



City of  
Norwood  
Payneham  
& St Peters

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**NAME OF POLICY:** Community Consultation

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**POLICY MANUAL:** Governance

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## BACKGROUND

Section 50 of the *Local Government Act 1999*, requires that the Council must develop a Public Consultation Policy and specifies the minimum standards regarding community consultation. This is expressed both in terms of the activity (for example, changes to the basis of rating) and the type of consultation (for example, public notification in a newspaper and the calling of submissions).

Notwithstanding the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act), and other relevant legislation, the Council has a number of policies which require or may require consultation to be undertaken in certain circumstances.

The Council has identified that community engagement and consultation is important and indeed fundamental to its role and is committed to enhancing the methods and techniques which are used when engaging with the community across a broad range of issues. It is also recognised that the community is multi-dimensional and that different sections of the community respond better to certain methods of consultation and that appropriate structures are necessary to enable input by the community to be made.

## KEY PRINCIPLES

In shaping the Key Principles for this Policy, it is recognised that engagement and consultation is not an end in itself and that the purpose of consultation (in its broadest sense), is to provide structured or facilitated opportunities for the broad community, community interest groups and other viewpoints, to be taken into account.

Community consultation is designed to inform the decision making process, but does not involve making the decision as this rests with the Council. To this end, it is therefore not a substitute for the decision making role which forms part of the governance role of the Council.

The task of reconciling competing interests rests with the Council itself and in addition, it is important that the decisions of the Council do not alienate particular sections of the community.

The Community Consultation Policy is guided by the Council's Community Development Principles and the processes which contribute to the good governance of the City, as follows:

- *Equity – We promote equality of opportunity*
- *Access – We are committed to removing barriers to participation and improving access to services, facilities and programs*
- *Participation – We encourage active involvement in community life*
- *Inclusion – We value diversity*
- *Collaboration – We value a partnership approach to achieving shared goals*

Associated with the above Principles, is the adoption by this Council of the International Association for Public Participation's *Public Participation Spectrum*. (Refer to Attachment 1)

## **DISCUSSION**

Local Government as a level of government, is regarded as the closest and most accessible to the people. Whilst the decisions of the Federal and State Governments impact significantly on the community, it is the expectation of the community and indeed of Local Government, that the community can interact with its local council and make representations on issues which impact on them.

Local Government has a strong history of respecting the rights of its local citizens and has a number of processes which enable this to occur on a regular basis. These include Deputations to the Council, presentation of Petitions and Representation through Elected Members – the procedures for which are set out in *Code of Practice Access to Meetings & Documents*.

### **The Decision Making Process**

The Council is bound to make decisions that are equitable, economically, socially, culturally and environmentally appropriate, timely and in accordance with the relevant legislation.

Decisions are made, in keeping with legislative requirements, to determine:

- policies to be applied by the Council in exercising its discretionary powers;
- the type, range and scope of projects to be undertaken by Council;
- the resources which are to be made available to undertake such works and services.

Other factors are also taken into consideration when the Council is considering and ultimately making a decision on an issue. These include:

- the impact (cultural, social, economic, environmental, etc);
- any financial and resource implications for the Council.

In making decisions, the Council will have regard to a number of factors. In this respect an important factor which may be taken into account, is community opinion.

Communication between the community and the Council improves decision making and is valued by the Council, as it enables the Council to be responsive to the needs and aspirations of the local community.

Nevertheless, input derived as a result of community consultation needs to be considered in the decision making process together with a range of other factors to ensure that balanced and equitable decisions are made.

### **The Purpose of Communication, Engagement and Consultation**

Community engagement and consultation is an essential component of local governance, assisting the Council to govern in the knowledge that the directions have the support of the Community. Engagement and consultation is however, one component of a whole community involvement approach to governance. To ensure that engagement and consultation leads to greater information and improved decision-making processes, it needs to be undertaken in tandem with education and other partnership and communication programmes.

This Council believes that open communication, engagement and consultation with the community, will lead to community capacity building, the formation of partnerships and the development of better governance and is therefore committed to a policy and process of meaningful communication, engagement and consultation.

Community engagement and consultation is a way of supporting principles of social justice and:

- building partnerships with the community;
- providing people with a process to exercise their right to have access to information;
- providing people with the ability to contribute to and influence decisions that will affect them;

- ensuring that plans, actions and services reflect, where relevant, the aspirations of the community; and
- utilising community networks and resources.

### **Definitions and Nomenclature**

**"Communication"** - the act of imparting or exchanging news and information.

**"Community"** - for the purposes of this policy the term Community is used to include all residents, businesses and landowners and any other individual or organisation with an interest in the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters. Community is used in this Policy in place of the term "public".

