

POLICY NUMBER	-	2.29
POLICY SUBJECT	-	2.29 Community Engagement
ADOPTED	-	20 November 2018 (CMRef 82279)
<u>REVIEWED</u>	-	<u>22 November 2022</u>

POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of the Community Engagement Policy is to outline the Shire of Merredin’s commitment to timely, consistent and genuine community engagement as a core component of Council’s decision-making process.

~~This policy is guided by Section 1.3 (2) of the Local Government Act 1995 (the Act) which states that the intent of the Act is to result in:~~

- ~~a) — Better decision-making by local governments;~~
- ~~b) — Greater community participation in the decisions and affairs of local governments;~~
- ~~c) — Greater accountability of local governments to their communities; and~~
- ~~d) — More efficient and effective local government.~~

This ~~p~~olicy should be considered in conjunction with the Shire’s ‘Community Engagement Framework & Toolkit’ (CEFT). This policy and the engagement framework are intended to ~~enhance the capacity of~~guide the Shire’s ~~to engagement practices~~ with its community ~~and for community members to engage with the Shire~~ by clearly communicating the goals and parameters for engagement.

POSITION STATEMENT

The Shire of Merredin believes:

- ~~• That effective communication and engagement results in better decision-making by bringing a range of perspectives to the table; and~~
- ~~• That those impacted by a decision have the right to have input and for Council to consider their views in their decision-making and planning processes.~~

The Shire of Merredin is committed to open and transparent communication with its community and recognises that effective engagement builds the foundation for shared responsibility for decisions and trust in the decision-making process.

The Shire of Merredin’s ‘Strategic Community Plan ~~2020 – 2030~~2018–2028’ reinforces this commitment ~~through~~through the following key priorities under ~~Theme~~Zone 4: Communication ~~unity and~~& Leadership:

4.1 Community Engagement

4.1.1 The Shire regularly engages with its community and, in return, communicates the information gathered in a clear and transparent manner

4.1.2 The Council works closely with the community to successfully achieve projects or outcomes that delivery the community's vision for Merredin

4.1.3 The Shire has a strong working relationship with the Njaki Njaki Nyoongar Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal community members

~~Key Priority 4.2 – Council engaging broadly and proactively with the community; and~~

~~Key Priority 4.5 – Ensuring Council has the information and support to enable informed decision-making.~~

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Policy (in conjunction with the CEFT) are to:

- 1) Build trust between the Shire and its community members by confirming the Shire's commitment to undertake quality engagement as part of its decision-making processes;
- 2) Clarify the role that the Shire will take in engaging the community;
- 3) Enable a consistent approach to community engagement in relation to projects, plans and other activities requiring community involvement;
- 4) Enable better community participation in the decisions and affairs of the Shire ~~beyond regardless of~~ the Shire's legislative and regulatory obligations;
- 5) Reduce risk and increase credibility;
- 6) Integrate community engagement as a core component of the Shire's decision-making process;
- 7) Build enduring relationships with the community; and
- 8) Adhere to the Shire's legislative and regulatory obligations regarding community engagement.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the Shire of Merredin, contractors, consultants and any other person or group who undertakes community engagement activities on behalf of the Shire.

This policy does not replace any obligation under the *Local Government Act 1995* for Council to communicate, consult and/or engage with the community.

~~Community engagement does not replace the decision-making responsibility of Council. Rather, community engagement is designed to ensure that Council has access to a range of information about community needs, opinions and options prior to making decisions.~~

~~Development approvals and other planning related matters are not included within the scope of this policy as their engagement requirements are addressed by the Planning and Development Act 2005, Land Administration Act 1997, Town Planning Regulations 1967 and Local Planning Scheme No. 6.~~

GUIDELINES

~~The Shire of Merredin's CEFT will guide the Shire's approach to community engagement. The CEFT outlines when the Shire will engage, at what level and the methods that may be used. It is important to note however, that in some instances the Shire is guided by legislation or requirements imposed by another tier of government in its approach to engagement.~~

The Shire of Merredin has adopted the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum (refer to Figure 1) in its approach to community engagement. The IAP2 spectrum stipulates that the level of engagement needs to be reflective of the nature, complexity and impact of the issue, plan or project for which the engagement is being undertaken.

