

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1999

Section 50 Community Engagement Charter

The Community Engagement Charter (the Charter) is established by the Minister for Local Government pursuant to Section 50 of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act) for the purposes of this Act.

Principles

This charter has been prepared taking into account the following principles contained in Section 50(2) of the *Local Government Act 1999*—

- (a) members of the community should have reasonable, timely, meaningful and ongoing opportunities to gain access to information about proposed decisions, activities and processes of councils and to participate in relevant processes;
- (b) information about issues should be in plain language, readily accessible and in a form that facilitates community participation;
- (c) participation methods should seek to foster and encourage constructive dialogue, discussion and debate in relation to proposed decisions, activities and processes of councils;
- (d) participation methods should be appropriate having regard to the significance and likely impact of proposed decisions, activities and processes;
- (e) 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.

Categories

In recognition of the fact that the matters included for community engagement in this Charter have differing levels of impact on councils' communities, this Charter establishes the following categories of engagement and requirements that are appropriate to each group—

- **Significant—annual business plan and rating policy:** decisions related to a council's adoption of its annual business plan or proposed changes to the basis of its council rates.
- **Significant:** decisions that a council makes that have a significant impact on most or all ratepayers and residents, or the wider community or area.
- **Standard:** decisions that a council makes that benefit from community input across the council area.
- **Local:** decisions that impact an identifiable smaller group of residents/ratepayers or a local area.
- **Inform:** matters where councils provide information to a community impacted by a decision.

Mandatory Requirements Definitions

Where the Charter includes a mandatory requirement, the following table provides more information about actions that must be taken at a minimum to meet that requirement for community engagement.

While these actions are mandatory, councils should actively consider all activities that should be undertaken for each matter that it is consulting on to give community members the best chance to make their views known. In particular, councils should undertake additional engagement for matters that have greater significance, greater community interest or a greater impact on communities.

In this Charter 'community' means individuals, groups or stakeholders that are impacted by or interested in a particular council decision or action. Councils should seek broad, diverse and representative views across its community.

Whenever a council is preparing information to support engagement, it should be in plain language, readily accessible and in a form that facilitates community participation.

Categories

Mandatory Requirement	Mandatory Minimum Actions to Achieve the Mandatory Requirements	Mandatory Requirement that Applies to Matters Categorised as: (X indicates that the mandatory requirement applies)				
		Significant— Annual Business Plan 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
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			
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 community to bring their attention to the matter and to support participation.	X	X	X		

Mandatory Requirement	Mandatory Minimum Actions to Achieve the Mandatory Requirements	Mandatory Requirement that Applies to Matters Categorised as: (X indicates that the mandatory requirement applies)				
		Significant— Annual Business Plan and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform
Invite submissions	Provide information about how the community can make a submission, including timeframe.	X	X			
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			
Seek and consider feedback from the community—significant matters	Consider how best to invite feedback from the community. 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.	X	X			
Public meeting	Hold a public meeting where the community is invited to provide submissions (written or verbal) on the matter. The public meeting may be part of a council meeting or a separate event.	X				
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			
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	
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 to the whole council area	Provide information to the whole of the council's community if it may be directly affected by the council decision or action.					X

Mandatory Requirement	Mandatory Minimum Actions to Achieve the Mandatory Requirements	Mandatory Requirement that Applies to Matters Categorised as: (X indicates that the mandatory requirement applies)				
		Significant— Annual Business Plan and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform
Information to local community	Provide information to the local community that may be directly affected by the council decision or action.					X

Matters (in Legislative Order)

Category	Matter	Act Reference	Description
Significant	Representation reviews	Section 12(7) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Consultation that a council undertakes when it is doing a review of its internal representation (including possible changes to its ward structure, number of council members, change of council or ward names).
Inform	Minor changes to opening hours and place of council offices	Section 45(3) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	A council's decision about the manner, places and times at which its offices will be open to the public, where the impact of the decision would be minor.
Standard	Substantial changes to the opening hours and place of council offices	Section 45(3) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	A council's decision about the manner, places and times at which its offices will be open to the public, where the impact of the decision would be substantial.
Standard	Community engagement policy	Section 50A(6)(b) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Councils must consult before adopting its community engagement policy, which is the document that demonstrated how the council will consult in accordance with this charter and on other matters.
Standard	Council behavioural support policies	Section 75(F)(6) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Consultation that a council undertakes when it is proposing to adopt behavioural support policies.
Standard	Access to meetings and documents	Section 92(5) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	How councils ensure that council documents are made available and accessible to community members.
Significant	Strategic Management Plans	Section 122(6) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	The development and review of a council's strategic management plan. Strategic management plans lay out the council's strategic directions for a future ten-year period, including council's long-term financial plan and infrastructure and asset management plan.
Significant—annual business plan and rating policy	Annual Business Plan	Section 123(3)(b) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Adopting an annual business plan. Annual business plans set out the decisions a council makes each year on the rates and income they will receive and how they will spend these funds.
Significant—annual business plan and rating policy	Basis of rating	Section 151(5)(e) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Consultation that a council takes when it is proposing changes to the basis of its council rates, including declaring differential rates; imposing a separate rate, service rate or service charge; changing the basis on which land is valued for the purposes of rating.
Significant	Differential rating and special adjustments	Section 156 (14a)(b) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Consultation that a council takes when it is proposing changes to its use of differential rating.
Significant	Revocation of classification of land as community land—in all other cases	Section 194(2)(b) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Consultation that councils must undertake before revoking the community land status of any land that is community land.

Category	Matter	Act Reference	Description
Significant	Community Land Management Plans—adoption	Section 197(1) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Before a council adopts a community land management plan, it must undertake consultation.
Significant	Community Land Management Plans—significant amendments	Section 198(3) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	If a council amends a community land management plan, and the amendment has a significant impact on the community, it must undertake consultation.
Significant	Alienation of community land by lease or licence	Section 202(2) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Consultation that a council undertakes when it is proposing to lease or licence community land.
Inform	Council is proposing a permit or authorisation for alternation of a road or use of roads for business purposes	Section 223(1) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Consultation that a council takes when there are works on a road that require the council's permit and authorisation, and where traffic will be impeded for less than 48 hours and the council ensures that a detour is in place.
Local	Council is proposing a permit or authorisation for alternation of a road or use of roads for business purposes	Section 223(1) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Consultation that a council takes when there are works on a road that require the council's permit and authorisation, and where traffic will be impeded for more than 48 hours (with a detour in place) or where no detour will be available.
Local	Consultation on proposed planting of vegetation on a road	Section 232(b) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Consultation that a council takes when it proposes or authorises or permits for planting street trees or other vegetation on council roads, if the planting may have a significant impact on residents, nearby business or advertisers in the area.
Standard	Power to make orders	Section 259(2)(b) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i>	Councils must have policies in place on how they make orders relating to hazards on land adjoining a public place and the inappropriate use of a caravan or vehicle as a place of habitation and must consult before they adopt these policies.
Inform	Election information	Section 13A(2) of the <i>Local Government (Elections) Act 1999</i>	Councils must provide information, education and publicity for local government elections.

Commencement

The Community Engagement Charter comes into operation on the day on which it is published in the Gazette.

Dated: 2 December 2025

HON JOE SZAKACS MP
Minister for Local Government