**"Consultation"** - the act of seeking input and feedback on specified issues and matters affecting the City.

"Engagement" - 'Community engagement' is any process *'that involves the public in problem solving or decision making and uses public input to make decisions'*. *The International Association of Public Participation, (IAP2)*

**"The Act"** - for the purposes of this Policy, the Act refers to the *Local Government Act 1999*.

### **Provision of Information**

To ensure that the community is well informed about all matters pertaining to the City and Council business, the Council will provide a range of culturally and gender sensitive information.

The information may be provided and distributed in a range of forms including, but not limited to:

- the Council's Newsletter, *Look East*;
- commercial print media;
- fact sheets;
- brochures;
- the Council's Website;
- the Council's E-Newsletter, *Your NPSP*;
- the Council's digital marketing platforms (ie, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter);
- Library Noticeboards;
- via letterbox drops of various publications both generic and specific; and
- through public displays.

To supplement the requirements of Section 132 of the *Local Government Act 1999*, the Council has a philosophy of equity in respect to access to information and therefore, will provide information for inspection at its Principal Office, Libraries and on its web site, free of charge. This includes all information of a non-confidential nature including:

- advance notice of Council and Committee meetings and meeting schedules;
- Council Meeting Agendas;
- Council Minutes;
- notice of forums;
- matters for public consultation and any supporting documentation;
- Council Policies, Procedures and By-Laws;
- Development Plans;
- Infrastructure works and special projects;
- changes (eg: suburb names, new legislation etc.);
- Council registers; and
- other administrative information.

Section 132 of the Act enables the Council to charge for copies of information. However, to ensure that there is equity in access to Council information, copies of such information will generally be provided to citizens free of charge. In cases where the provision of the information incurs a significant cost to the Council, basic cost recovery charges will apply.

All information will be provided in a timely fashion and in accordance with copyright and privacy laws.

The Council will endeavour to make all information freely available and thereby reduce the need for formal applications under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991*. However, this Policy does not replace the requirements of the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* and therefore the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* will apply in those circumstances whereby information is not made freely available by the Council.

## **POLICY**

The City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters recognises that community consultation enables the Council to best meet the needs of the community, by ensuring that planning and decision making is based upon an understanding of the needs, aspirations and expectations of the community.

The objectives of effective community consultation are to:

- foster positive relations between the community and the Council;
- promote effective communication and consultation between the community and the Council;
- promote access and equity so that the community can participate in planning and decision-making processes;
- provide a framework for community involvement in City planning and decision making.
- enhance decision making – based on a comprehensive understanding of the needs, aspirations and expectations of the community;
- increase participation by citizens in the life and future directions of the City.

## **Options for Consultation**

There are a number of alternative methods of consultation recognised as providing the opportunity for people to have meaningful input into decision-making processes. The most appropriate process for consultation will be dependant largely on the topic or issue upon which consultation is occurring and consequently the “target market” with which the consultation will occur.

Accordingly the Council will develop specific consultation programs, with regard to the *International Association for Public Participation’s Public Participation Spectrum (IAP2)* (Refer to Attachment 1) for each specific matter upon which consultation is to occur.

It is important that the broadest cross section of the community can become involved. This requires the removal of any barriers that individuals or sections of the community may face in respect to becoming involved in the consultation process. Employing a number of varied relevant consultation techniques and providing information to the community to enable discussion on the issues, is important and leads to meaningful community input and can assist to overcome these barriers.

The consultation techniques may be drawn from, but are not limited to, the following list of options and any specific consultation program may include all or some of these techniques as judged appropriate for each specific topic:

- Invitation for submissions (written and verbal) to be placed in the local media and on the Council’s website. (The time for written submission will be no less than a minimum of 21 working days and may be extended subject to the complexity of the topic under consultation.)
- Letterbox drop (for example, individual letters or notices), to the community to notify of an issue.
- Public meetings/hearings/workshops and problem solving sessions.
- Focus groups.
- Questionnaires and surveys.

- The opportunity for interested persons to appear before the Council or a Committee of the Council in support of their comments.
- Publication of information brochures, booklets and papers.
- Dedicated issue based Forums.
- Information displays in public places.

All relevant documentation will be available for inspection free of charge at the Council's Principal Office, Libraries and on the Council's website.

### **Public Consultation - Provisions under the *Local Government Act 1999***

Pursuant to Section 50 of the *Local Government Act 1999*, each council must develop a Public Consultation Policy. This Policy must set out the steps that the council will follow in cases where the Act requires the council to follow its Public Consultation Policy.

