Shire of
BODDINGTON
Flowing with Natural Beauty

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CHARTER

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Flowing with Natural Beauty

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Shire of Boddington acknowledges the Wiilman People of the Noongar Nation as the traditional custodians, and pays respect to Elders past and present, as well as the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

What is the purpose of this charter?

The Community Engagement Charter is a formal expression of Council's commitment to engaging the Boddington community through the use of appropriate, effective and inclusive practices.

The Shire of Boddington strives to provide a high level of communication and engagement with the community and stakeholders. This Charter outlines the principles that the Shire of Boddington uses to guide its community engagement, to ensure that the decision-making process adequately reflects the current and future requirements of the broader community.

This Community Engagement Charter aims to support safe, healthy, active and inclusive communities who are involved and informed in decision-making processes. It enables the Shire to improve its services to enhance the quality of life within Boddington.

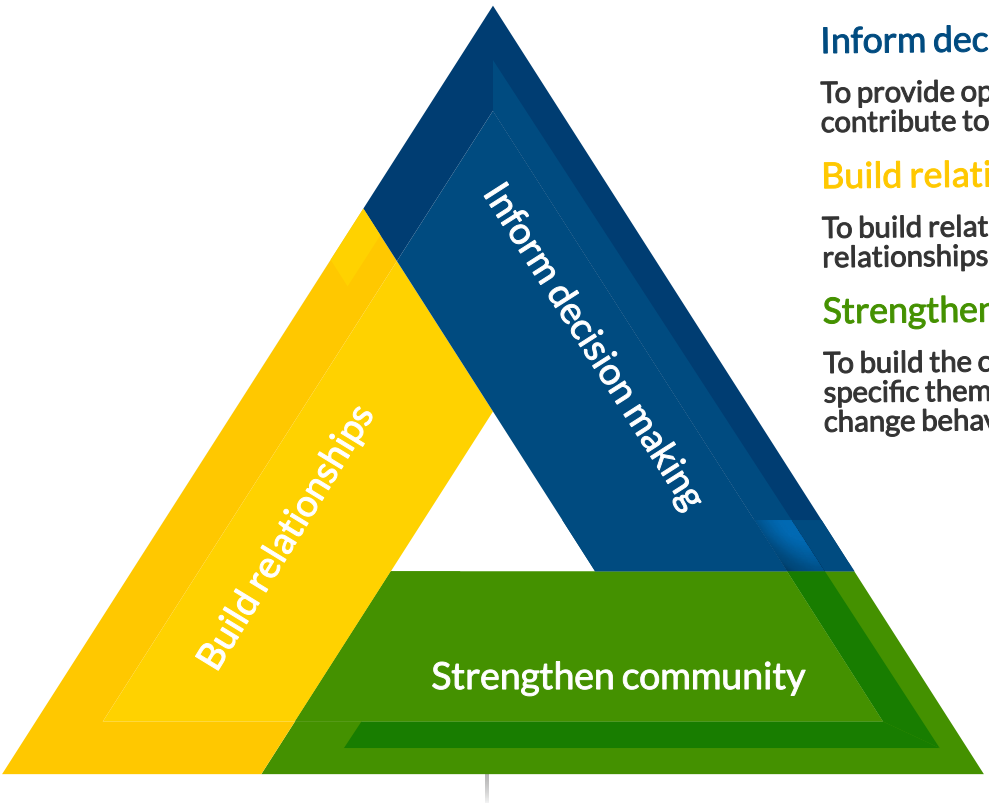
The Charter supports the Shire's vision of making Boddington a better place to live, work and visit. It provides a focus for all engagement activities, policies and processes to align with the Shire's values and objectives stated within the Council Plan.

The Shire will routinely consider the information, provision, and participation opportunities it will provide across all functions.

What is community engagement?

Community engagement is defined as the range of opportunities for public involvement in Council decision-making, relationship building and community strengthening. Community engagement is achieved when the community is and feels part of a process.

Some community engagement processes are carried out to help decision-making, while others are centred on relationship-building and community strengthening (or capacity building). Frequently engagement processes support two or all three of these objectives.



Inform decision making

To provide opportunities to the community to contribute to decision-making processes.

Build relationships

To build relationships and/or improve relationships with the opportunity.

