



ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

NOTICE OF MEETING

To: Mayor Nathan Daniell

Councillor Kirrilee Boyd
Councillor Adrian Cheater
Councillor Chris Grant
Councillor Malcolm Herrmann
Councillor Lucy Huxter
Councillor Leith Mudge
Councillor Mark Osterstock
Councillor Kirsty Parkin
Councillor Alex Trescowthick
Councillor Lisa Clare Woolcock
Councillor Richard Gladigau
Councillor Georgia McDonnell

Notice is given pursuant to the provisions under Section 83 of the *Local Government Act 1999* that the next meeting of the Council will be held on:

Tuesday 9 June 2026
6.30pm
36 Nairne Road, Woodside

A copy of the Agenda for this meeting is supplied under Section 83 of the Act.

Meetings of the Council are open to the public and members of the community are welcome to attend. Public notice of the Agenda for this meeting is supplied under Section 84 of the Act.

Greg Georgopoulos
Chief Executive Officer



ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

AGENDA FOR MEETING
Tuesday 9 June 2026
6.30pm
36 Nairne Road, Woodside

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. COMMENCEMENT

2. OPENING STATEMENT

2.1. *Acknowledgement of Country*

Council acknowledges that we meet on the traditional Country of the Peramangk and Kurna people. We pay our respects to Ancestors and Elders past and present as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land.

2.2. Together we will care for this place for the generations to come and in this context the decisions we make should be guided by the principle that nothing we do should decrease our children's ability to live on this land.

3. APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

3.1. Apology

3.2. Leave of Absence

Cr Adrian Cheater – 5 June 2026 to 11 June 2026 -approved 26 May 2026

Cr Kirrilee Boyd – 5 June 2026 to 16 June 2026 – approved 26 May 2026

3.3. Absent

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Council Meeting – 26 May 2026

That the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 26 May 2026 as supplied, be confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

5. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

6. MAYOR'S OPENING REMARKS

7. QUESTIONS ADJOURNED/LYING ON THE TABLE

- 7.1. Questions Adjourned
- 7.1.1. Advertising and Promotion of Oil and Gas Companies (see item 11.1)
- 7.2. Questions Lying on the Table
Nil

8. PETITIONS / DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC FORUM

- 8.1. Petitions
Nil
- 8.2. Deputations
Nil
- 8.3. Public Forum

9. PRESENTATIONS (by exception)

Nil

10. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

11. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

11.1 Advertising and promotion of oil and gas companies (Cr Chris Grant)
(adjourned on 9 February 2026)

1. *Council reaffirms its long-standing commitment to sports in the Adelaide Hills, in particular the Tour Down Under;*
2. *Notwithstanding (1), Council rescinds decision 214/25 which explicitly supports the Santos Tour Down Under;*
3. *Council will no longer permit or participate in the advertising or promotion of any company whose main business is the extraction or sale of coal, oil and gas, including advertising or promotion of any event that promotes such a company (including through naming rights)*
 - a. *on any Council owned or controlled property;*
 - b. *on its website or other communications and*
 - c. *(c) in any other area within its control,*

unless it is legally required to do so;

4. *Council will not accept sponsorship from companies whose main business is the extraction or sale of coal, oil or gas, or hold or promote, or allow to be held or promoted, events sponsored by such companies where Council has the authority to do so;*
5. *That all relevant Council policies be reviewed and updated to reflect this policy position, including but not confined to the Festivals and Events Policy; and*

6. *That Council communicates this policy position via its usual means including, but not limited to, its website and Hills Voice, and inform relevant stakeholders including, but not limited to, local Federal and State Members of Parliament and any event organisers who may be affected.*

12. ADMINISTRATION REPORTS – DECISION ITEMS

12.1. Draft Annual Business Plan and Budget for Consultation.

1. *That the Annual Business Plan 2025-26 Draft for Consultation report be received and noted.*
2. *To endorse the draft Annual Business Plan 2026-27 (ABP) as contained in Appendix 1 for community consultation in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1999, which includes a budget with an average residential rate rise of 7.6%.*
3. *That the CEO be authorised to:*
 - a. *Make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the ABP prior to being released for public consultation and*
 - b. *Determine the consultation timings, media and processes while ensuring consistency and compliance with the provisions of applicable legislation and Council's Public Consultation Policy.*

12.2. Community Engagement Framework

1. *That the Community Engagement Framework report be received and noted.*
2. *To note the Community Engagement Outcomes Report for Phase 2 of community engagement (Appendix 3).*
3. *To adopt the revised draft Community Engagement Framework, in Appendix 1, with an effective date of 10 June 2026.*
4. *To authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the proposed framework.*

12.3. Community Engagement Policy

1. *That the Community Engagement Policy report be received and noted.*
2. *To note the Community Engagement Outcomes Report (Appendix 3).*
3. *To adopt the revised Community Engagement Policy, in Appendix 1, with an effective date of 9 September 2026.*
4. *To authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the proposed policy.*

12.4. Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030

1. *That the report be received and noted.*
2. *To note the DAIP Community Engagement Outcomes Report for Phase 2 of community engagement (Appendix 2).*
3. *To endorse the AHC Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030 (Appendix 1).*
4. *To note that the endorsed AHC Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030 (the DAIP) will be submitted to the Department of Human Services (DHS) and be published on the DHS and AHC websites, alongside an Easy Read version (Appendix 3).*
5. *To authorise the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the DAIP.*

12.5. Caretaker Policy

1. *That the report be received and noted.*
2. *With an effective date of 16 June 2026, to revoke the current Caretaker Policy and to approve the proposed draft Caretaker Policy, as per Appendix 2.*
3. *To hold at least one candidate public meeting, as per section 91B of the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999, and as contained in the proposed draft Caretaker Policy, as per Appendix 2.*
4. *That during the election caretaker period, the frequency of ordinary Council meetings be reduced from two (2) meetings per month to one (1) meeting per month.*
5. *That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the draft Caretaker Policy.*

12.6. Election Signage Policy

1. *That the report be received and noted.*
2. *With an effective date of 16 June 2026, to approve the draft Election Signs Policy, as per Appendix 1.*
3. *That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the draft Election Signs Policy.*

12.7. Southern and Hills Local Government Association – Audit Committee Exemption Application

1. *That the report be received and noted.*
2. *To endorse the Southern and Hills Local Government Association applying to the Minister for an exemption, for a period of up to five (5) years, from the requirement to establish an Audit Committee, pursuant to Regulation 18 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011.*
3. *That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to provide written confirmation of this resolution to the Southern and Hills Local Government Association in support of its application.*

13. ADMINISTRATION REPORTS – INFORMATION ITEMS

13.1. Response to ESCOSA – Local Government Advice 2026-27 to 2029-30: Draft Framework and Approach

1. *That the response to ESCOSA – Local Government Advice 2026-27 to 2029-30: Draft framework and Approach report be received and noted.*

13.2. Integrated Planning Program

1. *That the Integrated Planning Program – Engagement Approach to Support Goal 3 Priorities report be received and noted.*
2. *That Council note and support the use of structured community engagement as a core delivery tool for the development and integration of Strategic Plan Goal 3 initiatives, noting that engagement outputs provide input to, but do not replace, formal Council decision-making.*
3. *That Council note the proposed Phase 1 engagement led delivery activities and timing, and acknowledge that subsequent phases will be progressed through integrated quarterly gateways and Council workshops in accordance with the program governance structure.*

14. CORRESPONDENCE FOR NOTING

Nil

15. QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

16. MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

17. REPORTS

17.1. Council Member Function or Activity on the Business of Council

17.2. Reports of Members/Officers as Council Representatives on External Organisations

17.3. CEO Report

18. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

18.1. Council Assessment Panel – 13 May

18.2. Audit and Risk Committee
Nil

18.3. CEO Performance Review Panel - 27 May 2026

That the minutes of the special meeting held on 27 May 2026 as supplied, be confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

18.4. Boundary Change Committee
Nil

19. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Nil

20. NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 23 June 2026, 6.30pm, 36 Nairne Road, Woodside

21. CLOSE MEETING

Council Meetings, Information and Briefing Sessions, CAP and Committee Meetings for 2026

DATE	TYPE	LOCATION	MINUTE TAKER
JANUARY 2026			
Tuesday 27 January	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Skye Ludzay
Wednesday 28 January	CEO PRP	Stirling	Zoë Gill
FEBRUARY 2026			
Monday 2 February	Workshop	Woodside	N/A
Tuesday 10 February	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Lauren Jak
Wednesday 11 February	CAP	Stirling	TBA
Monday 16 February	Audit and Risk Committee	Stirling	Lauren Jak
Tuesday 17 February	Professional Development	Stirling	N/A
Monday 23 February	Workshop	Stirling	N/A
Tuesday 24 February	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Skye Ludzay
MARCH 2026			
Monday 2 March	Workshop	Woodside	N/A
Tuesday 10 March	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Skye Ludzay
Wednesday 11 March	CAP	Stirling	TBA
Tuesday 17 March	Professional Development	Stirling	N/A
Tuesday 24 March	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Georgie McKeon
Saturday 28 March	Workshop	Stirling	N/A
APRIL 2026			
Tuesday 7 April (Due to public holiday on Monday 6)	Workshop	Woodside	N/A
Tuesday 14 April	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Georgie McKeon
Wednesday 8 April	CAP	Stirling	TBA
Monday 20 April	Audit and Risk Committee	Stirling	Lauren Jak
Tuesday 21 April	Professional Development	Stirling	N/A
Wednesday 22 April	CEO PRP	Stirling	Zoë Gill
Tuesday 28 April	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Skye Ludzay
MAY 2026			
Monday 4 May	Workshop	Woodside	N/A
Tuesday 12 May	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Skye Ludzay
Wednesday 13 May	CAP	Stirling	TBA
Monday 18 May	Workshop	Stirling	Zoë Gill
Tuesday 19 May	Professional Development	Stirling	N/A
Wednesday 20 May	CEO PROP	Stirling	TBA
Tuesday 26 May	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Georgie McKeon
JUNE 2026			
Monday 1 June	Workshop	Woodside	N/A
Tuesday 9 June	Ordinary Council	Woodside	Georgie McKeon
Wednesday 10 June	CAP		TBA
Tuesday 16 June	Professional Development	TBC	N/A
Wednesday 17 June	Audit and Risk Committee	TBC	Georgie McKeon
Tuesday 23 June	Ordinary Council	Woodside	Skye Ludzay

Monday 29 June	CEO PRP	Stirling library community room	TBA
JULY 2026			
Monday 6 July	Workshop	Woodside	N/A
Wednesday 8 July	CAP	Stirling	TBA
Tuesday 14 July	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Skye Ludzay
Wednesday 15 July	CEO PRP	Stirling	TBA
Tuesday 21 July	Professional Development	Stirling	N/A
Tuesday 28 July	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Georgie Mckeon
AUGUST 2026			
Monday 3 August	Workshop	Woodside	N/A
Tuesday 11 August	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Skye Ludzay
Wednesday 12 August	CAP	Stirling	TBA
Monday 17 August	Audit and Risk Committee	Stirling	TBA
Tuesday 18 August	Professional Development	Stirling	N/A
Tuesday 25 August	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Georgie Mckeon
SEPTEMBER 2026			
Monday 7 September	Workshop	Woodside	N/A
Tuesday 8 September	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Skye Ludzay
Wednesday 9 September	CAP	Stirling	TBA
Tuesday 15 September	Professional Development	Stirling	N/A
Tuesday 22 September	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Georgie Mckeon
OCTOBER 2026			
Tuesday 6 October (Public Holiday)	Workshop	Woodside	N/A
Tuesday 13 October	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Skye Ludzay
Wednesday 14 October	CAP	Stirling	TBA
Monday 19 October	Audit and Risk Committee	Stirling	TBA
Tuesday 20 October	Professional Development	Stirling	N/A
Wednesday 21 October	CEO PRP	Stirling	TBA
Tuesday 27 October	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Georgie Mckeon
NOVEMBER 2026			
Monday 2 November	Workshop	Woodside	N/A
Tuesday 10 November	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Skye Ludzay
Monday 16 November	Audit and Risk Committee	Stirling	TBA
Tuesday 17 November	Professional Development	Stirling	N/A
Tuesday 24 November	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Georgie Mckeon
DECEMBER 2026			
Monday 7 December	Workshop	Woodside	N/A
Tuesday 8 December	Ordinary Council	Stirling	Skye Ludzay
Wednesday 9 December	CAP	Stirling	N/A

Meetings are subject to change, please check agendas for times and venues. All meetings (except Council Member Professional Development) are open to the public.

Community Forums 2026

6.00 for 6.30pm

(dates and venues to be confirmed)

DATE	LOCATION
30 June 2026	Mylor Community Forum
24 August 2026	Birdwood Community Forum

Council Member Attendance 2026

Information or Briefing Sessions

Meeting Date	Cr Kirrilee Boyd	Cr Adrian Cheater	Cr Nathan Daniell	Cr Richard Gladigau	Cr Chris Grant	Cr Malcolm Herrmann	Cr Lucy Huxter	Cr Leith Mudge	Cr Mark Osterstock	Cr Kirsty Parkin	Cr Alex Trescowthick	Cr Lisa Woolcock	Cr Georgia McDonnell
2 Feb 2026	F	P	F	F	AP	F	AP	F	AP	LOA	F	F	
17 Feb 2026	F	P	F	F	F	F	F	F	A	LOA	F	F	
23 Feb 2026	A	F	P	F	LOA	P	P	F	F	LOA	F	A	
2 Mar 2026	F	F	F	F	LOA	F	AP	F	A	LOA	F	P	
10 March 2026	A	LOA	F	F	LOA	F	F	F	P	F	F	AP	
17 March 2026	F	P	F	F	F	AP	P	F	AP	F	F	P	
28 March 2026	F	P	F	F	F	F	P	F	AP	F	F	P	
7 April 2026	F	P	F	F	F	P	AP	F	AP	F	F	P	
21 April 2026	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
4 May 2026	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	P	F	F	P	F
18 May 2026	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	AP	A	F	P	F
19 May 2026	F	F	F	F	F	F	AP	F	AP	F	F	AP	F
1 June 2026	F	F	F	F	F	F	A	F	A	F	F	AP	F

Council Member Attendance 2026

Council Meetings (including Special Council Meetings)

Meeting Date	Cr Kirrilee Boyd	Cr Adrian Cheater	Cr Nathan Daniell	Cr Richard Gladigau	Cr Chris Grant	Cr Malcolm Herrmann	Cr Lucy Huxter	Cr Leith Mudge	Cr Mark Osterstock	Cr Kirsty Parkin	Cr Alex Trescowthick	Cr Lisa Woolcock	Cr Georgia McDonnell
27 Jan 2026	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	
10 Feb 2026	F	AP	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	AP	F	F	
24 Feb 2026	F	F	F	F	LOA	F	F	F	F	LOA	F	F	
10 Mar 2026	F	LOA	F	F	LOA	F	F	F	F	F	F	AP	
24 Mar 2026	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	AP	F	F	
14 April 2026	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	AP	F	F	F
28 April 2026	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	LOA
6 May 2026	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
12 May 2026	F	F	F	F	F	F	AP	F	F	F	F	AP	F
26 May 2026	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	AP	F	F	F	F	F

Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form

CONFLICTS MUST BE DECLARED VERBALLY DURING MEETINGS

Date: _____

Meeting Name (please tick one)

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Ordinary Council | <input type="checkbox"/> | Audit Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Special Council | <input type="checkbox"/> | Boundary Change Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| CEO Performance Review Panel | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Item No

Item Name:

(Only one conflict of interest entry per form)

I, Mayor / Cr _____ have identified a conflict of interest as:

GENERAL

MATERIAL

GENERAL

In considering a General Conflict of Interest (COI), an impartial, fair-minded person might consider that the Council Member's private interests might result in the Member acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty.

MATERIAL

In considering a Material Conflict of Interest (COI), a member of a council has a material conflict of interest in a matter to be discussed at a meeting of the council if a class of persons as defined in s75(1)(a-l) in the Act would gain a benefit, or suffer a loss, (whether directly or indirectly and whether of a personal or pecuniary nature) depending on the outcome of the consideration of the matter at the meeting.

The nature of my conflict of interest is as follows:

(Describe the nature of the interest, including whether the interest is direct or indirect and personal or pecuniary)

I intend to deal with my conflict of interest in the following transparent and accountable way:

- I intend to **stay** in the meeting (please complete details below)
- I intend to **stay** in the meeting as exempt under s75A (please complete details below)
- I intend to **leave** the meeting (*mandatory if you intend to declare a Material conflict of interest*)

The reason I intend to stay in the meeting and consider this matter is as follows:

(This section must be completed and ensure sufficient detail is recorded of the specific circumstances of your interest.)

Office use only: Council Member voted FOR / AGAINST the motion.

8. DEPUTATIONS

For full details, see Code of Practice for Meeting Procedures on www.ahc.sa.gov.au

1. A request to make a deputation should be made by submitting a Deputation Request Form, (available on Council's website <http://www.ahc.sa.gov.au/> and at Service and Community Centres) to the CEO seven clear days prior to the Council meeting for inclusion in the agenda.
2. Each deputation is to be no longer than ten (10) minutes, excluding questions from Members.
3. Deputations will be limited to a maximum of two per meeting.
4. In determining whether a deputation is allowed, the following considerations will be taken into account:
 - the number of deputations that have already been granted for the meeting
 - the subject matter of the proposed deputation
 - relevance to the Council agenda nominated – and if not, relevance to the Council's powers or purpose
 - the integrity of the request (i.e. whether it is considered to be frivolous and/or vexatious)
 - the size and extent of the agenda for the particular meeting and
 - the number of times the deputee has addressed Council (either in a deputation or public forum) on the subject matter or a similar subject matter.

8.3 PUBLIC FORUM

For full details, see Code of Practice for Meeting Procedures on www.ahc.sa.gov.au

1. The public may be permitted to address or ask questions of the Council on a relevant and/or timely topic.
2. The Presiding Member will determine if an answer is to be provided.
3. People wishing to speak in the public forum must advise the Presiding Member of their intention at the beginning of this section of the meeting.
4. Each presentation in the Public Forum is to be no longer than five (5) minutes (including questions), except with leave from the Council.
5. The total time allocation for the Public Forum will be ten (10) minutes, except with leave from the Council.
6. If a large number of presentations have been requested, with leave from the Council, the time allocation of five (5) minutes may be reduced.
7. Any comments that may amount to a criticism of individual Council Members or staff must not be made. As identified in the Deputation Conduct section above, the normal laws of defamation will apply to statements made during the Public Forum.
8. Members may ask questions of all persons appearing relating to the subject of their presentation.

**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 9 June 2026
AGENDA BUSINESS ITEM**

Item: 11.1

Originating from: Cr Chris Grant

Subject: MON - Advertising and Promotion of Oil and Gas Companies

1. MOTION

11. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

11.1 Advertising and Promotion of Oil and Gas Companies (Cr Chris Grant)

MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE

Having taken into account the Guiding Principles, the Mayor accepted the following Motion Without Notice.

Moved Cr Chris Grant
S/ Cr Kirrilee Boyd

I move that:

Adelaide Hills Council, having taken the position of declaring a climate emergency and engaging in initiatives to reduce carbon emissions, encourage renewable energy and recognise the need to ameliorate the impact of climate change on our community through extreme weather events, bushfires and drought, and recognising that the ongoing use of fossil fuels and opening up of new gas fields are drivers of the climate crisis, Council writes to the Premier of South Australia and the SA Minister for Environment, Climate and Water as follows:

24 February 2026

1. Commending the State Government for its continued support for the Tour Down Under as a major event that celebrates South Australia's regions, promotes active and healthy lifestyles, and contributes to tourism and the local economy;
2. Highlighting that climate science warns that January temperatures will continue rising and threaten the delivery of outdoor events such as the TDU unless urgent action is taken to reduce carbon pollution from the burning of coal, oil and gas. Already the impact of high January Temperatures has required the TDU to change the timing and length of certain stages;
3. Expressing concerns that it is deeply disappointing and ironic that SANTOS, a major fossil fuel company, holds naming rights to an event whose future viability is jeopardised by the climate crisis;
4. Requesting that the State Government incorporate sustainability and environmental responsibility criteria - including reducing carbon emissions - into the sponsorship evaluation process for all major State-supported events, aligning with South Australia's climate and net-zero emissions objectives; and
5. Offering Council's support in promoting and partnering on initiatives that highlight South Australia's leadership in sustainability and innovation through major events such as the Tour Down Under.

FORMAL MOTION

Moved Cr Malcolm Herrmann
S/- Cr Alex Trescowthick

45/26

Council resolves to adjourn item 11.1 until a workshop has been held by June 2026 on the item.

2. BACKGROUND

Fossil fuel sponsorship of sport is unethical because it sanitizes the reputation of those industries that are driving climate harm. It exploits sport's cultural power to delay necessary change.

Sport carries values people trust: fairness, teamwork and health. Fossil fuel companies want to be associated with those values to mask the damage their business causes. This is not neutral advertising; it's a deliberate strategy to soften public opposition and regulation. This is the same reason tobacco companies wanted to sponsor sport, and the same reason they were banned from sponsoring sport. The product conflicts with the values sport represents.

Sport promotes physical health, clean air, and safe environments. Fossil fuel combustion directly harms all three. Climate change increases heat stress, bushfires, floods, and extreme weather that already cancel events and endanger participants.

Fossil fuel sponsorship reduces climate action by normalising the industry. We know fossil fuel companies are not transitioning fast enough to align with climate science, and in many cases actively lobbying against action on climate change. Sponsorship implies social approval and stability at a time when rapid change is essential.

Sporting events reach children and teenagers before they have the tools to critically evaluate corporate messaging. Young people will live longest with the consequences of climate change. Using their heroes, teams, and competitions to promote fossil fuel brands is unfair and offers them little hope.

Sport has successfully replaced unethical sponsors before (e.g. tobacco, apartheid-era sponsors, unsafe betting practices). The question isn't whether sport needs money, it's whether any money at all should be acceptable. There are better alternatives available to sponsor leading sporting events, e.g. renewable energy, transport, tech, education, and health sectors could sponsor instead.

Adelaide Hills Council has a reputation as a clean, green and beautiful place. We owe it to our community to not use its reputation to greenwash fossil fuel companies.

1. OFFICER'S RESPONSE – Gary Lewis, Director of Corporate Services

The effect of the resolution would be to send a letter as outlined in the resolution to the Premier of South Australia and the SA Minister for Climate, Environment and Water. A draft letter has been prepared following a Council workshop on 18 May 2026 where Councillor's provide their input (**Appendix 1**).

➤ **Strategic Management Plan/Functional Strategy/Council Policy Alignment**

Strategic Plan 2024 – Your Place, Your Space

Goal 1 Natural Environment

Objective NE2 Support the community and business to decarbonise and transition to sustainable lifestyle practices (green communities).

The proposed resolution aligns with Goal 1 of the Strategic Plan.

➤ **Legal Implications**

Under the *Major Events Act 2013* Council may have legal obligations to support or promote some major events, including the Santos Tour Down Under. This resolution would not impact these obligations.

➤ **Risk Management Implications**

The resolution will assist in mitigating the risk of Council being seen to fail in showing leadership in the promotion of its Guiding Principles of Natural Environment, Climate Change and Sustainability.

Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Target Risk
Medium (2C)	Low (2D)	Low (2D)

On the other hand, if this motion was successful, there is a risk that the relationship with South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) may be impacted.

➤ **Financial and Resource Implications**

Not applicable.

➤ **Customer Service and Community/Cultural Implications**

Not applicable.

➤ **Sustainability Implications**

Not applicable.

➤ **Engagement/Consultation conducted in the development of the report**

Consultation on the development of this report was as follows:

<i>Council Committees:</i>	Not applicable.
<i>Council Workshops:</i>	Workshop 18 May 2026.
<i>Advisory Groups:</i>	Not applicable.
<i>External Agencies:</i>	Not applicable.
<i>Community:</i>	Not applicable.

➤ **Additional Analysis**

Council position on climate change

Council's *Strategic Plan 2024 – Your Place, Your Space* states a guiding principle on climate change as, *We are dedicated to reducing our impact upon climate change and seek to mitigate and adapt to its impact in line with our declaration of a climate emergency.* It also states a guiding principle on sustainability as, *We consider the environmental, economic, social and cultural implications of our decisions to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the Council and our community.*

The Plan includes under Goal 1, Natural Environment, an objective (NE2) to *Support the community and business to decarbonise and transition to sustainable lifestyle practices (green communities).*

In 2019 Council recognised a state of climate emergency requiring urgent action by all levels of government and reaffirmed Council's commitment to both mitigating against and adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change within Adelaide Hills Council.

Council stated in a media release on the declaration (29 March 2019) that "The decision reflects that Council is united in its intention to provide leadership for our community by mitigating against and adapting to the impacts of climate change." The release also stated that, "In asking Council members to endorse the motion, Cr Daniell felt it would send a message to our community that Council will not sit idly by. We should be leaders and play our role in addressing the impacts of climate change – a view wholehearted shared by his fellow Council members".

On 22 April 2025 Council unanimously carried a motion to adopt *Towards Zero Emissions – A Carbon Management Plan for the Adelaide Hills* (building upon the Corporate Carbon Management Plan 2019). The plan provides a pathway for Council's ongoing emissions reduction efforts with achievements already including:

- over 22 electric vehicles in Council's fleet and associated charging stations
- major solar panel installations at Stirling, Woodside, Lobethal (Fabrik), Norton Summit, Gumeracha and Birdwood totalling around 300kW
- expansion of the FOGO trial resulting in substantial landfill diversion
- Over 900 streetlights changed to LEDs
- Inclusion of sustainability objectives within the updated Procurement Policy

- Prepared and implemented ESD Building and Refurbishment Guidelines
- Sustainability audit undertaken of 37 community facilities and the roll out of energy efficiency actions including LED lighting
- Negotiated a 100% renewable electricity contract with Diamond Energy
- Installed the data management software Trellis to enable managing and reporting on electricity, water and fuels use and emissions.

In 26 November 2024 Council as a key member of the Resilient Hills and Coasts regional climate change partnership endorsed the Resilient Hills and Coasts Regional Action Plan 2025-2030 to help build a community that is more resilient to climate change. The Action Plan has 5 key focus areas including resilient and biodiverse landscapes, climate ready housing, community resilience, climate risk management and telling the story. The partnership commenced in 2014 and achievements include:

- Bushfire and biodiversity plan to better understand the latest knowledge and best practise for reconciling the tensions between bushfire risk reduction and biodiversity protection
- Categorised and analysed the risk to existing housing to flood, heat and bushfire through the “Where We Build What We Build project resulting in a range of advocacy activities and the initiation of the Homes for Tomorrow project
- Workshops and training to increase the uptake of water sensitive urban design
- Involved in the first SA pilot of a Climate Risk Governance Assessment to shift organisational understanding of climate as a risk management issue.

Position of other SA Councils regarding fossil fuel promotion

City of Mitcham endorsed a ban on fossil fuel advertising and sponsorship in 2023. They also wrote a letter to the State Government stating opposition to the Santos sponsorship of the Tour Down Under. It should be noted that Mitcham has never hosted a stage start or finish of the Tour Down Under and rejected offers to host in 2010, 2011 and 2014.

City of Onkaparinga endorsed a Motion on 17 March 2026 to avoid new fossil fuel advertising and sponsorship in 2026 but noted it did not affect existing arrangements or preclude participation in international events (see motion below).

12.2 NOTICE OF MOTION – CR THEMELIOTIS – FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS FOR COUNCIL SPONSORSHIP AND ADVERTISING

MOVED Cr Themeliotis.

That Council:

- *Notes growing community concern regarding the promotion of coal, oil and gas through sponsorship and advertising on publicly owned assets.*
- *Notes the City of Onkaparinga's existing leadership and commitments in addressing climate change, including implementation of its Climate Change Response Plan, corporate and community emissions reduction initiatives, renewable energy adoption, urban greening and resilience programs.*
- *Recognises that Council-owned and controlled advertising and sponsorship arrangements should be consistent with Council's strategic objectives, environmental commitments and community expectations.*
- *Indicates that Council will seek to avoid entering into new advertising or sponsorship arrangements on Council-owned or controlled property with companies whose primary business is the extraction or sale of coal, oil or gas, and that such arrangements should only be considered where no reasonably available alternative sponsors or advertisers aligned with Council's strategic objectives can be identified, subject to policy and procedure review and any legal or contractual considerations.*
- *Requests that, at the next scheduled review of relevant policies and procedures (including Sponsorship, Advertising and Procurement policies), administration bring forward any recommended changes necessary to give effect to this position.*
- *Notes this does not affect existing contractual arrangements or preclude council from participating in international events that show case our council area or bring in revenue. It also recognises that Council does not control sponsorship settings for many major state or nationally delivered events held within the city.*

Seconded by Cr Davis.

CARRIED

Draft letter

At the Council workshop on 18 May 2026 Council considered what a letter may contain, if it were determined by Council to endorse the motion.

Potential inclusions in addition to those stated in the MON were: information on Council's achievements in responding to climate change, connection to Council's strategic plan and advocacy role, how we have supported the Tour Down Under to be more sustainable in the past. A draft letter is included as **Appendix 1**.

3. APPENDICES

- (1) Draft Letter

Appendix 1

Draft Letter

Draft Letter regarding TDU sponsorship (including feedback from workshop on 18 May)

Dear Premier,

Adelaide Hills Council has been associated with the Tour Down Under (TDU) since it was established in 1999 and we commend the State Government for its continued commitment to the TDU as a major event celebrating South Australia's regions, promoting healthy and active lifestyles, and contributing to tourism and the local economy. However, Council has strong concerns regarding alignment with our position regarding climate change.

In 2019 our Council recognised a state of climate emergency requiring urgent action by all levels of government and reaffirmed our commitment to both mitigating against and adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change within Adelaide Hills Council.

Our *Strategic Plan 2024 – Your Place, Your Space* confirms this commitment and our advocacy role in considering the environmental, economic, social and cultural implications of our decisions to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the Council and our community. Supporting the community and business to decarbonise and transition to sustainable lifestyle practices (green communities) is a key objective of the Plan.

Towards Zero Emissions – a Carbon Management Plan sets out Council's pathway to addressing climate change and achievements to date include: over 22 electric vehicles and associate charging stations, major solar panel installations at Stirling, Woodside, Norton Summit, Gumeracha and Birdwood, expansion of the FOGO trial resulting in substantial landfill diversion, over 900 streetlights changed to LEDs and negotiated a 100% renewable electricity contract.

Climate science warns January temperatures will continue rising and threaten the delivery of outdoor events such as the TDU unless urgent action is taken to reduce carbon pollution from the burning of coal, oil and gas. Already the impact of high January temperatures has required TDU to change the timing and length of certain stages.

Council works with the South Australian Tourist Commission to deliver TDU as a sustainable event with initiatives around waste management and environmentally friendly activations but would like to raise our concerns around SANTOS sponsorship.

Council is concerned and deeply disappointed that SANTOS, a major fossil fuel company, holds naming rights to an event whose future viability is jeopardised by climate change.

Council therefore requests that the State Government incorporate sustainability and environmental responsibility criteria, including reducing carbon emissions, into the sponsorship evaluation process for all major State-supported events, aligning with South Australia's climate and net-zero emissions objectives.

Finally, Council offers its support in promoting and partnering on initiatives that highlight South Australia's leadership in sustainability and innovation through major events such as the Tour Down Under.

Yours sincerely

Dr Nathan Daniell
Mayor

Administration Reports Decision Items

**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2026
AGENDA BUSINESS ITEM**

Item: 12.1

Responsible Officer: Gary Lewis
Director
Corporate Services

Subject: Annual Business Plan 2026-27 Draft for Consultation

For: Decision

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the draft *Annual Business Plan 2025-26* (**Appendix 1**) to Council for endorsement to undertake community consultation.

The *Annual Business Plan* is a legislative requirement under s122 of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the "Act") and a key element of Adelaide Hills Council's *Strategic Planning Framework*.

The draft *Annual Business Plan 2025-26 (ABP)* has been developed to align to the *Strategic Plan 2024 - 'Your Place, Your Space'*. Council resolutions, staff and community feedback, and risk assessments have also informed projects and programs included in the ABP.

The focus during the development of the initiatives and budget for the ABP has been on:

- Responding to ongoing cost pressures, including increased infrastructure, depreciation and finance costs in a challenging economic environment;
- Maintaining, rationalising and renewing a large portfolio of community assets;
- Taking a disciplined approach to expenditure, including reducing new initiatives compared to previous years;
- Supporting community priorities through targeted investments in safety, accessibility and connectivity; and
- Returning to surplus in the coming years and achieving the goals of the LTFP.

This draft plan is based on the national March quarter CPI figure of 4.6%. Recognising inflation eased in the April quarter, Council will reassess in line with latest inflation data at the conclusion of the consultation period and this may influence the final rate that is adopted.

RECOMMENDATION

Council resolves:

1. That the *Annual Business Plan 2025-26 Draft for Consultation* report be received and noted.
2. To endorse the draft *Annual Business Plan 2026-27 (ABP)* as contained in *Appendix 1* for community consultation in accordance with Section 123 of the *Local Government Act 1999*, which includes a budget with an average residential rate rise of 7.6%.
3. That the CEO be authorised to:
 - a. Make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the ABP prior to being released for public consultation and
 - b. Determine the consultation timings, media and processes while ensuring consistency and compliance with the provisions of applicable legislation and Council's *Public Consultation Policy*.

1. BACKGROUND

The draft Annual Business Plan (ABP) 2026-27 (*Appendix 1*) has been developed in alignment with the financial and strategic goals outlined in the *Strategic Plan 2024 – 'Your Place, Your Space'*.

The attached documents are for the purpose of community consultation and therefore do not contain all elements that will be published in the final document.

Below is a list of items omitted in the draft document for consultation. These will be included when the final ABP is presented to Council for adoption:

- Mayor's Message and CEO's message;
- A summary of Community Engagement and Statement of Amendment
- Statement of Expected Rate Revenue
- Council's Corporate Performance Indicators
- Council's Response to the ESCOSA recommendations

The draft Annual Business Plan 2026-27 will be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on 17 June 2026. Feedback from the Audit and Risk Committee on the draft Annual Business plan will be considered during the community consultation phase.

In addition to the full-day budget workshop held with elected members on 28 March 2026, Administration undertook further engagement with the elected member body on 4 and 18 May 2026. These additional sessions supported careful deliberation in light of the range of factors influencing the 2026–27 Budget, including cost pressures associated with higher CPI and the need to balance the impact of proposed rate increases on the community. Feedback and insights gathered during these sessions have informed the development of the draft ABP.

2. ANALYSIS

➤ Strategic Management Plan/Functional Strategy/Council Policy Alignment

Strategic Plan 2024 - Your Place, Your Space

Goal 4 Organisation

Objective O5 Evolve Council's functions and services to meet the current and future needs and aspirations of our community

Priority O5.2 Demonstrate financial sustainability through long term financial planning and annual budget setting which aligns with adopted targets.

➤ Legal Implications

The preparation of an ABP is a requirement of Section 123 of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act), and the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011* (the "Regulations"). The ABP has been developed in accordance with Section 8 of the Act – Principles to be observed by Council.

Section 123(3) of the Act currently states that before a council can adopt its ABP that it must prepare a draft ABP and follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy (i.e. consultation for at least 21 calendar days).

Section 123(3) to (6) of the Act specifies the actions that Council must take in relation to Consultation:

- (3) Before a council adopts an annual business plan, the council must—
 - (a) prepare a draft annual business plan; and
 - (b) follow the relevant steps set out in its public consultation policy, taking into account the requirements of subsection (4).
- (4) For the purposes of subsection (3)(b), a public consultation policy must at least provide for the following:
 - (a) the publication in a newspaper circulating within the area of the council and on a website determined by the chief executive officer of a notice informing the public of the preparation of the draft annual business plan and inviting interested persons—
 - (i) to attend—
 - (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
 - (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,

(on the basis that the council determines which kind of meeting is to be held under this subparagraph); or
 - (ii) to make written submissions in relation to the matter within a period (which must be at least 21 days) stated in the notice; and
 - (b) the council to make arrangements for a meeting contemplated by paragraph (a)(i) and the consideration by the council of any submissions made at that meeting or in response to the invitation under paragraph (a)(ii).
- (5) The council must ensure that copies of the draft annual business plan are available at the meeting under subsection (4)(a)(i), and for inspection (without charge) and purchase (on payment of a fee fixed by the council) at the principal office of the council and on the website at least 21 days before the date of that meeting.
- (5a) The council must ensure that provision is made for—
 - (a) a facility for asking and answering questions; and
 - (b) the receipt of submissions,on its website during the public consultation period.
- (6) A council may then, after considering—
 - (a) any submission made to the council during the public consultation period; and
 - (b) any new or revised information in the possession of the council that is relevant to the material contained in the draft annual business plan; and
 - (c) such other materials or information as the council thinks fit,adopt its annual business plan (with or without amendment).
- (6a) However, if a council proposes to adopt an annual business plan with amendments, the council must include in the adopted business plan a statement—
 - (a) setting out any significant amendments from the draft annual business plan; and
 - (b) providing reasons for those amendments.