Section 50(4) of the Act requires that the Public Consultation Policy must, as a minimum, provide for:

- the publication in a newspaper circulating within the area of the council a notice describing the matter under consideration and inviting interested persons to make submissions in relation to the matter within a period (which must be at least 21 days) stated in the notice; and
- the consideration by the council of any submissions made in response to the invitation.

In accordance with Section 50(5) of the Act, the Council may from time to time alter its Public Consultation Policy, or substitute a new Policy. However, prior to adopting, substituting or altering the Policy, the Act stipulates a consultation process, of documentation and public notification that must occur.

The Council is required to have reference to its Public Consultation Policy in regard to the following matters as contained in the *Local Government Act 1999*:

- Principal Office opening hours - Section 45(3);
- Code of Practice - Access to meetings and documents – Section 92;
- Rating – *Section 151*
- Community Land classification – Section 193(2);
- Community Land Revocation of classification –Section 194(2);
- Community Land Management Plans – Section 197(1);
- Community Land Amendment or Revocation of Management Plans – Section 198;
- Community Land Alienation by Lease or Licence – Section 202(2);
- Public Consultation – Section 223; and
- Trees – Section 232.

The Act also requires that specific consultation should be undertaken in respect to other detailed activities. In this respect, the Council will follow the requirements as set out in the relevant sections of the Act, namely:

- Representation Reviews - Section 12;
- Status of a Council and Change of Name - Section 13;
- Commercial activities prudential requirements - Sections 48(2)(d), 48(5), 48(6);
- Strategic Management Plans – Section 122(6);
- Passing By-Laws – Section 249; and
- Policies on Orders – Section 259.

The document, *Schedule of Requirements – Instances Where Public Consultation Must Be Followed*, provides a summary of the legislative requirements associated with the items listed above. (Refer to Attachment 2).

## **Additional matters for which the Council may undertake consultation in accordance with this Policy**

In addition to the matters which are set out in the Act, the Council may choose to follow this Policy in regard to other matters. Without limiting the extent of the operation of this Policy, other situations may include:

- major development programmes;
- the provision of services and facilities;
- significant planning initiatives (strategic, corporate and local area);
- physical infrastructure;
- traffic management; and
- proposals for significant change.

This Policy may also be used to supplement specific public consultation requirements as required by statute.

Any decision to undertake consultation in this regard, is at the discretion of the Council.

This Policy does not apply in respect to Development Applications which are lodged, assessed and determined under the *Development Act 1993*.

## **Reporting on Community Consultation**

At the conclusion of the decision-making process, and dependent on the nature of the consultation, the number of submissions received and the complexity of the matter, a Council response to the consultation may be provided, at the discretion of the Council, via one or more of the following methods:

- a letter/or email to all citizens who provided comments as part of the consultation; and/or
- a letter/or email to all affected citizens; and/or
- a notice published on the Council's website; and/or
- a notice published via the Council's digital marketing platforms (ie, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter); and/or
- a notice published in a newspaper circulating within the area.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: *International Association Public Participation's (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum.*

Attachment 2: *Schedule of Requirements – Instances Where Public Consultation Must Be Followed*

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

The Council will review this Policy within 12 months of the next Local Government General Elections to be conducted in November 2022. The Council does, however, have the ability to review this Policy and to amend or replace it at any time.

## **INFORMATION**

The contact officer for further information at the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters is the Council's General Manager, Governance & Community Affairs.

## **ADOPTION OF THE POLICY**

This Policy was adopted by the Strategy & Policy Committee on 8 April 2002.

This Policy was reviewed by the Council on 6 November 2006.

This Policy was reviewed by the Council on 13 October 2008.

This Policy was reviewed by the Council on 4 March 2019.

This Policy was reviewed by the Council on 1 March 2021.

## **TO BE REVIEWED**

By November 2023

## Attachment 1

# IAP2'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM



The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public's role in any public participation process. The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

		INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 				
		INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
	PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for 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.

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## Attachment 2

### COMMUNITY CONSULTATION POLICY

#### SCHEDULE OF REQUIREMENTS - INSTANCES WHERE THE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION POLICY MUST BE FOLLOWED

Section 50 of the *Local Government Act 1999*, stipulates the **minimum** consultation requirements of a council in the following instances:

- (a) the publication in a newspaper circulating within the area of the Council a notice describing the matter under consideration and inviting interested persons to make submissions in relation to the matter within a period (which must be at least 21 days) stated in the notice; and
- (b) the consideration by the council of any submissions made in response to an invitation.