Strengthen community

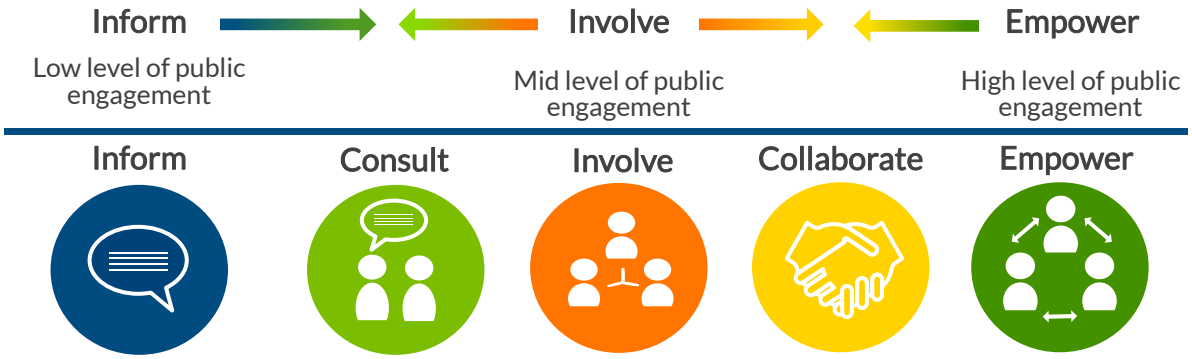
To build the capacity of the community on a specific theme or issue to increase knowledge or change behaviours.

The Shire of Boddington, key stakeholders and the wider community engage with each other at different levels along a spectrum of increasing involvement. The process of community engagement is a dynamic one which means there is likely to be movement back and forth through the different levels as an engagement process is implemented.

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) has developed the Public Participation Spectrum to demonstrate the possible types of engagement with stakeholders and communities.

The spectrum below has been adapted from IAP2, and shows the increasing level of community involvement from the 'inform' end of the spectrum through to the 'empower' end of the spectrum.

The table below identifies each of these five levels of engagement and clearly outlines the amount of involvement from both the Shire of Boddington and stakeholders/community within each level. The table also identifies the role of community members and/or stakeholders.



	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Goal	One way communication to provide balanced and objective information to assist understanding about something that is going to happen, or that has already happened.	Two-way communication process aimed at obtaining feedback on ideas, alternatives, and proposals to inform our decision making	Participatory process designed to help identify issues and views to ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood and considered.	Working together to develop an understanding of all issues and interests to work out alternatives and identify preferred collective solutions.	To build the capacity of the community to lead their own plans for change.
Role of community and/or stakeholders	Listen	Contribute	Participate	Partner	Lead
Examples when this engagement level may be appropriate.	In the event of an emergency.	Undertaking a survey on playground redevelopment.	Seeking input from the Shire of Boddington committees on initiatives.	Stakeholder led discussions on developing community vision key directions.	Building capacity skills of small business employees through skills-based training.
Possible methods	Advertisements, fact sheets, newsletters, public notices, social media, and websites.	Focus groups, public exhibitions and surveys.	Advisory committees, deliberate voting on options, and workshops.	Consensus building, participatory decision making and participant led workshops.	Facilitation of networks, practical skills workshops, and training events.