Council's *Public Consultation Policy* specifies that the period of consultation should be for at least 21 calendar days.

Section 123(7) of the Act requires that each budget of council must:

- a) Be considered in conjunction with the council’s ABP (and must be consistent with that plan); and
- b) Be adopted by the council after the council has adopted its ABP.

Part 2 of the Regulations sets out what financial information must be included as well as the required formats.

➤ **Risk Management Implications**

Preparing an ABP as required by the Act and Regulations will assist in mitigating the risk of:

Inability to discharge role and functions of a local government entity leading to a breach of legislation and loss of stakeholder confidence.

Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Target Risk
Extreme (5C)	High (5E)	High (5E)

It ensures that financial resources are deployed in areas that align with Council’s Strategic Management Plans, are affordable and support Council’s Long Term Financial Plan.

➤ **Budget, Financial and Resource Implications**

The ABP sets out the priorities and application of the Council’s resources over the next financial year. The plan has been developed to be consistent with the *Strategic Plan 2024 – ‘Your Place, Your Space’*.

The finalisation of the documents will be primarily produced internally using mainly existing staff resources. External costs will be associated with activities such as the printing of the final copy and any promotional costs related to the public consultation.

➤ **Customer Service and Community/Cultural Implications**

The ABP provides transparency for the community regarding Council’s financial plans for the short term. It highlights key goals and objectives and the strategies to achieve these objectives.

➤ **Sustainability Implications**

The Council’s sustainability (financial, social and environmental) is a key consideration in the development of the ABP.

To be sustainable, the increase in revenue needs to cover the inflationary impacts on its expenditure base. The draft plan is based on inflation data at the time it was developed. Council will reassess in line with latest inflation data at the conclusion of the consultation period and this may influence the final rate that is adopted.

The proposed average residential rate increase of 7.6% will maintain the financial sustainability of the Council. In-line with the March national CPI figure, 4.6% has been applied, plus 1.5% to manage community assets and deliver key initiatives. An additional

1.5% is proposed to support Council's long term financial sustainability. The higher-than-expected increase is in response to the rise in asset values which have materially increased depreciation charges in recent years. This is commensurate with factors considered in the budget review processes in 2025-26.

Interest

Council's level of debt has been steadily increasing over the past 4 years. This increase is reflective of insufficient rate revenue being raised to cover the capital delivery program. As Council's debt levels increase, so too do the associated interest costs. This is now a material cost to Council and whilst debt assists with creating intergenerational equity, it also decreases Council's ability to respond to external shocks (eg: bushfires) and results in higher than CPI rate increases.

Carry Forwards

Following the review of the Capital Works Program through 2025-26 the need for annual carry forwards has been materially reduced. Noting this, there are projects which have commenced, and which will not be completed in 2025-26. These will be considered by Council as part of the budget review process early in the new financial year.

Financial Summary

The ABP contains the following financial summary based on the average residential rate increase of 7.6% (CPI of 4.6% plus 1.5% to manage community assets and deliver key initiatives plus 1.5% is proposed to support Council's long term financial sustainability):

- Increase of approximately \$223 for the average value residential property
- Operating deficit of \$3.4m
- Operating Deficit Ratio of 5.0%
- Renewals Capital Expenditure of \$12.1m
- Asset Renewal Ratio of 114%
- New & Upgrade Capital Expenditure of \$2.290m
- Financial Liabilities of \$37.713m
- Net Financial Liability Ratio of 55.1%

The Asset Renewal Ratio is outside of target as there are major pieces of work required which are not considered in the relevant plans but are essential.

Financial Indicator Targets

The budgeted operating deficit ratio follows on from a surplus of 0.9% in 2024-25 and a budgeted deficit in 2025-26 of 4.8%. Whilst a small surplus was returned in 2024-25, the deficits were significantly outside of Council's target ratio range for an Operating Surplus of between 0% and 10%

The long-term target is to return a small surplus of roughly 1% across the life of future LTFP's.

➤ Engagement/Consultation conducted in the development of the report

Consultation on the development of this report was as follows:

Council Committees: The draft ABP will be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee at its 17 June 2026 meeting.

<i>Council Workshops:</i>	A budget workshop was held on 28 March 2026, and subsequent engagements with the elected member body regarding key budget elements, strategic initiatives, rating, etc. were held during information or briefing sessions on 4 th and 18 th May 2026.
<i>Advisory Groups:</i>	Not applicable.
<i>External Agencies:</i>	Not applicable.
<i>Community:</i>	Not applicable.

➤ **Additional Analysis**

Community Consultation

The timing for presentation of the draft Annual Business Plan (ABP) to Council for consultation was extended this year to allow for additional engagement sessions with the elected member body, supporting thorough deliberation of the proposed projects and rate rise associated with the 2026–27 Budget.

To minimise the impacts on Council associated with a later adoption of the draft ABP for consultation, Administration has already placed a public notice in *The Courier* and posted a social media post on 27 May 2026, advising that consultation will open on 15 June, and that a public meeting will be held on 23 June 2026 during the Ordinary Council Meeting. This approach aligns with the requirements of Council’s Public Consultation Policy, which stipulates that a public meeting must be held at least 21 days after publication of the notice, while also mitigating the risk of further delays to the adoption of the 2026–27 ABP.

Public consultation will be undertaken over the period Monday 15 June to Monday 6 July 2026. Community feedback is primarily via the Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub website, with copies of the draft ABP and hard copy feedback forms available in Council’s libraries, service centres and community centres in Stirling, Woodside, Gumeracha and Norton Summit.

Should requests for in-person engagement be received from members of the community during the consultation phase, the Director Corporate Services will make appropriate arrangements with individuals or small groups.

Consultation activities include:

- A paid advert in *The Courier* newspaper (27 May 2026);
- Feedback via Adelaide Hills Council’s Engagement Hub website;
- A public forum during the Ordinary Council Meeting on 23 June 2026 for verbal submissions to Council (per the legislative requirement);
- Posters, information packs and hard copy feedback forms for display at Council libraries, service centres and community centres;
- Emails to engagement subscribers inviting feedback and linking to the online resources;
- Email campaign to community groups, resident associations and sporting clubs promoting the engagement opportunity;
- Notification on our website and within our e-newsletter; and
- Social media posts on LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram.

Following the consultation, a report will be created which will list all feedback and responses for Council to consider. A special workshop may be required, depending on the feedback received, ahead of adoption of the final Annual Business Plan.

At the conclusion, of the consultation period Council may reassess the final rating considering the latest inflation figures and community feedback.

All feedback participants will receive a copy of the consultation report where they have provided an email address, and the report will be published on the Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub website.

3. OPTIONS

Council has the following options:

- I. *To endorse the draft Annual Business Plan 2026-27 (ABP) as contained in Appendix 1 for community consultation in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1999, which includes a budget with an average residential rate rise of 7.6%*
- II. To not endorse the *draft Annual Business Plan 2026-27* for progression to the next stage of community consultation.

4. APPENDICES

- (1) *Draft Annual Business Plan 2026-27*

Appendix 1
Draft Annual Business Plan 2026-27

DRAFT Annual Business Plan and Budget

2026-2027



Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL

Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges that we undertake our business on the traditional Country of the Peramangk and Kaurna people. We pay our respects to Ancestors and Elders past and present as the custodians of this ancient and beautiful land, for they hold the memories, traditions, spiritual relationships, culture and hopes of the First Nations of Australia.

We are committed to working together to ensure that Peramangk and Kaurna culture and traditions are sustained, valued and continuing.



Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL

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Purpose of the Annual Business Plan

The Annual Business Plan (ABP) outlines how Adelaide Hills Council will fund and deliver services, programs and infrastructure over the coming financial year. It connects our annual priorities with Council's long-term strategies, ensuring our work supports the sustainability, resilience and liveability of the Hills.

The Plan includes Council's proposed budget, rating approach and capital works for the year. It is developed with consideration of community needs, financial capacity, legislative requirements and asset management responsibilities.

Community engagement plays an important role. Feedback from residents, businesses and community groups to help shape the initiatives included in the final Plan, ensuring they reflect local priorities. This input comes not only from consultation on the draft Annual Business Plan and Budget, but also from community participation in Council's strategic planning processes and engagement activities undertaken throughout the year.

The Plan also sets out the outcomes Council intends to achieve and the measures we will use to monitor progress. These help maintain transparency, guide improvements and support responsible financial management.

Overall, the Annual Business Plan ensures Council uses its resources effectively to deliver the services and projects that matter to the Adelaide Hills community, now and into the future.

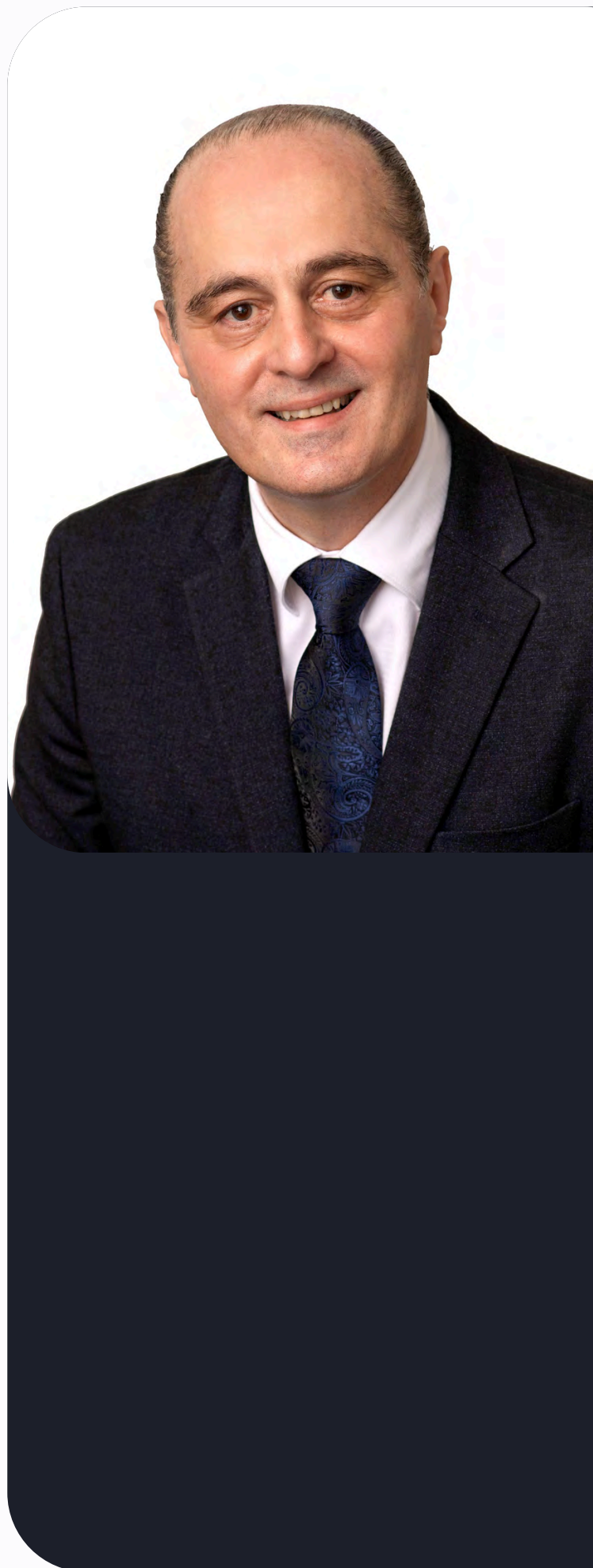
A message from the Mayor

To be included when final ABP is presented to Council for adoption.



From the desk of the CEO

To be included when final ABP is presented to Council for adoption.



PLACEHOLDER SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To be included when final ABP is presented to Council for adoption.

Our Region



District Wards

Correct at time of publication



Alexandrina Council

We are unique

The size of a regional council with the expenses and population of a city council



57 townships and settlements



795 km2 district area



42,368 total population



16,267 households



44 is the median age



620km of sealed roads
397km of unsealed roads



30% of the population volunteer



Our Elected Council

The Mayor and Council Members, acting under the Local Government Act 1999, provide leadership, governance, and strategic direction for the Council. The Elected Council is responsible for representing local interests, setting priorities, and overseeing the effective and responsible management of Council affairs.



Mayor
Nathan Daniell



Deputy Mayor
Cr Lucy Huxter



Cr Kirrilee Boyd
Ranges Ward



Cr Adrian Cheater
Ranges Ward



Cr Chris Grant
Valleys Ward



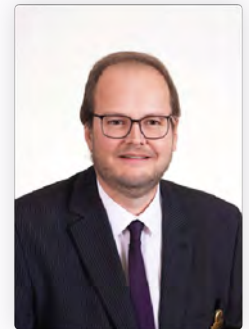
Cr Richard Gladigau
Valleys Ward



Cr Malcolm Herrmann
Valleys Ward



Cr Georgia McDonnell
Ranges Ward



Cr Leith Mudge
Ranges Ward



Cr Mark Osterstock
Ranges Ward



Cr Kirsty Parkin
Ranges Ward



Cr Alex Trescowthick
Valleys Ward



Cr Lisa Clare Woolcock
Ranges Ward

How we serve our community

Adelaide Hills Council delivers a broad range of essential services that support our community's safety, wellbeing, environment, and local economy. These services support the day-to-day functioning of our townships and rural areas, helping to meet the needs of the community now and into the future.

1

Infrastructure & Essential Services

- Roads, footpaths, bridges & stormwater management
- Public lighting, signage & traffic management
- Waste, recycling & resource recovery services
- Community Wastewater Management Systems (CWMS)
- Maintenance of Council buildings, facilities & cemeteries



2

Environment & Sustainability

- Natural area & open space maintenance
- Biodiversity protection, habitat conservation & weed management
- Climate change considerations and strategies for the community
- Fire prevention, bushfire mitigation & emergency preparedness
- Sustainable water, waste & land management practices



3

Community Wellbeing & Support

- Community centres, libraries & lifelong learning programs
- Positive ageing, youth development & volunteering support
- Public health services, food safety inspections & immunisation clinics
- Disability access and inclusion initiatives
- Emergency management, resilience & recovery support



4

Culture, Recreation & Community Life

- Thriving arts and heritage hub at Fabrik Arts + Heritage
- Sport & recreation facilities, playgrounds and reserves
- Community events, festivals and local activation
- Support for clubs, volunteers and community groups



5

Planning, Development & Economy

- Development assessment, planning approvals & compliance
- Strategic land use & policy planning
- Support for local businesses, tourism & economic development
- Placemaking & township enhancement



6

Customer Service & Administration

- Customer service centres, contact centre and online services
- Parking and by-law enforcement
- Animal management and responsible pet ownership
- Governance & financial management
- Transparent decision-making, engagement and advocacy



Strategic Context



Strategic Planning Framework

Adelaide Hills Council’s Strategic Planning Framework provides a coordinated and integrated approach to long-term planning, service delivery, and financial management.

The framework is guided by Council’s long-term strategic management plan, Your Place, Your Space Strategic Plan 2024, which sets the vision, goals, and priorities for the Adelaide Hills community.

A suite of interrelated documents support the Strategic Management Plans. Together, these documents ensure that Council’s activities are aligned, financially sustainable and responsive to community needs, while also demonstrating Council’s performance against its annual targets.



Figure 1: Adelaide Hills Council Strategic Planning Framework



Strategic Plan 2024

The ‘Your Place, Your Space’ Strategic Plan 2024 will guide Adelaide Hills Council’s priorities and decisions over the next four to ten years.

Shaped through extensive community engagement, the Plan reflects the priorities and aspirations of our residents. It focuses on sustainability, resilience, and innovation, with goals that protect our environment, strengthen community wellbeing, support local economic growth, and drive organisational improvement.

The ‘Your Place, Your Space’ Strategic Plan 2024 will guide decision-making and investment, ensuring the Adelaide Hills remains a vibrant and thriving place to live, work, and visit.





Our Goals



Natural Environment

NE 1 Pursue our adopted pathway to achieve net zero carbon emissions.

NE 2 Support the community and businesses to decarbonise and transition to sustainable lifestyle practices (green communities).

NE 3 Protect, improve, expand and connect habitat.

NE 4 Build resilience in the natural environment to adapt to climate and other environmental changes.

NE 5 Improve landscape character and amenity value on Council managed land.



Community Wellbeing

CW 1 Promote and support reconciliation.

CW 2 Enrich, empower and support connected communities.

CW 3 Embrace diversity in our community and build on community strengths.

CW 4 Build community resilience for the future.

CW 5 Foster cultural identity and connection to place.

CW 6 Promote physical, mental and social wellbeing.



Built Form and Economy

BFE 1 Guide development that fosters vibrant and resilient communities, promotes appropriate design and enhances livability.

BFE 2 Nurture a distinctive sense of place, support activation activities and recognise and celebrate our rich heritage.

BFE 3 Develop and maintain infrastructure to support livability and sustainable economic activity.

BFE 4 Improve the utilisation of Council and community facilities.

BFE 5 Promote sustainable prosperity by supporting tourism, creative industries, primary production and vibrant townships.



Organisation

O1 Embrace technology solutions and digital transformation to enhance our organisation and the community experience.

O2 Operate with integrity using best practice governance processes.

O3 Support and develop a skilled organisation that is aligned to Council's priorities.

O4 Engage and advocate for our communities.

O5 Evolve Council's functions and services to meet the current and future aspirations of our community.



The Long Term Financial Plan

The Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) outlines Council's financial direction over a ten-year period and supports responsible budgeting and long-term financial sustainability. It ensures decisions made today enable the ongoing delivery of services and maintenance of community assets into the future.

What the LTFP does

The LTFP provides a framework to guide key financial decisions. It supports the delivery of services at sustainable levels, plans for the renewal and upgrade of community assets, and identifies the rates and revenue required to fund Council activities, while ensuring borrowings and financial obligations are managed responsibly.

Supporting financial sustainability

The LTFP outlines Council's pathway to long-term financial sustainability by balancing income and expenditure over time. It prioritises investment in the renewal of existing assets, maintains liabilities within sustainable limits, and aligns financial resources with Council's strategic priorities.

What this means for the community

The LTFP ensures Council can continue to deliver essential services and maintain infrastructure, while planning for the future in a financially responsible way. It supports a balanced approach that considers the needs of both current and future ratepayers.

Ongoing review

The LTFP is reviewed annually as part of the budget process to reflect changing economic conditions, service needs and community priorities. This ongoing review supports Council's commitment to financial sustainability by reassessing key assumptions, strengthening financial planning approaches, and ensuring the Plan continues to provide a clear pathway back to, and maintenance of, a sustainable financial position.

It also ensures Council maintains an appropriate balance between investing in existing assets, managing expenditure, and delivering services, while responding to emerging cost pressures and supporting the long-term financial resilience of the organisation and the community.

Council will be seeking to update, consult on, and adopt an updated Long Term Financial Plan in Quarter One of the 2026-27 financial year.

Budget Overview



Snapshot

The 2026-27 Annual Business Plan focuses on maintaining essential services, investing in priority community infrastructure and continuing the transition to long-term financial sustainability.

In a challenging economic environment, the draft budget reflects a disciplined approach to spending while responding to rising costs associated with infrastructure, depreciation and finance. Council remains committed to balancing financial responsibility with delivering the services and facilities our community value.



Capital budget

\$2.2M capital expenditure on new or upgraded assets.
\$12.1M for capital expenditure on renewal of existing assets.



Operating budget

New operating projects \$1.0M
Total operating income of \$68.4M
Total operating expenditure of \$71.8M
Proposed deficit of \$3.4M



Borrowing

An increase in Net Financial Liabilities of \$1.6M, resulting in forecast total borrowings at 30 June 2027 of \$37.2M to maintain service levels that the community values. By funding these service levels through debt, Council ensures intergenerational equity.



Rates

A rate increase of 4.6% in line with CPI plus 1.5% to manage community assets and deliver key initiatives. An additional 1.5% is proposed to ensure Council's long term financial sustainability. This combined proposed rate increase of 7.6% equates to approximately \$223 for an average value residential property.

Key considerations for the 2026-27 budget

The key focus in preparing the 2026-27 budget has been to balance financial sustainability with the delivery of essential services and community infrastructure.

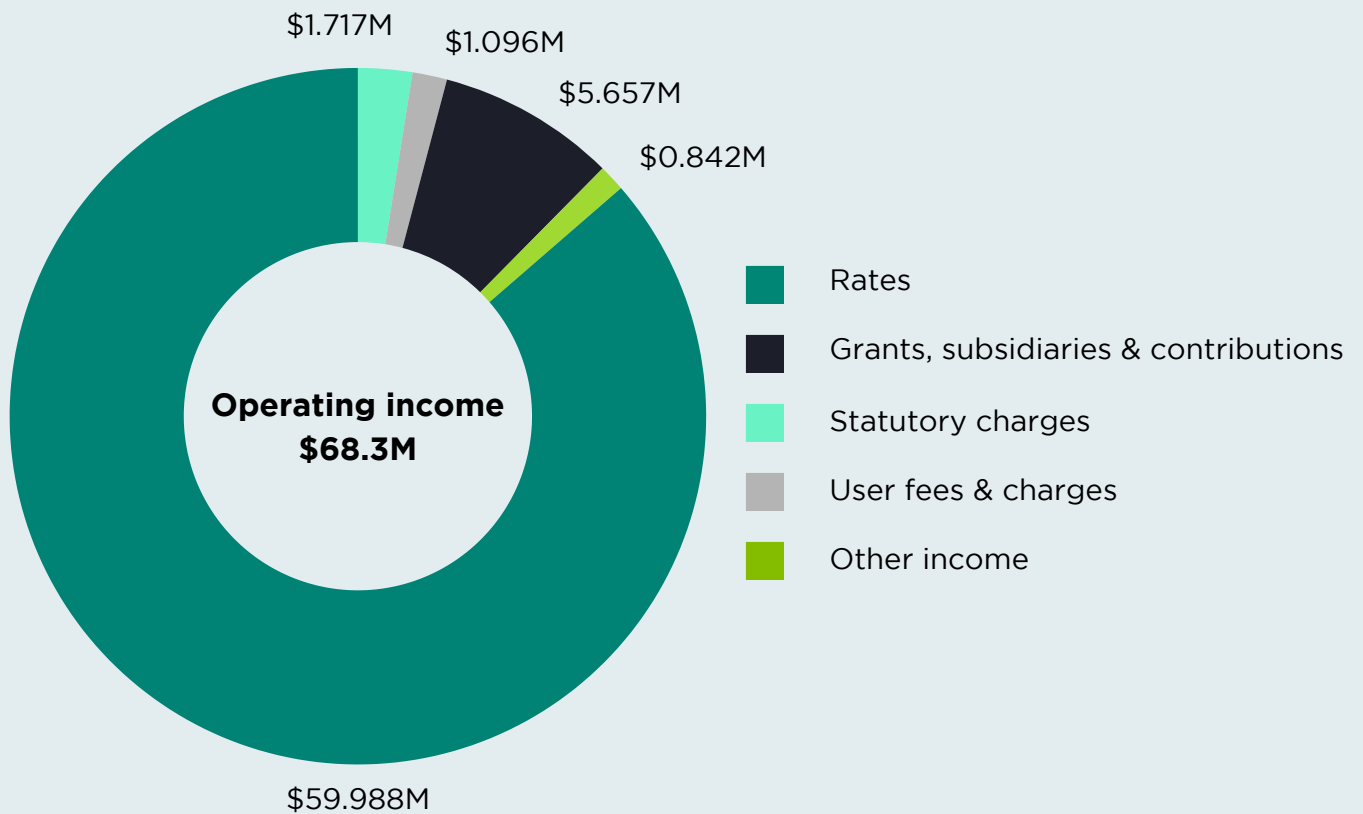
Considerations include:

- Responding to ongoing cost pressures, including increased infrastructure, depreciation and finance costs in a challenging economic environment;
- Maintaining, rationalising and renewing a large portfolio of community assets;
- Taking a disciplined approach to expenditure, including reducing new initiatives compared to previous years;
- Supporting community priorities through targeted investments in safety, accessibility and connectivity;
- Returning to surplus in the coming years and achieving the goals of the Long Term Financial Plan.



Operating Income

Council's total operating income in 2026-27 is budgeted to be **\$68.3M**.



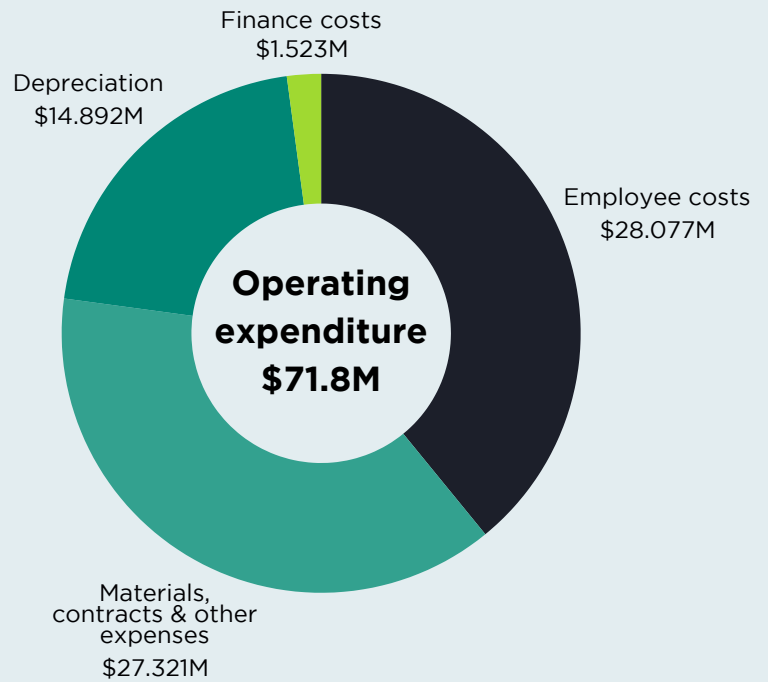
Operating Expenditure

Council's operating expenditure covers the day-to-day costs of delivering Council services and maintaining community assets.

It funds the ongoing activities that keep services running, such as waste, roads, parks and community programs, as well as the upkeep of infrastructure and facilities to ensure they remain safe, functional and accessible for the community.

For 2026-27, operational expenditure has increased by \$4.923M, or 7.36%, relative to the 2025-26 budget. The increase in expenditure has resulted from general inflationary pressures.

The percentage of expenditure allocated to each category remains unchanged from the 2025-26 budget.

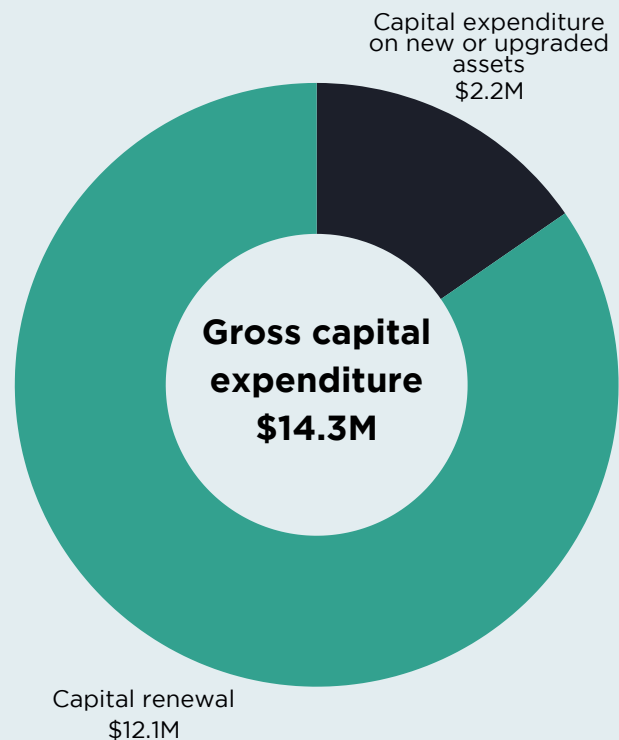


Capital Expenditure

Council's capital expenditure is investment in new assets and the renewal of existing assets.

It funds projects such as building or renewing roads, facilities and infrastructure to support current and future community needs.

Information on expenditure for Council's operating and capital initiatives, including the capital works program, is detailed in the Key Priorities section of this Annual Business Plan.





Significant influences for the 2026-27 budget

Each year, in preparing the Annual Business Plan and Budget, Council considers a range of internal and external factors that may influence the community, organisation and the broader region.

These influences are also considered in the preparation of the Long Term Financial Plan.

- The long term financial sustainability of Council to ensure the ongoing delivery of services to the community now and into the future;
- Global pressures and rising inflation (CPI), are increasing the cost of essential goods and materials such as fuel, raw materials, and construction supplies required to deliver Council services and projects;
- Providing the essential services required by our community while managing the impact of increasing costs;
- Asset management (renewal and maintenance) expenditure to ensure longevity of Council assets;
- Increase in depreciation due to revaluations largely relating to cost escalation in infrastructure and building costs;
- Higher interest costs arising from increased borrowings which were used to fund capital initiatives;
- Rates and levies imposed by subsidiaries and other external stakeholders;
- The Boundary Commission's Inquiry into Campbelltown City Council's Woodforde/Rostrevor boundary reform proposal is ongoing. Should the reform proposal be successful, it may materially impact Council's financial sustainability. No financial or resource implications have been built into the 2026-27 budget.

Key Priorities



Key focus areas

Council's focus for the 2026–27 financial year is on supporting and strengthening the community, environment and region through a responsible budget that recognises unique constraints and prioritises essential services, prudent resource management, and sustainability.

The organisation's priorities are aligned to the goals of the Your Place, Your Space Strategic Plan 2024 and will be delivered through ongoing services and initiatives.

Some of the key areas of focus for 2026-27 include:



Natural Environment

- Continue reviewing waste management service models to find efficiencies and divert more waste from landfill.
- Adapt Cox Creek rehabilitation project learnings and techniques to prepare for expansion across water supply catchments and improve the health of Adelaide Hills creeks and rivers.
- Build capacity in electric vehicle charging infrastructure.



Community Wellbeing

- Implement the new Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.
- Use a co-design approach to develop a new Youth Action Plan.
- Explore opportunities to expand visitor and tourism experiences at Fabrik Arts + Heritage.



Built Form & Economy

- Plan for the future of the Hills by defining what our communities need and value into the future.
- Advocate for development outcomes for the Woodside Barracks that deliver the best long-term outcomes for the community.
- Progress a review of Community Land Management Plans and prepare a Strategic Asset Management Plan.



Organisation

- Continue to enhance the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to improve customer experience for enquiries, requests and response timeframes.
- Improve efficiency and service delivery through the implementation of a modern, integrated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.
- Continue to progress towards long-term financial sustainability by undertaking long-term asset and financial planning.

Operating expenditure

Directorate	Function	Budget
Office of the CEO	CEO's Office	\$601,511
	Governance & Performance	\$2,182,578
	Governance - Civic costs	\$3,138
	Governance - Elected Member costs	\$461,684
	TOTAL	\$3,248,910
Community and Development	Community Centres	\$360,599
	Community Wellbeing	\$1,203,290
	Positive Ageing (Home Support)	\$1,423,150
	Libraries	\$2,282,964
	Community Management	\$130,800
	Community Development	\$434,288
	Customer Experience	\$165,000
	Community and Development Director's Office	\$417,445
	Region and Place	\$1,063,635
	Fire Prevention	\$178,475
	Animal Management	\$571,260
	Parking and By-laws	\$321,313
	Development Services	\$2,900,663
	Environmental Health	\$674,804
	FABRIK Arts + Heritage	\$861,012
	Customer Service	\$1,051,074
TOTAL	\$14,039,773	
Corporate Services	Communications, Engagements and Events	\$874,801
	Corporate Services Director's Office	\$586,922
	Finance Costs	\$1,155,865
	Finance Operations	\$1,447,610
	People and Culture; Work, Health and Safety	\$1,338,706
	Information and Communication Technology	\$3,600,721
	Information Management	\$647,987
	Regional Landscape Levy	\$1,693,564
	Rates Administration	\$384,300
	TOTAL	\$11,730,476

Operating expenditure continued

Directorate	Function	Budget
Environment and Infrastructure	Depreciation	\$14,472,043
	Cemeteries	\$183,646
	Property Management	\$3,107,528
	Environment and Infrastructure Director's Office	\$417,334
	Strategic Assets	\$832,814
	Civil Services	\$6,833,365
	Open Space - Arboriculture, Biodiversity and Horticulture	\$6,527,524
	Sport and Recreation	\$932,148
	Emergency Management	\$5,230
	Sustainability	\$286,871
	Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS)	\$1,302,246
	Waste	\$6,652,915
	TOTAL	\$41,553,665
Total 2026-27 Administration/Services Expenditure		\$70,572,825
Operating Projects		1,233,000
TOTAL 2026-27 OPERATING EXPENDITURE		\$71,805,825




Key operating projects

The operating projects below outline the key initiatives Council will deliver over the year, in addition to its ongoing service delivery and business as usual activities.

These initiatives reflect Council’s commitment to advancing the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan, while maintaining a focus on planning, service improvement, and innovation, and balancing existing commitments with emerging priorities.

 Natural Environment		
2026-27 Initiative	Project Description	Expenditure
Food Organics Green Organics kerbside collection	To further investigate waste management service models, including opportunities for cost savings and improved cost recovery within waste management services.	Operating project \$64,000

 Community Wellbeing		
2026-27 Initiative	Project Description	Expenditure
Sport and Recreation Strategic Planning	A strategic open space strategy that identifies opportunities for sport and recreation development.	Operating project \$80,000



Key operating projects continued



Built Form and Economy

2026-27 Initiative	Project Description	Expenditure
School safety and activation project: Verdun	To investigate, in partnership with the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, safety improvements at Hills Christian Community School. This includes reviewing pedestrian access and further off-street parking at peak school hour drop off times, to ease congestion and improve safety.	Operating project \$40,000
Strategic asset planning and community land management consultancy	To progress a Strategic Asset Management Plan from a review and renewal of asset management plans and community land management plans.	Operating project \$120,000
Town and precinct planning	To deliver three integrated land use planning tools - the Township & Precinct Planning Framework, a Housing Strategy incorporating a Local Area Plan, and a Placemaking Framework - to guide coordinated growth and investment. Together, these frameworks will prioritise precinct-level planning and infrastructure alignment, address housing issues, strengthen local centres, and attract targeted investment that reflects community needs and place-specific opportunities.	Operating project \$70,000



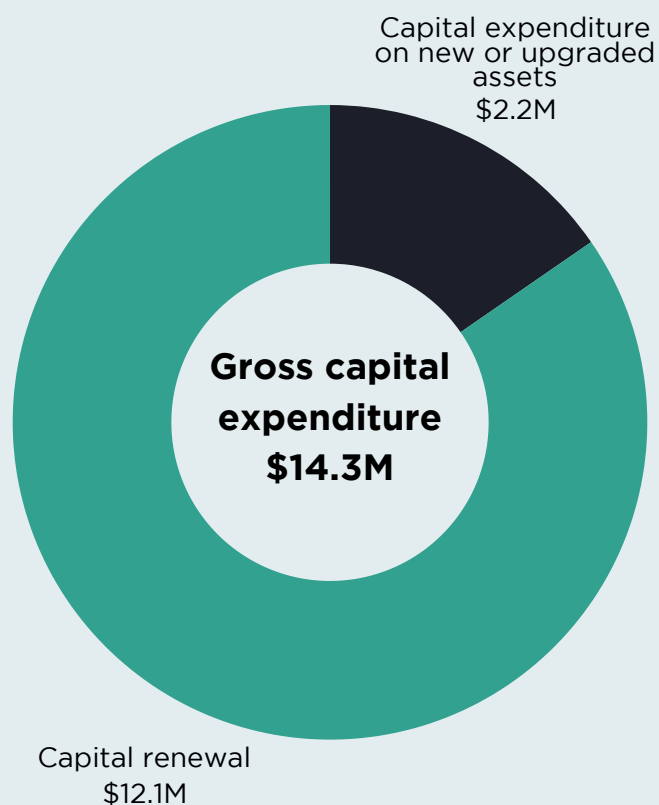
Organisation

2026-27 Initiative	Project Description	Expenditure
Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System	To fund two contract positions to manage the ERP transition, including process mapping, change management, training and project management. It will also cover initial costs such as contract setup, and implementation progress payments and part of new licensing costs.	Operating project \$600,000
Local Government Election costs	Provision for the costs associated with delivering the Adelaide Hills Council election, in line with the scheduled election cycle and statutory requirements.	Operating Project \$350,000
Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) Advice Scheme	To meet the ESCOSA requirements, ensuring Council's ongoing compliance with regulatory and reporting obligations.	Operating project \$45,000



Capital budget


The 2026-27 Capital Budget continues to focus on the renewal of infrastructure. Council has in excess of 50,000 assets that it manages and maintains to ensure that our current and future communities have access to the ongoing services these assets provide.



