Primary Contact | N/A |
| Key Issues/ Areas of Interest | |
| Value <i>e.g. skills, knowledge or influence</i> | |
| Best Methods to Engage | Social Media, Merredin Show, Avon Youth, Schools etc |
| Barriers to Participation | |







| ENGAGEMENT PLAN | | | |
|----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| HOW WILL YOU ENGAGE? | | | |
| | Method | | Details <i>Type of content planned</i> |
| INFORM | Print Material <i>e.g. mail outs, newsletter, flyers/posters, fact sheets, reports</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Posted in the Phoenix |
| | Electronic Material <i>e.g. e-newsletter, website</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Newsletter |
| | Public Forums/Meetings <i>e.g. Council forums, Merredin Show, community meetings</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Merredin Show |
| | Social Media <i>e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Lumen5 video infographics, 'Share It – Blare It' campaign</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Social Media, facebook |
| | Signage <i>e.g. electronic notice board, community notice boards</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Nil |
| | Media <i>e.g. media release, radio interview, newspaper advertisement</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| CONSULT | Surveys | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Focus Groups | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Informal Meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Advertised Comment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Interviews | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Public Events/Exhibitions | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Merredin Show & Youth Fest |
| | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| INVOLVE | Interactive Sessions | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Merredin Show & Youth Fest |
| | Focus Groups | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Interviews | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Online Engagement Tools | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| COLLABORATE | Advisory/Steering Committees | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Working Groups | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Council working group, Cr Anderson, Cr Boehme, Cr Flockart |
| | Joint Ventures/Initiatives | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Online Collaborative Platforms | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| EMPOWER | Community Ballot/Poll | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Merredin Show, Youthfest |
| | Citizens Jury | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Delegated Decisions | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Council |
| | Participative Decision-Making <i>e.g. participative budgeting</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | |





* Refer to Appendix 5 for pros and cons of engagement methods when filling in the above section.

| ENGAGEMENT PLAN | |
|---|---|
| ACCESS & INCLUSION | |
| Measure | Details <i>What will you employ to make access easier?</i> |
| Written Materials <i>e.g. large fonts, electronic and hard copy, simple language, etc.</i> | N/A |
| Audio Formats <i>e.g. translation services, audio visual formats, etc.</i> | N/A |
| Accessible Venue <i>e.g. venue has ramps, accessible parking, etc.</i> | N/A |

| TIMELINE | | | |
|--|------------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Task <i>What tasks need to be completed and by when? Who will be responsible for each task?</i> | Start Date | End Date | Responsible Person |
| Completed social media for 3 week advertising as requested by CMRef 82331? | 29 th March | 17 April 2019 | DCEO MCO |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

| RESOURCES | |
|--|--|
| Venue <i>e.g. venue hire or room hire</i> | |
| Additional Support <i>e.g. external facilitator, consultants, expert advice</i> | |
| Technology <i>e.g. computer software, internet connection, teleconference, etc.</i> | |
| Equipment <i>e.g. audio equipment, projector, screen, tables, chairs, etc.</i> | |
| Materials | |