Our Commitment to the Community

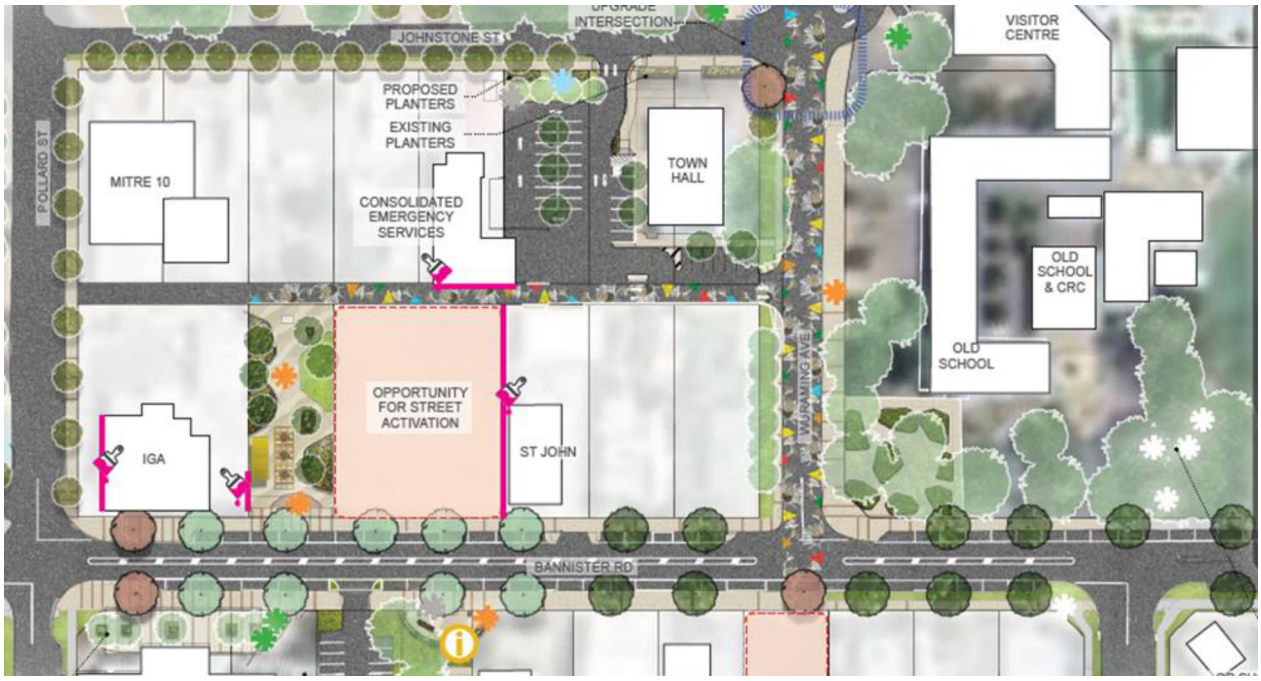
The Shire's Community Engagement Charter is built upon a set of commitments that guide the planning, development, implementation, evaluation and continuous improvement of community engagement processes undertaken by the Shire.

When engaging the community we will be open and accountable in our decision making process. The Shire commits to:

1. Ensuring that the purpose of our engagement is clear, relevant and the methods used are well suited to generate highly effective community engagement.
2. Providing information that is clear, easy to understand and accessible to all people.
3. Proactively engage with our community in an ethical manner using a range of methods and enable everyone to have a voice on matters of importance to them.
4. Providing engagement opportunities that are mutually respectful, undertaken in reasonable timeframes and with a shared understanding of how the input will inform decision making processes.
5. Valuing all participants' knowledge, expertise and experiences, acknowledging that everyone has different views and needs.
6. Undertaking evaluation processes to continually improve our approach to community engagement.
7. Reporting back to our community in a timely manner about how their input was considered and influenced the final outcome.
8. Use information provided by community engagement to advocate on behalf of our community to relevant parties.

Why we engage

Community engagement is a collaborative process that connects the Shire with the community in a mutually beneficial sharing of new ideas, skills, knowledge, expertise and experience.



Effective community engagement has real benefits for both the Shire and the community. Better identifying the priorities, needs and aspirations of our community assists the Shire to improve its strategic planning and service delivery. A regular two-way conversation ensures the Shire is transparent, accountable and informed in its decision making which will demonstrate integrity and build trust within the community.

Where appropriate, engagement should go above and beyond legislative requirements. The information and knowledge gained through hearing a range of community perspectives assists Council to make informed decisions; develop strong partnerships and create sustainable outcomes.

The community also benefit from participating in engagement activities. Participating in engagement on matters that impact them can create a sense of belonging and connection; increase community involvement; unite and empower individuals and communities; and lead to a greater community ownership and resilience.

The knowledge, expertise and experience gained also provides the Shire with a foundation to advocate to other relevant parties, including Federal and State Government bodies, on issues of community importance which are out of its direct control.

In summary there are a broad range of benefits to effective and authentic community engagement, both to the Shire and to the community.

Some of these benefits include:

1. Increasing community involvement and connections
2. Developing strong relationships and partnerships with our community, leading to a shared understanding of our community's needs, aspirations and priorities
3. Meeting legislative requirements
4. Providing a valuable source of evidence-based information which gives a wider perspective on issues and supports the Shire's future planning and service delivery activities
5. By supporting transparency and accountability, integrity is demonstrated and trust built between all parties
6. Ensuring the community's right to assist with democratic processes
7. Ensuring informed decision making occurs and issues are addressed
8. Helping to inform and assist with advocacy
9. Leading to more sustainable outcomes
10. Building community resilience and capacity leading to community empowerment

Who we engage

Boddington is a small and diverse community with individuals from all walks of life including a variety of interest groups. Because everyone has a role to play in our community, it is critical that our engagement techniques are accessible and broad in scope.