Capital projects















The following Capital Projects program outlines Council's key infrastructure investments for the year, including new, upgraded, and renewed assets, supporting long-term community outcomes and aligned with the Strategic Plan.

 Natural Environment		
2026-27 Initiative	Project Description	Expenditure
Electric vehicle charging infrastructure	To enhance and optimise Council's existing electric vehicle charging infrastructure and to develop policy that incorporates public access.	Capital project \$75,000

 Built Form and Economy		
2026-27 Initiative	Project Description	Expenditure
Operational workplace accommodation review	To optimise staff accommodation across Council sites to ensure facilities remain fit-for-purpose and support effective service delivery to the community. The project will include relocating staff into Council-owned facilities.	Capital project \$100,000
Stirling Coventry Library cladding	To progress the replacement of cladding at the Stirling Coventry Library. The project supports Council's program of safety and compliance upgrades to community facilities.	Capital project \$800,000
School safety and activation projects: Lenswood	To undertake the Lenswood Main Street safety upgrade, including footpath access, a footbridge, kerb alignment and street scaping.	Capital project \$150,000
School safety and activation project: Stirling East	To undertake targeted infrastructure improvements in the vicinity of Stirling East Primary School to enhance pedestrian access, safety, and local traffic management.	Capital project \$90,000
Amy Gillett Bikeway connection: Station Road, Woodside	To provide key linkages between Amy Gillett Bikeway at Station Rd, from Tiers Rd to the existing Bikeway connection point. This will include a formalised path and access through the existing reserve and complete the sections from Gillman Rd Oakbank through to Birdwood.	Capital project \$675,000
New footpath program	The footpath program improves asset condition, accessibility and connectivity across the pedestrian network through the planning, construction and renewal of footpath infrastructure.	Capital project \$400,000

Capital renewal expenditure

The renewal program is informed by Council's Asset Management Plans, which apply lifecycle planning, condition assessments, and risk-based prioritisation to ensure the ongoing performance of existing assets. Sustained investment in renewal is critical to maintaining service levels, managing long-term costs, and delivering safe, reliable infrastructure that continues to benefit the community.

Summary of capital renewal expenditure	
Asset category	2026-27 allocation
 Bridges	\$405K
 Buildings	\$140K
 Cemeteries	\$40K
 Community Wastewater Management System	\$302K
 Footpaths	\$414K
 Kerbing & Road Shoulders	\$565K
 Sport & Recreation	\$166K
 Stormwater	\$150K
 Roads (sealed & unsealed)	\$4.874M
 Plant & Fleet	\$3.088M
 ICT Equipment	\$166K
 Other	\$512K
 Project Management & Contingency	\$1.280M
 TOTAL	\$12.101M

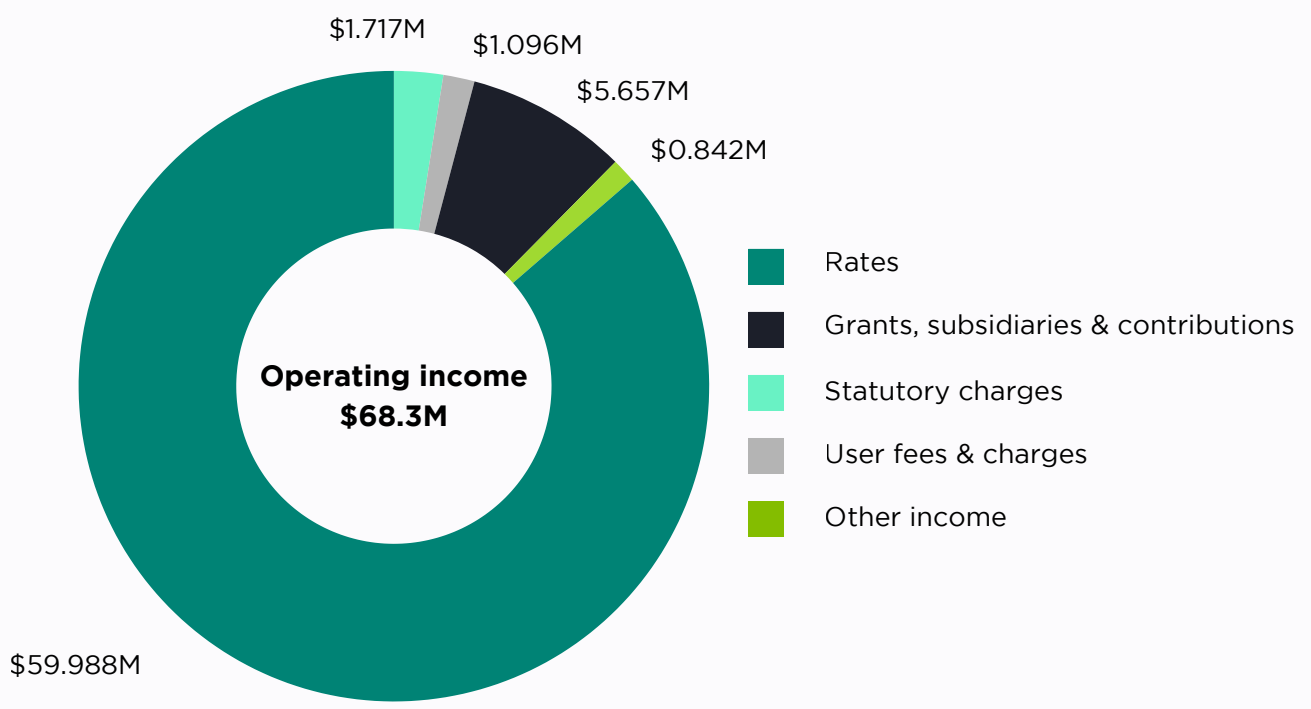
A detailed listing of the Capital Works Program is available at Appendix F.



How will we fund our program?

Council generates revenue through various sources to fund essential services, maintain infrastructure, and deliver projects for benefit of the community.

- Rates**
 Rates revenue is Council's primary source of income, raised from property owners to fund the delivery of services, infrastructure, and community outcomes. Rates are a form of property taxation, and property values determine how much each property contributes.
- Grants, subsidies and contributions**
 Grants, subsidies and contributions are external funding sources provided by Federal and State governments and other organisations, usually for specific projects, infrastructure, or service initiatives.
- Statutory charges**
 Statutory charges are legislated fees and levies applied to specific regulatory services, including permits, licences, and compliance activities.
- User fees and charges**
 User fees and charges are applied to specific services and facilities, reflecting a contribution from users toward the cost of providing those services. Fee increases are generally in line with CPI, where practicable.
- Other income**
 Other income includes miscellaneous revenue received by Council that does not fall within primary funding categories, such as interest, reimbursements, and one-off receipts.



Borrowings

Borrowing is an important funding source, especially for expenditure relating to new capital and is undertaken in accordance with Council’s Treasury Policy.

The key objective of the Policy is to manage the finances of the Council holistically in accordance with the overall financial sustainability strategies and targets.

Council promotes the principle of intergenerational equity through the diligent use of borrowings. This involves spreading costs in relation to significant capital expenditure based on the pattern of benefits over time so that one generation is not excessively subsidising another.

Forecasted levels of borrowing are dependent on the accuracy of the budget. In particular, changes to the delivery of the Capital Works Program have the capacity to change the level of borrowings required. The forecast below assumes that all capital projects will be delivered by the end of 2026-27.

Borrowing	Amount \$
Forecast Opening Balance of Borrowings July 2026	\$32.648M
Estimated New Borrowing for 2026-27	\$13.129M
Repayment of Principal for 2026-27	\$8.50M
Forecast Closing Balance of Borrowings June 2027	\$37.277M
Split as follows:	
Variable Borrowings	\$33.807M
Fixed Term Borrowings	\$3.470M
Forecast Closing Balance of all Borrowings June 2027	\$37.277M



Rates and Levies



Rates

Rates revenue is Council's primary source of income, raised from property owners to fund the delivery of services, infrastructure, and community outcomes. Rates are a form of property taxation, and property values determine how much each property contributes.

The 2026-27 draft budget includes a rate increase of 4.6% in line with the March National Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1.5% to manage community assets and deliver key initiatives. An additional 1.5% is proposed to ensure Council's long term financial sustainability. This combined proposed rate increase of 7.6% equates to an increase of approximately \$223 for an average value residential property.

This year's valuation of the Council area by the Valuer-General has shown variability in valuation increases across all land uses. As such, Council will continue to reduce the impact of significant valuation changes for 2025-26 by:

- Differentiating all land uses to enable differences in valuation for land use categories to be taken into account;
- Applying a rate rebate to residential and primary production land use categories where the increase exceeds 15%;
- Making the rebate automatic;
- Excluding the rebate on properties where there is any change of rateability, land use, improvements or change in ownership of properties from the previous year.

Rating structure

Council applies a rating structure comprising of two components: a fixed charge applied equally to all rateable properties to ensure a base contribution toward services, and a variable based general rate that incorporates differential rates based on the predominant land use of each property.

For the 2026-27 year, the fixed charge will increase from \$880 to \$947 which represents an 7.6% increase.

Stirling businesses separate rate

A separate rate applies to businesses in Stirling, raising approximately \$110,000 each year. These funds are provided to the Stirling Business Association (SBA) under a funding agreement to support promotion of Stirling as a visitor destination and the 'Gateway to the Hills'.

Council also sets both a maximum and minimum amount payable by individual properties with the maximum and minimum amounts adjusted each year with reference to the CPI. Council will maintain these minimum and maximum thresholds, supporting a consistent and balanced distribution of the rate across all contributing properties.

Rates modelling

The valuation of the Council area by the Valuer-General has been completed and information provided reflects an average increase of just under 9% in valuation for existing properties.

Analysis indicates that:

- Residential properties, representing 73% of total assessments, have had an average valuation increase of 9.5%
- Primary production properties, representing 15% of total assessments, have had an average valuation increase of 9.3%.
- Commercial and Industrial Light properties have had an average valuation increase of 1.3%.
- Vacant land properties have had an average valuation increase of 10.4%

Allocation of rates

Council uses the capital value method to assess properties, which includes both the land and any buildings or improvements. This is the most commonly used approach across South Australia.

This method is considered a fair way to distribute rates, as it reflects the relative value of each property, meaning those with higher-value properties generally contribute more.

In setting rates, Council also applies a fixed charge to ensure all properties make a base contribution and uses different rate levels (differential rates) based on the primary use of the land to better reflect the varying demands properties place on Council services.



Rebates

Under sections 160-165 of the Local Government Act 1999, Council is required to provide mandatory rebates on rates for certain categories of land used for community benefit.

These include land used for:

- health services
- community services
- religious purposes
- public cemeteries
- educational institutions
- specified not-for-profit organisations

The rebates, which range from a minimum of 75% up to 100% of rates, recognise the public value of these services and ensure that eligible organisations receive equitable support through reduced rate obligations.

Rates relief

Council supports ratepayers experiencing financial hardship by offering a flexible and compassionate approach, including a range of assistance options such as:

- smaller, more frequent payment arrangements
- tailored repayment plans, including reduced payments for a period of time
- the ability to defer or postpone part or all of rates for an agreed period
- consideration of waiving fines and interest where appropriate

In addition, Council's Rating Policy includes provisions to assist those experiencing significant and ongoing hardship. This includes access to the State Government's seniors rate postponement scheme, which allows eligible Seniors Card holders to defer a portion of their rates on their principal place of residence.

Further information

Additional information relating to rates, including rates relief is available on Council's website: www.ahc.sa.gov.au/council/rates or contact Council's Rates Officer via email at rates@ahc.sa.gov.au

Levies

Regional Landscape Levy

The Landscape Levy is a State Government charge that Council is required to collect on behalf of the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board.

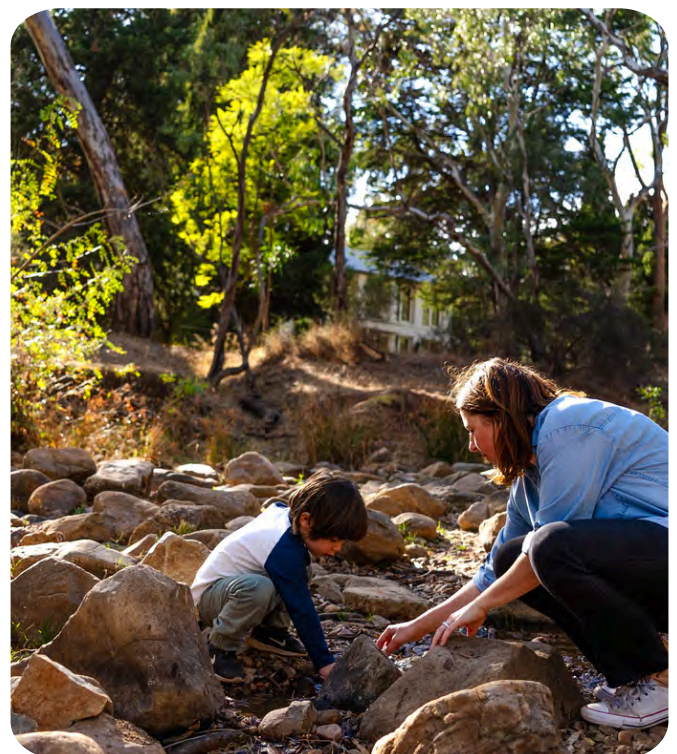
The levy is based on the capital value of each property. Council does not determine the amount of the levy or how the funds are used, with all revenue directed to regional programs that protect and manage natural resources.

The Landscape Board have advised that the levy applicable to Adelaide Hills Council will decrease by 1.26% in 2026-27.

Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS)

Council provides Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) services to a number of townships within the district that are not connected to SA Water sewer. Properties connected to these systems pay an annual service charge, which is separate from general rates.

This charge funds the full cost of establishing, operating, maintaining, improving and replacing the wastewater infrastructure, including ongoing renewal and future upgrades. Council reviews these costs each year to ensure charges are set appropriately and in line with Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) guidelines.



Measuring Success



Financial Sustainability

Key targets and indicators

The Local Government Association of South Australia requires councils to report against a set of standard financial indicators, ensuring consistent, transparent and comparable reporting across the sector. These indicators are a formal requirement of Council's annual financial reporting and are subject to external audit, supporting confidence that financial sustainability will be maintained over the long term.

They provide a common framework for assessing financial performance, sustainability and asset management, while strengthening Council's ability to respond to changing conditions and unexpected events. This supports responsible stewardship of public funds and ensures a balanced approach to delivering services, managing liabilities and investing in infrastructure for the community now and into the future.

Indicator	Adopted Target	Proposed 2026-27 Budget
Operating Surplus/(Deficit) Ratio	0 - 10% on average over 10 years	(5.0%)
Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	0 - 100%	55.1%
Asset Renewal Funding Ratio	90 - 110%	114.2%

Operating Surplus/(Deficit) Ratio

This ratio measures the percentage by which operating income exceeds (or falls short of) operating expenses for a financial year. It indicates Council's ability to cover operating costs and generate revenue that can be directed toward capital investment, debt reduction, or the delivery of new and enhanced services.

Net Financial Liabilities Ratio

This ratio measures the level of Council's net financial liabilities relative to its operating revenue. It indicates the extent to which Council's indebtedness can be supported by its income, with higher ratios reflecting increased reliance on borrowings and a greater level of financial obligations to be serviced over time.

Asset Renewal Funding Ratio

This ratio measures the extent to which existing assets are being renewed or replaced, compared to the level required under Council's Asset Management Plans. It indicates whether assets are being maintained at an appropriate standard.

The Asset Renewal Funding Ratio falls outside the target range in the 2026-27 financial year due to the inclusion of significant renewal works that are not currently reflected in the adopted Asset Management Plans, but are considered essential.



Monitoring performance

Council measures its success by how well it delivers services and meets the needs of residents, informed by performance results and feedback. This includes monitoring performance across service delivery, major projects, financial sustainability, asset management and overall community outcomes.

Within the organisation, Council also considers how effectively it is operating, including meeting financial goals, demonstrating strong leadership and decision-making, adopting new ideas and technology to improve efficiencies.

Council measures its achievements and performance through the following processes:

- [Council's Quarterly Performance Report](#) provides a regular snapshot of progress against strategic objectives, Annual Business Plan initiatives and performance indicators, highlighting achievements, service delivery and major projects.
- [The Budget Review](#) provides an in-year assessment of Council's financial performance, enabling adjustments to the budget to reflect changes in priorities, costs and service delivery in accordance with legislative requirements.
- [The Annual Report](#) provides a comprehensive, end-of-year account of Council's overall performance, including financial results, governance and progress against strategic objectives, in line with statutory reporting requirements.
- [The Long Term Financial Plan](#) is regularly reviewed to ensure Council's financial sustainability and that future decisions remain aligned with available resources and strategic priorities.

Council also considers community engagement and feedback to understand local priorities and support continuous improvement in services and programs.

[Council's suite of Corporate Performance Indicators for 2026-27](#) are included at Appendix D.

To be included when final ABP is presented to Council for adoption.



Essential Services Commission of SA

The Essential Services Commission, South Australia's (ESCOSA) independent economic regulator and advisory body, has been given a role by the State Government to provide advice on material changes proposed by local councils in relation to elements of their strategic management plans and on the proposed revenue sources, including rates, which underpin those plans.

One of the main purposes of the Local Government Advice Scheme (advice or the scheme) is to support councils to make financially sustainable decisions relating to their annual business plans and budgets in the context of their long-term financial plans (LTFPs) and infrastructure and asset management plans.

The first cycle of the scheme extends over four years from 2022-23 to 2025-26, and Council is obliged to publish the findings within each Annual Business Plan that the advice relates to.

The advice is based on information available to the Essential Services Commission as of February 2023.

Council's response to the nine recommendations from ESCOSA are included at Appendix E.

To be included when final ABP is presented to Council for adoption.

Appendicies



Summary of Appendices

Appendix A: Uniform Presentation of Finances

Appendix B: Statement of Expected Rate Revenue - to be included in final for adoption

Appendix C: Rating Policy - to be included in final for adoption

Appendix D: Corporate Performance Indicators - to be included in final for adoption

Appendix E: ESCOSA Report and Council Response - to be included in final for adoption

Appendix F: 2026-27 Capital Works Program

Annual Financial Statements

Uniform Presentation of Finances

\$'000	Jun-2026 Forecast	Jun-2027 Budget
Income		
Rates	55,088	59,088
Statutory Charges	1,671	1,717
User Charges	1,055	1,096
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital	1,119	1,329
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Operating	4,432	4,329
Investment Income	25	26
Reimbursements	513	285
Other Income	760	426
Net Gain - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	105	105
Total Income	64,768	68,399
Expenses		
Employee Costs	25,645	28,082
Materials, Contracts & Other Expenses	27,255	27,314
Depreciation, Amortisation & Impairment	13,777	14,892
Finance Costs	1,228	1,517
Net Loss - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	-
Total Expenses	67,905	71,806
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	(3,136)	(3,406)
Less: Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital New / Upgraded	-	-
Adjusted Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	(3,136)	(3,406)
Net Outlays on Existing Assets		
Capital Expenditure on renewal and replacement of Existing Assets	(17,335)	(12,101)
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	13,777	14,892
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital Renewal	1,119	1,329
Proceeds from Sale of Replaced Assets	314	-
	(2,125)	4,120
Net Outlays on New and Upgraded Assets		
Capital Expenditure on New and Upgraded Assets	(2,603)	(2,290)
Amounts Received Specifically for New and Upgraded Assets	-	-
	(2,603)	(2,290)
Net Lending / (Borrowing) for Financial Year	(7,864)	(1,576)

Annual Financial Statements

Uniform Presentation of Finances

\$'000	Jun-2026 Forecast	Jun-2027 Budget
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Income Statement

Income		
Rates	55,088	59,088
Statutory Charges	1,671	1,717
User Charges	1,055	1,096
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital	1,119	1,329
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Operating	4,432	4,329
Investment Income	25	26
Reimbursements	513	285
Other Income	760	426
Net Gain - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	105	105
Total Income	64,768	68,399
Expenses		
Employee Costs	25,645	28,082
Materials, Contracts & Other Expenses	27,255	27,314
Depreciation, Amortisation & Impairment	13,777	14,892
Finance Costs	1,228	1,517
Net Loss - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	-
Total Expenses	67,905	71,806
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	(3,136)	(3,406)
Asset Disposal & Fair Value Adjustments	(1,075)	1,125
Capital WIP Write-Off Prior Years	-	-
Amounts Received Specifically for New or Upgraded Assets	-	-
Physical Resources Received Free of Charge	-	-
Operating Result from Discontinued Operations	-	-
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	(4,212)	(2,282)
Other Comprehensive Income		
Changes in Revaluation Surplus - I,PP&E	-	-
Share of Other Comprehensive Income - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	-
Movements in Other Reserves	-	-
Total Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	(4,212)	(2,282)

Annual Financial Statements

Uniform Presentation of Finances

\$'000	Jun-2026 Forecast	Jun-2027 Budget
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Balance Sheet

Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	500	500
Trade and Other Receivables	5,260	5,433
Inventories	32	32
Total Current Assets	5,792	5,965
Non-Current Assets		
Equity Accounted Investments in Council Businesses	4,345	4,450
Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	611,535	612,159
Other Non-Current Assets	-	-
Total Non-Current Assets	615,881	616,609
Total Assets	621,672	622,574
Current Liabilities		
Trade & Other Payables	2,741	1,222
Current Borrowings	5,912	6,005
Current Provisions	4,415	4,415
Other Current Liabilities	-	-
Total Current Liabilities	13,068	11,642
Non-Current Liabilities		
Non-Current Borrowings	26,736	31,345
Non-Current Provisions	659	659
Liability - Equity Accounted Council Businesses	-	-
Total Non-Current Liabilities	27,395	32,005
Total Liabilities	40,463	43,646
Net Assets	581,209	578,927
Equity		
Accumulated Surplus	143,261	140,980
Asset Revaluation Reserves	437,850	437,850
Other Reserves	97	97
Total Equity	581,209	578,927

Annual Financial Statements

Uniform Presentation of Finances

\$'000	Jun-2026 Forecast	Jun-2027 Budget
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Cash Flow Statement

Cash Flow from Operating Activities		
Receipts		
Rates	56,224	58,914
Statutory Charges	1,673	1,717
User Charges	1,035	1,096
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Operating	3,585	4,329
Investment Income	25	26
Reimbursements	513	285
Other Income	760	426
Payments		
Payments for Employees	(26,479)	(28,082)
Payments for Materials, Contracts & Other Expenses	(30,700)	(28,833)
Finance Payments	(1,228)	(1,517)
Net Cash Provided By (or Used In) Operating Activities	5,408	8,360
Cash Flow from Investing Activities		
Receipts		
Amounts Received Specifically for New / Upgraded Assets	-	-
Grants, Subsidies and Contributions - Capital	1,119	1,329
Sale of Replaced Assets	314	-
Sale of Surplus Assets	-	-
Payments		
Expenditure on Renewal / Replacement of Assets	(17,335)	(12,101)
Expenditure on New / Upgraded Assets	(2,603)	(2,290)
Net Cash Provided By (or Used In) Investing Activities	(18,505)	(13,062)
Cash Flow from Financing Activities		
Receipts		
Proceeds from Borrowings	41,190	92,859
Proceeds from Bonds and Deposits	-	-
Payments		
Repayment of Borrowings	(27,843)	(88,158)
Repayment of Lease Liabilities	-	-
Net Cash Provided By (or Used In) Financing Activities	13,347	4,702
Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash Held	251	-
Cash & Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of Period	249	500
Cash & Cash Equivalents at the End of Period	500	-

Annual Financial Statements

Uniform Presentation of Finances

\$'000	Jun-2026 Forecast	Jun-2027 Budget
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Statement of Changes in Equity

Accumulated Surplus		
Balance at the end of previous reporting period	147,473	143,261
Net result for the year	(4,212)	(2,282)
Transfers from other reserves	-	-
Balance at the end of the period	143,261	140,980
Asset Revaluation Reserves		
Balance at the end of previous reporting period	437,850	437,850
Gain (Loss) on Revaluation of I, PP&E	-	-
Balance at the end of period	437,850	437,850
Other Reserves		
Balance at the end of previous reporting period	97	97
Transfers from Accumulated Surplus	-	-
Balance at the end of period	97	97
Total Equity at end of reporting period	581,209	578,927

Capital Works Program 2026-27 Draft

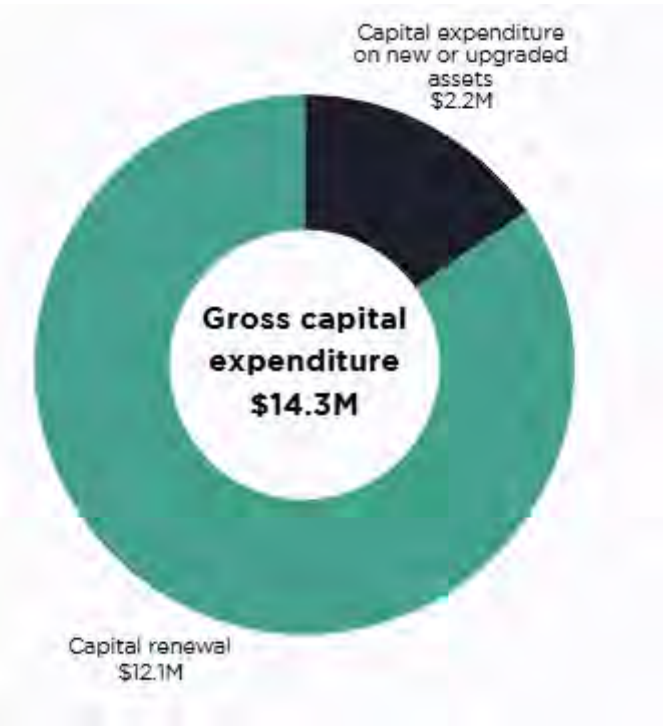


Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL

Overview

The 2026-27 Capital Budget continues to focus on the renewal of infrastructure. The Council has in excess of 50,000 assets that it manages and maintains to ensure that our current and future communities have access to the ongoing services these assets provide.

In 2026-27, Council's Capital Works Program will include:



New Capital Expenditure

The Annual Business Plan 2026-27 identifies Council's key infrastructure investments for the year, including new, upgraded, and renewed assets, supporting long-term community outcomes and aligned with the Strategic Plan.

Capital Renewal

The renewal program is informed by Council's Asset Management Plans, which apply lifecycle planning, condition assessments, and risk-based prioritisation to ensure the ongoing performance of existing assets. Sustained investment in renewal is critical to maintaining service levels, managing long-term costs, and delivering safe, reliable infrastructure that continues to benefit the community.

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2 Summary of Capital Expenditure

3 Detailed Capital Expenditure by Asset Category

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4 Community Wastewater
Management System

9 Plant & Fleet

4 Footpaths

9 ICT Equipment

5 Kerbing & Road Shoulders

9 Project Management & Contingency

5 Sport & Recreation



Summary

Asset Category	2026-27 Allocation
Bridges	\$405,000
Buildings	\$140,000
Cemeteries	\$40,000
Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS)	\$302,000
Footpaths	\$414,000
Kerbing & Road Shoulders	\$565,000
Sport and Recreation	\$46,000
Stormwater	\$150,000
Roads (sealed & unsealed)	\$4,874,000
Plant & Fleet	\$3,088,000
ICT Equipment	\$166,000
Other	\$512,000
Project Management & Contingency	\$1,400,000
TOTAL RENEWAL EXPENDITURE	\$12,101,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON NEW & UPGRADED ASSETS	\$2,290,000
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	\$14,391,000

Bridges

Proposed Project Name	Project Description	Suburb/Township
Smiths Gully Road	Re-lining bridge	MONTACUTE
Wenzel Road	Design & cost estimation	BALHANNAH
Spoehr Road Bridge	Deck drainage & concrete repairs	BALHANNAH
Onkaparinga Road	Span renewal/blasting	BRIDGEWATER
TOTAL		\$405,000

Buildings

Proposed Project Name	Project Description	Suburb/Township
Heathfield/Gumeracha Depots	Renew gates to meet security compliance requirements	GUMERACHA HEATHFIELD
TOTAL		\$140,000

Cemeteries

Proposed Project Name	Project Description	Suburb/Township
Cemetery Renewal Program	Renewal to meet legislative requirements, community expectations and safety.	REGIONWIDE
TOTAL		\$40,000

Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS)

Proposed Project Name	Project Description	Suburb/Township
Dual pipe renewal	Renew mains - Kersbrook Oval to pump station	KERSBROOK
Tank upgrades	Replace manual handling drums with 1000L chemical tanks	BIRDWOOD
Generator renewal	Church Street backup generator	BIRDWOOD
Diesel Generator	Replace Woodside mobile unit	WOODSIDE
TOTAL		\$302,000

Footpaths

Proposed Project Name	Project Description	Suburb/Township
Woodside Rd	Jeffrey St to Lobethal Rd	LOBETHAL
Woodside Rd	Main St to No 5 Woodside Rd	LOBETHAL
Longwood Rd	High school entrance to netball courts	HEATHFIELD
Longwood Rd	Willow Rd to May Rd	STIRLING
Fairview Rd	Adjacent northern on street parking	ALDGATE
Strathalbyn Rd	School crossing to Wembley Rd	ALDGATE
Heathfield Rd	Hender Rd to Keithly Rd	HEATHFIELD
Hender Rd	Eves Pl to Heathfield Rd	HEATHFIELD
Cemeteries	Internal footpaths	VARIOUS
TOTAL		\$414,000

Kerbing & Road Shoulders

Proposed Project Name	Project Description	Suburb/Township
Paratoo Rd	Renewal of kerb (Stirling East Primary School)	STIRLING
Longwood Rd	High school entrance renewal	HEATHFIELD
Various	Renewal of kerb in-line with reseal program	REGIONWIDE
Pfeifer Rd	Bird in Hand Rd to Harrison Rd	WOODSIDE
Various	Renewal of road shoulders in-line with reseal program	REGIONWIDE
TOTAL		\$565,000

Sport and Recreation

Proposed Project Name	Project Description	Suburb/Township
Court resurfacing		REGIONWIDE
TOTAL		\$46,000

Stormwater

Proposed Project Name	Project Description	Suburb/Township
Minor works	Renewal of pits, pipelines & other infrastructure	REGIONWIDE
Mt Barker Rd	Renewal of pits/pipes	STIRLING
TOTAL		\$150,000

Roads

**Note: the intended program may be subject to change*

Activity	Location	Suburb / Township
Reseal	Charlick Rd: Gulfview Street to Hillview Street	CRAFERS WEST
Reseal	Charlick Rd: Manna Gum Lane to Wyly Lane	CRAFERS WEST
Reseal	Charlick Rd: Hill Crest Avenue to Manna Gum Lane	CRAFERS WEST
Reseal	Charlick Rd: Wyly Lane to Gulfview Street	CRAFERS WEST
Reseal	Charlick Rd: Hillview Street to End of Hotmix	CRAFERS WEST
Reseal	Church Rd: Corkscrew Road to Corkscrew Deviation Road	MONTACUTE
Reseal	Coldstore Rd: Joyce Rd to Croft Rd	LENSWOOD
Reseal	Emmett Rd: Property No 23 Emmett Road to Sedum Place	CRAFERS WEST
Reseal	Emmett Rd: Hillcrest Avenue to Property No 23 Emmett Road	CRAFERS WEST
Reseal	Emmett Rd: Kerria Place to End of Road	CRAFERS WEST
Reseal	Emmett Rd: Sedum Place to Kerria Place	CRAFERS WEST
Reseal	Forreston Rd: Checker Hill Road to Winton Road	FORRESTON
Reseal	Forreston Rd: Agnes Street to Checker Hill Road	FORRESTON
Reseal	Forreston Rd: 20m North of Bridge Deck	GUMERACHA
Reseal	Glebe Rd: Onkaparinga Valley Road to Junction Road	BALHANNAH
Reseal	Honeysuckle Gr: Mount Barker Road to End of Road	BRIDGEWATER
Reseal	Ironbank Rd: Sturt Valley Road to Coats Road	IRONBANK
Reseal	Ironbank Rd: 15m after Morgan Road to Council Boundary	IRONBANK
Reseal	Kain Ave: Mount Barker Road to Old Mount Barker Road	ALDGATE
Reseal	Kintyre Rd: Heather Avenue to End of Road	WOODFORDE
Reseal	Lower Hermitage Rd: Rural Property Address 43 to Salem Bridge Road	LOWER HERMITAGE
Reseal	Milford Ave: Twin Street to Pine Street	STIRLING
Reseal	Military Rd: Moore Road to Council Boundary	WOODSIDE
Reseal	Military Rd: Woodside Nairne Road to Piney Ridge Road	WOODSIDE
Reseal	Military Rd: Five Bob Road to Moore Road	WOODSIDE
Reseal	Military Rd: Piney Ridge Road to Rural Property Address 221	WOODSIDE
Reseal	Military Rd: Property Address 221 to Five Bob Road	WOODSIDE
Reseal	Morella Gr: Shannon Road to Trenouth Street	BRIDGEWATER
Reseal	Paratoo Rd: Snows Road to Azalea Place	ALDGATE
Reseal	Paratoo Rd: Wakefield Court to Braeside Road	ALDGATE
Reseal	Paratoo Rd: Braeside Road to Boomerang Crescent	ALDGATE
Reseal	Paratoo Rd: Boomerang Crescent to Yam Street	ALDGATE

Roads Continued

Activity	Location	Suburb / Township
Reseal	Paratoo Rd: Yam Street to Old Mount Barker Road	ALDGATE
Reseal	Paratoo Rd: Azalea Place to Wakefield Court	ALDGATE
Reseal	Stock Rd: Aldgate Valley Road to Rural Property Address 158	MYLOR
Reseal	Stony Rise Rd: Lobethal Road to Jennings Drive	ASHTON
Reseal	Stony Rise Rd: Jennings Drive to 50m Before Tregarthen Road	ASHTON
Reseal	William St: Woodside Nairne Road to John Street	WOODSIDE
Reseal	Woods Hill Rd: Stony Rise Road to Ridge Track	ASHTON
Major Patch Future Reseals	Charlick Rd: Hillview Street to End of Hotmix	CRAFERS WEST
Major Patch Future Reseals	Coldstore Rd: Joyce Road to Croft Road	LENSWOOD
Major Patch Future Reseals	Coldstore Rd: Joyce Road to Croft Road	LENSWOOD
Major Patch Future Reseals	Emmett Rd: Sedum Place to Kerria Place	CRAFERS WEST
Major Patch Future Reseals	Forreston Rd: Watts Gulley Road (CFS Station) to Martin Hill Road	FORRESTON
Major Patch Future Reseals	Glebe Rd: Onkaparinga Valley Road to Junction Road	BALHANNAH
Major Patch Future Reseals	Ironbank Rd: Sturt Valley Road to Coats Road	IRONBANK
Major Patch Future Reseals	Ironbank Rd: 15m after Morgan Road to Council Boundary	IRONBANK
Major Patch Future Reseals	Kain Ave: Mount Barker Road to Old Mount Barker Road	ALDGATE
Major Patch Future Reseals	Kintyre Rd: Heather Avenue to End of Road	WOODFORDE
Major Patch Future Reseals	Longwood Rd: Hender Road to School Crossing	HEATHFIELD
Major Patch Future Reseals	Lower Hermitage Rd: Rural Property Address 43 to Salem Bridge Rd	LWR HERMITAGE
Major Patch Future Reseals	Military Rd: Moore Road to Council Boundary	WOODSIDE
Major Patch Future Reseals	Morella Gr: Shannon Road to Trenouth Street	BRIDGEWATER
Major Patch Future Reseals	Pfeiffer Rd: Bird in Hand	WOODSIDE
Major Patch Future Reseals	William St: Woodside Nairne Road to John Street	WOODSIDE
Major Patch Future Reseals	Woods Hill Rd: Stony Rise Road to Ridge Track	ASHTON
Full Pavement Renewal	Burdett Rd: CFS Station Rehabilitation	BASKET RANGE
Full Pavement Renewal	Sturt Valley Rd: Stage 2 - Change of Seal to Heather Road	IRONBANK
Pavement Investigations	Investigate and pavement design	REGIONWIDE
Unsealed	Adelaide Gully Rd: Millbrook Road to Mount Gawler Road	MILLBROOK
Unsealed	Airstrip Road Rd: RPA 122 to Mount Gawler Road	LWR HERMITAGE
Unsealed	Bonython Rd: South Para Road to Rural Property Address 60	KERSBROOK
Unsealed	Croft Rd: Rural Property Address 407 to Mawson Road	LENSWOOD
Unsealed	Croft Rd: Klopsch Road to Staffords Road	CUDLEE CREEK
TOTAL		\$4,874,000

Roads Continued

Activity	Location	Suburb / Township
Unsealed	Deloraine Rd: The Nuggett Road to Watts Gully Road	KERSBROOK
Unsealed	Kersbrook Forest Rd: End seal RA 309 to Forestry entrance & turn around	KERSBROOK
Unsealed	Muellers Rd: End of Sealed Section to Rural Property Address 112	BIRDWOOD
Unsealed	Muellers Rd: Rural Property Address 112 to Onkaparinga Valley Road	BIRDWOOD
Unsealed	Orana Drive Rd: Bradbury Road to end of road	MYLOR
Unsealed	Pitman Rd: Murray Road to Rural Property Address 39	INGLEWOOD
Unsealed	Pitt Rd: End of Sealed Section to Rural Property Address 104	PARACOMBE
Unsealed	Porteous Rd: Bradbury Road to Lamont Road	MYLOR
Unsealed	Porteous Rd: Ridge Road to Bradbury Road	MYLOR
Unsealed	Reefton Rd: Pfeiffer Road to End Of Seal	WOODSIDE
Unsealed	Stringy Bark Rd: Croft Road to Rural Property Address 134	CUDLEE CREEK
Unsealed	Walters Rd: Onkaparinga Valley Road to Size Road	OAKBANK
TOTAL		\$4,874,000

Other

Proposed Project Name	Project Description	Suburb/Township
Street litter bin replacement	Ongoing cage replacement	REGIONWIDE
Irrigation assets	Irrigation controllers/systems – 10 sites	REGIONWIDE
Safety barriers	Renewals in-line with 2026 Safety Barrier Audit	REGIONWIDE
Retaining wall	To support footpath - Wembley Rd	ALDGATE
Retaining wall	To support footpath - Snows Rd	STIRLING
Fence renewal program	Mount Barker Rd – 2 sections near Honey Suckle Rd	BRIDGEWATER
Fence renewal program	Mount Barker Rd - near Euston Rd	ALDGATE
Street furniture renewal	Seats, bike racks, benches and reserve signs	REGIONWIDE
Field staff	Capitalised wages (Civil & Arboriculture)	NA
TOTAL		\$512,000

Plant & Fleet

Category	Item	
Heavy plant	Renewal of heavy fleet	
Light fleet	Renewal of 17 vehicles in the light fleet	
Fleet infrastructure	Replace/relocate 6 electric vehicle chargers	
TOTAL		\$3,088,000

ICT Equipment

Proposed Project Name	Project Description	
ICT Equipment	General renewals	
TOTAL		\$166,000

Project Management & Contingency

Proposed Project Name	Project Description	
Project management costs	NA	
Contingency	NA	
TOTAL		\$1,400,000



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**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2026
AGENDA BUSINESS ITEM**

Item: 12.2

Responsible Officer: Gary Lewis
Director Corporate Services
Corporate Services

Subject: Community Engagement Framework

For: Decision

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's adoption of the revised draft Community Engagement Framework (provided at **Appendix 1**) following community engagement outcomes (provided at **Appendix 3**)

The Community Engagement Framework is a guiding document that describes a consistent and coordinated engagement approach for community engagement activities undertaken by Adelaide Hills Council.