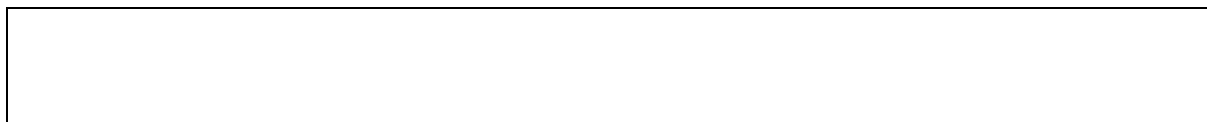




| | | | |
|--|---|---------|-------|
| <i>e.g. printed reports/worksheets, pens, note paper</i> | | | |
| Other | | | |
| ENGAGEMENT PLAN | | | |
| BUDGET | | | |
| Expenditure <i>Detail engagement costs including the in-kind and cash components</i> | Cash | In-Kind | Total |
| Project Management & Administration | No cost due to capacity to utilise local and shire events at the time of advertising. | | |
| External Consultant(s) | | | |
| Marketing & Promotion | | | |
| Equipment & Venue Hire | | | |
| Catering (if required) | | | |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | Costs have been allocated for staff time only. | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|-----------|--------------------|
| EVALUATION | | | |
| METHOD <i>e.g. survey, verbal feedback, etc.</i> | MEASURE <i>e.g. satisfaction rating scale, number of participants, demographic information</i> | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| PROVISION OF FEEDBACK TO PARTICIPANTS | | | |
| Method | Details | Timeframe | Responsible Person |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Limitations <i>Detail any boundaries/limitations for sharing/disclosing information obtained through the engagement activity</i> | | | |
| | | | |





APPENDIX 5

EXAMPLE ENGAGEMENT METHODS

The below examples are not an exhaustive list of possible engagement methods. Continual monitoring of engagement trends is recommended to ensure emerging engagement methods are considered. In weighing up the engagement methods you could use, consider the potential benefits (pros) and pitfalls (cons) of each.

| ENGAGEMENT LEVEL 1: INFORM | | |
|--|--|---|
| ENGAGEMENT METHOD | PROS | CONS |
| Written Materials - Print <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Fact Sheets ▶ Newsletters ▶ Media Articles ▶ Flyers/Posters ▶ Reports/Papers ▶ Mail Out | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Can reach a large audience. ▶ Consistency in information delivery ▶ Not reliant on technology/connectivity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Costs of printing/distribution ▶ Information overload ▶ Limited ability to track readership ▶ No opportunity for clarification (i.e. cannot ask questions) ▶ Limited capacity to communicate complicated concepts |
| Written Materials - Electronic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Website ▶ Social Media ▶ E-newsletter ▶ Email | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Low cost ▶ Broad distribution ▶ Can monitor and analyse use and readership ▶ Popular information source particularly amongst young people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Limitations of technology/connectivity of internet/phone services ▶ Relevance and interest diminish if not maintained and regularly updated |
| Verbal/Visual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Briefings. ▶ Community Meetings ▶ Radio Interviews/Announcements ▶ Videos | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Most suitable for certain community groups (e.g. low literacy levels, visually impaired) ▶ More expressive/emotive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Information can be misinterpreted ▶ Cost prohibitive ▶ Inconsistent messaging |







| ENGAGEMENT LEVEL 2: CONSULT | | |
|--|--|--|
| ENGAGEMENT METHOD | PROS | CONS |
| <p>Written (Electronic/Print)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Survey ▶ Poll ▶ Questionnaire ▶ Public Comment Period | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Involvement of people who cannot attend meetings ▶ Allows for statistical analysis of input ▶ Easy to record responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Poor response rates. ▶ Labour intensive ▶ Questions can be misinterpreted limiting value of output ▶ Mistrust of the process ▶ Results not fed back to participants |
| <p>Verbal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Workshops ▶ Focus Groups ▶ Forums ▶ Interviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Allows two-way dialogue ▶ Enables exposure of different community groups to other perspectives ▶ Allows exploration of ideas/concerns. ▶ Establish partnerships/ collaborations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Loud minority dominate and 'silent majority' remain silent ▶ Cost prohibitive ▶ Poor participation rates. ▶ Requires skilled facilitator ▶ Difficult to record responses ▶ Labour intensive ▶ Can be derailed by incorrect format ▶ Can be used as an avenue to verbalise a concern/issue that is not relevant to the topic |

| ENGAGEMENT LEVEL 3: INVOLVE | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| ENGAGEMENT METHOD | PROS | CONS |
| <p>Online Engagement Tools</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Allows two-way dialogue ▶ Enables exposure of different community groups to other perspectives ▶ Allows exploration of ideas/concerns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Loud minority dominate and 'silent majority' remain silent ▶ Poor participation rates ▶ Requires skilled facilitator ▶ Difficult to record responses ▶ Can be used as an avenue to verbalise a concern/issue that is not relevant to the topic |