~~The following general guidelines should be adhered to when undertaking community engagement:~~

- ~~1) Shire employees should advise Councillors of community engagement activities in advance.~~
- ~~2) When planning community engagement activities consideration should be given to timing around holiday periods and events which may impact on the availability of community members to participate.~~
- ~~3) For high impact projects or issues that impact on the whole Shire (e.g. Strategic Community Plan), engagement activities should be conducted at multiple sites across the local government area.~~
- ~~4) Recording and reporting of community comments and recommendations should be accurate and unbiased.~~
- ~~5) Community members involved in any engagement activity should be provided with feedback on how their input influenced the decision-making process.~~

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
OBJECTIVE				
To provide the community with balanced and objective information and assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives and solutions.	To obtain community feedback on analysis, alternatives or decisions.	To work directly with the community throughout the process to ensure that public and private concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the community in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place the final decision-making in the hands of the community.

PROMISE TO THE COMMUNITY				
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge your concerns and feedback on how community input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that where appropriate, your concerns/issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how community input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
COMMUNITY'S ROLE				
To Listen	To Contribute	To Participate	To Partner	To Decide
EXAMPLES – ENGAGEMENT METHODS				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Fact sheets ▶ Websites ▶ Displays ▶ Newsletters ▶ Media releases ▶ Presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Public comment ▶ Focus groups ▶ Surveys ▶ Community meetings ▶ Submissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Workshops ▶ Surveys ▶ Web forums ▶ Field trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Advisory Committees ▶ Consensus building ▶ Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Delegated decisions ▶ Ballots ▶ Citizens' Juries
EXAMPLES – REASON FOR ENGAGEMENT				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Fire bans ▶ Building Act changes ▶ Events ▶ Public safety projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Traffic/transport projects ▶ Infrastructure redevelopments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Marketing Plan ▶ Prospectus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Strategic Community Plan ▶ Aged Care Friendly Plan ▶ Youth Strategy & Engagement Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Managing Emergencies in Facilities Plan ▶ Business Continuity Plan

Figure 1 – IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

OUR VALUES

The core values of the Shire of Merredin will form the foundation upon which its engagement activities are conducted. These core values, as outlined in the 'Strategic Community Plan 2018 – 2028' and the 'Corporate Business Plan 2018 – 2022', are:

Integrity: Act in an honest, open and accountable manner in all of our activities ensuring they are equitable and socially just.

Participation: Provide genuine opportunities for informed community participation in decision making in a framework of democracy.

Service: Be sensitive and responsive to the needs and aspirations of our Community and focus on customer satisfaction and value for money.

Learning: Continue learning from training, our actions and experiences and continually seek better and more innovative ways of doing things.

Valuing People: Value the contribution that people inside and outside the organisation make to the achievement of the Shire's vision.

~~**Commitment:** Ensure our actions serve the people of Merredin and their long term interests.~~

~~**Sustainability:** Have a global perspective and ensure our actions minimise the impact on the environment and the resources available for future generations.~~

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Shire of Merredin has adopted seven key principles to guide its community engagement activities. These principles set a standard by which the Shire will build consistent, open and inclusive relationships with all of its community members.

Innovative	We will explore and implement new ways to listen to and engage with our community members.
Accountable	We will be open and honest with our community members about how the outcomes of our engagement will be used and commit to providing feedback.
Strategic	Our community engagement will be driven by comprehensive analysis and planning to ensure that our approach is appropriate to our target audience.
Collaborative	We will establish collaborative partnerships with key community groups to share resources and leverage our networks to accomplish mutual goals.
Genuine	Our community engagement will be undertaken with genuine intent to use the information in our decision making and planning processes.
Inclusive	We will use a range of opportunities and techniques to obtain the opinions and perspectives of our diverse community members.
Achievable	We will be clear about the purpose of our engagement and provide realistic expectations about the level of influence being offered.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

~~This Policy should be read together with other Shire policies and guiding documents including:~~

- ~~1) Community Engagement Framework & Toolkit;~~
- ~~2) Code of Conduct;~~
- ~~3) Customer Service Charter;~~
- ~~4) Access & Inclusion Plan;~~
- ~~5) Social Media Policy;~~
- ~~6) Risk Management Policy;~~
- ~~7) Record Keeping Policy; and~~
- ~~8) Community Partnerships Policy.~~

DEFINITIONS

~~**IAP2:** International Association of Public Participation~~

Community Members: Any individual, group of individuals or organisations that are impacted by or could impact on the activity, service or project that is the focus of the engagement.