The framework has been developed around what we heard from our community about their priorities for community engagement and Council decision-making processes during Phase 1 (September and October 2025) and incorporates feedback provided from community members, council staff and Elected Members around our draft Framework and Guiding Principles during Phase 2 of community engagement (18 March to 26 April 2026).

RECOMMENDATION

Council resolves:

- 1. That the Community Engagement Framework report be received and noted.**
 - 2. To note the Community Engagement Outcomes Report for Phase 2 of community engagement (Appendix 3).**
 - 3. To adopt the revised draft Community Engagement Framework, in Appendix 1, with an effective date of 10 June 2026.**
 - 4. To authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the proposed framework.**
-

1. BACKGROUND

Council Administration presented a Council Workshop on 19 August 2025, providing an overview of the project plan and proposed timeline for development of the Community Engagement Framework.

Phase 1 of community engagement commenced in September 2025. From 15 September to 26 October 2025, Council invited feedback from the community around their priorities for community engagement and what they thought should be included in the Community Engagement Framework.

A subsequent Council Workshop was presented on 1 December 2025, providing a summary of engagement findings from Phase 1 and presenting five draft Guiding Principles for the draft Framework. Council administration asked for feedback from Elected Members on the five draft Guiding Principles.

The draft Community Engagement Framework was developed from Phase 1 community engagement findings, feedback from Elected Members and input from council staff.

The draft Community engagement Framework was approved by Council to be taken out to community engagement at the Council Meeting on 10 March 2026.

12.4 Draft Community Engagement Framework

**Moved Cr Leith Mudge
S/- Cr Kirrilee Boyd**

91/26

Council resolves:

- 1. That the draft Community Engagement Framework report be received and noted.**
- 2. To note the Community Engagement Outcomes Report for Phase 1 of community engagement (Appendix 2).**

-
- 3. To approve commencement of community engagement on the draft Community Engagement Framework (Appendix 1), with the following amendment:**

To add the wording “participatory and deliberative engagement methods,” after the words co-design workshops in Step 5.

Carried Unanimously

Phase 2 of community engagement, seeking feedback on the draft Framework, was undertaken from 15 March to 26 April 2026.

2. ANALYSIS

➤ Strategic Management Plan/Functional Strategy/Council Policy Alignment

Strategic Plan 2024 – Your Place, Your Space

Goal 4 Organisation

- Objective 4 Engage and advocate for our communities
Priority 4.1 Develop a robust Community Engagement Framework including exploring opportunities for community to participate in decision making.
Priority 4.2 Advocate on behalf of the community to represent its needs and views with relevant stakeholders and decision makers.

Reconciliation Action Plan 2025-2026 (Relationships)

- Action 3. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.
Deliverable 3.1 Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.
Deliverable 3.2 Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.

Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024

- Priority 4. Participation in decision-making
Action 4.1 We will ensure our emerging Community Engagement Framework encompasses strategies to enable young people with disability to participate in Council decision-making processes.

- Priority 6. Engagement and consultation
Action 6.1 We will use the DHS engagement toolkit (when released) to consult and engage with people living with disability when developing policies and programs. We will provide employees training in the use of this toolkit where required
Action 6.2 We will adopt co-design principles to engage our residents with disability, their families and carers, in the ongoing management, maintenance and replacement planning of public infrastructure (including roads, bridges, signage, footpaths, trails) through consultation processes.
Action 6.3 We will ensure our emerging Community Engagement Framework includes guidance for employees on best practice in consulting and engaging with people with disability.

Priority 8. Accessible and available information

- Action 8.3 We will provide Easy Read training for employees and volunteers who produce public documents, information and communications related to Council consultations and decision-making.

Youth Action Plan 2021-2024

- Objective 5 Identify and create opportunities to engage with young people and those that support them.
Action 5.3 Review and update youth consultation methods, including community engagement processes, to ensure the needs of young people are taken into account in all Council decisions that affect them.
Action 5.4 Explore mechanisms to further engage young people in Council decision making.

➤ **Legal Implications**

Under the Local Government Act 1999 Council is required to maintain a Community Engagement Policy. The Community Engagement Policy sets out Council’s formal commitments, statutory requirements and minimum standards for community engagement.

The Community Engagement Framework does not create statutory obligations. It sits above the Community Engagement Policy. It provides the overarching principles, a best-practice approach for how council engages with our community. It supports implementation of Council’s Community Engagement Policy that provides the formal governance and legislative foundation for engagement activities.

The administration is seeking adoption of the draft Community Engagement Policy at this same Council Meeting, held on 9 June 2026.

➤ **Risk Management Implications**

Council resolving to adopt the revised Community Engagement Framework as recommended will assist with mitigating the risk of:

Lack of community and stakeholder input into the development of the draft Community Engagement Framework leading to a framework that doesn’t represent the communities’ priorities or expectations.

Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Target Risk
High (3B)	Medium (2C)	Low

Modified existing issue.

➤ **Financial and Resource Implications**

An operational budget has been assigned for the development of the Community Engagement Framework. Staff hours required to implement the Framework, are within existing staff resources and operational budgets.

➤ **Customer Service and Community/Cultural Implications**

It is a community expectation that Council will facilitate all community members to have a voice in Council decision making and to be kept informed of Council decisions. It is appropriate that they are consulted on the draft Community Engagement Framework.

➤ **Sustainability Implications**

Not applicable

➤ **Engagement/Consultation conducted in the development of the report**

Consultation on the development of this report was as follows:

- Council Committees:* Not Applicable
Council Workshops: Project Plan presented on 19 August 2025.
Phase 1 community engagement outcomes presented on 1 December 2025.
Advisory Groups: Not Applicable

External Agencies: Meeting with Peramangk Aboriginal Corporation Inc. on 26 September 2026

Community: Phase 1 of community Engagement was undertaken from 15 September to 26 October 2025. During the engagement period council staff undertook a range of face-to-face activities with community members seeking their ideas and input to develop Council’s draft Community Engagement Framework.
 Phase 2 of community engagement was undertaken from 18 March to 26 April 2026. During the engagement period council staff undertook a range of activities with community members and staff, seeking their ideas and feedback on the draft Framework.

➤ **Additional Analysis**

Community Engagement Outcomes – Phase 2

The purpose of the engagement was to assist us to understand our community's level of support for the draft Community Engagement Framework.

We received nine (9) formal feedback responses relating to the draft Framework from community members and three (3) responses from council staff. The table below shows the themes of feedback received regarding the draft Community Engagement Framework.

Theme	Detail
Support for draft Framework	Statements in support of the draft Framework or highlighting support for a particular section of the draft Framework.
What changes?	Questions about how community input will affect council decision-making and what will change through the implementation of the framework.
Decision making steps	Questions or recommended improvements to steps within the Democracy and Decision-Making model.
Continuous engagement	Questions about how the continuous loop of engagement will work and how we will close the loop with the community.
Levels of engagement	Request for clear explanation and examples of the different levels of engagement.
Length and purpose of document	Question about the document purpose (policy / procedure / framework) and concerns about length of document.
Practical examples	Request for practical examples of how council will put the Framework and principles into action.
Measuring success	Question about how council measure the success / implementation of the framework.
Staff training	Question about how staff be supported to improve / grow engagement practices.
Aboriginal Engagement Strategy	Question about whether council will be creating an Peramangk engagement strategy.

Expense of engagement	Question / concern about costs required to implement the Framework and undertake engagement activities.
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Amendments / revisions to draft Community Engagement Framework

Following the outcomes of community engagement, some amendments have been made to the draft Framework to correct spelling/grammar errors and to address factors that were important to our community.

Requested change / addition	Draft Framework Amendment
Include explanation / detail about how community input can influence council decision-making.	The below sentence has been added to Step 3 of the Democracy and Decision-Making model. “Information is shared about the engagement opportunity including how community members can get involved and how their ideas and feedback will inform the decision-making process.”
Include detail about how community engagement plans/ approaches are developed and approved.	The below bold text has been added to Step 5 of the Democracy and decision-Making Model. “A community engagement plan and approach is developed by the council project team and approved by the relevant council delegate (Manager, Director or Elected Body depending on the scale and complexity of the project).”
What does continuous engagement look like? How will this be implemented?	We have added additional text to the relevant dot point under Guiding Principle 1: Communication and Connection, shown below in bold: “Creating a continuous loop of engagement information from early project planning through to decision-making and outcome delivery. This may include meetings with community members, updates on council websites and social channels, emails to subscribers and promotion through our libraries and community centres.”
Provide a simple explanation about the different levels of engagement.	We have added an appendix to the draft Framework called “Engagement Levels” . The appendix includes a table of engagement levels including descriptions and example engagement methods and projects. The appendix does not include a copy of the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum as the spectrum can only be included with permission from the International Association of Public Participation and any modifications to the way the spectrum is displayed, including changes to content to align the levels, purpose and tools to activities of council, must be approved by the International Association of Public Participation.

How will council measure the success of the Framework and whether anything has changed?	We have added a “How we will measure and review” section to the draft Framework. This section explains how council administration will measure the implementation of the Framework.
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3. OPTIONS

Council has the following options:

- I. Adoption of the revised Community Engagement Framework.
- II. Rejection of the revised Community Engagement Framework.

Should Council identify the need for substantial amendments to the draft Community Engagement Framework, it is recommended that they be referred to staff for review to allow for analysis of the implications of the amendments, prior to the matter being brought back to Council for further consideration.

4. APPENDICES

- (1) Draft Community Engagement Framework (clean)
- (2) Draft Community Engagement Framework (track changed)
- (3) Draft Community Engagement Framework Community Engagement Outcomes Report

Appendix 1

Draft Community Engagement Framework (clean)



Join the Conversation

Draft

Community Engagement Framework



Working together to make well-informed decisions for our Hills communities

Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges that we conduct our business on the traditional Country of the Peramangk and Kaurna people. We pay our respects to Ancestors and Elders past and present as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land.

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Mayor's Message

Getting involved in Council planning and decision-making is one of the most powerful ways you can help shape the future of our community.

When we hear directly from our residents, community groups and business owners, Council is able to make informed decisions that truly reflect what our community needs and wants.

I'm pleased to introduce this Community Engagement Framework. It sets out how we'll connect with you and involve you in decisions that matter. The framework is built on what you've told us is most important and will guide us to engage in ways that align with your expectations and preferences.

Your ideas and opinions matter, so I encourage you to get involved in conversations that will shape the future of life in the Adelaide Hills.

Nathan Daniell
Mayor



Introduction

The Adelaide Hills Council area is made up of 57 townships and suburbs, each with unique identities and characteristics. These localities are spread across 795km² and are home to over 40,000 residents.

We are committed to giving people across the Hills opportunities to join in conversations that matter to them, and ensuring Council decisions reflect the voices of our Adelaide Hills communities.

Community engagement undertaken by Adelaide Hills Council is informed by legislative and regulatory requirements, including the *Local Government Act 1999* and the *Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter*. These requirements are given effect through Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Under the *Local Government Act 1999* Council is required to maintain a Community Engagement Policy. The Policy sets out Council's formal commitments, statutory requirements and minimum standards for community engagement.

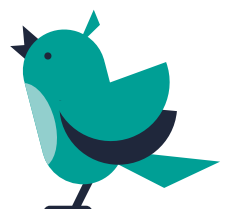
The Community Engagement Framework sits above the Community Engagement Policy. It provides the overarching principles, approach and culture for how Council engages with our community, while the Policy will provide the formal governance and legislative foundation for engagement activities.

The Framework is a guiding document that describes a consistent and coordinated engagement approach to community engagement. It explains our engagement principles (our commitments to our community) and outlines how our community can contribute to Council decision-making processes.

The Community Engagement Framework is not a policy and does not create statutory obligations. It is intended to guide best-practice engagement across Council activities and to support the implementation of Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Through implementation of the framework, we aim to:

- Deliver clear, timely and accessible communication about engagement opportunities so people understand what Council is doing, why it matters, and how they can be involved.
- Provide early and ongoing opportunities to participate, recognising that meaningful engagement starts well before decisions are finalised.
- Manage community expectations by being transparent about project purpose, influence and constraints, including what is open for feedback and what is not.
- Tell the stories about how community input has influenced decisions by closing the loop with our community, explaining how feedback has shaped decisions, and why certain suggestions may not have been adopted.
- Build trusting and ongoing relationships between Council staff, Representative Elected Body and the community based on openness, respect and shared understanding.
- Empower our community by valuing local knowledge, supporting collaboration and enabling shared decision-making where appropriate.
- Strengthen capability and consistency across council, increase staff confidence and align engagement best practice with Council's strategic objectives.



What is community engagement?

Community engagement can be described as any process that involves the community in decision-making and uses that community input to make better, more informed decisions.

It is about providing genuine opportunities for diverse communities to meaningfully contribute to problem solving, opportunities and outcomes that affect or interest them.



Our approach

The way Council engages with our community will vary depending on the topic, complexity of the issue or idea and the level of influence stakeholders (e.g. community members, business owners, relevant organisations and agencies) may have over an outcome.

Community engagement can include informing, consultation and active community participation. Our engagement work is guided by the *Engagement Institute's International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation*.

Some aspects of community engagement are directed by statutory requirements such as the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act) and *Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter 2025* (the Charter).

We may choose to undertake community engagement activities not prescribed by the Act, the Charter or any other legislation, when we believe engagement will lead to better outcomes for our community and for Council and will enhance decision-making and our ability to deliver on the outcomes stated in our Strategic Plan. Council will endeavour to achieve best practice community engagement whenever possible.

Community engagement versus customer requests

There are a variety of ways residents and stakeholders can share ideas and concerns with council including by submitting a Customer Request. Customer Requests are typically individual transactions, focusing on reporting an issue or seeking a service (e.g. reporting a pothole, requesting tree pruning) to ensure a prompt, direct response.

These requests may involve conversations with the affected resident/s however they are not considered to be a community engagement process.

The most effective way to influence Council planning and rate spending, is to participate in Council strategic planning and budgeting processes as either an individual or community group and to work with council staff and Representative Elected Body to plan for future needs and priorities within your local area.

We are committed to giving people across the Hills the opportunity to take part in conversations that matter to them

How did we engage with you?

During September and October 2025, we engaged with community members and stakeholders across the Adelaide Hills to share information about the development of the Community Engagement Framework and have a range of discussions about what is important and valuable to them to feature in this document.

We asked our community about what good community engagement looks like and what level of involvement they would like to have in Council decision-making processes.

Engagement activities undertaken:



Engagement feedback / participation (number of people):



“Transparency is very important. Offering multiple ways to engage.”





What we heard

What does good community engagement look like?

- Timely and ongoing communication
- Inclusive and accessible engagement
- Transparency and trust
- Collaborative approach
- People focused
- Strategic and purposeful
- Effective use of feedback
- Empower and recognise community knowledge and experience

How can we improve the way we engage with our community?

- Promotion and communication
- Accessibility and inclusion
- Responsiveness and transparency
- Relationship building
- Empower and support
- Systems and processes
- Training and culture
- Strategic use of data

Do you have any feedback you'd like to share about your experiences engaging with council?

Positive Experiences

- Authentic engagement
- Valued community spaces / assets
- Effective communication
- Staff and team support
- Tools and platforms

Challenges and Frustrations

- Communication gaps
- Decision-making issues
- Process and planning weaknesses
- Support and culture
- Inclusivity and reach
- Tools and resources
- Project challenges

“Good engagement has an excellent feedback ‘loop’ so that people who contribute feel really connected, rather than just being part of a policy (i.e. something that Council ‘has to do’ rather than wants to do)”

Our Guiding Principles

Our community shared what is most important for us to consider when it comes to good community engagement and Council decision-making processes.

Through these discussions with community members, key stakeholders and council staff, we developed three guiding principles, which underpin our community engagement practices.

Guiding Principles

- 1 Communication and Connection** - We will communicate in ways that are clear, timely and accessible, recognising that our community engages through many different channels. We will grow genuine and respectful relationships and ensure people can meaningfully participate in conversations that affect or interest them.
- 2 Purpose, Influence and Transparency** - We will be clear about why we are engaging and inform our community of the ways in which community engagement can shape and influence local decisions. We will build community trust and confidence by creating opportunities for open and honest conversations and clearly communicating outcomes of Council decisions and project next steps.
- 3 Active Participation** - We will grow engagement participation and community capacity through embracing local knowledge and lived experience and involving our community throughout decision-making processes.

How we will deliver on our principles

Communication and Connection

We will communicate in ways that are clear, timely and accessible, recognising that our community engages through many different channels. We will grow genuine and respectful relationships and ensure everybody can meaningfully participate in conversations that affect or interest them.

We will deliver on our principle by:

- Providing clear and timely information in accessible language, about engagement opportunities through a variety of formats and promotional channels.
- Making engagement participation flexible by creating a variety of ways, times and locations for community members to participate including informal opportunities and community forums.
- Creating a continuous loop of engagement information from early project planning through to decision-making and outcome delivery. This may include meetings with community members, updates on council websites and social channels, emails to subscribers and promotion through our libraries and community centres.
- Seeking representations from a wide variety of members across our diverse community and designing engagements so people can participate meaningfully, regardless of their background, ability or circumstances.
- Creating two-way conversations and engagement channels where each party has the opportunity to learn and take something away from the experience.

Purpose, Influence and Transparency

We will be clear about why we are engaging and inform our community of the ways in which community engagement can shape and influence local decisions. We will build community trust and confidence by creating opportunities for open and honest conversations and clearly communicating outcomes of Council decisions and project next steps.

We will deliver on our principle by:

- Clearly defining the engagement purpose and scope of influence at the beginning of a project so we can share with our community what information we are seeking and speak to the people who are most affected.
- Avoiding predetermined plans where community has limited opportunity to shape outcomes, whenever possible.
- Creating consistent engagement processes and approaches and embedding engagement practices across all departments of council to increase community confidence and trust.
- Explaining and promoting how community feedback has been utilised and has influenced project next steps or outcomes. Using community data and feedback across a variety of council projects and planning initiatives to avoid asking the same question twice.
- Being honest and transparent about project limitations, explaining when and why a project or idea can't proceed and making the hard decisions when they need to be made.
- Clearly explaining Council's role and our decision-making processes and inviting our community to participate in these processes.

Active Participation

We will grow engagement participation and community capacity through embracing local knowledge and lived experience and involving our community throughout decision-making processes.

We will deliver on our principle by:

- Respecting cultural knowledge, and experience and collaborating with Kurna and Peramangk Aboriginal communities and authorities to seek their input and advice.
- Speaking to local experts, people who use the spaces and those who have lived experience, during the engagement or project initiation and throughout the project delivery.
- Putting people at the centre of our planning by respecting that they like to participate in different ways and bring different backgrounds, abilities and experiences that add value to our planning and decision-making processes.
- Empowering community groups and stakeholders to become engagement champions and active citizens, advocating for local priorities, furthering engagement opportunities within their communities and working with council to achieve shared outcomes.
- Investigating opportunities for co-design and co-funded initiatives, including participatory and deliberative engagement methods, when aspirations, project scopes and objectives align.

Democracy & Decision-Making

The graphic below shows a visual description of how Council's Representative Elected Body (Mayor and Elected Members) considers collective ideas and issues identified to reach an outcome or decision.

The model takes you through the various steps that may be involved in the decision-making process and shows the possible opportunities for community members and other stakeholders to share ideas, knowledge, lived experiences and feedback throughout this process.

Every idea or issue identified will not automatically lead to a decision-making and community engagement process. An idea or issue must first be assessed and be determined to align with Council or other government strategic priorities and to require a council decision-making and engagement process to reach a resolution.

Some matters are determined to require a community engagement process under the *Local Government Act 1999* and/or the *Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter*.



See page 13 of the Framework for further information and clarification about each of these steps of the decision-making process.

Decision making steps

Step 1

An idea or issue is identified which requires a community engagement process. This idea or issue may be identified as part of Council strategic planning and budgeting processes or may be raised by a resident or community group. Not every idea or issue identified will lead to a decision-making and/or community engagement process.

Step 2

The project is scoped and the issue or idea is defined through conversations with council staff, community members and any other relevant stakeholders. Negotiables and non-negotiables for the project are determined.

Step 3

A community engagement plan and approach is developed by the council project team and approved by the relevant council delegate (Manager, Director, CEO or Elected Body depending on the scale and complexity of the project). This may involve discussions with community members and relevant stakeholders. Information is shared about the engagement opportunity including how community members can get involved and how their ideas and feedback will inform the decision-making process.

Step 4

Stakeholders are identified including level of participation and engagement tools/techniques for each. The level of engagement and methods of engagement selected will be dependent on the complexity of the issue or idea, the scope of the project, and the level of community influence possible.

Step 5

The engagement plan is implemented. Information is shared about the engagement opportunity including how community members can get involved and how their ideas and feedback can influence the decision or outcome. Community members and other key stakeholders are brought together to discuss the issue or idea. This could involve surveys, community forums, one-on-one meetings, co-design workshops and online engagement tools.

Step 6

Feedback is collated and assessed by relevant staff. Key themes of feedback are identified, and any further clarification of engagement findings is sought from contributors. A community engagement outcomes report is prepared.

Step 7

The issue or idea is presented by staff to the Representative Elected Body for review. Information may be delivered via a Council Workshop presentation or Council Meeting Report and could include presentation of the issue or idea, analysis of the engagement findings, consideration of other influences and recommended next steps.

Step 8

The Representative Elected Body makes a decision after considering community feedback alongside other decision-making influences. Interested community members and other stakeholders may choose to present at or attend the relevant Council Meeting where this decision is discussed.

Influences on decision-making that may be considered by the Representative Elected Body:

- Representative Elected Body and staff local knowledge and expertise.
- Legislation and policies.
- Previous Council decisions.
- Council strategic priorities.
- Legal or expert advice.
- Community knowledge and feedback including community engagement outcomes and any presentations to Council.
- Council capacity and resources – available budgets and staffing and any competing projects.
- Environmental, social and economic context.
- Research and analysis.

Step 9

Community members and stakeholders are advised of the decision and next steps. Information is shared with engagement contributors about the decision including how it was reached, the community engagement outcomes, and any planned next steps staff will take.

Step 10

Implementation of the decision or outcome and evaluation and review of engagement process. This review will be used to inform future community engagement and decision-making processes. Feedback collected across the community engagement process will be shared with relevant staff across council to inform future and ongoing projects.

Roles of people in engagement

Community members and stakeholders

Become informed and involved in community engagement opportunities that interest and impact them.

Review engagement materials and provide informed feedback.

Be open to all ideas and respect other people's opinions and perspectives.

Adhere to the engagement process and timeframe provided.

Understand that many factors/influences contribute to a decision, and that the outcome may not always be the one they desire.

Follow designated avenues to bring ideas and concerns to council staff and Representative Elected Body for consideration.

Treat Council staff and Representative Elected Body with respect.

Representative Elected Body

Endorse and support Council's Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework.

Uphold Council's Community Engagement Principles.

Be open to all ideas and respect other people's opinions and perspectives.

Help identify issues and opportunities that benefit from community engagement.

Promote participation in community engagement activities and opportunities.

Promote one shared message and goal in line with project scope and guidelines.

Be objective when engaging in conversations out in the community.

Review and consider the results of community engagement findings when forming opinions and making decisions.

Council staff

Uphold Council's Community Engagement Principles.

Consult community engagement staff about the need for community engagement before initiating work or making decisions.

Partner with communication and engagement staff to design genuine and meaningful engagement processes and opportunities.

Incorporate community engagement timing and budgets into project planning, ensuring adequate time is allocated for community members to learn about and participate in engagement opportunities.

Ensure community members have the information required to be informed and participate meaningfully.

Encourage discussion and understanding of all viewpoints and try to be as objective as possible.

Evaluate, document and report engagement findings to Council and the community.

Continuously build skills / look for opportunities for improvement and share knowledge to build staff capacity.

How we will measure and review

This framework will guide community engagement activities undertaken by Adelaide Hills Council through to 2030. The framework may be updated in line with the development and endorsement of Council's next Strategic Plan.

We will monitor the implementation of the framework through the development of an internal Community Engagement Action Plan. The Action Plan will allow us to track our progress and monitor and report against our objectives and principles.



Appendix 1: Engagement Levels

The table below shows the different levels of community engagement council may undertake based on the goals of the engagement, ability for community to influence the decision or outcome and the scale and complexity of the project or decision.

Community engagement can include informing, consulting, and active community participation. Our engagement work is guided by the Engagement Institute’s International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation.

<i>Inform</i>	<i>Consult</i>	<i>Active Participation</i>
<p>We will inform our community when there is limited or no opportunity for community members to influence a decision or outcome. This may be due to legislative, technical or safety requirements.</p>	<p>We will consult with our community when we have a project or idea that needs further community input before a decision can be made.</p>	<p>We will actively involve our community when we have the opportunity to work together around an idea or issue and have the supporting resources to enable this process.</p>
<p>We will explain to our community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we are doing and why. • The impact of the decision or outcome. • Where further information can be found. • How any concerns or questions can be shared. 	<p>We will ask our community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For their preferences. • For any ideas for improvement. • What the impact would/could be of the proposed decision or outcome. 	<p>We will work with our community to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What people would like to see happen. • How they would like to be involved. • What we should consider or be aware of. • How we should proceed.

Inform***Consult******Active
Participation*****Example engagement methods and tools:**

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on Adelaide Hills Website and Engagement Hub • Factsheets • E-newsletter articles • Social media posts • Information in libraries / customer service centres | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys or feedback forms • Meetings with key stakeholders • Idea submissions • Drop-in/ pop-up engagement sessions • workshops | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups • Deliberative panels • Co-design workshops • Community forums • Advisory groups • Community asset mapping |
|--|---|--|

Example engagement projects:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council election information • Minor changes to office opening hours • Roadworks / temporary road closures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or reviewed policies • Local reserve upgrades • Lease agreement over 5 years • Revisions to existing By-laws | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main street or precinct master plans • Regional reserve upgrades • Development of Council strategic plans |
|--|---|---|





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Appendix 2

*Draft Community Engagement Framework
(tracked changed)*

Draft Community Engagement Framework

Working together to make well-informed decisions for our Hills communities



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Acknowledgement of Country

2

Council acknowledges that we conduct our business on the traditional Country of the Peramangk and Kurna people. We pay our respects to Ancestors and Elders past and present as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land.

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Mayor's message

Getting involved in Council planning and decision-making is one of the most powerful ways you can help shape the future of our community.

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When we hear directly from our residents, community groups and business owners, Council is able to make informed decisions that truly reflect what our community needs and wants.

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I'm pleased to introduce this Community Engagement Framework. It sets out how we'll connect with you and involve you in decisions that matter. The framework is built on what you've told us is most important and will guide us to engage in ways that align with your expectations and preferences.

Your ideas and opinions matter, so I encourage you to get involved in conversations that will shape the future of life in the Adelaide Hills.

Nathan Daniell

~~Mayor's message to be added to final version~~

Introduction

The Adelaide Hills Council area is made up of 57 townships and suburbs, each with unique identities and characteristics. These localities are spread across 795km² and are ~~the~~ home to over 40,000 residents.

We are committed to giving people across the Hills ~~the opportunities~~ to ~~take part~~ join in conversations that matter to them, and to ~~making sure~~ ensuring Council decisions reflect the voices of our Adelaide Hills communities.

Community engagement undertaken by Adelaide Hills Council is informed by legislative and regulatory requirements, including the *Local Government Act 1999* and the *Local Government Community Engagement Charter*. These requirements are given effect through Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Under the *Local Government Act 1999* Council is required to maintain a Community Engagement Policy. ~~The Community Engagement Policy~~ ~~The Policy~~ sets out Council's formal commitments, statutory requirements and minimum standards for community engagement.

The Community Engagement Framework sits above the Community Engagement Policy. It provides the overarching principles, approach and culture for how Council engages with our community, while the Policy will provide the formal governance and legislative foundation for engagement activities.

The Framework is a guiding document that describes a consistent and coordinated engagement approach to community engagement. It explains our engagement principles (our commitments to our community) and outlines how our community can contribute to Council decision-making processes.

The Community Engagement Framework is not a policy and does not create statutory obligations. It is intended to guide best-practice engagement across Council activities and to support the implementation of Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Through implementation of the framework, we aim to:

- **Deliver clear, timely and accessible communication about engagement opportunities** so people understand what Council is doing, why it matters, and how they can be involved.
- **Provide early and ongoing opportunities to participate**, recognising that meaningful engagement starts well before decisions are finalised.
- **Manage community expectations by being transparent about project purpose, influence and constraints**, including what is open for feedback and what is not.
- **Tell the stories about how community input has influenced decisions** by closing the loop with our community, explaining how feedback has shaped decisions, and why certain suggestions may not have been adopted.
- **Build trust and ongoing relationships between Council staff, Elected Members and the community** based on openness, respect and shared understanding.
- **Empower our community** by valuing local knowledge, supporting collaboration and enabling shared decision-making where appropriate.
- **Strengthen capability and consistency across council**, increasing staff confidence and aligning engagement best practice with Council's strategic objectives.

What is community engagement?

Community engagement can be described as any process that involves the community in decision-making and uses that community input to make better, more informed decisions.

It is about providing genuine opportunities for diverse communities to meaningfully contribute to problem solvings, opportunities and outcomes that affect or interest them.

Our approach

The way Council engages with our community will vary depending on the topic, complexity of the issue or idea and the level of influence stakeholders (e.g. community members, business owners, relevant organisations and agencies) may have over an outcome.

Community engagement can include informing, consultation and active community participation. Our engagement work is guided by the Engagement Institute's International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation.

Some aspects of community engagement are directed by statutory requirements such as the Local Government Act 1999 (the Act) and Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter 2025 (the Charter).

We may choose to undertake community engagement activities not prescribed by the Act, the Charter or any other legislation, when we believe engagement will lead to a better outcomes for our community and for Council and will enhance our decision-making ~~or and~~ our ability to deliver on the outcomes stated in our Strategic Plan. ~~On the other hand, at times, Council may not be able to achieve best practice community engagement despite our best efforts to do so.—~~Council will endeavour to achieve best practice community engagement whenever possible.

Community engagement versus customer requests

There are a variety of ways residents and stakeholders can share ideas and concerns with council including by submitting a Customer Request. Customer Requests are typically individual transactions, focusing on reporting an issue or seeking a service (e.g. reporting a pothole, requesting tree pruning) to ensure a prompt, direct response.

These requests may involve conversations with the affected resident/s however they are not considered to be a community engagement process.

The most effective way to influence Council planning and rate spending, is to participate in 4 Council strategic planning and budgeting processes as either an individual or community group and to work with council staff and Elected Members to plan for future needs and priorities within your local area.

How did we engage with you?

During September and October 2025, we engaged with community members and stakeholders across the Adelaide Hills to share information about the development of the Community Engagement Framework and have a range of discussions about what is important and valuable to them to feature in this document.

We asked our community about what good community engagement looks like and what level of involvement they would like to have in Council decision-making processes.

Infographics and text sharing what we asked, how we asked and what we heard

Our Guiding Principles

Our community shared what is most important for us to consider when it comes to good community engagement and Council decision-making processes.

Through these discussions with ~~our~~ community members, key stakeholders and council staff, we ~~have~~ developed three guiding principles, which underpin our community engagement practices.

Guiding Principles

- 1. Communication and Connection** - We will communicate in ways that are clear, timely and accessible, recognising that our community engages through many different channels. We will grow genuine and respectful relationships and ensure people can meaningfully participate in conversations that affect or interest them.
- 2. Purpose, Influence and Transparency** - We will be clear about why we are engaging and inform our community of the ways in which community engagement can shape and influence local decisions. We will build community trust and confidence by creating opportunities for open and honest conversations and clearly communicating outcomes of Council decisions and project next steps.
- 3. Active Participation** - We will grow engagement participation and community capacity through embracing local knowledge and lived experience and involving our community throughout decision-making processes.