ENGAGEMENT LEVEL 4: COLLABORATE

| ENGAGEMENT METHOD | PROS | CONS |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Advisory Committee/ Steering Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed and in-depth exploration and discussion of ideas/issues Allows for expert advice and guidance on a topic Can create effective partnerships/working relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not representative of the whole community Can be perceived as 'exclusive' and 'discriminating' Can be time consuming and costly |

ENGAGEMENT LEVEL 5: EMPOWER

| ENGAGEMENT METHOD | PROS | CONS |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Participative Decision-Making | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased ownership of outcomes Better outcomes for the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limitations on what decisions can be made through this process Mistrust in the process and outcomes if expectations are not managed |





APPENDIX 6

EVALUATION TEMPLATE

It is important to assess if the community engagement process has been effective and achieved its intended purpose. This will support continuous improvement in future engagement processes.

There are a range of means by which information can be gathered to complete an evaluation. For example:

- ▶ Feedback/evaluation forms;
- ▶ Verbal feedback provided during or after an engagement activity; and
- ▶ Evaluation meeting with the project team.

| EVALUATION | | |
|---|--|---|
| Project Title | Redevelopment Apex Park | |
| Project Overview | To refer concept plan to the public to see if support to redevelop Apex Park and for the support to spend ratepayers monies. | |
| Method(s) of Engagement | Social Media, Merredin Show & Youth Fest 2019 | |
| Number of Participants | Community Groups Represented | Community Groups not Represented |
| 186 | Local community, youth, parents, general community members, ratepayers, councillors, staff | N/A |
| Summary of Participant Feedback (include verbatim responses if possible) | Refer to Attached document for comments from social media, Merredin Show & Youthfest. | |
| Evaluation | Satisfaction Rating (if applicable) | n/a |
| | Issues/Concerns | n/a |
| | What Worked Well | Public comments via councillor support help to assist the community with positive feedback. |
| | Opportunities for Improvement | |
| Recommendations for Future Engagement | | |



APPENDIX 7

FEEDBACK & REPORTING

Best practice community engagement ensures that all participants in the engagement are provided with feedback on the value and impact of their participation. This feedback should report on the aggregate of the engagement activities and clearly articulate how the community members' input influenced the decision-making process and what the final outcome was. This step is critical in communicating the value of community participation and encouraging them to participate in future engagement exercises.

There are various methods that can be used singularly or in combination to provide feedback on an engagement process:





CONCLUSION OF ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

As suggested in the diagram on pg. 37 a 'written report' is one method of feedback that can be produced. A 'written report' should provide a full run down on the engagement process, outcomes and evaluation and it may be produced for the community or Council or both.

Completing these written reports ensures the finalisation of the engagement process. It provides the community and Council with a summary outlining the process that took place, what outcomes were determined and what is to occur going forwards.

ENGAGEMENT REPORT

This report should be made accessible to all community members whether they participated in the engagement activity or not. An Engagement Report may include the following components:

- ▶ Introduction with background information on the purpose and scope of the engagement activity;
- ▶ Summary of the engagement methodology and profile of community members engaged in the process;
- ▶ Outcomes of the engagement including issues and trends identified, supported by measurable and quality data;
- ▶ A selection of verbatim comments contributed by participants;
- ▶ A summary of the evaluation of the engagement process;
- ▶ Information on how the input from community members will be used in the decision-making process; and
- ▶ Any opportunities for ongoing involvement.

COUNCIL SUMMARY REPORT

A summary report of the engagement process, outcomes and evaluation to accompany an Agenda item to Council is the ideal format should an item need to go to Council. The summary should provide the greatest depth of information on the outcomes of the engagement process with a focus on the detail that will assist in the Council's decision-making process. This summary report may contain:

- ▶ Clear and succinct information and feedback from the community;
- ▶ Identification of the main interests and any differences between individuals and/or community;
- ▶ Identification of the degree of agreement or disagreement between participants;
- ▶ Clarification of key issues and any strongly held community views; and
- ▶ Clear and equitable recommendations based on the information provided throughout the report.



Your Voice Matters to Us Merredin