**NB:** *Council should always refer directly to the relevant Section of the Act before determining the appropriate consultation requirements.*

TOPIC	SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT
<b>Principal Office – Opening hours</b> (Section 45)	Consult in accordance with Council's Community Consultation Policy about the manner, places and times at which its Offices will be open to the public for the transaction of business and about any significant changes to these arrangements.
<b>Code of Practice – Access to meetings and documents</b> (Section 92(5)(b))	Before a council adopts, alters or substitutes a Code of Practice under S.92 it must follow steps set out in its public consultation policy.
<b>Community Land Classification:</b> All local government land (except roads) that is owned, or under care, control and management of Council is to be classified as community land unless Council resolves to exclude it from classification within 3 years of the commencement of the Act. (Section 193(1), (2))	Before a council excludes land from classification as Community Land (within three (3) years after commencement of the Act), it must follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy.
<b>Revocation of classification of land as community land</b> (Section 194(2))	A Council must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy before revoking the classification of land as community land</li><li>• submit a proposal with a report on all submissions made as part of the public consultation process to the Minister.</li></ul>

## Attachment 2

TOPIC	SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT
<b>Management Plans - Public Consultation</b> (Section 197(1))	Before a council adopts a management plan for Community Land it must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make copies of the proposed plan available for inspection or purchase at the Council's Principal Office</li> <li>• follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy</li> <li>• give public notice of its adoption of a management plan.</li> </ul> <p>If a council has adopted a management plan after a process of public notification and consultation before the commencement of the Act, S197 (1) does not apply.</p>
<b>Amendment or revocation of management plans</b>  NB: A Council cannot dispose of Community Land until revocation of its classification as community land. (Section 198)	Public consultation is required for a new management plan and is to be carried out prior to adopting a proposal for amendment or revocation of a management plan. <p>Public consultation is not required if the amendment has no significant impact on the interests of the community.</p>
<b>Alienation by lease or licence</b> (Section 202)	A council must follow the relevant steps set out in its Community Consultation Policy, prior to granting a lease or licence relating to Community Land. Exceptions apply in circumstances where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lease or licence is authorised in an approved management plan and the term is five (5) years or less; and</li> <li>• regulations provide for an exemption for compliance with a Community Consultation Policy.</li> </ul>
<b>Permits</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right of exclusive occupation</li> <li>• Restricting access to a road</li> <li>• Use or activity for which public consultation required under regulations</li> </ul> (Section 223)	A council must follow the relevant steps set out in its Community Consultation Policy prior to granting the authorisation or permit.
<b>Roads – Trees</b> (Section 232)	Before planting or authorising planting of vegetation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the vegetation may have a significant impact on residents, the proprietors of nearby businesses or advertisers in the area, councils must follow the relevant steps set out in its Community Consultation Policy.</li> </ul>

## Attachment 2

TOPIC	SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT
<p><b>Representation Reviews.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review and reporting to the Electoral Commissioner</b> (Section 12)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public notice of a review inviting written submissions within six (6) weeks, including notice in a newspaper circulating within its area</li> <li>• Provide opportunity for person who makes written submission to appear before the Council or a Council Committee to be heard on submissions</li> <li>• Council to prepare report on the public consultation</li> <li>• By public notice inform of the completion and availability of the report for inspection and invite written submissions within 3 weeks, including notice in a newspaper circulating within its area</li> <li>• Provide opportunity for person who makes written submission to appear before Council or a Council committee to be heard on submissions</li> <li>• Council must then finalise its report and refer to the Electoral Commissioner.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Status of a Council/ Change of Name</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Change from a municipal council to a district council, or change from a district council to a municipal council</b></li> <li>• <b>Alter the name of the council, the area of the council, or the name of a ward.</b> (Section 13)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public notice of the proposal inviting written submissions within 6 weeks, including notice in a newspaper circulating within its area</li> <li>• Provide opportunity for person who makes written submission to appear before Council or a Council committee to be heard on submissions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Commercial Activities – Prudential Requirements</b> (Section 48(2)(d) &amp; 48(5)(6))</p>	<p>Report addressing prudential issues to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the level of consultation with the local community, including contact with persons who may be affected by the project and representations made by them</li> <li>• the means by which the community can influence or contribute to the project or its outcomes.</li> </ul>