How we will deliver on our principles

Communication and Connection -

We will communicate in ways that are clear, timely and accessible, recognising that our community engages through many different channels. We will grow genuine and respectful relationships and ensure everybody can meaningfully participate in conversations that affect or interest them.

We will deliver on our principle by:

- Providing clear and timely information in accessible language, about engagement opportunities through a variety of formats and promotional channels.

- Making engagement participation flexible by creating a variety of ways, times and locations for community members to participate including informal opportunities and community forums. ⁵
- Creating a continuous loop of engagement information from early project planning through to decision-making and outcome delivery ~~and establishing clear contact processes and connection opportunities for community members to connect with council staff and Elected Members. This may include meetings with community members, updates on council websites and social channels, emails to subscribers and promotion through our libraries and community centres.~~
- Seeking representations from a wide variety of members across our diverse community and designing engagements so people can participate meaningfully, regardless of their background, ability or circumstances.
- Creating two-way conversations and engagement channels where each party has the opportunity to learn and take something away from the experience.

Purpose, Influence and transparency -

We will be clear about why we are engaging and inform our community of the ways in which community engagement can shape and influence local decisions. We will build community trust and confidence by creating opportunities for open and honest conversations and clearly communicating outcomes of Council decisions and project next steps.

We will deliver on our principle by:

- Clearly defining the engagement purpose and scope of influence at the beginning of a project so we can share with our community what information we are seeking and speak to the people who are most affected.
- Avoiding predetermined plans where community has limited opportunity to shape outcomes, whenever possible.
- Creating consistent engagement processes and approaches and embedding engagement practices across all departments of council to increase community confidence and trust.
- Explaining and promoting how community feedback has been utilised and has influenced project next steps or outcomes. Using community data and feedback across a variety of council projects and planning initiatives to avoid asking the same question twice.
- Being honest and transparent about project limitations, explaining when and why a project or idea can't proceed and making the hard decisions when they need to be made.
- Clearly explaining Council's role and our decision-making processes and inviting our community to participate in these processes.

Active Participation -

We will grow engagement participation and community capacity through embracing local knowledge and lived experience and involving our community throughout decision-making processes.

We will deliver on our principle by:

- Respecting cultural knowledge, and experience and collaborating with Kurna and Peramangk Aboriginal communities and authorities to seek their input and advice.

- Speaking to local experts, people who use the spaces and those who have lived experience, during the engagement or project initiation and throughout the project delivery.
- Putting people at the centre of our planning by respecting that they like to participate in different ways and bring different backgrounds, abilities and experiences that add value to our planning and decision-making processes.
- Empowering community groups and stakeholders to become engagement champions and active citizens, advocating for local priorities, furthering engagement opportunities within their communities and working with council to achieve shared outcomes.
- Investigating opportunities for co-design and co-funded initiatives, including participatory and deliberative engagement methods, when aspirations, project scopes and objectives align.

Democracy and Decision Making

The graphic below shows a visual representation of how Council's Representative Elected Body deliberates on collective ideas and issues raised or identified to reach an outcome or decision. The model takes you through the various steps that may be involved in the decision-making process and highlights the opportunities for community members and other stakeholders to share ideas, knowledge, lived experiences and feedback throughout this process.

Every idea or issue identified will not automatically lead to a decision-making and/or community engagement process. An idea or issue must first be assessed and be determined to align with Council and/or other government strategic priorities and to require a council decision-making and/or engagement process to reach a resolution.

Decision making steps:

Step 1: An idea or issue is identified which requires a community engagement process. This idea or issue may be identified as part of Council strategic planning and budgeting processes or may be raised by a resident or community group. Not every idea or issue identified will lead to a decision-making and/or community engagement process.

Step 2: The project is scoped and the issue or idea is defined through conversations with council staff, community members and any other relevant stakeholders. Negotiables and non-negotiables for the project are determined.

Step 3: A community engagement plan and approach is developed by the council project team and approved by the relevant council delegate (Manager, Director, CEO or Elected Body depending on the scale and complexity of the project). This may involve discussions with community members and relevant stakeholders.

Step 4: Stakeholders are identified including level of participation and engagement tools/techniques for each. The level of engagement and methods of engagement selected will be dependent on the complexity of the issue or idea, the scope of the project, and the level of community influence possible.

Step 5: The engagement plan is implemented. Information is shared about the engagement opportunity including how community members can get involved and how their ideas and feedback will inform the decision-making process. Community members and other key stakeholders are brought together to discuss the issue or idea. This could involve surveys, community forums, one-on-one meetings, co-design workshops and online engagement tools.

Step 6: Feedback is collated and assessed by relevant staff. Key themes of feedback are identified, and any further clarification of engagement findings is sought from contributors. A community engagement outcomes report is prepared.

Step 7: The issue or idea is presented by staff to the Representative Elected Body for review. Information may be delivered via a Council Workshop presentation or Council Meeting Report and could include presentation of the issue or idea, analysis of the engagement findings, consideration of other influences and recommended next steps.

Step 8: The Representative Elected Body makes a decision after considering community feedback alongside other decision-making influences. Interested community members and other stakeholders may choose to present at or attend the relevant Council Meeting where this decision is discussed.

Influences on decision-making that may be considered by the Representative Elected Body:

- Representative Elected Body and staff local knowledge and expertise.
- Legislation and policies.
- Previous Council decisions.
- Council strategic priorities.
- Legal or expert advice.
- Community knowledge and feedback including community engagement outcomes and any presentations to Council.
- Council capacity and resources – available budgets and staffing and any competing projects.
- Environmental, social and economic context.
- Research and analysis.

Step 9: Community members and stakeholders are advised of the decision and next steps. Information is shared with engagement contributors about the decision including how it was reached, the community engagement outcomes, and any planned next steps staff will take.

Step 10: Implementation of the decision or outcome and evaluation and review of engagement process. This review will be used to inform future community engagement and decision-making processes. Feedback collected across the community engagement process will be shared with relevant staff across council to inform future and ongoing projects.

Roles of people in engagement

Community members and stakeholders	Elected Members	Council staff
<p>Become informed and involved in community engagement opportunities that interest and impact them.</p> <p>Review engagement materials and provide informed feedback.</p> <p>Be open to all ideas and respect other people's opinions and perspectives.</p> <p>Adhere to the engagement process and timeframe provided.</p> <p>Understand that many factors/influences contribute to a decision, and that the outcome may not always be the one they desire.</p> <p>Follow designated avenues to bring ideas and concerns to council staff and Elected Members for consideration.</p> <p>Treat Council staff and Elected Members with respect.</p>	<p>Endorse and support Council's Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework.</p> <p>Uphold Council's Community Engagement Principles.</p> <p>Be open to all ideas and respect other people's opinions and perspectives.</p> <p>Help identify issues and opportunities that benefit from community engagement.</p> <p>Promote participation in community engagement activities and opportunities.</p> <p>Promote one shared message and goal in line with project scope and guidelines.</p> <p>Be objective when engaging in conversations out in the community.</p> <p>Review and consider the results of community engagement findings when forming opinions and making decisions.</p>	<p>Uphold Council's Community Engagement Principles.</p> <p>Consult community engagement staff about the need for community engagement before initiating work or making decisions.</p> <p>Partner with communication and engagement staff to design genuine and meaningful engagement processes and opportunities.</p> <p>Incorporate community engagement timing and budgets into project planning, ensuring adequate time is allocated for community members to learn about and participate in engagement opportunities.</p> <p>Ensure community members have the information required to be informed and participate meaningfully.</p> <p>Encourage discussion and understanding of all viewpoints and try to be as objective as possible.</p> <p>Evaluate, document and report engagement findings to Council and the community.</p> <p>Continuously build skills / look for opportunities for improvement and share knowledge to build staff capacity.</p>

How we will measure and review

9

This framework will guide community engagement activities undertaken by Adelaide Hills Council through to 2030. The framework may be updated in line with the development and endorsement of Council's next Strategic Plan.

We will monitor the implementation of the framework through the development of an internal Community Engagement Action Plan. The Action Plan will allow us to track our progress and monitor and report against our objectives and principles.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media posts • Information in libraries / customer service centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop-in/ pop-up engagement sessions • workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community asset mapping
<p>Example engagement projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council election information • Minor changes to office opening hours • Roadworks / temporary road closures 	<p>Example engagement projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or reviewed policies • Local reserve upgrades • Lease agreement over 5 years • Revisions to existing By-laws 	<p>Example engagement projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main street or precinct master plans • Regional reserve upgrades • Development of Council strategic plans

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Appendix 3

*Draft Community Engagement Framework
Community Engagement Outcomes Report*

Draft Community Engagement Framework

Community Engagement Outcomes Report

May 2026



Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL

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1. Introduction

During September and October 2025, we asked our community to help shape the way we engage in the Adelaide Hills. We are developing a Community Engagement Framework that will guide the way we undertake community engagement activities, and we asked our community to help us to understand what's most important to feature in this framework.

The ideas and feedback shared were used to develop our draft Community Engagement Framework and we then asked our community if we heard them correctly. What did they think of the draft Framework? Was there anything missing or that could be improved on?

This engagement ran from the 18 March through to Sunday 26 April 2026.

We received nine (9) formal feedback responses relating to the draft Framework from community members and three (3) responses from staff. You can see the full list of engagement participation activities below in *Table 2: Participation Source*.

This report presents feedback received during the engagement period and will be presented to Council and made available to those who participated in the engagement on Council's Engagement Platform.

2. Summary of Engagement

Engagement approach

The purpose of the engagement was to assist us to understand our community's level of support for the draft Community Engagement Framework.

A community engagement plan was developed, and community engagement was undertaken between 18 March and 26 April 2026.

Our engagement approach aimed to provide detail about what community engagement is, the difference between the role of the Community Engagement Framework and Policy, our legal obligations under the Minister for Local Governments Community Engagement Charter (the Charter) and the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act) and what we are looking to achieve through developing a community engagement framework.

Questions were asked to determine participants level of support for the draft Framework, the draft Guiding Principles within the Framework and any additional feedback or comments.

A feedback form was developed and provided online and in hardcopy format. It contained both closed and open style questions. An easy read version of the feedback form was created as well as an easy read version of the draft Community Engagement Framework.

Feedback could be provided via any of the following options:

- Online - complete our online feedback form.
- Hardcopy feedback - collect a hardcopy feedback form from any of our libraries or customer service centres or print your own from the Document Library.
- In writing - submit feedback in writing via email (engage@ahc.sa.gov.au) or via letter addressed to 63 Mount Barker Rd, Stirling SA 5152.
- Invite us to a meeting - we offered members of community or residents' groups, to invite us along to one of their regular meetings.
- Phone - give us a call to share your feedback.

Distribution and promotion

The opportunity to provide feedback was promoted through the following channels:

- Notices posted on Council's website and engagement platform.
- Courier Advertisement on 25 March 2026.
- Hills Voice E-newsletter.
- Email to engagement subscribers with relevant categories of interest and who had participated in previous rounds of engagement.
- Email to relevant community and stakeholder groups.
- Information and hardcopy feedback forms available at libraries/customer service centres at Gumeracha, Stirling, Norton Summit and Woodside.
- Social media promotion.
- Engagement activities throughout March and April.

Email and social media promotion statistics are presented in table 1 Promotional Statistics.

Table 1 Promotional statistics

Media	Number of posts / emails / Newsletter	Reach	Engagement (reaction, comment, share or opening link)
Adelaide Hills Council Facebook	2 posts	1,727 views	10 reactions, 3 shares, 2 link clicks
Adelaide Hills Council Instagram	2 posts	750 impressions, 28 engagements	15 reactions, 21 clicks, 2 reposts
Hills Voice April e-Newsletter	1 email	4,336 emails sent 1,626 emails opened	513 email clicks
Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub email	2 emails	2,360 emails sent, 1,048 emails opened	91 email clicks
Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub page	NA	401 views, 166 visitors	5 contributors, 1 follower

A copy of information provided on Council's Engagement Platform and feedback form is available in Appendix A.

All verbatim online and hardcopy feedback responses are provided in Appendix B.

All written submissions (emails and letters) are provided in Appendix C.

All e-newsletters, advertisements and social media posts are provided in Appendix D.

3. Community Engagement Participation

This section provides details about participation during the engagement period including an overview of the different ways that community engagement feedback was captured.

A summary of community engagement findings is available under section 5. Summary of Community Engagement Findings.

Participation source

The following table displays how participants provided feedback or were involved in discussions, during the engagement period.

Table 2 Participation source

Formal feedback responses	Number Participating
Online feedback form submissions	4
Hardcopy feedback form submissions	1
Written response – email, letter, customer request	4
Staff feedback	3
Formal feedback responses	12
Informal feedback responses	
AHRWG network meeting	7 attendees
HERD network meeting	3 attendees
CFS engagement officers meeting	3 attendees
Lenswood Community Forums	31 attendees, 3 discussions
Day of Doing Information Session	1 discussion
Informal feedback interactions / responses	17
Total participation across all streams	29

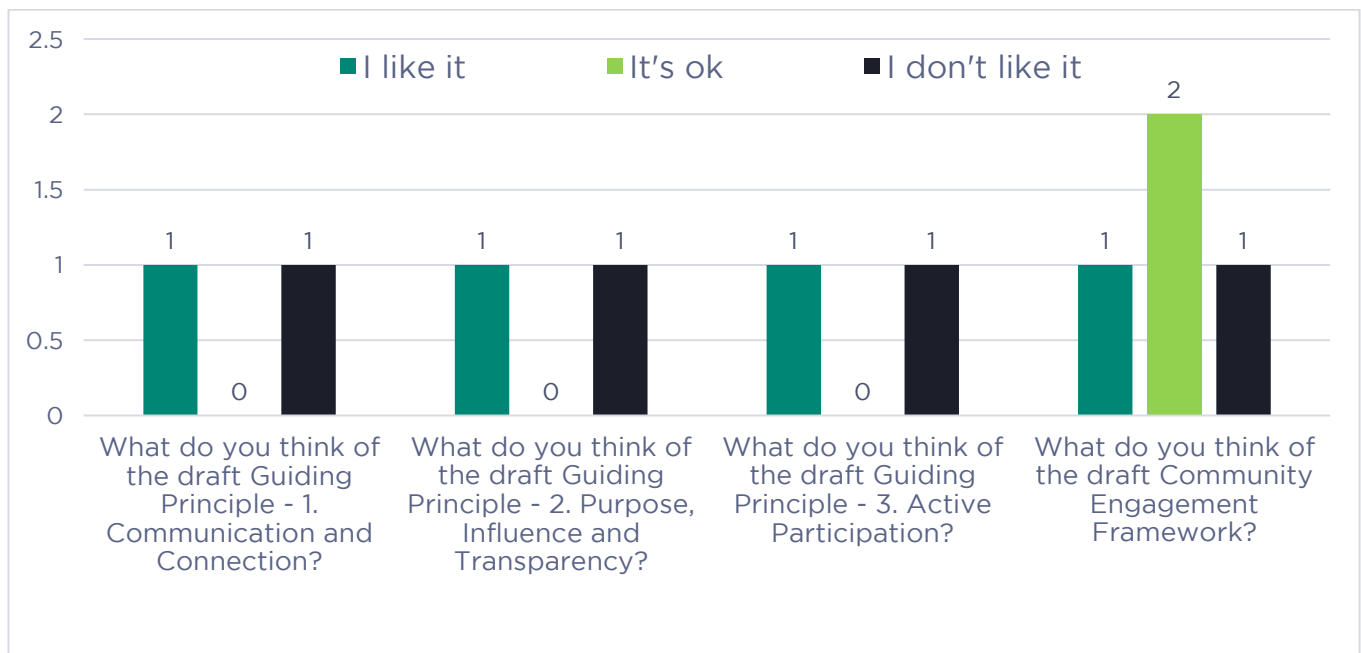
Online and hardcopy feedback form

Six online and hardcopy feedback responses were received in relation to the draft Community Engagement Framework, with one person completing the survey twice, resulting in five final responses.

Of the five respondents, two chose to provide their level of support for the draft Guiding Principles and overall Framework, three chose to only provide their level of support for the overall Framework and one chose to only provide commentary.

Two of the respondents provided feedback that wasn't in line with draft Framework, but rather a general complaint about council's operations and/or services.

Graph 1: Level of support for Guiding Principles and draft Framework



Themes of feedback received through online and hardcopy feedback forms:

- How will community input affect council decision-making / what will change through implementation of the framework.
- Improvements / additions to steps within the Democracy and Decision-Making model.
- How will the continuous loop of engagement work / how will council close the loop.
- Clear explanation and examples for different engagement levels and how the framework will be put into action.
- Measuring the success / implementation of the framework.
- Support provided for staff to improve / grow engagement practices.
- General support for draft Framework.
- Concern about cost of engagement and implementing the framework
- General complaint about council or council services

Verbatim responses can be seen in Appendix B.

Emails and written feedback

Four feedback responses were received via email during the engagement period from residents and community associations. Two emails were from members of the same resident association.

Themes of feedback received via email:

- Concern about document length and purpose.
- General support for draft Framework and focus on engagement.
- Comment about cost of engagement and implementing the framework.
- Framework covers the basics but doesn't exceed expectations.
- Accessibility of Elected Members in the community.

Verbatim responses can be seen in Appendix B.

Stakeholder Meetings and engagement forums

On commencement of engagement, emails were sent to resident and community associations across the Adelaide Hills as well as the Peramangk and Kurna Aboriginal Corporation and other key community organisations.

These emails promoted the engagement and included the range of ways groups could get involved. The emails offered the opportunity for a staff member to attend a meeting to discuss the draft Framework on request.

We also considered any existing community network meetings and the opportunity to discuss the draft Framework in these settings.

Groups / stakeholders that staff met with:

- Hills Emergency Resilience Disability Group (HERD).
- Adelaide Hills Reconciliation Working Group (AHRWG).
- CFS Engagement Officers for Station 1 and 2.

Lenswood Community Forum

The Lenswood Community Forum was held on Monday 30 March at the Lenswood Bowling and was attended by 31 community members. The forum included a range of presentations and discussions from council representatives and community leaders.

Community members had the opportunity to participate in a range of engagement activities with council staff and Elected Members at the forum including speaking to council's Community Engagement Coordinator about the draft Community Engagement Framework and Policy and about opportunities to work with council staff on local initiatives and decision-making discussions.

Themes of feedback across face-to-face discussions:

- Importance of transparency and honesty.
- Respect and time given to resident groups to provide knowledge and needs for their local area.
- Importance of the identity of Adelaide Hills and individual townships.
- Difficulty identifying and accessing the appropriate contact/s within council.

- Perception that concerns are not being heard or understood by council.

Staff feedback

Three AHC staff members provided feedback on the draft Community Engagement Framework. Their feedback centred around the wording of the draft Guiding Principles and decision-making steps and highlighted a few spelling and grammar errors that could be improved.

4. Summary of Engagement Findings

This section provides a summary of feedback themes received from across all streams of engagement participation during the months of March and April 2026.

Table 3 *Community engagement key themes*

Theme	Feedback / comments
Support for draft Framework	<p>“Overall, a simple, short and easy to read document that provides a level of clarity and reassurance to the community”</p> <p>“Overall, this is a thoughtful and community centred Framework that clearly reflects the values of transparency, inclusion and respect. I particularly appreciate the emphasis on closing the feedback loop and recognising diverse ways people engage with Council.”</p> <p>“Introduction is good and clear.”</p> <p>“As an overarching framework I think it reflects the Council’s approach and is an easy to read, well written document.”</p> <p>“The Community Engagement Draft looks good. We appreciate the efforts of council to work closely with the community. We welcome the focus on community consultation.”</p>
What changes? How will community input effect council decision-making? What will change through the implementation of the framework?	<p>“While the Framework explains how consultation occurs, it could be strengthened by: A clearer, repeated through line showing how community input directly influences decisions, priorities, or trade offs”.</p> <p>“You do not say what is going to be different in the future. You are still using forced card tick-boxes and giving me 3 x 6 on which to write my answers. That is not communicating.”</p> <p>“I think that the framework does address the basics and will serve as an overarching document, however it will not exceed expectations or be an exemplar of engagement.”</p>
Decision making steps Questions or recommended improvements to steps within the Democracy and Decision-Making and model.	<p>Step 1: “How in Step 1 does one get an idea onto the loop?”</p> <p>Step 3: “prudent to have a co-design element in this step”.</p> <p>Step 5: “The approval/endorsement process for how the engagement plan got from Step 3 to Step 5 seems unclear”.</p>

<p>Continuous engagement</p> <p>How will the continuous loop of engagement work?</p> <p>How will council close the loop?</p>	<p>“How will the ‘continuous loop of engagement’ actually work, when and how does one get on the merry go round?”</p> <p>Step 7 and 8: “I would like to see clearer wording here around how the community and stakeholders are kept informed during this time, as sometimes this can be months whilst a decision is made”.</p>
<p>Levels of engagement</p> <p>Clear explanation and examples for different engagement levels.</p>	<p>“Very plain English examples of what each level looks like in practice (e.g. “inform” vs “consult” vs “collaborate”).</p> <p>Clear statements about when collaboration is not appropriate, to manage expectations.</p> <p>This helps avoid “consultation fatigue” and disappointment, particularly in complex or constrained projects.”</p> <p>“The Customer Request could be expanded to make it one approach as a community engagement process. Individuals who use this service could be a community group.</p> <p>The participation in Council strategic planning and budgeting processes is the aim yes. However, as an ongoing process how this occurs needs to be defined.”</p>
<p>Too long / document purpose</p> <p>The document purpose seems to be unclear with parts framework, policy and procedure.</p>	<p>“Broadly I think that the document, whilst well intentioned, is too long and will not engage most residents. Less is best and I would recommend a heavy edit to bring the text to 3 to 4 pages at most. It is quite repetitive.”</p> <p>“The Framework is wordy and dry.”</p> <p>“It would be good to differentiate between a framework document, policy document and a procedural document . This lacks the clarity to meet the requirements of each. It seems that all 3 documents (in part) have been rolled into one and I understood that you wanted an overarching Framework document only.”</p>
<p>Practical examples</p> <p>Practical examples of how council will put the Framework and principles into action.</p>	<p>“The ‘how’ of it isn’t clear. Lots of ‘what’. Maybe provide examples of the ideas or issues which require community engagement and the how.”</p> <p>“The commitment to inclusion is strong, but I’d suggest adding:</p> <p>Practical examples of how AHC will reach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • young people • working families • people with disability • isolated rural residents”
<p>Measuring success</p> <p>How will council measure the success / implementation of the framework?</p>	<p>“The Framework would benefit from clearer success indicators, for example:</p> <p>How Council will know engagement has been effective</p> <p>What success looks like beyond participation numbers (e.g. quality of insight, trust, clarity, satisfaction with process)”</p>
<p>Staff training</p>	<p>“You reference culture and approach, which is excellent. You could strengthen this by:</p>

How will staff be supported to improve / grow engagement practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief statement on how staff will be supported and trained to lead respectful, high quality engagement. • Acknowledging the emotional and relational load of engagement work for staff, and the need for consistency across departments. <p>This reinforces that good engagement is a skill, not just a process.”</p>
Aboriginal Engagement Strategy	“Peramangk communities are the only lawful communities that have right of abode on their lands. Where is your statement of redress and the Peramangk community engagement framework?”
Expense of engagement Costs to implement the Framework / to undertake engagement activities.	<p>“This all sounds very expensive. If the core business of council isn’t delivering necessary services in as cost effective way as possible, the mark has been missed.</p> <p>This draft framework points to the financial issues council is in and us, the ratepayer, have no choice but to pay for the poor direction.”</p> <p>“I appreciate in saying this that AHC is a small council with limited resources and serving a geographically dispersed community with diverse opinions and needs, which limits the ability to manage these matters.”</p>

5. Conclusion

Following feedback received from community members and staff, a range of amendments have been proposed for the final version of the draft Community Engagement Framework.

The table below explains the amendments that have been made in line with community feedback and provides information about the ideas that were not able to be incorporated.

Table 4 *Council responses and proposed changes following community feedback*

Theme	Council response / notes
What changes? How will community input effect council decision-making? What will change through the implementation of the framework?	<p>Sentence added to Step 3: Information is shared about the engagement opportunity including how community members can get involved and how their ideas and feedback will inform the decision-making process.</p> <p>We have strived to create a framework that provides a clear engagement approach and principles for staff and Elected Members to follow, while also offering opportunities for us to grow our engagement practises and investigate opportunities into participatory and deliberative engagement methods when the right opportunities present.</p> <p>The Framework gives us flexibility to plan for individual projects and initiatives and to grow our engagement practices as we go.</p>
Decision making steps	Step 1: explains that this idea or issue may be identified as part of Council strategic planning and budgeting

<p>Questions or recommended improvements to steps within the Decision-making and Democracy Model.</p>	<p>processes or may be raised by a resident or community group. E.g. through a customer request, meeting between council staff and community member / group.</p> <p>Step 2: While community members and groups may be involved in early discussions that help unpack the idea or issue and inform council next steps, the development of a community engagement plan and approach will be undertaken by Council staff.</p> <p>A community engagement plan looks at the engagement purpose and scope and identifies potential engagement methods and stakeholders. There is always opportunity to add engagement activities and stakeholders to the engagement plan, as the project progresses.</p> <p>We have added the following bold text to Step 5: A community engagement plan and approach is developed by the council project team and approved by the relevant council delegate (Manager, Director or Elected Body depending on the scale and complexity of the project).</p>
<p>Continuous engagement</p> <p>How will the continuous loop of engagement work? How will we close the loop?</p>	<p>We have added additional text to this point shown below in bold:</p> <p>Creating a continuous loop of engagement information from early project planning through to decision-making and outcome delivery. This may include meetings with community members, updates on council websites and social channels, emails to subscribers and promotion through our libraries and community centres.</p>
<p>Levels of engagement</p> <p>Clear explanation and examples for different engagement levels.</p>	<p>We have added an appendix to the draft Framework called "Engagement Levels". The appendix includes a table of engagement levels including descriptions and example engagement methods and projects.</p>
<p>Too long / too wordy / Document purpose</p> <p>The document purpose seems to be unclear with parts framework, policy and procedure.</p>	<p>It has been interesting working out exactly what the draft Framework should incorporate. We agree that we have included some elements that are more procedural such as the Democracy and Decision-Making model, Roles of People in Engagement table and now the Engagement Levels appendix.</p> <p>These elements were added following feedback we received during the first and second phases of engagement.</p>
<p>Practical examples</p> <p>Practical examples of how council will put the Framework and principles into action.</p>	<p>In order to try and keep the length of the Framework manageable, we have reduced references or examples of specific engagement methods, tools and projects.</p> <p>Each engagement process is unique and needs a tailored approach based on the idea or issue being discussed, project location, invested or affected community and stakeholders, existing knowledge and any previous projects or decisions.</p>

	The Framework gives us flexibility to plan for individual projects and initiatives and to select the most appropriate engagement approach for each.
Measuring success How will council measure the success / implementation of the framework?	We have added a “How we will measure and review” section to the draft Framework.
Staff training How will staff be supported to improve / grow engagement practices.	Following endorsement of the final Framework, an internal Engagement Tool Kit will be developed to support council staff undertaking engagement activities and promote the range of training and development opportunities available to staff.
Aboriginal Engagement Strategy	As part of the implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan, staff are working with Kurna and Peramangk custodians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives around the development of a Cultural Engagement Framework.
Expense of engagement Costs to implement the Framework / to undertake engagement activities.	Implementation of this Framework will involve working with staff across council to grow their knowledge and capacity to undertake engagement activities and build engagement practices into everyday work. Any additional costs required to undertake engagement activities will be built into individual project costs and requested as part of Council’s annual budgeting processes.

6. Appendices

Appendix A - Information Provided and Feedback Form



Home / Your Say, Your Way

What's happening

During September and October 2025, we asked for your help to shape the way we engage in the Adelaide Hills. We are developing a Community Engagement Framework that will guide the way we undertake community engagement activities, and we asked you to help us to understand what's most important to feature in this framework.

To find out what we heard from our community during Phase 1 of community engagement, follow the link below or read the Engagement Outcomes Report.

The ideas and feedback you shared have been used to develop our draft Community Engagement Framework and now we want to find out if we heard you correctly. You can review the draft Framework and share your feedback by following the link below.

The Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter was published in December 2025. We have reviewed our Public Consultation Policy and created a draft Community Engagement Policy in line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1999* and the Community Engagement Charter. We are seeking our communities' feedback on the draft Policy.

Timeline

- ★ **Community Engagement - Phase 2**
 18 March and 26 April 2026.
 Feedback on draft Community Engagement Framework.
- ★ **Community Engagement - Phase 3**
 25 March to 26 April 2026.
 Feedback on draft Community Engagement Policy.

[See more](#)

Links

our communities' feedback on the draft Policy.

LINKS

- [The Local Government Act 1999](#)
- [Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter](#)
- [AHC Public Consultation Policy](#)
- [Your Say, Your Way Community Engagement Outcomes Report](#)



Phase 1 - Your Say, Your Way

View information we shared and find out what we heard during Phase 1 of community engagement.

[Find out more >](#)



Phase 2- Draft Framework

Share your feedback on our draft Community Engagement Framework.

[Share your feedback >](#)



Phase 3 - Draft Policy

Share your feedback on our draft Community Engagement Policy.

[Share your feedback >](#)

FAQs

- ? [What is community engagement?](#)
- ? [What is a community engagement framework?](#)
- ? [What is the difference between council's community engagement framework and policy?](#)
- ? [What factors form part of Council's decision-making processes?](#)
- ? [What is the difference between community engagement and a customer request?](#)

Who's Listening

Melissa Clarke

Community Engagement Coordinator, Adelaide Hills Council

Phone: 8408 0400

Email: mclarke@ahc.sa.gov.au

Share your feedback on our draft Community Engagement Framework.

What do you like? Is there anything missing? We'd like your help to finalise this important community document.

During September and October 2025, we asked for your help to shape the way we engage in the Adelaide Hills.

The ideas and feedback you shared have been used to develop our draft Community Engagement Framework and now we want to find out if we heard you correctly.

What do you like? is there anything missing?

You can review the draft Framework and share your feedback, by selecting the tabs below.



Draft Community Engagement Framework

[View document >](#)



Easy Read Draft Community Engagement Framework

[View document >](#)

Feedback Form - Draft Community Engagement Framework



Help us to finalise our Community Engagement Framework.

You can skip past any question you don't want to answer, and once you have completed your form you can return it by:

- Dropping it into an Adelaide Hills Council library or customer service centre.
- Mailing it to 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling SA 5152.
- Emailing it to engage@ahc.sa.gov.au.



Engagement closes on Sunday 26 April 2026. This submission form is also available online at engage.ahc.sa.gov.au.

About you

The below questions help us to understand who we are engaging with. All demographic questions are optional.

Your name

Your suburb, township or locality

Your email address

Your age group

Select one answer only	
<input type="radio"/> Under 14 years	<input type="radio"/> 55 to 64 years
<input type="radio"/> 15 to 24 years	<input type="radio"/> 65 to 74 years
<input type="radio"/> 25 to 34 years	<input type="radio"/> 75 to 84 years
<input type="radio"/> 35 to 44 years	<input type="radio"/> 85 years and above
<input type="radio"/> 45 to 54 years	

Your gender

Select one answer only			
<input type="radio"/> Male	<input type="radio"/> Female	<input type="radio"/> Non-binary	<input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say
<input type="radio"/> Prefer to select-describe			

I would like to provide feedback on:

Select all that apply
<input type="radio"/> The draft guiding principles and overall framework
<input type="radio"/> Just the overall framework (skip to Q12)

Your feedback

Guiding Principle: Communication and Connection

We will communicate in ways that are clear, timely and accessible, recognising that our community engages through many different channels. We will grow genuine and respectful relationships and ensure everybody can meaningfully participate in conversations that affect or interest them.

What do you think of the draft guiding principle - Communication and Connection?

Select one answer only			
<input type="radio"/> I like it	<input type="radio"/> It's ok	<input type="radio"/> I don't like it	<input type="radio"/> I'm not sure

Please provide more feedback about your response.

Guiding Principle: Purpose, Influence and Transparency

We will be clear about why we are engaging and inform our community of the ways in which community engagement can shape and influence local decisions. We will build community trust and confidence by creating opportunities for open and honest conversations and clearly communicating outcomes of Council decisions and project next steps.

What do you think of the draft guiding principle - Purpose, Influence and Trust?

Select one answer only			
<input type="radio"/> I like it	<input type="radio"/> It's ok	<input type="radio"/> I don't like it	<input type="radio"/> I'm not sure

Please provide more feedback about your response.

Guiding Principle: Active Participation

We will grow engagement participation and community capacity through embracing local knowledge and lived experience and involving our community throughout decision-making processes.

What do you think of the draft guiding principle - Active Participation?

Select one answer only			
<input type="radio"/> I like it	<input type="radio"/> It's ok	<input type="radio"/> I don't like it	<input type="radio"/> I'm not sure

Please provide more feedback about your response.

--

Overall Framework

What do you think of the draft Community Engagement Framework?

Select one answer only

<input type="radio"/> I like it	<input type="radio"/> It's ok	<input type="radio"/> I don't like it	<input type="radio"/> I'm not sure
---------------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------------------	------------------------------------

Please provide more feedback about your response.

What do you like? Is there anything missing? Do you have any additional feedback?

--

Draft Community Engagement Framework

Easy Read Feedback Form



We would like your help to finalise our draft Community Engagement Framework.

You can view the easy read draft Community Engagement Framework by visiting Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub

www.engage.ahc.sa.gov.au

You can also collect a copy from one of our libraries or customer service centres at the below locations:

- Stirling Coventry Library – 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling.
- Woodside Library – 26 Onkaparinga Road, Woodside.
- Gumeracha Library – 45 Albert Street, Gumeracha.
- The Summit Community Centre – 4 Crescent Drive, Norton Summit.



Please call council on 8408 0400 if you need any assistance.



You

About you

Your name



Your suburb or township



Your email or phone number

If you would like to stay in the loop.



Your feedback



What do you think of the draft Community Engagement Framework?

Put a tick or cross next to 1 answer below.



I like it



It's ok



I don't like it



I'm not sure



Do you have feedback about the draft

Framework you would like to share?

This could be about what you like or don't like
or if anything is missing.



**THANK
YOU**



Thank you for your feedback.

Please hand your completed form to staff at an Adelaide Hills Library or Customer Service Centre, by Sunday 26 April 2026.

Or you can mail your completed feedback form to Adelaide Hills Council at 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling SA 5152.

Image credit

Envato website artists and photographers: Lady waving - by Sangiao_photography
 Person thinking - by DC_Studio
 Person writing – by ADDICTIVE_STOCK
 Thank you - by kenishirotie

Your Say, Your Way

**Share your feedback on our draft
Community Engagement Framework**



*Your ideas and feedback
have helped us to develop our draft
Community Engagement Framework and
now we want to find out if we heard you correctly.*


You can view the draft Framework and share your feedback, by visiting our online Engagement Hub below, or collecting a copy from one of our libraries or customer service centres.


Community engagement is open until Sunday 26 April 2026.



Scan to find out more

 engage.ahc.sa.gov.au

 mail@ahc.sa.gov.au

 8408 0400



Draft Community Engagement Framework



Share your feedback on our draft Community Engagement Framework.

What do you like? Is there anything missing? We want your help to finalise this important community document.

The Community Engagement Framework is a guiding document that describes a consistent and coordinated engagement approach for community engagement activities undertaken by Adelaide Hills Council.

The Framework explains our engagement principles (our commitments to our community) and how our community can contribute to Council decision-making processes.

You can view a copy of the draft Community Engagement Framework online on Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub or access a printed copy at our libraries and customer service centres at Stirling, Woodside, Gumeracha and Norton Summit.



Guiding Principles:

Communication and Connection

We will communicate in ways that are clear, timely and accessible, recognising that our community engages through many different channels. We will grow genuine and respectful relationships and ensure everybody can meaningfully participate in conversations that affect or interest them.

Purpose, Influence and Transparency

We will be clear about why we are engaging and inform our community of the ways in which community engagement can shape and influence local decisions. We will build community trust and confidence by creating opportunities for open and honest conversations and clearly communicating outcomes of Council decisions and project next steps.

Active Participation

We will grow engagement participation and community capacity through embracing local knowledge and lived experience and involving our community throughout decision-making processes.