Community Engagement: Any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision-making and uses public input to make decisions.

POLICY NUMBER	-	5.5
POLICY SUBJECT	-	5.5 Sponsor Advertisements Sporting Grounds
ADOPTED	-	5 September 2000 (CMRef 27632)
AMENDED	-	19 June 2018 (CMRef 82200)
<u>REVIEWED</u>	-	<u>22 November 2022</u>

Sponsor advertising is permitted on perimeter fences ~~to playing fields, or freestanding adjacent to playing fields~~, on land owned or managed by Council, subject to the approval of the CEO or relevant facility manager, on the basis it does not conflict with the core principles of the Shire of Merredin and the following policy guidelines.

Objectives:

To ~~rationalise sponsor advertising on sporting grounds~~ provide a guideline on acceptable advertising.

Guidelines:

The ~~Council Shire of Merredin~~ in may approve advertising as requested by external organisations and users.

~~granting approval is to seek comments from the particular sporting bodies/Associations responsible for the specific playing field or fields involved. The applicant is to be responsible for maintaining advertising material in good state of repair to the satisfaction of the Council.~~

CONDITIONS:

In line with the Shire's Strategic Community Plan the following conditions are associated to the display of sponsorship materials:

1. The Shire does not allow advertising materials promoting
 - a. smoking, alcohol, or other drugs
 - b. fast food or unhealthy lifestyle;
2. Advertisement which conflicts with the objectives of the Shire;
3. The applicant is to be responsible for maintaining advertising material in a good state of repair to the satisfaction of the Shire of Merredin;
4. The advertising material must be to a high professional presentation and good condition;
5. The applicant is responsible for installing and removing the sponsorship material unless otherwise agreed;
6. Commercial, political and religious advertisements can be considered depending on the location and approved by the relevant administrative staff;
7. Advertisements should not conflict with the objectives of the event;
8. The advertisement at the MRCLC complex is to be dealt with as per the club/ association MoU and this policy;

- 9. Relevant Fees and Charges may apply;
- 10. All advertising must comply with provisions of the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6; and
- 11. Advertising may require a building permit to be obtained from the Shire of Merredin.

POLICY NUMBER	- 5.7
POLICY SUBJECT	- 5.7 Conditions of Usage - Recreation Reserves
ADOPTED	- 5 September 2000 (CMRef 27632)
REVIEWED	- 16 January 2018 (CMRef 82117)
<u>RESCINDED</u>	<u>22 November 2022</u>

~~That all user groups of Council's recreation reserves agree to the terms of reserve usage and that in the event of failing to adhere to those terms, Council has the power to refuse usage and/or charge a fee.~~

~~Objectives~~

~~To minimise potential vandalism and monitor user group usage.~~

~~Guidelines~~

~~That all bookings of recreation reserves are to be made through Council's Administration Centre. Bookings for the MRCLC oval are to be made at the MRCLC.~~

~~Payment of the appropriate fee must be paid in full prior to the event.~~

~~Consumption of alcohol is not permitted unless prior permission has been received from the CEO. Permission to sell alcohol must be obtained from the Clerk of Courts by applying for a Liquor Permit, after approval has been received from the CEO.~~

~~All rubbish created from an event should be disposed of appropriately in bins provided or removed from the site.~~

~~Persons using Council's recreation reserves are not to interfere in any way with infrastructure such as water reticulation, seating, shade and play equipment.~~

~~Persons are to submit an application form to obtain approval from Council's Administration Centre.~~

~~This policy covers all of Council's ovals, parks and reserves.~~

POLICY NUMBER	-	5.12
POLICY SUBJECT	-	5.12 Cummins Theatre - Donations/Loans/ Sponsorship
ADOPTED	-	21 June 2011 (CMRef 30627)
REVIEWED	-	20 March 2018 (CMRef 82145)
<u>REVIEWED</u>	-	<u>22 November 2022</u>

Policy

All offers of donations, loans or sponsorship for the Cummins Theatre be directed to the [Manager Community and Culture Theatre Manager](#) and assessed in accordance with the definitions and guidelines.