## Attachment 2

TOPIC	SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT
<b>Public Consultation Policies</b> (Section 50)	<p>Requirements for preparation, adoption and alteration to Council's public consultation policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policy must set out steps that Council will follow in cases where the Act prescribes public consultation</li><li>• Policy may also set out steps to follow in other cases involving council decision making</li><li>• Steps may vary, but must provide for a reasonable opportunity to make submissions in relevant circumstances</li><li>• Section 50 (4) sets out minimum steps which require Councils to:</li><li>• publish notice describing the matter under consideration in a newspaper circulating within the area, and inviting submissions within stated period (at least 21 days)</li><li>• consider submissions made in response.</li><li>• Section 50 (40) applies before Council adopts, substitutes and/or alters a public consultation policy, unless the alteration is only of minor significance.</li><li>• Council's public consultation policy is to be made available for inspection without charge at the principal office during ordinary office hours, and for purchase on payment of a fixed fee by Council.</li></ul>
<b>Strategic Management Plans</b> (Section 122(6))	<p>A council must adopt a process or processes to ensure that members of the public are given a reasonable opportunity to be involved in the development and review of its strategic management plans (Plans for between 3 – 5 years).</p>
<b>Annual Business Plans and Budget</b> (Section 123(4))	<p>Before Council adopts an Annual Business Plan, it must: Publicise in a newspaper circulating within the area of the council a notice informing the public of the preparation of the draft annual business plan and inviting interested persons—</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) to attend<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. a public meeting in relation to the matter to be held on a date (which must be at least 21 days after the publication of the notice) stated in the notice; or</li><li>b. a meeting of the Council to be held on a date stated in the notice at which members of the public may ask questions, and make submissions, in relation to the matter for a period of at least 1 hour</li></ol></li><li>(2) to make written submissions in relation to the matter within a period (which must be at least 21 days) stated in the notice</li></ol> <p>The Council must make arrangements for the meeting outlined in (1) and the consideration by the Council of any submissions made at that meeting or in response to the invitation outlined in (2). Council may then adopt its annual business plan after considering submissions made during the consultation period.</p> <p>The council must ensure that copies of the report are available at the meeting, and for inspection (without charge) and purchase (on payment of a fee fixed by the council) at the principal office of the council at least seven days before the date of that meeting.</p>

## Attachment 2

TOPIC	SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT
<p><b>Rates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Amending the basis of rating</b></li> <li>• <b>Amending the basis of the valuation of land for rating</b></li> <li>• <b>Introducing a new rate</b></li> <li>• <b>Changes to the basis of differential rating</b></li> </ul> <p>(Sections 151 &amp; 156)</p>	<p>Prepare a report on the proposed change.</p> <p>Publicise in a newspaper circulating within the area of the council a notice describing the proposed change, informing the public of the preparation of the report, and inviting interested persons—</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) to attend a public meeting in relation to the matter to be held on a date (which must be at least 21 days after the publication of the notice) stated in the notice; or</li> <li>(2) to make written submissions in relation to the matter within a period (which must be at least 21 days) stated in the notice</li> </ol> <p>The council must ensure that copies of the report are available at the meeting, and for inspection (without charge) and purchase (on payment of a fee fixed by the council) at the principal office of the council at least 21 days before the date of that meeting. The public consultation required may be undertaken as part of the public consultation for Council’s draft annual business plan.</p>
<p><b>Passing by-laws</b></p> <p><b>NB: No specific reference to Council’s Public Consultation Policy, but minimum standards apply</b></p> <p>(Section 249)</p>	<p>At least 21 days before resolving to make a by-law, the Council must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make copies of the proposed by-law (and other code, standard or other document proposed to be applied or incorporated by the by-law) available for public inspection</li> <li>• inform the public of the proposed by-law and set out the terms or describe in general terms the nature and effect of the by-law, through a notice in a newspaper circulating in the City of Norwood Payneham &amp; St Peters</li> <li>• give reasonable consideration to a written or other acceptable submission made on a proposed by-law</li> </ul> <p>Publish a notice of the making of a by-law in a newspaper circulating in the City of Norwood Payneham &amp; St Peters.</p>
<p><b>Power to Make Orders</b></p> <p><b>Councils must take reasonable steps to prepare and adopt policies relating to power to make orders.</b></p> <p>(Section 259(2))</p>	<p>The Council must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prepare a draft of a policy</li> <li>• by notice in a newspaper circulating in the City of Norwood Payneham &amp; St Peters, advise where the draft is available for inspection (without charge) or purchase (on payment of a fee fixed by Council), and invite written representations on the draft with a period specified by the Council (at least four weeks)</li> <li>• consider any submission made in response to the invitation.</li> </ul> <p>The requirements of Section 259 (2) of the <i>Local Government Act 1999</i> apply prior to the Council adopting an amendment to a policy, unless Council determines that the amendment is of only minor significance.</p>