08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



Draft Community Engagement Framework



How can I get involved?

There are a variety of ways that you can provide your ideas and feedback on our draft Community Engagement Framework.

- Online - complete our online feedback form on Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub.
- Hardcopy feedback - collect a hardcopy feedback form from any of our libraries or customer service centres or print your own from the Document Library.
- In writing - submit your ideas or feedback in writing via email send to engage@ahc.sa.gov.au or via letter addressed to 63 Mount Barker Rd, Stirling SA 5152.
- Invite us to a meeting - if you are part of a community or residents' group, you can invite us along to one of your regular meetings so we can discuss your ideas and feedback.



If you need assistance to provide your feedback, please email engage@ahc.sa.gov.au or call 8408 0400.

Phase 2 of engagement closes on Sunday 26 April 2026. Your feedback will be utilised to help us finalise the Community Engagement Framework to be presented to Council in June 2026.

08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



Appendix B - Verbatim comments from online and hardcopy feedback responses

Please provide more information about your response (Overall draft Community Engagement Framework)

Introduction is good and clear.

The Customer Request could be expanded to make it one approach as a community engagement process. Individuals who use this service could be a community group. The participation in Council strategic planning and budgeting processes is the aim yes. However, as an ongoing process how this occurs needs to be defined.

Positive Experiences:

Good feedback from Planning on the Livable Housing Standards (NCC 2022). Consistent support from Resilience Officers and team, especially on disability. Opportunities to assist Council with disseminating relevant information and speaking publicly.

Visible, proactive Mayor.

Challenges and Frustrations:

Low visibility of Councillors (except at election time). Little opportunity to interact with them. Not very approachable.

Recognise that the formal Council Meetings can include community members. However, little opportunity to interact in this environment.

How will the 'continuous loop of engagement' actually work, when and how does one get on the merry go round?

How in Step 1 does one get an idea onto the loop? Ideas like more Disabled Parking places, given there are now more disabled people being issued with these permits (Australia's Disability Parking Permit (DPP) with the change to the criteria in November 2025.

Another idea is Textile Recycling, great opportunities if this was upscaled locally. This is for the sort of unwanted/unsatisfactory clothing (mostly fast fashion garments) that go shops forward to rag dealers, much going overseas to flood the market and beaches) or expensively placed in landfill. Australians are amongst the highest consumers, buying an average of 56 new clothing items per year (23 kg per person). Only about 1% garments are recycled into new products.

The Framework is wordy and dry. The 'how' of it isn't clear. Lots of 'what'. Maybe provide examples of the ideas or issues which require community engagement and the how.

This all sounds very expensive. If the core business of council isn't delivering necessary services in as cost effective way as possible, the mark has been missed.

This draft framework points to the financial issues council is in and us, the ratepayer, have no choice but to pay for the poor direction.

Not good enough. Back to basics please.

1. Make the "what changes because of engagement" more explicit

While the Framework explains how consultation occurs, it could be strengthened by: A clearer, repeated through line showing how community input directly influences decisions, priorities, or trade offs.

One short, visual "feedback loop" diagram showing:

We asked → We heard → We did → We couldn't do (and why)

This would reinforce trust and demonstrate accountability in a very concrete way.

2. Stronger differentiation between engagement levels

The spectrum of engagement is sound, but could benefit from:

Very plain English examples of what each level looks like in practice (e.g. "inform" vs "consult" vs "collaborate").

Clear statements about when collaboration is not appropriate, to manage expectations. This helps avoid "consultation fatigue" and disappointment, particularly in complex or constrained projects.

3. Practical guidance for hard to reach voices

The commitment to inclusion is strong, but I'd suggest adding:

Practical examples of how AHC will reach:

young people

working families

people with disability

isolated rural residents

Even a short case example or vignette would help staff and community members see this in action.

4. Staff capability and culture

You reference culture and approach, which is excellent. You could strengthen this by: A brief statement on how staff will be supported and trained to lead respectful, high quality engagement.

Acknowledging the emotional and relational load of engagement work for staff, and the need for consistency across departments.

This reinforces that good engagement is a skill, not just a process.

5. Measuring success

The Framework would benefit from clearer success indicators, for example:

How Council will know engagement has been effective

What success looks like beyond participation numbers (e.g. quality of insight, trust, clarity, satisfaction with process)

Even 3 or 4 high level indicators would strengthen evaluation and continuous improvement.

Overall, this is a thoughtful and community centred Framework that clearly reflects the values of transparency, inclusion and respect. I particularly appreciate the emphasis on closing the feedback loop and recognising diverse ways people engage with Council. To strengthen the Framework further, I would encourage clearer, practical examples of how community input influences decisions, guidance on managing expectations where collaboration isn't possible, and simple measures of what successful engagement looks like in practice. These additions would support both community confidence and staff consistency across projects.

Overall, a simple, short and easy to read document that provides a level of clarity and reassurance to the community

Comments relate to "Decision Making Steps"

Step 3 - A community engagement plan and approach is developed by the council project team. This may involve discussions with community members and relevant stakeholders.

I think it would be prudent to have a co-design element in this step, so it's not simply the Council project team developing the plan and approach. It is concerning to see this draft state only "This may involve discussions with community members and relevant stakeholders". An example of this in years gone by was at Federation Park, Gumeracha, where a masterplan was prepared by Council and funds allocated, yet no one in the community seemingly had been engaged in the process until the masterplan was released. Then due to this the project was changed markedly, resulting in a wasted effort by Council staff/consultants who had prepared the draft masterplan.

Step 5 - The engagement plan is implemented.

The approval/endorsement process for how the engagement plan got from Step 3 to Step 5 seems unclear.

Steps 7 & 8 -

I would like to see clearer wording here around how the community and stakeholders are kept informed during this time, as sometimes this can be months whilst a decision is made. Some additional words to this effect would be appreciated.

<p>Letter / email 1</p>	<p>Hi Melissa</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Engagement Framework.</p> <p>As an overarching framework I think it reflects the Council’s approach and is an easy to read, well written document.</p> <p>As a framework and direction it invites some level of participation and the opportunity for the Council to transparently explain how decisions are ultimately made.</p> <p>I think community engagement and participation is an extremely difficult process to manage with many competing interests and generally poor levels of interest in engagement from the community. However, there are some interesting models which exist in other communities which could assist thinking about improved engagement. For example there are models which actively encourage participation rather than just invite, for example here.</p> <p>In this summary the authors note,</p> <p>“We are not just listening to people, we are encouraging them to participate and use all their capabilities and passions in making this city the place we together want it to be. Our city is made by its users, and the users are people, businesses, communities, politicians and organisations. Main stakeholders are citizens.”</p> <p>I think that the framework does address the basics and will serve as an overarching document, however it will not exceed expectations or be an exemplar of engagement. I appreciate in saying this that AHC is a small council with limited resources and serving a geographically dispersed community with diverse opinions and needs, which limits the ability to manage these matters.</p> <p>Kind regards</p>
<p>Email 2</p>	<p>Good Morning Melissa,</p> <p>Further to ██████’s comments below I wish to add some broad and specific commentary.</p> <p>Broadly I think that the document, whilst well intentioned, is too long and will not engage most residents. Less is best and I would recommend a heavy edit to bring the text to 3 to 4 pages at most. It is quite repetitive. A 10 point communication process seems onerous. People are not likely to read nor absorb 9 pages of text around communication. It would be good to differentiate between a framework document, policy document and a procedural document . This lacks the clarity to meet the requirements of each. It seems that all 3 documents (in part) have been rolled into one and I understood that you wanted an overarching Framework document only.</p>

	<p>Specifically page 10. Guiding Principles: Point 1 and the immediate text on the RHS of the page are identical text. Page 13. a minor typo, “brough” should be brought 😊</p> <p>Kind regards</p>	31
<p>Email 3</p>	<p>Hi Melissa,</p> <p>Happy Easter!</p> <p>Lovely to catch up with you at the Community Forum. It was a good opportunity to meet with council staff and councillors. We had some very constructive conversations.</p> <p>The Community Engagement Draft looks good. We appreciate the efforts of council to work closely with the community. We welcome the focus on community consultation. We are happy with the way we are able to communicate with council staff.</p> <p>Regards,</p>	
<p>Email 4</p>	<p>I think the date for your feedback on community connection has expired but I'll submit my opinion anyway. I feel councilors should be more known to the people in their locality/ward, by being out and about at various events. Importantly, aspiring council members should have public meetings prior to election. Merely letter boxing or press releasing their attributes and priorities if elected is not enough for electors to cast a well considered vote. Thankyou.</p>	

Courier Ad – 18 March 2026

Your Say, Your Way

Share feedback on our draft **Community Engagement Framework and Policy**




The Community Engagement Framework guides how we engage with the community, setting the principles, approach and culture.

The Community Engagement Policy is the formal governance and legislative foundation.

Share your feedback on the Framework and Policy by Sunday 26 April 2026.

Scan to find out more:

 engage.ahc.sa.gov.au

 mail@ahc.sa.gov.au

 8408 0400



Adelaide Hills Council
March 26 · 🌐

Have your say on our Draft Community Engagement 'Framework' and 'Policy' 🗣️ We've made revisions based on your feedback, and we want to know if we have it right.

- 📄 The Framework outlines how we engage, including the principles, approach and culture that guide our conversations with you.
- 📜 The Policy is the formal foundation that ensures our engagement aligns with governance requirements and legislation.

Your insights will help shape a more responsive, transparent and collaborative Council.

Share your feedback by 📅 Sunday 26 April, visit 🖱️ <https://ow.ly/ushn50YysxA>

Your Say, Your Way

Draft Community Engagement Framework and Policy feedback

Adelaide Hills COUNCIL

3

Like Comment Share

Write a comment...

Social media post – 22 April 2026



Adelaide Hills Council

April 22 at 5:45 PM · 🌐



Just a few days left to have your say on our Draft Community Engagement 'Framework' and 'Policy'. 📄📄 These documents guide how we connect with our community and involve you in decision-making.

What do you think of the drafts? What's working well, and what could be improved? 🗣️ Your input helps shape how we engage with our community in the future.

Share your feedback by 📅 Sunday 26 April, visit 📄 <https://ow.ly/usnh50YysxA>



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Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL

**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2026
AGENDA BUSINESS ITEM**

Item: 12.3

Responsible Officer: Gary Lewis
Director Corporate Services
Corporate Services

Subject: Community Engagement Policy

For: Decision

SUMMARY

The purpose of this Report is to seek Council's adoption of the revised draft Community Engagement Policy (provided at **Appendix 1**) following community engagement outcomes (provided at **Appendix 3**) and the release of the Local Government Association of South Australia's (LGASA) Community Engagement Model Policy (provided at **Appendix 4**).

Administration undertook community engagement around our draft Community Engagement Policy from Wednesday 25 March to Sunday 26 April 2026.

The Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter (the Charter) and related amendments to the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act), were release in the South Australian Government Gazette on Thursday 11 December 2025.

Local Councils have a period of 9 months from the release of the Charter and the Act amendments to review and endorse their Community Engagement Policies by 11 September 2026.

The Community Engagement Policy, once endorsed, will supersede our existing Public Consultation Policy adopted on 28 January 2020.

RECOMMENDATION

Council resolves:

- 1. That the Community Engagement Policy report be received and noted.**
 - 2. To note the Community Engagement Outcomes Report (Appendix 3).**
 - 3. To adopt the revised Community Engagement Policy, in Appendix 1, with an effective date of 9 September 2026.**
 - 4. To authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the proposed policy.**
-

1. BACKGROUND

Council's Public Consultation Policy was adopted on 28 January 2020.

12.3 Draft Public Consultation Policy

Moved Cr Leith Mudge
S/- Cr Mark Osterstock

10/20

Council resolves:

1. That the report be received and noted.
2. With an effective date of 10 February 2020, to revoke the 8 September 2015 Public Consultation Policy and to approve the Public Consultation Policy as contained in *Appendix 1*.
3. That the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, be authorised to make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the Policy prior to coming into effect.

Carried Unanimously

A revised version of the Policy was adopted on 21 April 2020 in response to the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency. The revised Policy included an addendum added to provide consistency with Public Access and Public Consultation (Notice 2/2020). The relevant sections from the resolution at this 21 April meeting are copied below:

6.2 Public Access and Public Consultation (Notice 2/2020) – proposed compliance arrangements

Moved Cr Linda Green

S/- Cr Pauline Gill

64/20

Decision 1

Council resolves the report be received and noted.

Decision 2

....

7

- 1.7. the power pursuant to Section 50(5a) of the LG Act to alter the Council's Public Consultation Policy or substitute a new policy without undertaking public consultation, even if the Council's existing Public Consultation Policy requires the Council to conduct public consultation;
- 1.8. the power pursuant to Section 123(5) of the LG Act to ensure that copies of the draft annual business plan are available for inspection (without charge) and purchase (on payment of a fee fixed by the Council) at the principal office of the Council (including as provided for in Sections 45(4) and 45(9) of the LG Act) and on the website at least 21 days before the end of the period for providing written submissions;
- 1.9. the power pursuant to Section 151(8) of the LG Act to ensure that copies of the report required under Section 151(5)(d) are available for inspection (without charge) and purchase (on payment of a fee fixed by the Council) at the principal office of the Council (including as provided for in Sections 45(4) and 45(9) of the LG Act) at least 21 days before the end of the period for public consultation;
- 1.10. the power pursuant to Section 156(14e) of the LG Act to ensure that copies of the report required under section 156(14a)(a) of the LG Act are available for inspection (without charge) and purchase (on payment of a fee fixed by the Council) at the principal office of the Council (including as provided for in Sections 45(4) and 45(9) of the LG Act) at least 21 days before the end of the period for public consultation.

....

4. Pursuant to Section 50(5a) of the Local Government Act 1999, as inserted under the Public Access and Public Consultation Notice (No 2) 2020, the Council alters its Public Consultation Policy by including in the Policy, the Public Consultation Policy Addendum as detailed in Appendix 2.

Council's Public Consultation Policy was due to be reviewed in January 2023. This review was delayed due to the impending release of the Office of Local Government / Minister for Local Government's draft Community Engagement Charter.

In October 2023, the Office of Local Government launched community engagement around the Local Government Participation and Elections Review. This process involved a statewide engagement where community members and councils could provide feedback on ideas and suggestions on how communities can better engage with their councils through a council term and, particularly, at election time.

Adelaide Hills Council provided a feedback submission as part of this engagement. The submission was endorsed by Council at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 27 February 2024.

12.3 Local Government Participation and Elections Review Report

7:55pm Cr Louise Pascale left the meeting room and did not return.

7:57pm Cr Pauline Gill left the meeting room and did not return.

**Moved Cr Adrian Cheater
S/- Cr Leith Mudge**

45/24

Council resolves:

1. That the report be received and noted.
2. That Council endorse the Adelaide Hills Council Local Government Participation and Election Review Final Submission be issued to the Office for Local Government with a copy provided to the Local Government Authority for their information.

VARIATION

Through the presiding member, with the consent of the Mover and Seconder, leave of the meeting was sought and granted to vary the motion by adding Point 3.

Council resolves:

1. That the report be received and noted.
2. That Council endorse the Adelaide Hills Council Local Government Participation and Election Review Final Submission be issued to the Office for Local Government with a copy provided to the Local Government Authority for their information.
3. That the CEO is authorised to make administrative changes that do not substantively change the content of the submission.

Carried Unanimously

The Local Government Participation and Elections Review Engagement Outcomes Report was released in June 2024.

On Friday 30 May 2025, the Office of Local Government released their draft Local Government Community Engagement Charter for public consultation. This charter was drafted utilising feedback from the Local Government Participation and Election Review and incorporating elements of the Local Government Association of South Australia community engagement charter that was drafted and presented to the Office of Local Government / Minister for Local Government in early 2021.

The Adelaide Hills Council Local Government Community Engagement Charter submission was endorsed for submission to the Office of Local Government at the Council Meeting on 8 July 2025.

12.4 Local Government Community Engagement Charter

Moved Cr Chris Grant
S/- Cr Leith Mudge

236/25

Council resolves:

1. That the Local Government Community Engagement Charter report be received and noted.
2. That Council endorse the Adelaide Hills Council's draft Local Government Community Engagement Charter Final Submission be issued to the Office of Local Government with a copy provided to the Local Government Authority for their information.
3. That the CEO is authorised to make administrative changes that do not substantively change the content of the submission.

Carried Unanimously

The Charter and related amendments to the Act, were released in the South Australian Government Gazette on Thursday 11 December 2025.

Local Councils were given a period of nine months from the release of the Act amendments to review and endorse their Community Engagement Policies by 11 September 2026.

At the Council Meeting 24 March 2026, Council approved the Draft Community Engagement Policy for community engagement.

12.3 Draft Community Engagement Policy

Moved Cr Chris Grant
S/- Cr Mark Osterstock

98/26

Council resolves:

1. That the Draft Community Engagement Policy report be received and noted.
2. To approve the commencement of community engagement on the Draft Community Engagement Policy (Appendix 1) from 25 March until 26 April 2026 inclusive.

Carried Unanimously

Community Engagement was undertaken between Wednesday 25 March and Sunday 26 April 2026. The findings of this engagement are available in the Draft Community Engagement Policy Community Engagement Outcomes Report (provided in **Appendix 3**).

2. ANALYSIS

➤ Strategic Management Plan/Functional Strategy/Council Policy Alignment

Strategic Plan 2024 – Your Place, Your Space

Goal 4	Organisation
Objective 2	Operate with integrity using best practise governance processes.
Priority 2.1	Demonstrate accountable and transparent decision making.
Objective 4	Engage and advocate for our communities.
Priority 4.1	Develop a robust Community Engagement Framework including exploring opportunities for community to participate in decision making.
Priority 4.2	Advocate on behalf of the community to represent its needs and views with relevant stakeholders and decision makers.

➤ Legal Implications

Under the *Local Government Act 1999* Council is required to maintain a Community Engagement Policy. The policy must comply with the Community Engagement Charter. Before Council adopts, alters, or substitutes a community engagement policy, they are required to undertake public consultation on the community engagement policy (Section 50A (6)):

50A—Council community engagement policy

- (1) A council must prepare and adopt a policy relating to community engagement for the purposes of this Act (a *community engagement policy*).
- (2) The policy may—
 - (a) in relation to any decision, activity or process in respect of which the community engagement charter prescribes requirements, principles or performance outcomes applying to community consultation and participation (relating to the decision, activity or process), make additional provision (not inconsistent with the charter) specifying how the council will—
 - (i) comply with the requirements in a relevant case; or
 - (ii) seek to achieve the principles or performance outcomes in a relevant case; and
 - (b) in relation to any other decision, activity or process of the council, provide for community consultation and participation in relation to the decision, activity or process.

- (3) The policy must be consistent with, and comply with any requirements specified by, the community engagement charter.
- (4) The policy may—
 - (a) be of general or limited application; and
 - (b) vary in operation according to factors stated in the policy; and
 - (c) provide for, or for the granting by the council of, exemptions (conditional or unconditional) from specified provisions of the policy.
- (5) A council may from time to time alter a community engagement policy, or substitute a new policy.
- (6) Before a council—
 - (a) adopts a community engagement policy; or
 - (b) alters, or substitutes, a community engagement policy,
 the council must undertake public consultation on the community engagement policy, alteration or substituted policy (as the case may be).

Under Part 5 of the *Local Government (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2021* Council has 9 months from 11 December 2025 to ensure that Council’s policy is consistent with the Charter and relevant amendments to the Act. Once a new policy is endorsed council has a period of three months before the new policy needs to come into effect.

➤ **Risk Management Implications**

The adoptions of the final Community Engagement Policy will assist in mitigating the risk of:

Failure to comply with legislative requirements leading to liability and punitive action against Council.

Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Target Risk
High (4C)	Low (2D)	Low

Modified existing issue.

➤ **Financial and Resource Implications**

Not applicable.

➤ **Customer Service and Community/Cultural Implications**

It is a community expectation that Council will facilitate community members to have a voice in Council decision making and to be kept informed of Council decisions.

➤ **Sustainability Implications**

Not applicable.

➤ **Engagement/Consultation conducted in the development of the report**

Consultation on the development of this report was as follows:

Council Committees: Not Applicable

<i>Council Workshops:</i>	Project Plan for development of the Community Engagement Framework and Policy, presented on 19 August 2025. Update on Minister for Local Government’s Community Engagement Charter and Policy review timeline, presented on 1 December 2025.
<i>Advisory Groups:</i>	Not applicable.
<i>External Agencies:</i>	Local Government Community Engagement officers Office of Local Government Local Government Association
<i>Community:</i>	Community engagement undertaken between 25 March and 26 April 2026. Community Engagement Outcomes Report available in Appendix 3 .

➤ **Additional Analysis**

Community Engagement Outcomes

We invited community feedback on our draft Community Engagement Policy between Wednesday 25 March and Sunday 26 April 2026. This engagement ran alongside community engagement for our draft Community Engagement Framework.

We received one formal feedback response relating to the draft Policy. This response was in support of the draft Policy and provided some suggested changes regarding the general engagement activities listed in Table 1: Mandatory engagement requirements.

Amendments to Draft Community Engagement Policy

Following the opening of community engagement in late March 2026, the LGA SA released their Community Engagement Model Policy (provided in **Appendix 4**) in April 2026. This model policy recommends small amendments to areas of our draft Community Engagement Policy, specifically under the sections:

- Scope
- Charter Engagement Requirements
- Review and Evaluate
- Delegation

After further review of the draft Policy, there was duplication of information under Introduction and Scope. These duplications have been removed.

Minor changes have been made to sections listed under “General engagement requirements” within Table 1: Mandatory engagement requirements, following suggestions received through community feedback and following the release of the LGA SA Model Policy.

These changes have been tracked and are provided at **Appendix 2**. A clean copy of the revised policy is provided at **Appendix 1**.

3. OPTIONS

Council has the following options:

- I. Adoption of the revised Community Engagement Policy.
- II. Rejection of the revised Community Engagement Policy.

Should the Council identify the need for substantial amendments to the final Policy, it is recommended that they be referred to staff for review to allow for analysis of the implications of the amendments, prior to the matter being brought back to the Council for further consideration.

4. APPENDICES

- (1) Draft Community Engagement Policy (clean)
- (2) Draft Community Engagement Policy (tracked changed)
- (3) Draft Community Engagement Policy Community Engagement Outcomes Report
- (4) LGA SA Community Engagement Model Policy

Appendix 1

Draft Community Engagement Policy (clean)

Community Engagement Policy



Policy Number: COM-01

Responsible Department(s): Communications, Engagement and Events

Other Relevant Policies: None

Other Relevant Procedure(s): None

Policies superseded by this procedure Public Consultation Policy 2020 adopted on 28 January 2020

Approved by: Council

Date of Approval

Effective From:

Next Review:

Version Control

Version:	Effect Date:	Description of Changes:	Approver:
1.0	28/01/2020	Code adopted	Council - Res 10/20
1.1	21/04/2020	Addendum added to provide consistency with Public Access and Public Consultation (Notice 2/2020)	Council - Res 47/24
2.0	TBD	Policy Review in line with release of Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter and subsequent changes to the Local Government Act 1999 (SA)	Council - TBD

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council is committed to giving people across the Adelaide Hills the opportunity to meaningfully take part in open conversations about initiatives and decisions that matter to them, and to making sure Council decisions reflect the voices of our community.
- 1.2 Community engagement undertaken by Adelaide Hills Council is informed by legislative and regulatory requirements, including the *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)* (the Act) and the Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter (the Charter). These requirements are given effect through Council's Community Engagement Policy.
- 1.3 *Section 50A of the Act* provides that the Council must prepare and adopt a community engagement policy. The policy must be consistent and comply with any requirements specified by the Charter.
- 1.4 This policy is intended for use by all council employees, elected members, contractors and volunteers involved in the design, delivery, or evaluation of community engagement activities.
- 1.5 This Policy is a guide to staff and should not be read as mandatory, except where there is a legislated obligation. Staff should always use their discretion and judgement when conducting consultation and ensure the consultation is appropriate in the circumstances.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of this policy are:
 - 2.1.1 To demonstrate the accountability and responsibility of the Adelaide Hills Council to its community and stakeholders.
 - 2.1.2 Ensure that the Council meets its legislative obligations regarding public consultation by:
 - Meeting mandatory requirements in the Act and the Charter.
 - Using appropriate and cost-effective engagement methods which are relevant to the specific circumstances of each decision, activity or process.
 - Providing for participation by the local community, key stakeholders and interested parties, wherever possible and appropriate.
 - Using feedback to enhance decision making.
 - Insofar as is reasonable, providing information to our community about how community views have been taken into account and reasons for decisions or actions of council.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **“Communication”** the imparting or exchange of information between the Council and the community to produce a greater understanding.
- 3.2 **“Community”** a general term for the people who live, work, study, own property, conduct private or government business, visit or use the services, facilities and public spaces and places of the Adelaide Hills Council. A community may be a geographic location (community of place), a community of similar interest (community of interest), or a community of affiliation or identify (such as an industry or sporting club).
- 3.3 **“Stakeholders”** are recognised as individuals and organised groups that have an interest in a decision or proposal or may be directly or indirectly affected by a decision that has been made or is being proposed. Business owners, retail outlets, State and Federal Governments, community groups, Local Government and not for profit organisations are all considered stakeholders. Stakeholders may also be individuals, groups or organisations who have a role to play in policy development and program or service delivery.
- 3.4 **“Community engagement”** is the process of seeking input or feedback from the community or stakeholders regarding a decision that may affect them. This includes any activity where council provides information on a decision or invites comment on a matter. For the purposes of this policy, community engagement and public consultation are one and the same.
- 3.5 **“Public consultation”** see community engagement above.
- 3.6 **“Public notification”** For the purposes of the Local Government Act 1999, public notice is given if a notice is published:
- in the Gazette; and
 - on a website determined by the CEO.
- 3.7 **“The Act”** is the Local Government Act 1999 (SA).
- 3.8 **“The Charter”** is the Minister for Local Government’s Community Engagement Charter published in the South Australian Government Gazette on 11 December 2025.

4. SCOPE

- 4.1 The purpose of this Policy is to fulfill council’s statutory obligations under section 50 and 50A of the Act and the Minister for Local Government’s Community Engagement Charter published in the South Australian Gazette on 11 December 2025.

- 4.2 This policy applies to decisions, activities and processes undertaken by the Council, a delegate of the Council or a person exercising power on the Council's behalf, where public consultation is required to be undertaken in accordance with the Act, the Charter, or this policy. A reference in this policy to 'Council' includes a reference to a delegate or other person exercising power on the Council's behalf.
- 4.3 The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the implementation and application of this policy, and where necessary reporting the outcomes of consultations to the Council. The specific delegations made under this Policy are outlined in Part 8 of this policy.
- 4.4 This Policy does not apply where the Council is exercising powers and functions under any other Act. Where there are consultation requirements under other legislation, e.g. the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*, those specific processes take precedence over this policy.
- 4.5 Council recognises that there may be occasions where community engagement may be desirable, but there is no statutory requirement to undertake consultation. For these occasions this Policy does not apply.
- 4.6 Local Government Act 1999
- 4.6.1 Under Section 6 of the Act a council is established to provide for the governance and management of its area at the local level and, in particular:
- a. To act as a representative, informed and responsible decision-maker in the interests of its community; and
 - b. To provide and co-ordinate various public services and facilities and to develop its community and resources in a socially just and ecologically sustainable manner; and
 - c. To encourage and develop initiatives within its community for improving the quality of life of the community; and
 - d. To represent the interests of its community to the wider community; and
 - e. To exercise, perform and discharge the powers, functions and duties of local government under [the Local Government Act 1999] and other Acts in relation to the area for which it is constituted.
- 4.6.2 Section 8 of the Act (Principles to be observed by a council) outlines the performance of its roles and function including but not limited to:
- a. Provide open, responsive and accountable government;
 - b. Be responsive to the needs, interests and aspirations of individuals and groups within its community;
 - e. Seek to facilitate sustainable development and the protection of the environment and to ensure a proper balance within its community between economic, social, environmental and cultural considerations;
 - f. Seek to provide services, facilities and programs that are adequate and appropriate and seek to ensure equitable access to its services, facilities and programs.

- 4.6.3 The Council recognises that community engagement can result in diverse views in relation to a particular matter or proposal. The Council will endeavour to consider relevant facts and circumstances, weighing and balancing competing considerations where necessary, before making a determination. The final decision in matters will rest with the Council, as the collective elected representatives of the community.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

- 5.1 The preparation and adoption of this policy fulfil the council's obligations to prepare and adopt a policy under section 50(A) of the Act. The following principles in the Charter have been considered in the preparation of this policy:

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

- 5.2 In relation to the matters listed below under Public Consultation Categories, the Council will comply with its legislative obligations under the Act, the Charter and this policy. For each of the matters listed, refer to the mandatory minimum community engagement steps to be undertaken shown in Table 1 in Part 7 of this Policy. There are matters that require public notification and/or community engagement under the Act that do not feature in the Charter. In these circumstances, we will follow the requirements as set out in the relevant sections of the Act.

- 5.3 Council may, in its absolute discretion, determine in relation to a matter for which it is required by the Act and/or the Charter to follow its community engagement policy, to undertake a step or steps in addition to those set out in this policy. However, council is not required to consider and/or determine whether or not to undertake any additional step or steps in relation to such a matter before taking any action or making any decision in relation to such a matter.

- 5.4 Council may, from time to time, alter or substitute a new policy, following public consultation.

6. PUBLIC CONSULTATION CATEGORIES

6.1 The Charter addresses minimum mandatory community engagement activities for matters where the Act requires public consultation to be undertaken.

6.2 The Charter establishes different categories of public consultation for matters as follows:

- **Significant – Annual business plan and rating policy**
 - o Adopting an Annual Business Plan - section 123(3)(b) of the Act.
 - o Changes to basis of rating, declaring differential rates, imposing a separate rate, service rate or service charge, or changing the basis on which land is valued for the purpose of rating - section 151(5)(e) of the Act.
- **Significant**
 - o Representation reviews - section 12(7) of the Act.
 - o Consider a change of status of council or name change – section 13(2) of the Act.
 - o Development and review of Strategic Management Plans - section 122(6) of the Act.
 - o Changes to use of differential rating- section 156(4a)(b) of the Act.
 - o Revocation of classification of land as community land - sections 194(2)(b) of the Act.
 - o Community Land Management Plans - adoption - section 197(1) of the Act.
 - o Community Land Management Plans – significant amendments - section 198(3) of the Act.
 - o Alienation of community land by lease or license - section 202(2) the Act.
 - o Making of By-laws – section 249(1) of the Act.
- **Standard**
 - o Opening hours and place of principal office - substantial changes - section 45(3) of the Act.
 - o Community Engagement Policy - section 50A(6)(b) of the Act.
 - o Council behavioural support policies - section 75F(6) of the Act.
 - o Access to meetings and documents - section 92(5) of the Act.
 - o Power to make orders - section 259(2)(b) of the Act.
- **Local**
 - o Carrying out commercial activities – Prudential Requirements – section 48 of the Act.
 - o Proposed permit or authorisation for alteration or use of a road for business purposes when there are works and traffic impeded for more than 48 hours (with a detour in place) or where no detour will be available - section 223(1) of the Act.
 - o Proposed planting of vegetation on a road – significant impact - section 232(b) of the Act.

- **Inform**
 - o Opening hours and place of principal office – minor changes - section 45(3) of the Act.
 - o Proposed permit or authorisation for alteration or use of a road for business purposes when there are works and traffic impeded for less than 48 hours and the council ensures that a detour is in place - section 223(1) of the Act.
 - o Election information - section 13A (2) of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999.6.3*

6.3 The table in Part 7 of this policy sets out the engagement activities that Council will generally undertake to meet the requirements of each matter for which public consultation must be undertaken in accordance with the Act and the Charter.

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7. CHARTER ENGAGEMENT REQUIREMENT

- 7.1 Council will comply with the minimum mandatory public consultation requirements for each category of matters set out in the Charter.
- 7.2 The following table sets out the engagement activities that Council will generally undertake to meet the public consultation requirements in the Act and the Charter.
- 7.3 In circumstances where more than one engagement activity is specified, there is no obligation on Council to utilise all engagement activities in respect of each Charter requirement.
- 7.4 The examples provided in the below table are non-exhaustive and Council may, but is under no obligation to, consider or determine to utilise different approaches that are not specified in the table depending on the particular matter Council is engaging on.

Table 1: Mandatory community engagement requirements

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirements	Charter Category					General engagement activities
		Significant - ABP 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information published on a website maintained by Council.
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information published in a print or digital newspaper, community newsletter or other (non-council) publication circulating in the area of Council.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council. Information available at council customer service centres / libraries at Stirling, Gumeracha and Woodside. Consider if roadside and/or site-specific signage would be suitable for this engagement.
Invite submissions	Provide information about how the community can make a submission, including timeframe.	X	X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement material provides information about how the community can make a submission, including the minimum 21 day timeframe for submissions.
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement material explains what the Council proposes to do, why it proposes to do it, and what it seeks to achieve. Information published explains how feedback received will be taken into account by the Council or the person or body with delegated authority to make the proposed decision or undertake the proposed activity or process, before making a decision.
Seek and consider feedback from the community –	Consider how best to invite feedback from the community. Provide a minimum community engagement	X	X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback will be invited via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written submissions (email or letter). Completion of a survey or feedback form. Attendance at Council or public meeting, workshop or community forum.

significant matters	<p>period of 21 days to enable the community to provide feedback.</p> <p>Include a summary of community engagement feedback to the council ahead of the decision.</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider promoting opportunities to make submissions at a pop-up engagement activity or community event. • Community Engagement Outcomes Report presented to a Council meeting for consideration by Council ahead of decision . • Community Engagement period open for a minimum of 21 days.
Public meetings	<p>Hold a public meeting where the community is invited to provide submissions (written or verbal) on the matter.</p> <p>The public meeting may be part of a council meeting or a separate event.</p>	X					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite community to a public meeting either as part of a Council meeting, or a separate event, to provide written or verbal submissions on matter.
Council meeting invitation	<p>Invite people who have made a written submission to attend a council meeting to speak to their submission before the decision is made.</p>		X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who made written submissions will be invited to attend a council meeting to speak to their written submission (email, letter or feedback form) before decision is made.
Seek and consider feedback from the community	<p>Consider how best to invite feedback from the community</p> <p>Provide information about how community feedback will inform the council's decision.</p> <p>Ensure an appropriate period of time is provided to enable communities to provide feedback.</p>			X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback may be invited via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions (email or letter). • Completion of a survey or feedback form. • Attendance at Council or public meeting, workshop or community forum. • Consider promoting opportunities to make submissions at a pop-up engagement activity or community event. • Information published indicates how

							<p>feedback received will be taken into account by the Council, person or body with delegated authority to make the proposed decision or undertake the proposed activity or process (if delegable).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement period open for a period of 21 days or such other period as determined by Council.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider information published on a social media platform maintained by Council. • Consider information published in targeted letters or leaflet drops for effected residents. • Consider signage in a local location e.g. reserve, shopping centre, library or community centre. • Consider pop-up / drop-in engagement activities at a local venue or reserve.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council. • Council e-newsletter and/or Courier newsletter column. • Consider signage in prominent locations e.g. roadside, major reserves, shopping centres, libraries and community centres. • Consider pop-up information sites or sessions.
Information to local	Provide information to the local community that may be					X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council

community	directly affected by the council decision or action.						<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider information published in targeted letters or leaflet drops for effected residents.• Consider signage in a local location e.g. reserve, shopping centre, library or community centre.
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8. DELEGATION

8.1 The community engagement activities in this policy are general in nature, to meet the minimum mandatory requirements in the Act and Charter.

8.2 Specific engagement activities to be undertaken in relation to any particular decision, activity or processes shall be determined on a case-by-case basis, by:

- Council, by resolution;
- The CEO;
- A delegate with the power to undertake community engagement under the Act, the Charter or this policy; or
- A delegate with power to make the relevant decision or undertake the relevant activity or process that requires community engagement under the Act, the Charter or this policy.

8.3 Council, the CEO or a delegate is not required by this policy to undertake, or to consider or determine whether to undertake, any optional or additional engagement steps or employ optional or additional engagement methods. Such a decision is at the absolute discretion of the decision maker.