Purpose

To provide the [Manager Community and Culture Theatre Manager](#) and potential ~~donors, lenders and sponsors~~ contributors with definitions and guidelines in relation to donations, loans and sponsorship for the Cummins Theatre.

Definitions

Donation – A donation (including an unconditional gift, bequest or endowment) is a provision of cash or other items of value with no return benefits expected. The person or organisation providing these may request a modest acknowledgement or that the provision be used for a particular purpose and the recipient should as far as possible, respect those wishes.

Loan – Is the temporary physical transfer of an item/s or object/s from individual or organisation to another where there is no transfer of ownership.

Sponsorship – A commercial arrangement in which a sponsor provides a contribution in money or in kind to support an activity in return for certain specified benefits.

Guidelines

Donations, loans and sponsorship must be in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Cummins Theatre and not conflict with the core principles of the Shire of Merredin. All donations, loans and sponsorship arrangements are to be mutually agreed to and formalised in writing.

Donations

In general, the following types of donations will be accepted – monetary gifts, promotional material, suitable art, office equipment, kitchen equipment or other related items that will enable the Cummins Theatre to operate at a professional level and/or assist those groups (either community or commercial) that utilise the Theatre.

1. Donations (other than monetary gifts) are to be new or in good condition.
2. Acceptance of donations may be dependent on storage and display capacity at the Cummins Theatre.
3. Donations, upon approval, are to be delivered to the Cummins Theatre.
4. Donations will be acknowledged with a letter of thanks, publicity through various forms of media as appropriate (in compliance with donor's approval) and through promotion within the Cummins Theatre.

Loans

Items may be accepted on loan for display or use at the Cummins Theatre under the following conditions:

1. in general, the items are to be relevant to the Cummins Theatre history and/or shows or events or will assist in the presentation of the venue or its activities;
2. dependent on storage and display capacity at the Cummins Theatre;
3. items to be delivered to the Cummins Theatre;
4. the lender is responsible for insurance on loaned items;
5. care will be taken by Cummins Theatre staff and Volunteers with all loaned items however the Cummins Theatre will not be liable for any damage;
6. the period of the loan to be determined prior to items being accepted; and
7. loaned items will be acknowledged in association with the display or relevant activities.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship is welcomed from corporate bodies, businesses, community organisations and individuals who would like to support projects and activities that are conducted in alignment with the aims and objectives of the Cummins Theatre. Sponsorship agreements will be under the following conditions:

1. the Project, Event, Show or Activity shall be mutually agreed by the sponsor and the Manager Community and Culture Cummins Theatre Manager;
2. the Manager Community and Culture Cummins Theatre Manager will inform and seek permission from the Sponsor in advance if any changes in the purposes or activities are required;
3. the period of sponsorship to be determined prior to the agreement being signed;
4. sponsors will be acknowledged with a letter of thanks, publicity through various forms of media as appropriate, at the sponsored project/event/show/activity and through promotion within the Cummins Theatre (acknowledgements with sponsor's approval); and
5. the terms and conditions of the sponsorship agreement shall not be disclosed to any third parties without the prior written consent of both parties.

Scope

~~This policy applies to all offers of donations, loans or sponsorship for the Cummins Theatre.~~

POLICY NUMBER	-	5.16
POLICY SUBJECT	-	5.16 Community Facilities Usage
ADOPTED	-	15 May 2018 (CMRef 82179)
<u>RECINDED</u>	-	<u>22 November 2022</u>

Policy:

The Shire of Merredin is responsible for the management of a diverse range of facilities that are available for use by residents and visitors to Merredin. The purpose of this policy is to define Council's position in relation to the use and objectives of community facilities, which will then provide the basis for a consistent approach to their management and use.

Scope:

This policy applies to all groups and individuals wishing to access facilities owned or managed by the Shire of Merredin. The following table provides an overview of the range of Shire facilities.