For the purpose of this charter:

- the Boddington community is defined as individuals or groups who live, work, play, visit, study, invest in or pass through Boddington. They could share a geographical location, characteristic, or interest.
- the term 'stakeholder' defines our community groups or individuals who are directly impacted by, involved with, or interested in, the Shire's decision-making, relationship building or community strengthening processes.

Each person within our community has the potential to be a stakeholder In the Shire's engagement activities.

"At the Shire of Boddington, we utilise community engagement techniques to help us improve the efficiency, validity, and transparency of our decision-making processes. By enabling people to participate in decision-making, the outcomes are more likely to be advantageous and long-lasting for our stakeholders and the Shire."

Julie Burton
CEO Shire of Boddington

In Boddington some of the stakeholder groups include:

- Arts and culture community
- Agriculture employees
- Boddington Shire employees
- Business and industry
- Carers
- Chamber of Commerce
- Children
- Community service providers
- Commuters
- Councillors
- Emergency services
- Environmental groups
- Families
- Government organisations
- Heritage groups
- Aboriginal community
- Lesbian. gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community
- Local Members of Parliament
- Media
- Neighbouring Shires or other local governments
- Not for profit organisations and groups
- Mining community
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- People with a disability
- Ratepayers
- Residents
- Schools, education facilities and students
- Seniors/senior groups
- Service groups
- Sporting, leisure and recreational clubs and groups
- Visitors to Boddington
- Volunteers/ volunteer organisations
- Young people.

When we engage

Community engagement should take place at the planning stage of any project or initiative, when a change in service, activities or infrastructure is considered, when an issue is raised and requires a decision or when more information or evidence is required. Engagement is likely to be undertaken at multiple stages within a project, program or development where information or evidence is required.

Circumstances that call for engagement activities

The Shire will promote opportunities for the community to actively participate in the following Shire processes:

- where a proposed change to Shire activities or strategic direction may significantly affect the community in terms of the economy, lifestyle, environment, wellbeing or amenity of the municipality
- when developing new or reviewing existing policies, strategies or plans
- introducing a new service, discontinuing an existing service or substantially changing or reviewing a service that may significantly affect how services are provided
- proposals for changing the way in which public space looks, is used or enjoyed
- the community raises an issue with the Shire for a decision (or outcome) and there are likely to be competing community interests
- planning and development of major projects and capital works, including public buildings, centres or other infrastructure
- development/redevelopment proposals, such as structure plans, that may significantly alter the existing amenity or characteristics of an geographic area
- any circumstance where the Shire needs more information or evidence to make an informed decision.

Mandatory engagement

While the Local Government Act 1995 and a range of other legislation set out minimum requirements for some specific consultations, each engagement process needs to be considered on its individual basis and merits. In many instances the Shire will go above and beyond the minimum requirements to gain a strong understanding of our community's wants and needs to ensure we are achieving the best possible outcomes for our community.

Some of these specific matters include:

- adopting the Council Plan
- making a local law
- changing the Shire's system of land valuations for council rates
- adopting the Annual Budget
- declaring a special rate or a special charge
- selling, exchanging or leasing land
- entering into a regional library agreement
- road closures
- making amendments to the Planning Scheme or deliberating on planning applications under the Planning and Development Act 2006.
- development of the Public Health Plan

The community engagement activities of the Shire of Boddington are certainly not limited to these matters.

Circumstances where the Shire's engagement with the community will be limited

There are times when the Shire's level of engagement with the community and key stakeholders will be limited. In certain circumstances, the Shire may only be able to inform the community and stakeholders of the Shire's decisions and actions.

Examples include when:

- an immediate resolution is required
- technical or other expertise is required
- an initiative involves confidential or commercial information
- there are clear and defined legislative responsibilities that must be met
- developing or reviewing internal policies and procedures
- the Shire is responding to an emergency
- there is a risk to public safety.

Influencing the Shire's decision making

Where decision making is the purpose of a community engagement process, it must be identified that the final decision rests with the Shire of Boddington.