8.4 The Chief Executive Officer has the delegation to:

- Approve, amend and review any procedures that shall be consistent with this Policy; and
- Make any legislative, formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the Policy during the period of its currency.

9. REVIEW AND EVALUATE

To ensure Council continues to meet legislative requirements and undertakes effective community engagement, this policy will be subject to periodic evaluation and review.

This policy will be scheduled for review within 3 years from endorsement, or as required when there is a significant change to relevant legislation. A report will be provided to Council upon completion of this review.

10. AVAILABILITY OF THE POLICY

9.1 This Policy will be available for inspection at the Council's Offices during ordinary business hours and via the Council's website www.ahc.sa.gov.au. Copies will also be provided to the public upon request, and upon payment of a fee in accordance with the Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.

Appendix 2

Draft Community Engagement Policy (tracked changed)

Community Engagement Policy



Policy Number: COM-01

Responsible Department(s): Communications, Engagement and Events

Other Relevant Policies: None

Other Relevant Procedure(s): None

Policies superseded by this procedure Public Consultation Policy 2020 adopted on 28 January 2020

Approved by: Council

Date of Approval

Effective From:

Next Review:

Version Control

Version:	Effect Date:	Description of Changes:	Approver:
1.0	28/01/2020	Code adopted	Council - Res 10/20
1.1	21/04/2020	Addendum added to provide consistency with Public Access and Public Consultation (Notice 2/2020)	Council - Res 47/24
2.0	TBD	Policy Review in line with release of Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter and subsequent changes to the Local Government Act 1999 (SA)	Council - TBD

Community Engagement Policy



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council is committed to giving people across the Adelaide Hills the opportunity to meaningfully take part in open conversations about initiatives and decisions that matter to them, and to making sure Council decisions reflect the voices of our community.
- 1.2 Community engagement undertaken by Adelaide Hills Council is informed by legislative and regulatory requirements, including the *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)* (the Act) and the Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter (the Charter). These requirements are given effect through Council's Community Engagement Policy.
- 1.3 *Section 50A of the Act* provides that the Council must prepare and adopt a community engagement policy. The policy must be consistent and comply with any requirements specified by the Charter.
- ~~1.4 This policy applies to all legislated community engagement undertaken by council outlined in the Act and the Charter.~~
- ~~1.5.1.4~~ This policy is intended for use by all council employees, elected members, contractors and volunteers involved in the design, delivery, or evaluation of community engagement activities.
- ~~1.6.1.5~~ This Policy is a guide to staff and should not be read as mandatory, except where there is a legislated obligation. Staff should always use their discretion and judgement when conducting consultation and ensure the consultation is appropriate in the circumstances.

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2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of this policy are:
- 2.1.1 To demonstrate the accountability and responsibility of the Adelaide Hills Council to its community and stakeholders.
- 2.1.2 Ensure that the Council meets its legislative obligations regarding public consultation by:
- Meeting mandatory requirements in the Act and the Charter.
 - Using appropriate and cost-effective engagement methods which are relevant to the specific circumstances of each decision, activity or process.
 - Providing for participation by the local community, key stakeholders and interested parties, wherever possible and appropriate.
 - Using feedback to enhance decision making.
 - Insofar as is reasonable, providing information to our community about how community views have been taken into account and reasons for decisions or actions of council.

Community Engagement Policy



3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **“Communication”** the imparting or exchange of information between the Council and the community to produce a greater understanding.
- 3.2 **“Community”** a general term for the people who live, work, study, own property, conduct private or government business, visit or use the services, facilities and public spaces and places of the Adelaide Hills Council. A community may be a geographic location (community of place), a community of similar interest (community of interest), or a community of affiliation or identify (such as an industry or sporting club).
- 3.3 **“Stakeholders”** are recognised as individuals and organised groups that have an interest in a decision or proposal or may be directly or indirectly affected by a decision that has been made or is being proposed. Business owners, retail outlets, State and Federal Governments, community groups, Local Government and not for profit organisations are all considered stakeholders. Stakeholders may also be individuals, groups or organisations who have a role to play in policy development and program or service delivery.
- 3.4 **“Community engagement”** is the process of seeking input or feedback from the community or stakeholders regarding a decision that may affect them. This includes any activity where council provides information on a decision or invites comment on a matter. For the purposes of this policy, community engagement and public consultation are one and the same.
- 3.5 **“Public consultation”** see community engagement above.
- 3.6 **“Public notification”** For the purposes of the Local Government Act 1999, public notice is given if a notice is published;
- in the Gazette; and
 - on a website determined by the CEO.
- 3.76 **“The Act”** is the Local Government Act 1999 (SA).
- 3.87 **“The Charter”** is the Minister for Local Government’s Community Engagement Charter published in the South Australian Government Gazette on 11 December 2025.

4. SCOPE

- 4.1 The purpose of this Policy is to fulfill council’s statutory obligations under section 50 and 50A of the Act and the Minister for Local Government’s Community Engagement Charter published in the South Australian Gazette on 11 December 2025.
- 4.2 This policy applies to decisions, activities and processes undertaken by the Council, a delegate of the Council or a person exercising power on the Council’s behalf, where public

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Community Engagement Policy



consultation is required to be undertaken in accordance with the Act, the Charter, or this policy. A reference in this policy to 'Council' includes a reference to a delegate or other person exercising power on the Council's behalf.

4.3 The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the implementation and application of this policy, and where necessary reporting the outcomes of consultations to the Council. The specific delegations made under this Policy are outlined in part 8 of this policy.

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4.4 This Policy does not apply where the Council is exercising powers and functions under any other Act. Where there are consultation requirements under other legislation, e.g. the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016, those specific processes take precedence over this policy.

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~~to public consultations or notification requirements of the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016.~~

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~~4.53~~ Council recognises that there may be occasions where community engagement may be desirable, but there is no statutory requirement to undertake consultation. For these occasions this Policy does not apply.

4.64 Local Government Act 1999

4.64.1 Under Section 6 of the Act a council is established to provide for the governance and management of its area at the local level and, in particular:

- a. To act as a representative, informed and responsible decision-maker in the interests of its community; and
- b. To provide and co-ordinate various public services and facilities and to develop its community and resources in a socially just and ecologically sustainable manner; and
- c. To encourage and develop initiatives within its community for improving the quality of life of the community; and
- d. To represent the interests of its community to the wider community; and
- e. To exercise, perform and discharge the powers, functions and duties of local government under [the Local Government Act 1999] and other Acts in relation to the area for which it is constituted.

4.64.2 Section 8 of the Act (Principles to be observed by a council) outlines the performance of its roles and function including but not limited to:

- a. Provide open, responsive and accountable government;
- b. Be responsive to the needs, interests and aspirations of individuals and groups within its community;
- e. Seek to facilitate sustainable development and the protection of the environment and to ensure a proper balance within its community between economic, social, environmental and cultural considerations;
- f. Seek to provide services, facilities and programs that are adequate and appropriate and seek to ensure equitable access to its services, facilities and programs.

- 4.64.3 The Council recognises that community engagement can result in diverse views in relation to a particular matter or proposal. The Council will endeavour to consider relevant facts and circumstances, weighing and balancing competing considerations were necessary, before making a determination. The final decision in matters will rest with the Council, as the collective elected representatives of the community.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

5.1 The preparation and adoption of this policy fulfil the council's obligations to prepare and adopt a policy under section 50(A) of the Act. The following principles in the Charter have been considered in the preparation of this policy:

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

~~5.2 The Act requires council, in certain cases, to follow specific steps by way of public consultation, also known as community engagement.~~

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5.23 In relation to the matters listed below under Public Consultation Categories, the Council will comply with its legislative obligations under the Act, ~~and~~ the Charter and this policy. For each of the matters listed, refer to the mandatory minimum community engagement steps to be undertaken shown in Table 1 in Part 76 of this Policy. There are matters that require public notification and/or community engagement under the Act that do not feature in the Charter. In these circumstances, we will follow the requirements as set out in the relevant sections of the Act.

5.34 Council may, in its absolute discretion, determine in relation to a matter for which it is required by the Act and/or the Charter to follow its community engagement policy, to undertake a step or steps in addition to those set out in this policy. However, council is not required to consider and/or determine whether or not to undertake any additional step or steps in relation to such a matter before taking any action or making any decision in relation to such a matter.

Community Engagement Policy



5.45 Council may, from time to time, alter or substitute a new policy, following public consultation.

6. PUBLIC CONSULTATION CATEGORIES

6.1 The Charter addresses minimum mandatory community engagement activities for matters where the Act requires public consultation to be undertaken.

6.2 The Charter establishes different ~~public consultation categories which apply to different types of Council decisions;~~ categories of public consultation for matters as follows:

- **Significant – Annual business plan and rating policy**

- o Adopting an Annual Business Plan - section 123(3)(b) of the Act.
- o Changes to basis of rating, declaring differential rates, imposing a separate rate, service rate or service charge, or changing the basis on which land is valued for the purpose of rating - section 151(5)(e) of the Act.

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- **Significant**

- o Representation reviews - section 12(7) of the Act.
- o Consider a change of status of council or name change – section 13(2) of the Act.
- o Development and review of Strategic Management Plans - section 122(6) of the Act.
- o ~~Changes to~~ ing-use of differential rates ~~and special adjustments~~ ing- section 156(4a)(b) of the Act.
- o Revocation of classification of land as community land - sections 194(2)(b) of the Act.
- o Community Land Management Plans - adoption - section 197(1) of the Act.
- o Community Land Management Plans – significant amendments - section 198(3) of the Act.
- o Alienation of community land by lease or license - section 202(2) the Act.
- o Making of By-laws – section 249(1) of the Act.

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- **Standard**

- o Opening hours and place of principal office - substantial changes - section 45(3) of the Act.
- o Community Engagement Policy - section 50A(6)(b) of the Act.
- o Council behavioural support policies - section 75F(6) of the Act.
- o Access to meetings and documents - section 92(5) of the Act.
- o Power to make orders - section 259(2)(b) of the Act.

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- **Local**

- o Carrying out commercial activities – Prudential ~~Requirements~~ Agreements – section 48 of the Act.
- o Proposed permit or authorisation for alteration or use of a road for business purposes when there are works and traffic impeded for more than 48 hours

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- (with a detour in place) or where no detour will be available - section 223(1) of the Act.
 - o Proposed planting of vegetation on a road – significant impact - section 232(b) of the Act.
- **Inform**
 - o Opening hours and place of principal office – minor changes - section 45(3) of the Act.
 - o Proposed permit or authorisation for alteration or use of a road for business purposes when there are works and traffic impeded for less than 48 hours and the council ensures that a detour is in place - section 223(1) of the Act.
 - o Election information - section 13A (2) of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* of the Act.

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6.3 The table in Part 76 of this policy sets out the engagement activities that Council will generally undertake to meet the requirements of each matter for which public consultation must be undertaken category in accordance with the Act and the Charter.

7. CHARTER ENGAGEMENT REQUIREMENT

- 7.1 Council will comply with the minimum mandatory public consultation requirements for each category of matters set out in the Charter.
- 7.2 The following table sets out the engagement activities that Council will generally undertake to meet the public consultation requirements in the Act and the Charter.
- 7.3 In circumstances where more than one engagement activity is specified, there is no obligation on Council to utilise all engagement activities in respect of each Charter requirement.
- 7.4 The examples provided in the below table are non-exhaustive and Council may, but is under no obligation to, consider or determine to utilise different approaches that are not specified in the table depending on the particular matter Council is engaging on.

Table 1: Mandatory community engagement requirements

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirements	Charter Category					General engagement activities
		Significant - ABP 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information published on a website maintained by Council.
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information published in a print or digital newspaper, community newsletter or other (non-council) publication circulating in the area of Council.
Consult with the whole	Consider appropriate forms of notifications to the council area.	X	X	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information published on a social media maintained by Council.

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.						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information available at council customer service centres / libraries at Stirling, Gumeracha and Woodside. Consider if roadside and/or site-specific signage would be suitable for this engagement.
Invite submissions	Provide information about how the community can make a submission, including timeframe.	X	X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Engagement material provides information about how the community can make a submission, including the minimum timeframe for submissions.</u> <u>Written submissions (email or letter) to Council or Council Customer Service Centres.</u> <u>Completion of a survey or questionnaire.</u> <u>Attendance at Council or public meeting, workshop or community forum.</u>
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Engagement material explains what the council proposes to do, why it proposes to do it, and what it seeks to achieve.</u> <u>Information published explains how feedback received will be taken into account by the Council or the person or body with delegated authority to make the proposed decision or undertake the proposed activity or project before making a decision.</u> <u>Information published or maintained by Council.</u> <u>Consider making information available at council service centres / libraries at Stirling, Gumeracha and Woodside.</u>
Seek and consider	Consider how best to invite feedback from the community.	X	X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Feedback will be invited via:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written submissions (email or letter)

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feedback from the community – significant matters	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.						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a survey or feedback form. • Attendance at Council or public meeting, workshop or community forum. • <u>Consider promoting opportunities to</u> submissions at a pop-up engagement community event. • <u>Community Engagement Outcomes</u> Report presented to a Council meeting for consideration by Council <u>ahead of decision members.</u> • Submissions considered by the person or body with delegated authority to make the proposed decision or undertake the proposed activity or process (if delegable). • <u>Community Engagement period open for</u> of 21 days.
Public meetings	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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite community to a public meeting <u>of a Council meeting, or a separate event</u> written or verbal submissions on matter
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>People who made written submissions invited to attend</u> invite community to a council meeting to speak to their written submission (email, letter or feedback form) before decision is made.
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			X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Feedback may be invited via:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions (email or letter) • Completion of a survey or feedback form • Attendance at Council or public meeting, workshop or community forum.

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	appropriate period of time is provided to enable communities to provide feedback.						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Consider promoting opportunities to</u> Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.11 cm, Line spacing: Multiple 1.1 li • <u>submissions at a pop-up engagement</u> • <u>community event.</u> • Report presented to a Council meeting for consideration by Council members. • <u>Information published indicates how feedback received will be taken into account</u> • Submissions considered by the <u>Council</u>, person or body with delegated authority to make the proposed decision or undertake the proposed activity or process (if delegable). • <u>Community Engagement period open for period of 21 days or such other period determined by Council</u>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider information published on a social media platform maintained by Council. • Consider information published in targeted letters or leaflet drops for effected residents. • Consider signage in a local location e.g. reserve, shopping centre, library or community centre. • Consider pop-up / drop-in engagement activities at a local venue or reserve.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council. • Council e-newsletter and/or Courier newsletter column. • <u>Consider signage in prominent locations</u> Formatted: Line spacing: Multiple 1.1 li • <u>roadside, major reserves, shopping centres, libraries and community centres.</u> Formatted: Font: Font color: Black, English (United Kingdom) • <u>Consider pop-up information sites or signs</u> Formatted: Font: Font color: Black, English (United Kingdom)
Information	Provide information to the local					X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council.

to local community	community that may be directly affected by the council decision or action.						media platform maintained by Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider information published in targeted letters or leaflet drops for effected residents. • Consider signage in a local location e.g. reserve, shopping centre, library or community centre.
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DRAFT

Community Engagement Policy



8. DELEGATION

8.1 The community engagement activities in this policy are general in nature, to meet the minimum mandatory requirements in the Act and Charter.

8.2 Specific engagement activities to be undertaken in relation to any particular decision, activity or processes shall be determined on a case-by-case basis, by:

- Council, by resolution;
- The CEO;
- A delegate with the power to undertake community engagement under the Act, the Charter or this policy; or
- A delegate with power to make the relevant decision or undertake the relevant activity or process that requires community engagement under the Act, the Charter or this policy.

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8.3 Council, the CEO or a delegate is not required by this policy to undertake, or to consider or determine whether to undertake, any optional or additional engagement steps or employ optional or additional engagement methods. Such a decision is at the absolute discretion of the decision maker, ~~such as for projects involving expenditure deemed 'significant' by the CEO; or matters likely to be of significant community interest.~~

8.4 The Chief Executive Officer has the delegation to:

- Approve, amend and review any procedures that shall be consistent with this Policy; and
- Make any legislative, formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the Policy during the period of its currency.

9. REVIEW AND EVALUATE

To ensure Council continues to meet legislative requirements and undertakes effective community engagement, this policy will be subject to periodic evaluation and review.

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This policy will be scheduled for review within 3 years from endorsement, or as required when there is a significant change to relevant legislation. A report will be provided to Council upon completion of this review.

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9.10. AVAILABILITY OF THE POLICY

9.1 This Policy will be available for inspection at the Council's Offices during ordinary business hours and via the Council's website www.ahc.sa.gov.au. Copies will also be provided to the public upon request, and upon payment of a fee in accordance with the Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.

Appendix 3

*Draft Community Engagement Policy
Community Engagement Outcomes Report*

Draft Community Engagement Policy

Community Engagement Outcomes Report



Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL

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1. Introduction

The Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter was published in December 2025. We reviewed our existing Public Consultation Policy and created a draft Community Engagement Policy in line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act) and the Community Engagement Charter (the Charter).

We invited community feedback on the draft Community Engagement Policy between Wednesday 25 March and Sunday 26 April 2026. This engagement ran alongside community engagement for our draft Community Engagement Framework.

We received one formal feedback response relating to the draft Policy.

This report presents feedback received during the engagement period and will be presented to Council and made available to those who participated in the consultation on Council's Engagement Platform.

2. Summary of Engagement

Engagement approach

The purpose of the engagement was to assist us to understand our community's level of support for the draft Community Engagement Policy.

A community engagement plan was developed, and community engagement was undertaken between 25 March and 26 April 2026.

Our engagement approach aimed to provide detail about what community engagement is, the difference between the role of the Community Engagement Framework and Policy, our legal obligations under the Act and the Charter.

Questions were asked to determine participants level of support for the draft Policy and any additional feedback or comments.

A feedback form was developed and provided online and in hardcopy format. It contained both closed and open style questions. An easy read version of the feedback form was created.

Feedback could be provided via any of the following options:

- Online - complete our online feedback form.
- Hardcopy feedback - collect a hardcopy feedback form from any of our libraries or customer service centres or print your own from the Document Library.
- In writing - submit ideas or feedback in writing via email (engage@ahc.sa.gov.au) or via letter addressed to 63 Mount Barker Rd, Stirling SA 5152.
- Phone - give us a call to share your feedback.

Distribution and promotion

The opportunity to provide feedback was promoted through the following channels:

- Notices posted on Council’s website and engagement platform.
- Courier Advertisement on 25 March 2026.
- Hills Voice E-newsletter.
- Email to engagement subscribers with relevant categories of interest.
- Email to relevant community and stakeholder groups.
- Information and hardcopy feedback forms available at libraries/customer service centres at Gumeracha, Stirling, Norton Summit and Woodside.
- Social media promotion.
- Engagement activities throughout March and April.

Email and social media promotion statistics are presented below:

Table 1 Promotional statistics

Media	Number of posts / emails	Reach	Engagement
Adelaide Hills Council Facebook	2 posts	1,727 views	10 reactions, 3 shares, 2 link clicks
Adelaide Hills Council Instagram	2 posts	750 impressions, 28 engagements	15 reactions, 21 clicks, 2 reposts
Hills Voice April e-Newsletter	1 email	4,336 emails sent 1,626 emails opened	513 email clicks
Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub email	2 emails	2,360 emails sent, 1,048 emails opened	91 email clicks
Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub page	NA	401 views, 166 visitors	5 contributors, 1 follower (across draft Framework and Policy engagements)

A copy of information provided on Council’s Engagement Platform and feedback form is available in Appendix A.

All e-newsletters, advertisements and social media posts are provided in Appendix B.

3. Participants

This section provides details about participation during the engagement period.

Participation source

The following table displays how participants provided feedback or were involved in discussions, during the engagement period.

Table 2 Participation source

Formal feedback responses	Number Participating
Online and hardcopy feedback form submissions	1
Written response – email, letter	0
Formal feedback responses	1
Informal feedback responses	
HERD network meeting	3 attendees
CFS engagement officers meeting	3 attendees
Lenswood Community Forums	31 attendees, 3 discussions
Informal feedback interactions / responses	9
Total participation across all streams	10

4. Online and Hardcopy Feedback

One online feedback response was received during the engagement period. This feedback submission can be seen below.

Table 3 Feedback Responses

What do you think of the draft Community Engagement Policy?	Please provide more information about your response
I like it	This is a great policy, improving on past AHC policies. Some minor comments are -

- 1) "Inform – Election information - section 13A (2) of the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999 of the Act." Whilst this categorisation is set by the Charter, essentially this only requires Council to promote the election on its website, social media and an e-newsletter/print media. To improve community awareness and participation in Council elections, it would be great if Council committed to promoting the Council election with some roadside signage, displays at its libraries/service centres/community centres and potentially even pop-up displays. To ensure such occurs, could a separate column be added to the policy, labelled "Inform - Council Elections", with crosses in the relevant boxes. Or alternatively, a sentence be added in Section 6 of the document, recognising the unique communication requirements of Council elections?
- 2) One notable positive is that now there is a Council meeting invitation for respondents on 'significant category' consultations – I recall such wasn't in place for the last AHC representation review in 2025, which caused some surprise when it was submitted to a Council agenda without advising consultation participants.
- 3) In terms of this Charter requirement "Seek and consider feedback from the community – significant matters ", I would like to see AHC commit to more than just a summary of community engagement feedback to the Council ahead of the decision. Through Elected Members only being provided a summary, and not the 'primary source' documents that the community has submitted, it opens the door for concerns about transparency and unconscious bias of Council staff to only note, report and feedback that they feel is relevant. This is akin in a legal setting to the Judge's Associate screening all evidence and summarising it, rather than letting the Judge see all evidence. It is important that the Judge, or in this case the Elected Body of Council, see all information that is submitted on consultations by the community. This has the benefit of increased transparency, and reduces the likelihood of Ombudsman investigations or judicial reviews from aggrieved parties.

5. Community Meetings and Drop-in Sessions

Stakeholder Meetings and engagement forums

On commencement of engagement, emails were sent to resident and community associations across the Adelaide Hills as well as the Peramangk and Kurna Aboriginal Corporation and other key community organisations.

These emails promoted the engagement and included the range of ways groups could get involved. The emails offered the opportunity for a staff member to attend a meeting to discuss the draft Framework and Policy on request.

We also considered any existing community network meetings and the opportunity to discuss the draft Framework and Policy in these settings.

Groups / stakeholders that staff met with:

- Hills Emergency Resilience Disability Group (HERD).
- CFS Engagement Officers for Station 1 and 2.

Lenswood Community Forum

The Lenswood Community Forum was held on Monday 30 March at the Lenswood Bowling and was attended by 31 community members. The forum included a range of presentations and discussions from council representatives and community leaders.

Community members had the opportunity to participate in a range of engagement activities with council staff and Elected Members at the forum including speaking to council's Community Engagement Coordinator about the draft Community Engagement Framework and Policy and about opportunities to work with council staff on local initiatives and decision-making discussions

Themes of feedback across face-to-face discussions:

- Importance of transparency and honesty.
- Respect and time given to resident groups to provide knowledge and needs for their local area.
- Importance of the identity of Adelaide Hills and individual townships.
- Difficulty identifying and accessing the appropriate contact/s within council.
- Perception that concerns are not being heard or understood by council.

6. Conclusion

One formal community engagement response was received during the engagement period. Following the suggestions made by this community member, small amendments have been proposed for the final version of the draft Community Engagement Policy.

The table below explains the amendments that have been made in line with community feedback and provides responses regarding any ideas that are not able to be incorporated.

Table 4 *Council responses to community feedback*

Feedback request / commentary	Council feedback / response
1) "Inform – Election information	<p>We have added the following dot points to Table 1 under "information to the whole council area":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider signage in prominent locations e.g. roadside, major reserves, shopping centres, libraries and community centres. • Consider pop-up information sites or sessions.
2) One notable positive is that now there is a Council meeting invitation for respondents on 'significant category' consultations	<p>We too appreciate the clarity the Charter has provided around the requirement to invite people who have made a written submission to attend a council meeting to speak to their submission before the decision is made, for "significant category" engagements.</p>
3) In terms of this Charter requirement "Seek and consider feedback from the community – significant matters ", I would like to see AHC commit to more than just a summary of community engagement feedback to the Council ahead of the decision.	<p>We have modified the wording in Table 1 to reference a "Community Engagement Outcomes Report" being presented to a Council meeting for consideration by Council ahead of decision rather than a summary report.</p> <p>While we understand the value of including all verbatim responses as part of this Community Engagement Outcomes Report, there are certain engagements where this isn't appropriate due to the nature of the engagement and/or personal nature of responses shared by community members.</p> <p>Where appropriate, verbatim responses will be included as part of the Community Engagement Outcomes Reports provided to Council.</p>

7. Appendices

Appendix A - Information Provided and Feedback Form



Home / Your Say, Your Way

What's happening

During September and October 2025, we asked for your help to shape the way we engage in the Adelaide Hills. We are developing a Community Engagement Framework that will guide the way we undertake community engagement activities, and we asked you to help us to understand what's most important to feature in this framework.

To find out what we heard from our community during Phase 1 of community engagement, follow the link below or read the Engagement Outcomes Report.

The ideas and feedback you shared have been used to develop our draft Community Engagement Framework and now we want to find out if we heard you correctly. You can review the draft Framework and share your feedback by following the link below.

The Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter was published in December 2025. We have reviewed our Public Consultation Policy and created a draft Community Engagement Policy in line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1999* and the Community Engagement Charter. We are seeking our communities' feedback on the draft Policy.

Timeline

- Community Engagement - Phase 2**
18 March and 26 April 2026.
Feedback on draft Community Engagement Framework.
- Community Engagement - Phase 3**
25 March to 26 April 2026.
Feedback on draft Community Engagement Policy.

[See more](#)

Links

our communities' feedback on the draft Policy.



Phase 1 - Your Say, Your Way

View information we shared and find out what we heard during Phase 1 of community engagement.

[Find out more >](#)



Phase 2- Draft Framework

Share your feedback on our draft Community Engagement Framework.

[Share your feedback >](#)



Phase 3 - Draft Policy

Share your feedback on our draft Community Engagement Policy.

[Share your feedback >](#)

LINKS

- [The Local Government Act 1999](#)
- [Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter](#)
- [AHC Public Consultation Policy](#)
- [Your Say, Your Way Community Engagement Outcomes Report](#)

FAQs

- ? [What is community engagement?](#)
- ? [What is a community engagement framework?](#)
- ? [What is the difference between council's community engagement framework and policy?](#)
- ? [What factors form part of Council's decision-making processes?](#)
- ? [What is the difference between community engagement and a customer request?](#)

Who's Listening

Melissa Clarke

Community Engagement Coordinator, Adelaide Hills Council

Phone: 8408 0400

Email: mclarke@ahc.sa.gov.au

Share your feedback on our draft Community Engagement Policy.

We have updated our Public Consultation Policy to align with the Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter.

Under the [Local Government Act 1999](#) (the Act) every council is required to maintain a Community Engagement Policy. The Community Engagement Policy sets out our formal commitments, statutory requirements and minimum standards for community engagement.

The review of our existing [Public Consultation Policy](#) was delayed while we waited on the release of the Minister for [Local Government's Community Engagement Charter](#) (the Charter). The Charter was released in December 2025.

We have updated our Policy to align with the requirements of the Charter and related amendments to the Act. Now we'd like to know what you think of the draft Policy.

You can view the existing Policy and the draft Policy, by selecting the links below:



**View our draft
Community Engagement
Policy**

[View policy >](#)



**View our existing Public
Consultation Policy**

[View policy >](#)

Feedback Form - Draft Community Engagement Policy



Help us to review our draft Community Engagement Policy.

Once you have completed your form you can return it by:

- Dropping it into an Adelaide Hills Council library or customer service centre.
- Mailing it to 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling SA 5152.
- Emailing it to engage@ahc.sa.gov.au .



Engagement closes on Sunday 26 April 2026. This submission form is also available online at engage.ahc.sa.gov.au.

About you

The below questions help us to understand who we are engaging with. All demographic questions are optional.

Your name

Your suburb, township or locality

Your email address

Your age group

Select one answer only	
<input type="radio"/> Under 14 years	<input type="radio"/> 55 to 64 years
<input type="radio"/> 15 to 24 years	<input type="radio"/> 65 to 74 years
<input type="radio"/> 25 to 34 years	<input type="radio"/> 75 to 84 years
<input type="radio"/> 35 to 44 years	<input type="radio"/> 85 years and above
<input type="radio"/> 45 to 54 years	

Your gender

Select one answer only			
<input type="radio"/> Male	<input type="radio"/> Female	<input type="radio"/> Non-binary	<input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say
<input type="radio"/> Prefer to select-describe			

Your feedback

What do you think of the draft Community Engagement Policy?

Select one answer only			
<input type="radio"/> I like it	<input type="radio"/> It's ok	<input type="radio"/> I don't like it	<input type="radio"/> I'm not sure

Please provide more feedback about your response.

What do you like? Is there anything missing? Do you have any additional feedback?

Draft Community Engagement Policy Easy Read Feedback Form



We would like your help to review our draft Community Engagement Policy.

You can view the draft Community Engagement Policy by visiting Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub www.engage.ahc.sa.gov.au



You can also view a copy at one of our libraries or customer service centres at the below locations:

- Stirling Coventry Library – 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling.
- Woodside Library – 26 Onkaparinga Road, Woodside.
- Gumeracha Library – 45 Albert Street, Gumeracha.
- The Summit Community Centre – 4 Crescent Drive, Norton Summit.



Please call council on 8408 0400 if you need any assistance.



You

About you

Your name

Your suburb or township



Your email or phone number

If you would like to stay in the loop.



Your feedback



What do you think of the draft Community Engagement Policy?

Put a tick or cross next to 1 answer below.



I like it



It's ok



I don't like it



I'm not sure



Do you have feedback about the draft

Policy you would like to share?

This could be about what you like or don't like or if anything is missing.



THANK
YOU



Thank you for your feedback.

Please hand your completed form to staff at an Adelaide Hills Library or Customer Service Centre, by Sunday 26 April 2026.

Or you can mail your completed feedback form to Adelaide Hills Council at 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling SA 5152.

Image credit

Envato website artists and photographers: Lady waving - by Sangiao_photography

Person thinking - by DC_Studio

Person writing – by ADDICTIVE_STOCK

Thank you - by kenishirotie

Draft Community Engagement Policy

Share your feedback



Share your feedback on our draft Community Engagement Policy.

We have updated our Policy to align with the requirements of the Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter and related amendments to the Local Government Act 1999.

To view the draft Policy and to provide your feedback, please visit engage.ahc.sa.gov.au, drop into an AHC library or contact us via the below details:

-  8408 0400
-  engage@ahc.sa.gov.au
-  63 Mt Barker Rd, Stirling SA 5152

Provide your feedback by Sunday 26 April 2026



08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



Draft Community Engagement Policy



Share your feedback on our draft Community Engagement Policy.

We have updated our Policy to align with the Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter.

Under the Local Government Act 1999 (the Act), every council is required to maintain a Community Engagement Policy.

The Community Engagement Policy sets out our formal commitments, statutory requirements and minimum standards for community engagement.

The Minister for Local Government's Community Engagement Charter (the Charter) was released in December 2025.

We have updated our existing Public Consultation Policy to align with the requirements of the Act and the Charter, and we'd like to know what you think of it.



You can view a copy of the draft Community Engagement Policy online on Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub or access a printed copy at our libraries and customer service centres at Stirling, Woodside, Gumeracha and Norton Summit.

Sharing your feedback

There are a variety of ways that you can provide your feedback on our draft Community Engagement Policy:

- Online - complete our online feedback form on Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub.
- Hardcopy feedback - collect a hardcopy feedback form from any of our libraries or customer service centres or print your own from the Document Library.
- In writing - submit your feedback in writing via email to engage@ahc.sa.gov.au or via letter addressed to 63 Mount Barker Rd, Stirling SA 5152.
- Phone - give us a call on 8408 0400.

Community engagement closes on Sunday 26 April 2026.

If you need assistance to provide your feedback, please email engage@ahc.sa.gov.au or call 8408 0400.

08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



Courier Ad – 18 March 2026

Your Say, Your Way

Share feedback on our draft **Community Engagement Framework and Policy**




The Community Engagement Framework guides how we engage with the community, setting the principles, approach and culture.


The Community Engagement Policy is the formal governance and legislative foundation.

Share your feedback on the Framework and Policy by Sunday 26 April 2026.

Scan to find out more:

 engage.ahc.sa.gov.au

 mail@ahc.sa.gov.au

 8408 0400



Adelaide Hills Council
March 26 · 🌐

Have your say on our Draft Community Engagement 'Framework' and 'Policy' 🗨️ We've made revisions based on your feedback, and we want to know if we have it right.

- 📄 The Framework outlines how we engage, including the principles, approach and culture that guide our conversations with you.
- 📜 The Policy is the formal foundation that ensures our engagement aligns with governance requirements and legislation.

Your insights will help shape a more responsive, transparent and collaborative Council.

Share your feedback by 📅 Sunday 26 April, visit 🖱️ <https://ow.ly/ushn50YysxA>

Your Say, Your Way

Draft Community Engagement Framework and Policy feedback

3

Like Comment Share

Write a comment...

Social media post – 22 April 2026



Adelaide Hills Council

April 22 at 5:45 PM · 🌐



Just a few days left to have your say on our Draft Community Engagement 'Framework' and 'Policy'. 📄📄 These documents guide how we connect with our community and involve you in decision-making.

What do you think of the drafts? What's working well, and what could be improved? 🗣️ Your input helps shape how we engage with our community in the future.

Share your feedback by 📅 Sunday 26 April, visit 📄 <https://ow.ly/usnh50YysxA>

Your Say, Your Way

Draft Community Engagement Framework and Policy feedback



👤 You and 2 others

📄 3 shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share



08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au

ahc.sa.gov.au



Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL

Appendix 4

LGA SA Community Engagement Model Policy

Helping local government
build stronger communities.



Community Engagement

Model Policy

March 2026

Format of this Model Policy

This *Model Community Engagement Policy* has been prepared by LGA South Australia with the assistance of Norman Waterhouse Lawyers to assist councils in the development of their own community engagement policies. This aims to ensure compliance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1999* following amendments made by the *Statutes Amendment (Local Government Review) Act 2021*, and commencement of the Community Engagement Charter.

Text and sections shaded in light blue indicate prompts for alteration and consideration when determining the specific policy position.

Legal Framework

A council's legal obligations relating to community engagement are set out in the *Local Government Act 1999* (**the Act**), the Community Engagement Charter (**the Charter**) and their council community engagement policies, as amended from time to time.

Other publications may provide useful information for councils, council officers and communities, but do not form part of the legal framework. These publications include (but are not limited to) the Local Government Community Engagement Handbook, this Model Policy, council frameworks, documents and policies (other than the council community engagement policy) and information on a council website.

Effective engagement assists councils to make informed decisions that consider a number of factors, including legislative requirements, budget constraints, strategic directions, public safety, expert advice and community views. When making decisions, councils must also weigh and balance a variety of competing factors which may include social, economic, technical, environmental and cultural considerations.

Section 50A of the Act requires councils to prepare and adopt a policy relating to community engagement which must be consistent with and comply with any requirements specified by the Charter.

A council's Community Engagement Policy, together with the Charter, will assist councils to make decisions that are representative of and support their communities.

Transitional Arrangements

Councils have 9 months from the commencement of the changes made to the Act on 11 December 2025 to adopt a community engagement policy under section 50A of the Act.

Until 3 months after the date a council adopts a community engagement policy, a requirement in the Act to undertake public consultation will be taken to be satisfied if the council follows the steps set out in its public consultation policy, as in force immediately prior

to 11 December 2025. Transitional regulations provide for the continuance of the Act in force immediately prior to that date for this purpose. During this period, councils can either rely on the provisions of their newly adopted community engagement policy or the applicable public consultation policy to meet the requirement to undertake public consultation in the Act.

Community Engagement Policy

Name of Council	
File reference	
Responsibility:	Governance
Version:	
Effective date:	
Last revised date:	
Minutes reference:	
Next review date:	
Applicable Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1999, s50, s50A</i>
Related Policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Related Procedures and Documents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement Charter •

1. Introduction

Council is committed to open, accountable and responsive decision making, which is informed by effective communication and engagement between Council and the community.

Including communities in decision-making processes is important to the successful development of appropriate and informed decisions and policies by Council.