Facility	Location
Burracoppin Pavilion	Burracoppin
Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre—Lawn	Barrack Street, Merredin
Cummins Theatre	Bates Street, Merredin
Merredin Military Museum	Reserve 10359
Merredin Railway Museum	Reserve 10359
Merredin Regional & Community Leisure Centre	Bates Street, Merredin
Merredin Seniors Centre	French Avenue, Merredin
Muntadgin Hall	Muntadgin
North Merredin Primary School Precinct	Coronation Street, Merredin
Nukarni Clubrooms	Bates Street, Merredin
Old Basketball Kiosk/Clubhouse	Kitchener Road, Merredin
Old Council Chambers	Barrack Street, Merredin
Old Library	Queen Street, Merredin
Old Pre-Primary	Throssell Street, Merredin
Women's Rest Centre	Barrack Street, Merredin

Description:

The facilities are available for community use. The type and size of spaces available generally varies from facility to facility. The following outlines different categories of user(s) which are relevant to this policy and to which different access requirements may apply.

Category of User:

Not-for-profit groups

Examples of Users and Activities:

Art, cultural and special interest groups
 Children and family groups (eg. playgroup, parent network meetings) Community concerts
 Community meetings
 Historical groups (eg. Tales of Time)
 Information and training sessions Landcare groups
 Museums
 Service organisations Sporting groups

Guidelines:

There is a high and growing demand for access to facilities from which organisations and interest groups can provide a range of community activity needs. The Shire has/will design and manage these facilities so there is flexibility to accommodate a broad range of activities and organisations.

Facilities that support multi-use result in a more efficient use of funding, minimise duplication of infrastructure (eg. change, meeting and activity rooms), reduce maintenance and maximise opportunities for community engagement and collaboration.

All individuals and organisations will have the opportunity to access available community facilities including not-for-profit groups and community groups.

This policy recognises organisations and individuals may at some time have the need for a range of activities and services that are offered from community facilities. These activities and services may include those organised by not-for-profit organisations (e.g. sports clubs, craft groups), or service group organisations (e.g. promotional events).

Some community groups will have priority access to the facility because they are deemed to provide outcome to the community.

Community facilities are primarily provided to support community based or not-for-profit organisations on the basis:

- They provide for a range of health and well-being needs of the community at minimal cost to participants;
- They minimise financial barriers to participation given their low operating; and
- They and their members do not have the capacity to provide for all the infrastructure needs associated with their activity alone.

Accordingly, the following groups and organisations will be generally be given priority access to community facilities:

- Those that align with the core or primary designed use of the community facility (e.g. lifelong learning and leisure programmes in a community hub);
- Groups or organisations contracted to provide a service for the Shire (e.g. out of school hours programme);

- ~~Not for profit organisations;~~
- ~~Groups or individuals that assist Council to achieve its objectives relating to community development; and~~
- ~~Groups that can show that at least 75% of membership or audience comes from within the Shire of Merredin.~~

~~Schools are significant stakeholders in the Shire of Merredin and provide Council with opportunities to form a variety of partnership models to provide access to open space and facilities for community purposes. Reciprocally, the Shire community facilities are available for use by local schools.~~

~~Council may restrict the use of the community facility by some types of users~~

~~This principle is to ensure facilities remain accessible for use by community based organisations that assist Council to achieve its strategic vision and this policy's objectives, and to ensure facilities are not dominated by one type of user group.~~

~~In order to minimise the potential for one or a number of groups, or a type of user to dominate a facility, individual community organisations can make application for the use which will be assessed on a case by case basis.~~

~~The Shire will provide opportunities for group's commercial in nature to use the community facility where significant community benefit and demand is evident. These types of commercial/semi-commercial activities may include martial arts and dance organisations that provide participation opportunities not commonly provided by community based not for profit organisations. The Shire encourages these types of activities to be conducted at Cummins Theatre or Merredin Recreation Leisure Centre as the first priority.~~

~~Agreements and Fees~~

~~Council manages access to the community facilities via formal agreements with approved groups and individuals, casual or one-off basis on a fee for use basis in accordance with adopted fees and charges.~~

~~Any usage requests that do not meet the requirements of these policies may be considered by the Chief Executive Officer or may be referred to Council for consideration.~~