Good governance is based on a belief that those impacted by a decision may have important contributions to make in a decision-making process. In planning a community engagement process, The Shire will determine at which levels they will engage and what corresponding commitment they will make to stakeholders and/or the community. This decision is likely to impact the nature and methods of engagement.

How we engage

There is no one-size fits all approach to community engagement activities.

A variety of methods will be required to cater for the different purposes of engagement as well as the broad range of groups and individuals in the community.

Plan

The planning stage is critical to ensuring a successful and authentic engagement process. During this stage we will understand, outline and gain agreement on:

- why are we engaging (purpose),
- what are we trying to achieve through the process (engagement objectives),
- how will results be used (engagement outcomes),
- who we want to engage with (stakeholder analysis)
- at what level do we wish to engage
- how we will engage (engagement methods)
- when do we wish to engage.

During this stage, it is also important to consider the monitoring and evaluation steps that will be embedded into the process.

Do

Those undertaking the community engagement activity will do so in a non judgemental and respectful way. They will follow the engagement principles as outlined in the 'Our Commitments' section. The following steps should be considered to ensure the activity is successful.

1. Decide on the most appropriate ways of informing the community/target group of the planned engagement activity.
2. Organise resources including who will conduct the engagement, and the organisation of venues and catering. It is also important to consider specific needs such as transport, childcare and translation services.
3. Invite previously identified stakeholders to participate in engagement activity.
4. Provide information to participants in jargon free, clear English. Use case studies or examples to assist with explaining the initiative. Provide translations if required.
5. Conduct the engagement activity.
6. Promptly provide any specific feedback for other areas of the Shire to ensure that urgent issues are dealt with according to our customer service charter.

Share

Following the engagement process we will report back to the community the results and outcomes of the engagement process. This will be done in a timely, accessible and informative manner so that participants understand how their involvement influenced the process, and therefore the outcome or decision.

If the engagement process is lengthy it is important that we regularly report on the project's development to ensure the community remain engaged.

Evaluate

Evaluation of the engagement process will be planned at the beginning of the project so we are aware of what the outcome will be measured against. Evaluation will be continuous so that the engagement process can be adjusted should an aspect not be working well. The engagement process will be reviewed at the end to ensure we understand what happened and why. We will reflect on what did and didn't work objectively and realistically then produce an evaluation report to share observations and recommendations.

Improve

We will take the lessons learnt throughout the project capturing them in an accessible format. Ideas for improvement of engagement will be shared across the organisation and and inform future versions of this charter and the Shire's broader engagement framework.

Example situations of how and when we engage

Community engagement should take place at the planning stage or any project or initiative; when a change in service is proposed; activities or infrastructure are being considered; when an issue is raised and requires a decision or when more information or evidence is required.

The trigger for 'when' we engage with the community may differ between projects and will depend on the complexity and nature of the project, however in most instances, community engagement is likely to be undertaken at multiple stages of the project.

When: Non-routine maintenance and small-scale renewal capital works (e.g. footpath replacement).

IPA2 engagement level: Inform

How

- We will take all reasonable steps to share information on activities and plans with relevant stakeholders so that they are advised of any upcoming works.
- We will also regularly communicate any key updates to ensure that relevant stakeholders **are informed throughout the works.**

Minimum consultation exhibition period: We will let relevant stakeholders know at least 14 days in advance of work.

When: New capital works and pace making (e.g. new or upgraded public space at a local centre).

IPA2 engagement level: Involve-collaborate

How

- We will seek to promote feedback opportunities widely and provide a range of opportunities/channels for the community to share their views
- We will involve the community to ensure priorities are reflected in the decision. Where possible, we will directly reflect community concerns and aspirations in the finalised plan.

Minimum consultation /exhibition period: 14 - 28 days

When: Council Plan (development and adoption)

IPA2 engagement level: **Collaborate**

How

- At a minimum, we will undertake a survey and community workshop
- We will also communicate updates and engagement opportunities through media to ensure that relevant stakeholders are informed and able to participate as much as they desire.

Minimum consultation /exhibition period: 30 days

How we communicate

We currently use a wide variety of tools to assist with how we communicate and engage with the community and are always on the lookout for new opportunities to keep our community informed.

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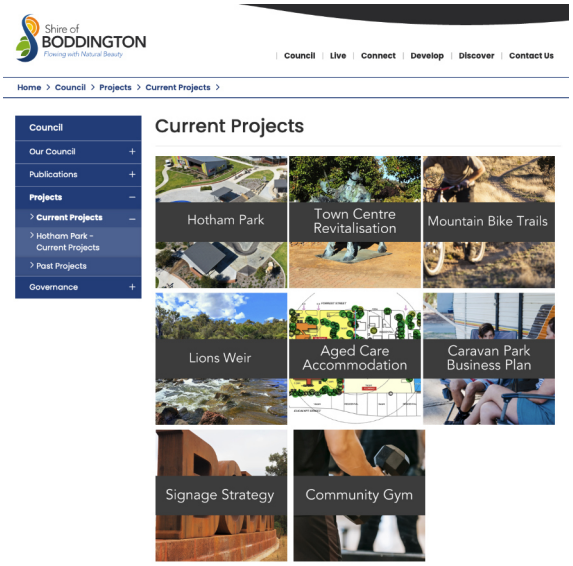
Some of the platforms and tools we currently use to engage include:

- Shire of Boddington website
- social Media: Facebook & Instagram
- print media: Bodd News, Peel Magazine, Narrogin Observer and other media outlets.
- fortnightly ENewsletter
- reference groups & workshops
- Council meetings
- surveys
- information boards (Shire office, Library, Youth Centre)
- letters & emails
- posters/flyers
- SMS alerts
- information displays
- events
- partnerships.



Responsibilities

Executive Leadership Team

The Executive Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring the consistent implementation of the Community Engagement Charter. Depending on the nature of an engagement project, 'approval' may be required at this level. Coordinators and senior management are also responsible for resourcing staff sufficiently to ensure effective community engagement and ensuring meaningful consideration of engagement outcomes is provided in the decision-making process.

Council

The Council plays a critical role in ensuring the needs of the local community are understood and met. They serve the community by actively listening to stakeholders and residents and representing those views in the decision-making process. Councillors are democratically elected representatives, the views and recommendations of Councillors are closely considered in all engagement projects.

Committees and reference groups

The Shire of Boddington hosts a number of committees and reference groups that are made up of staff, stakeholders, members of the community and Councillors. They advise on the views, needs and interests of the community. Some of the committees include:

- Cemetery Committee
- Local Emergency Management Committee

Consultants

The Shire may engage external consultants for particular projects where necessary. External Consultants are required to comply with all legislative requirements and this Charter when delivering engagement activities on behalf of the Shire of Boddington.

Not all projects impacting our community are led by and/or involve the Shire. When a third-party is delivering a project within the Shire of Boddington, the organisation who is managing the project is ultimately responsible for the engagement and associated outcomes. In this event, the Shire will seek to promote the engagement opportunity and strongly advocate on behalf of the interest of our community.

Glossary and document section

Glossary

Accessibility - the opportunity for all people to engage with activities in a manner that is equal.

Advocacy - public support for or recommendation of a particular cause.

Community - Includes individuals or groups who live, work, play, study, visit, invest in or pass through the municipality.

Community consultation - this is a form of community engagement that relates to the tools and practices used by the Shire to enable public involvement in decisions and actions that shape the community.

Community strengthening - community strengthening refers to a sustained effort of building cohesive and inclusive communities. This process aims to increase the connectedness, active engagement and partnership among members of the community, community groups and organisations in order to enhance social, economic and environmental wellbeing.

Deliberation - long and careful consideration or discussion.

Ethical - adherence to moral principles and conduct in undertaking a process or activity.

IAP2 - the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) is an international organisation advancing the practice of public participation. IAP2 supports people who implement or participate in public decision-making processes.

Plan - a plan outlines a detailed future course of action for Council aimed at achieving specific goals or objectives within a specific timeframe. A plan should identify roles and responsibilities along with resources that are required.

Responsible governance - effective processes for making and implementing decisions.

Charter - a charter provides high level holistic directions for Council designed to bring about a desired future, such as achievement of one or more goals or outcomes.

Related Documents

The following Shire of Boddington documents have been referenced in the composition of the Community Engagement Charter:

Council Plan 2022 - 2032
Annual Report 2021 - 2022
Customer Service Charter

Notes

Join our Facebook community for the latest news content. Find links to projects and have your say.

SOBoddington/

For the latest Shire news direct to your inbox subscribe to Community Connect.

Go to our website and scroll to the bottom of the page, then enter your email address and press subscribe. www.boddington.wa.gov.au.

If you require this document in larger print, please contact the Shire office.

Google Translate
https://translate.google.com

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