Council’s community includes people who live, work, study, own property, conduct private or government business, visit or use the services, facilities and public spaces and places of Council. Council recognises that a community may be a geographic location (community of place), a community of similar interest (community of interest) or a community of affiliation, practice or identity (such as industry or sporting clubs).

Section 50A of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act) requires Council to prepare and adopt a policy relating to community engagement for the purposes of the Act. The policy must be consistent with and comply with any requirements specified by the Community Engagement Charter (the Charter).

2. Policy Objective

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Council meets its legislative obligations regarding public consultation by:

- Meeting the requirements set out in the Act and the Charter.
- Using appropriate and cost effective engagement methods which are relevant to the specific circumstances of each decision, activity or process.
- Providing for appropriate participation by the local community, key stakeholders and interested parties.
- Using feedback to enhance decision making.
- Providing information on the reasons for decision or actions of Council, where reasonable and appropriate.

This policy is a statement of Council's general position in relation to community engagement (public consultation), as required under the Act and the Charter.

3. Scope

This policy applies to decisions, activities and processes undertaken by the Council, a delegate of the Council or a person exercising power on the Council's behalf, where public consultation is **required** to be undertaken in **accordance** with the Act, the Charter, or this policy. **A reference in this policy to 'Council' includes a reference to a delegate or other person exercising power on the Council's behalf.**

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the implementation and application of this policy, and **where necessary** reporting the outcomes of consultations to the Council. **The specific delegations made under this Policy are outlined in part 8 of this policy.**

This policy does not apply where the Council is exercising powers and functions under any other Act. Where there are consultation requirements under other legislation, e.g. the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*, those specific processes take precedence over this policy.

4. Policy Statement

The preparation and adoption of this policy fulfil the Council's obligations to prepare and adopt a policy under section 50(A) of the Act. The following principles in the Charter have been considered in the preparation of this policy:

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

Council will undertake public consultation in accordance with the Act, the Charter and this policy.

Council may, in its absolute discretion, determine to undertake a step or steps in addition to those set out in this policy in relation to a matter for which it is required by the Act and/or the Charter to undertake public consultation.

However, Council is not required to give prior consideration and/or to determine whether or not to undertake any additional step or steps in relation to such a matter. A well-intentioned engagement that does not generate the anticipated level of engagement is not a breach of this policy.

Council may, from time to time, alter or substitute a new policy, following public consultation.

5. Public Consultation Categories

The Charter addresses minimum mandatory community engagement activities for matters where the Act requires public consultation to be undertaken.

The Charter establishes different categories of consultation for matters, as follows:

- **Significant – Annual business plan and rating policy**
 - Adopting an Annual Business Plan - section 123(3)(b)
 - Changes to basis of rating, declaring differential rates, imposing a separate rate, service rate or service charge, or changing the basis on which land is valued for the purpose of rating - section 151(5)(e)
- **Significant**
 - Representation reviews - section 12(7)
 - Development and review of Strategic Management Plans - section 122(6)
 - Changes to use of differential rating - section 156(4a)(b)
 - Revocation of classification of land as community land - sections 194(2)(b)
 - Community Land Management Plans - adoption - section 197(1)
 - Community Land Management Plans – significant amendments - section 198(3)
 - Alienation of community land by lease or license - section 202(2)
- **Standard**
 - Opening hours and place of principal office - substantial changes - section 45(3)
 - Community Engagement Policy - section 50A(6)(b)
 - Council behavioural support policies - section 75F(6)
 - Access to meetings and documents - section 92(5)
 - Power to make orders - section 259(2)(b)
- **Local**
 - Proposed permit or authorisation for alteration or use of a road for business purposes when there are works and traffic impeded for more than 48 hours (with a detour in place) or where no detour will be available - section 223(1)
 - Proposed planting of vegetation on a road – significant impact - section 232(b)
- **Inform**
 - Opening hours and place of principal office – minor changes - section 45(3)
 - Proposed permit or authorisation for alteration or use of a road for business purposes when there are works and traffic impeded for less than 48 hours and the Council ensures that a detour is in place - section 223(1)
 - Election information - section 13A (2) of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*

The table in Part 6 of this policy sets out the engagement activities that Council will undertake to meet the requirements of each matter for which public consultation must be undertaken in accordance with the Act and the Charter.

6. Charter Engagement Requirements

Council will comply with the minimum mandatory public consultation requirements for each category of matters set out in the Charter.

The following table sets out the engagement activities that Council will undertake to meet the public consultation requirements in the Act and the Charter.

[Blue shaded area = Council to populate table with the engagement activities it will undertake for each category of matters in the Charter

White shaded area = No discretion for councils to populate]

In circumstances where more than one engagement activity is specified, there is no obligation on Council to utilise all engagement activities in respect of each Charter requirement.

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category					Engagement activities (Council to populate where required)
		Significant ABP 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	Information published on a Council website
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				Information published in a print or digital newspaper, community newsletter or other (non-council) publication circulating in the area of Council

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category					Engagement activities (Council to populate where required)
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
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			Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council Information made available at Council offices, libraries and/or community centers Advertisement published on television, radio station or streaming service broadcasting in Council's area
Invite submissions	Provide information about how the community can make a submission, including timeframe.	X	X				Engagement material provides information about how the community can make a submission, including the minimum 21 day timeframe for submissions.
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				Engagement material explains what the Council proposes to do, why it proposes to do it, and what it seeks to achieve. Information published explains that feedback received will be taken into account by the Council before making a decision [or such other explanation as to how the feedback will inform the Council's decision]
Seek and consider feedback from the	Consider how best to invite feedback from the community.	X	X				Feedback will be invited by (e.g.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written submissions Completion of survey or questionnaire

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category					Engagement activities (Council to populate where required)
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
community—significant matters	<p>Provide a minimum community engagement period of 21 days to enable the community to provide feedback.</p> <p>Include a summary of community engagement feedback to the Council ahead of the decision.</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of an online response via social media • Attendance in person, by representative or via electronic means at a Council meeting or public meeting • Attendance in person, by representative or electronic means at a workshop, focus group or interview <p>Community Engagement period open for a minimum of 21 days</p> <p>Summary of community engagement feedback considered by Council ahead of decision</p>
Public Meeting	<p>Hold a public meeting where the community is invited to provide submissions (written or verbal) on the matter.</p> <p>The public meeting may be part of a Council meeting or a separate event.</p>	X					<p>A public meeting will be held either as part of a Council meeting, or as a separate event, for the making of written or verbal submissions.</p>
Council meeting invitation	<p>Invite people who have made a written submission to attend a Council meeting to speak to their submission before the decision is made.</p>		X				<p>People who made written submissions will be invited to attend a Council meeting and speak to their submissions before a decision is made</p>

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category					Engagement activities (Council to populate where required)
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
Seek and consider feedback from the community	<p>Consider how best to invite feedback from the community</p> <p>Provide information about how community feedback will inform the Council's decision.</p> <p>Ensure an appropriate period of time is provided to enable communities to provide feedback.</p>			X	X		<p>Feedback will be invited by (e.g.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions • Completion of a survey or questionnaire • Provision of an online response via social media • Attendance in person, by representative or via electronic means at a Council meeting or public meeting • Attendance in person, by representative or via electronic means at a workshop, focus group or interview <p>Information published indicates that feedback received will be taken into account by the Council before making a decision [or such other information about how the feedback will inform the Council's decision]</p> <p>Community Engagement period open for a period of [14 days] or such other period as determined by Council</p>
Consult with local community	<p>Consider appropriate forms of notifications to the area within the Council affected by the Council decision or action.</p>				X		<p>e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category					Engagement activities (Council to populate where required)
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
	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.						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information published in targeted letters or leaflet drops to the area within the Council affected by the Council decision or action Information made available at Council offices, libraries and/or community centers in the area within the Council affected by the council decision or action Advertisement published on television, radio station or streaming service broadcasting in the area within the council affected by the Council decision or action
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	e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council Information made available at Council offices, libraries and/or community centers Advertisement published on television, radio station or streaming service broadcasting in Council's area
Information to local community	Provide information to the local community that may be directly affected by the Council decision or action.					X	e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council Information published in targeted letters or leaflet drops to local community that may be

Charter requirement	Mandatory minimum actions to achieve Charter requirement	Charter Category					Engagement activities (Council to populate where required)
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
							<p>directly affected by the Council decision or action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information made available at Council offices, libraries and/or community centers in the local community that may be directly affected by the Council decision or action Advertisement published on television, radio station or streaming service broadcasting in the local community that may be directly affected by the Council decision or action

7. Other decisions, activities and processes

Council recognises there may be decisions, activities and processes where the Act and Charter are silent in relation to community engagement, but for which community engagement may nevertheless be appropriate.

Council may undertake community engagement activities for community participation in relation to other decisions, activities or processes of the Council not specified in the Charter at its absolute discretion. However, Council is not required to give prior consideration and/or to determine whether or not to undertake any such steps in relation to these matters.

8. Delegation

Specific engagement activities to be undertaken in relation to any particular decision, activity or processes shall be determined on a case by case basis, by:

- Council, by resolution;
- the CEO;
- a delegate with the power to undertake community engagement under the Act, the Charter or this policy; or
- a delegate with power to make a decision or undertake an activity or process that requires community engagement under the Act, the Charter or this policy.

Council, the CEO or a delegate is not required by this policy to undertake, or to consider or determine whether to undertake, additional engagement activities or engagement methods. Such a decision is at the absolute discretion of the decision maker.

9. Review and evaluation

To ensure Council continues to meet legislative requirements and undertakes effective community engagement, this policy will be subject to periodic evaluation and review.

Council to insert review and evaluation clause.

10. Further Information

A copy of this policy can be obtained from the Council office listed below during ordinary business hours on request for a fixed fee (if applicable). It may also be downloaded from Council's website: www.xxxxx.sa.gov.au

(08) 8224 2000

lgasa@lga.sa.gov.au

148 Frome St Adelaide SA 5000

GPO Box 2693 Adelaide SA 5001

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**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2026
AGENDA BUSINESS ITEM**

Item:	12.4
Responsible Officer:	Jess Charlton Director Community and Development Community and Development
Subject:	Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030
For:	Decision

SUMMARY

The purpose of this Report is to seek Council endorsement of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030 (provided in **Appendix 1**) following community engagement.

The development of a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) is a legislative requirement under the Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA). DAIPs must align with the *State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025–2029*, which sets state-wide priorities for access and inclusion.

The DAIP outlines how Adelaide Hills Council will work with people with disability, carers, families, businesses, the wider community, and Council staff to remove barriers and create more inclusive places, services, and opportunities across the Adelaide Hills.

Development of the DAIP has occurred over several stages, including initial community and stakeholder engagement (Phase 1), which informed the development of the draft DAIP. During Phase 2 of community engagement, the community was invited to provide feedback on the draft Plan and community members with disability, people who care for or support someone with disability, and the broader community were encouraged to participate. Feedback from Phase 2 has been incorporated into the final draft with the outcomes detailed in the *Community Engagement Outcomes Report* provided in **Appendix 2**.

Subject to Council endorsement, the Adelaide Hills Council Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026–2030 will be submitted to the Department of Human Services (DHS) prior to the 30 June 2026 deadline and published on both the DHS and Council websites. An Easy Read version will also be published (refer **Appendix 3**).

RECOMMENDATION

Council resolves:

- 1. That the report be received and noted.**
- 2. To note the DAIP *Community Engagement Outcomes Report* for Phase 2 of community engagement (**Appendix 2**).**

3. To endorse the *AHC Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030 (Appendix 1)*.
 4. To note that the endorsed *AHC Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030 (the DAIP)* will be submitted to the Department of Human Services (DHS) and be published on the DHS and AHC websites, alongside an Easy Read version (*Appendix 3*).
 5. To authorise the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the DAIP.
-

1. BACKGROUND

The development of a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) is a legislative requirement for councils under the *Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA)*. The purpose of a DAIP is to support people with disability to access and participate fully in Council services, facilities, programs, events, and community life, and to identify and address barriers to access and inclusion across Council operations.

In accordance with legislative requirements, Council's DAIP must align with the *State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025–2029*, including its domains, priority areas, and performance measures. Councils are also required to demonstrate how actions will be monitored and measured over the life of the plan, and to publish a DAIP on the Department of Human Services website by 30 June 2026.

Council commenced development of its DAIP in 2025. Phase 1 of community engagement was undertaken between 19 November 2025 and 2 February 2026, providing opportunities for people with disability, carers, families, service providers, community members, and other stakeholders to share their experiences, priorities, and ideas for improving access and inclusion across the Adelaide Hills. The outcomes of Phase 1 engagement informed the development of a Draft DAIP, alongside input from Elected Members and Council staff.

Council considered the draft DAIP at its meeting on 12 April 2026, and approved commencement of community engagement.

12.3 Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030 – Phase 2 (Community Engagement)

Moved Cr Malcolm Herrmann
S/- Cr Chris Grant

121/26

Council resolves:

1. That the report be received and noted.
2. To note the outcomes of Phase 1 community consultation, as detailed in the *Community Engagement Outcomes Report*.
3. To approve the commencement of community engagement on the *Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026–2030* in Appendix 1 from 15 April until 6 May 2026 inclusive.

Carried Unanimously

Phase 2 of community engagement was undertaken from 15 April 2026 to 6 May 2026. Feedback gathered during Phase 2 was used to inform final revisions to the Plan, which is now presented to council for endorsement.

An Easy Read version has also been developed, and this is an important accessibility measure ensuring the DAIP can be understood without losing the important meaning, thus supporting people with intellectual disability, low literacy, or others who may find standard documents difficult to interpret.

2. ANALYSIS

➤ Strategic Management Plan/Functional Strategy/Council Policy Alignment

Strategic Plan 2024 – Your Place, Your Space

Goal 2 Community Wellbeing

Objective CW3 Embrace diversity in our community and build on community strengths.

Priority CW3.2 Update and implement our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and continue to improve universal access to our community supports and services.

➤ Legal Implications

Under section 16 of the Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (the Act), Councils are required to prepare a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) that sets out clear, measurable actions aligned with the priority areas and outcomes of the *State Disability Inclusion Plan Outcomes Framework*, to improve access to mainstream supports and services for people with disability.

A DAIP must demonstrate how the council will implement the Act through alignment with the State Plan, include strategies with measurable outcomes to improve access to the built environment, information and employment, address the specific needs of legislated priority groups, and be published in an accessible format on the council's website.

In developing and implementing the DAIP, councils must give particular consideration to groups who may experience compounded barriers, including Aboriginal people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women and children with disability, people with disability who identify as LGBTIQ+, people with significant intellectual disability or high levels of vulnerability, and people with disability living in regional communities, to ensure their rights, needs and experiences are appropriately recognised and addressed.

Accessibility must be prioritised from the outset of all DAIP-related work, including consultation, action development, and publication. This includes communicating in ways that are fit for purpose, easy to understand, and available in formats that people with disability can readily access.

Accountability under the Act is supported through mandatory reporting and review requirements. Councils must submit an annual progress report by 31 October each year for the preceding calendar year, using reporting templates provided by the responsible State authority. In line with the Act's continuous improvement intent, DAIPs must be formally

reviewed at least every four years to ensure ongoing relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with State priorities and community needs.

➤ **Risk Management Implications**

Council resolving to adopt the revised AHC Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030 as recommended will assist with mitigating the risk of:

Failure to comply with the Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA)—by not developing a DAIP—leading to possibility of perceived poor governance and lack of inclusion, increased long-term costs and funding risks, poorer accessibility outcomes, exposure to complaints, and reputational damage with loss of community trust.

Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Target Risk
High	Low	Low

This is an existing mitigation control.

➤ **Financial and Resource Implications**

The adopted Plan will be implemented within existing staff resources and operational budgets. The Administration will pursue all avenues for external funding to support the DAIP's implementation, including Federal and State government grants.

➤ **Customer Service and Community/Cultural Implications**

It is a community expectation that Council will facilitate opportunities for all community members to have a voice in decision making and to be kept informed of Council decisions.

The development of the DAIP reflects Council's commitment to engaging with people with disability and those with lived experience to inform planning and service delivery. This approach supports more responsive and inclusive outcomes, while also contributing to increased community awareness, understanding, and shared responsibility for creating accessible and welcoming environments across the Adelaide Hills Council.

➤ **Sustainability Implications**

Not applicable.

➤ **Engagement/Consultation conducted in the development of the report**

Community consultation has been an integral component of the Plan's development.

Council Committees: Not applicable

Council Workshops: Workshop with Council members on the 2 March 2026 with Phase 1 community engagement outcomes presented and draft DAIP presented.

- Advisory Groups:** Three former Access and Inclusion Advisors invited via email to provide feedback on the Draft DAIP including an Easy Read version. Two Advisors provided feedback via email.
- External Agencies:** Three external agencies including one peak body and two local disability services provided feedback via the online portal.
- Community:** Phase 2 of community engagement was undertaken from 15 April 2026 to May 2026.

Community consultation has been an integral component of the Plan’s development. The Engagement Outcomes Report is available in **Appendix 2**. The Draft DAIP was developed from Phase 1 community engagement findings including feedback provided by Elected Members during a Council Workshop.

During Phase 2 of community engagement, those with disability, those who care for or support someone with disability and the wider community were invited to provide feedback on the draft DAIP, including an Easy Read version. This included reengagement with community members and stakeholders who participated in Phase 1 engagement. One community member provided feedback. The Engagement Outcomes Report is available in **Appendix 2** and includes detail on the approach, promotion methods, participation and feedback received.

➤ **Additional Analysis**

Community Engagement Outcomes – Phase 2

The purpose of Phase 2 of the engagement was to assist Council to understand the community’s level of support for the draft DAIP 2026-2030, including the Easy Read version.

We received 6 formal feedback responses relating to the draft Plan, including from

- 1 community member
- 2 services providers
- 1 peak body
- 2 Access and Inclusion Advisors (Adelaide Hills Council area).

While the full detail is provided in the Engagement Outcomes Report in **Appendix 2**, the table below provides a summary of the feedback received, the response to the feedback and amendments made to the Plan as a result.

Theme	Response to Feedback
Support for the draft DAIP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General statements of support for the draft Plan and for specific sections included in the plan. • Commentary that document covers the key points really well and is appropriate for sharing with program members for feedback and awareness. 	No changes required.

<p>Implementation process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments about how council will ensure a high standard of implementation when it comes to universal design and co design. 	<p>An internal Implementation Plan will be developed with relevant Council staff, alongside development of measures of success and data capturing strategies.</p> <p>Detail on implementation activities will be provided through progress updates to Council as well as through annual reports submitted to DHS.</p> <p><i>Amendment:</i> Added 'To ensure a high standard of implementation' in the 'About this Plan section.</p>
<p>Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback on whether there should be an employment target for people with disability • How council will assist people with a disability to be referred to local employment services. • Support for businesses to work with people with a disability. 	<p>As it is not a legislative requirement, employment targets have not been included to avoid setting unrealistic expectations.</p> <p>The intent of the Plan is to strengthen recruitment processes to ensure inclusive recruitment practices for the right candidate, strengthen warm referrals to local inclusive employment services and support local businesses to be more aware of the benefits of employing people with disability.</p> <p><i>Amendment:</i> Changed action 2B.1 to add that Council will link people with disability with local inclusive employment services.</p> <p><i>Amendment:</i> Added an additional action (2B.3) that Council will support local businesses to understand the benefits of employing people with disability.</p>
<p>Lived experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request to strengthen the Council's commitment to lived experience / professional guidance. 	<p><i>Amendment:</i> Changed Action 1B.3 (and associated measure of success) to strengthen council's commitment to seek lived experience / professional guidance.</p>
<p>LGBTIQA+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for engagement with LGBTIQA+ community as part of first phase of engagement. • Acknowledging priority groups in the Plan 	<p><i>Amendment:</i> Added the priority groups that the DAIP must address (per the Act) in the legislative and policy alignment section.</p>
<p>Preventative health</p>	<p>No changes required.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for preventative health measures relevant to a council’s responsibility. 	
Inclusion in existing activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowering and supporting community groups to work with people with a disability to involve them in existing activities and programming. 	No changes required.
Formatting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the Easy Read DAIP • Suggestions for formatting improvements 	<i>Amendment:</i> Formatting improvement have been made, including changing to landscape format and spacing improvements.

The final draft DAIP for consideration by Council is provided in **Appendix 1** with **Appendix 4** highlighting the changes made following Phase 2 of consultation with ‘tracked changes’.

3. OPTIONS

Council has the following options:

1. Endorse the draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030 provided in **Appendix 1**.
2. Do not endorse the draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030.
3. Seek further amendments to the draft Plan Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030. Should Council identify the need for substantial amendments to the draft “DAIP”, it is recommended that they be referred to staff for review to allow for analysis of the implications of the amendments, prior to the matter being brought back to Council for further consideration.

Should Council not endorse the draft Plan or seek further amendments, it is noted that Council may not meet the 30 June 2026 timeframe for submitting the new DAIP to the Department of Human Services.

4. APPENDICES

- (1) Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030 (clean copy)
- (2) Community Engagement Outcomes Report
- (3) DAIP – Easy Read Version
- (4) Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030 (tracked changes)

Appendix 1

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030
(clean copy)

Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030

SECOND EDITION



Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL



Adelaide Hills Council acknowledges that we undertake our business on the traditional Country of the Peramangk and Kurna peoples.

We pay our respect to Ancestors and Elders past and present as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land, for they hold the memories, traditions, spiritual relationships, culture and hopes of the First Nations of Australia.

We are committed to working together to ensure that Peramangk and Kurna culture and traditions are sustained, valued and continuing.

Together we will care for Country for the generations to come and in this context the decisions we make should be guided by the principle that nothing we do should decrease our children's ability to live on this land.

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As Mayor of Adelaide Hills Council, I am pleased to present our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030.

This plan reflects our ongoing commitment to building a community where everyone belongs and where barriers to inclusion in community life are removed.

Inclusion is a part of everyday life in the Adelaide Hills. It benefits everyone – including people with disability, of all ages, cultures, identities and experiences. As a council, we will show leadership, model inclusive practice, and work towards making sure our services, facilities and information are accessible to all.

Our inaugural DAIP resulted in meaningful progress in improving access and inclusion for our Hills community. Examples of this include:

A new changing places facility at Fabrik in Lobethal, new communication boards at Sherry Park Mylor and Protea Reserve Crafers, disability awareness training for staff and inclusion of people with lived experience of disability in community engagement and advisory roles.

This next Plan sets clear, practical actions. It focuses on continuing to remove barriers, designing for inclusion from the start, and partnering with our community – especially people with lived experience – so that everyone can belong, participate and thrive.

On behalf of Council, thank you to everyone who has contributed to past initiatives and to the development of this Plan.

The DAIP will be published on our website: www.ahc.sa.gov.au.

If you need this document in another format, such as an Easy Read or a fully accessible Word version, please contact Council's Community Development team on **(08) 8408 0400** or email: mail@ahc.sa.gov.au.





Vision

An Adelaide Hills where everyone belongs, can participate fully, and can access and enjoy our places, services and community life.

Aspiration

Disability is a natural and valued part of human diversity in our community.

People with disability are not a single group. Experiences, identities and strengths are diverse.

We will strive to remove barriers before they exclude, and design our towns, landscapes, services and events so that people of all abilities can live, connect and thrive.

We will listen to lived experience, especially from priority groups, and include those voices in planning, design and delivery.

By designing inclusively, working in partnership, and being flexible, we will increase participation and create a community where everyone belongs.

About this Plan

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2026 – 2030) sets out how Adelaide Hills Council will work with people with disability, carers, families, businesses, the wider community and our staff to remove barriers and create more inclusive places, services and opportunities across the Hills.

To ensure a high standard of implementation, our approach is strength-based and integrated:

People with disability contribute skills, leadership and perspectives across all areas of community life.

We focus on universal design – designing environments so they can be used by as many people as possible without needing adaptation.

We design for belonging and participation, so people can take part in ways that reflect their strengths, identities and choices.

Autism Inclusion

The DAIP recognises autism as part of disability diversity. Actions consider sensory, communication and participation needs across environments, services and engagement activities.

Why this Plan Matters

For community members: It helps make public places easier to move around, information easier to understand, events more welcoming, and services easier to use.

For families and carers: It reduces everyday barriers and supports inclusion in community life.

For local businesses and community groups: It provides guidance and partnerships to improve accessibility and attract more customers and participants.

For Council: It aligns our work with South Australian law and national strategies and turns our values into clear actions and measurable outcomes.

Our Region

Adelaide Hills Council works on Peramangk and Kurna Country. Our district spans 795 km², located 10–40 km from the Adelaide CBD, across 57 townships/localities and 16,267 households, with an estimated population of 42,368.

Our area includes the hills face from Rostrevor and Teringie up to Kersbrook and Gumeracha in the north, west to Woodside and Oakbank, and south to Scott Creek and Mylor.

Council facilities include offices in Stirling and Woodside, a Resource Recovery Centre in Heathfield, the Fabrik Arts and Heritage Hub in Lobethal, 16 historic cemeteries, libraries, service centres and community centres in Stirling, Woodside, Gumeracha and Norton Summit. We also support The Hut Community Centre (Aldgate) and the Adelaide Hills Swimming Centre (Woodside). These places support connection, participation and belonging.



Our People

According to the 2021 Census, 1,540 people (3.8%) in the Adelaide Hills reported needing help with core activities due to disability. This provides insight into residents with higher support needs but does not capture all disability. Many people with disability do not need daily assistance yet still face barriers. This is why Council plans for inclusion using universal design to benefit everyone.



Our Workforce and Volunteers

Council is an equal opportunity employer with around 193 employees across a range of roles (administration, field crews, management, community development, property, biodiversity and more). We also have an average of 157 volunteers each year supporting the community.

We are building an inclusive workplace. We have a Reasonable Adjustment Policy and Procedures (adopted October 2018).

This DAIP meets our obligations under South Australian law and aligns our work with state and national strategies.

Legislative and Policy Alignment

- Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA): requires all councils to prepare and implement a DAIP.
- State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025 - 2029: our actions align to its domains:
 1. Inclusive environments and communities
 2. Education and employment
 3. Personal and community support
 4. Health and wellbeing*
 5. Safety, rights and justice

*NB The Health and Wellbeing Domain is not identified as the responsibility of Council and will be addressed by other state authorities.

State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025 - 2029, addressing the needs of priority groups:

- Aboriginal peoples with disability
 - People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with disability
 - Women with disability
 - Children with disability
 - People with disability who identify as LGBTIQ+
 - People with significant intellectual disability or who have high levels of vulnerability due to disability
 - People with disability who live in regional communities.
- Australia's Disability Strategy 2021 - 2031 and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities guide our commitment to human rights, participation and inclusion.
 - SA Autism Strategy (launched June 2024): provides a five - year roadmap to improve the lives of Autistic people and their families and works alongside the State Disability Inclusion Plan.
 - SA Autism Strategy (launched June 2024): provides a five - year roadmap to improve the lives of Autistic people and their families and works alongside the State Disability Inclusion Plan.

Alignment to Council's Strategies and Plans

11

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) works alongside many other Council plans. It is not a separate or standalone document — it fits within Council's broader strategic direction and supports the goals already set for our community.

Council's Strategic Plan sets the overall vision for how we want the Adelaide Hills to grow, connect and thrive. The DAIP supports this vision by ensuring that access and inclusion are built into the way we design places, plan services and make decisions.

The DAIP also aligns with a number of more detailed Council plans — such as those for infrastructure, community services, libraries, youth, recreation and local economic development. These plans guide how we deliver specific projects and services. The DAIP ensures that inclusion is considered across all of them, so accessibility isn't an afterthought but part of everyday practice.

The DAIP strengthens the work Council is already doing. It connects with existing strategies, guides future planning, and ensures that access and inclusion are at the heart of our long-term vision for the community.

Why this Matters to Residents

- Aligning our DAIP with state and national priorities helps us:
- Work together for collective impact
- Use shared indicators and data sources to measure progress
- Target actions that make a real difference locally.

What is Disability

Plain English Definition

Disability is when a person has a condition that makes it harder to do everyday activities or take part in community life.

It may affect how a person moves, sees, hears, thinks, learns, communicates or interacts.

Often, the main barriers are inaccessible places, information or attitudes – not the person.

Legal Context (South Australia)

Under the Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA), disability includes cognitive, neurological or sensory impairments (or a combination). When these interact with barriers, they can hinder a person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Adelaide Hills Council is committed to removing barriers so everyone can participate.



How We Engaged

- Internal meetings: more than 13 meetings across Council departments to identify opportunities and improvements.
- Community Forum: held on 27 November 2025 at The Village Well focused on access and inclusion.
- Drop-in sessions: in Stirling Library, Gumeracha Library, and Fabrik Christmas Market to gather local insights across the region.
- Online Engagement: Community Engagement Portal
- Targeted conversations: with disability services, peak organisations, AHC Access and Inclusion Advisors, and residents who requested a 1:1 discussion.
- Inclusion of priority groups: including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, young people, parents and carers, and LGBTIQ+ people.
- Experts in disability inclusion supported the process, most with lived experience.

What We Heard (Common Themes)

- Improve footpath accessibility, especially in main streets and around schools.
- Involve lived experience throughout the life of the Plan (co-design, testing, feedback).
- Increase accessible parking.
- Support local businesses to improve accessibility.
- Share accessible features of Council facilities online.
- Introduce the Sunflower Lanyard to support accessible events and services.
- Raise community awareness about access needs and inclusive attitudes.
- Embed universal design in planning and projects.
- Strengthen employment pathways and opportunities.
- We sincerely thank everyone who contributed their time, experience and ideas.

Inaugural DAIP Achievements

Highlights from the previous Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2020-2024)

Over the life of the 2020-2024 DAIP, Adelaide Hills Council delivered, or was in the progress of delivering, almost 90% of the 39 endorsed actions.

Key achievements included:

- A new changing places facility at Fabrik Arts + Heritage Hall in Lobethal
- New communication boards at Sheer Park Mylor and Protea Reserve Crafrers
- We have 26 accessible carparks which include 3 new ones located in Federation Park, Sherry Park and Mylor Tennis Club plus upgrading the disability carpark at The Summit Community Centre
- Disability awareness training for staff.
- Inclusion of people with disability in community engagement and advisory roles.
- Stronger partnerships with local disability service providers, including NDIS.

These achievements reflect Council’s dedication to providing a strong foundation for the 2026-2030 Plan.



DAIP Actions

STATE Domain, Priority Area and Outcome	AHC Action to support the State's Priority Areas and Outcomes	AHC 4-year measure of success	STATE Mandatory Measures	AHC Timeframe	AHC Responsibility
Domain 1: Inclusive environments and communities					
Priority Area A: Active Participation					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are active participants in accessible and inclusive communities.	1A.1 Explore ways to make it easier for people with disability to access information about, register for and attend council-run events and programs.	The needs of people with disability are consistently embedded in event and program planning and delivery across council.	1.1.2	An initial period of 6 months to set up anything new then business as usual	Region & Place, Community Centres, FABRIK, Libraries, Comms, Engagement & Events, Positive Ageing
	1A.2 Expand opportunities for people with disability to participate in arts and culture programs, exhibitions and performances at council-run venues, programs and events, where possible.	A variety of accessible arts and culture opportunities are available to people across council-run facilities and events to participate in.	1.1.2	Ongoing	Community Centres, Libraries, FABRIK, Community Development, Comms Engagement & Events
	1A.3 Through event and program planning we will give consideration to identifying and designating quiet/low-sensory spaces or times, and if available, communicate this in promotions.	Community members have low sensory times/spaces available to access events and programs where and when available.	1.3.2 (a)	End of 2026 then business as usual	Community Centres, Libraries, FABRIK, Region & Place, Comms Engagement & Events

	1A.4 Encourage and support community groups, local sporting clubs, community-run events and program providers to co-design and deliver accessible and inclusive programs and events.	Community groups have access to information to be able to offer accessible and inclusive initiatives.	1.1.2	Ongoing in response to community need	Sport & Recreation, Community Centres, Region & Place, Community Development
	1A.5 Offer accessible exercise programs as part of community centre programs that encourage movement, inclusion and wellbeing as part of a preventative health strategy.	People with disability or people with mobility impairment can access exercise classes for strength, movement and wellbeing.	1.2.1(b)	Ongoing	Community Centres
Priority Area B: Inclusive Communities and Attitudes					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are respected and included in their communities, where inclusive attitudes and behaviours are widely demonstrated.	1B.1 Build confidence, knowledge and skills of Council leadership, Elected Members, staff and volunteers to integrate inclusive practice into their work through disability awareness training, including mandatory training for roles that directly engage with people with disability.	Leadership, Elected Members, staff and volunteers are able to offer meaningful engagement with people with lived experience.	1.2.1 (a)	At induction for volunteers, when onboarding staff and Elected Members, and when updating of training is needed	People & Culture, Volunteering, Governance, Fabrik

	1B.2 Explore how to improve understanding of Universal Design within targeted council teams and for project managers who design buildings, infrastructure and communications.	Council staff involved in design work are trained in and are applying Universal Design principles.	1.3.2 (b)	Ongoing	Civil Services, Property, CEE, Region & Place, Development Services, (People & Culture as support)
	1B.3 Draw on lived-experience and professional guidance to shape access and inclusion initiatives - including from priority groups where possible.	Council is receiving and implementing lived experience feedback and expert guidance to inform the design of access and inclusion across a number of initiatives.	1.2.3	New initiatives or projects	Inclusion & Wellbeing, Community Development, Comms Engagement & Events
Priority Area C: Universal Design					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: Everyone in South Australia can access and enjoy inclusive and accessible natural and built environments.	1C.1 Embed universal design and accessibility requirements into all new, and where feasible, upgraded Council facilities, so they are usable and welcoming for the widest range and diversity of people.	Universal Design is routinely prioritised in new and renewed council buildings and fit-outs, meeting council's obligations under the Discrimination Inclusion Act 2018 and the State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025-2029.	1.3.2 (b)	Ongoing	Assets, Sport & Rec, Region & Place, Civil Services, Property, Open Space
	1C.2 Consider opportunities for accessible sport, physical activity and recreation across open spaces, trails, parks, reserves and playgrounds.	There's 'something for everyone' across council's open space infrastructure and playgrounds.	1.3.3	Ongoing	Sport & Recreation, Assets, Civil, Open Space

	1C.3 Apply solutions that address Universal Design and accessibility requirements whenever practical when installing, renewing, or maintaining infrastructure (including council footpaths, crossings and roads).	Universal Design solutions are routinely considered in infrastructure installation, renewal and maintenance.	1.3.2 (a), 1.3.2 (b), 1.3.3	Ongoing	Assets, Civil Services
	1C.4 Make it easier for council to identify where accessibility improvements are needed across facilities, infrastructure and services.	Council uses data from community complaints, lived experience and accessibility audits to help prioritise accessibility improvements across facilities and services.	1.3.2 (a)	Ongoing	Assets, CEE, Region & Place, Customer Service, Rangers, IT, Community Development
	1C.5 Encourage and support local businesses to enhance inclusion and accessibility through voluntary recognition, incentives, and guidance.	An increase in number local businesses that have become more accessible, and community members say they find it easier to shop and use local services.	1.2.1 (a), 1.2.1 (b)	12 months to initiate then ongoing	Region & Place
	1C.6 Showcase Fabrik as a model for making heritage places inclusive for everyone.	More heritage facilities improved for accessibility, with Fabrik demonstrating what successful upgrades look like.	1.3.2 (a)		Fabrik, Comms Engagement & Events
	1C.7 Explore a plan to improve the supply, placement and usability of accessible parking (and lighting) across Council facilities and town centres.	People can find and use accessible parking more easily, including at night.	1.3.2 (a)	December, 2026	Assets, Region & Place
Priority Area D: Accessible Facilities					

<p>AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability can access public toilets that meet their needs when out in the community.</p>	<p>1D.1 Review the minimum accessibility standards for toilets in open spaces to ensure both the facility and fixtures are useable and fit for purpose for the broadest range and diversity of people.</p>	<p>The useability of toilet facilities by people with a wide range of accessibility needs is prioritised in council's new builds, refurbishments and open spaces.</p>	<p>1.4.1</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Assets, Sport & Rec, Property</p>
<p>Priority Area E: Communications and Information</p>					
<p>AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability can find the information they need in the format(s) they need.</p>	<p>1E.1 Continue to explore ways to make it easier to find and navigate information about council's disability and inclusion initiatives, access and understand Council information and communicate with Council.</p>	<p>Council provides high quality communication and online experience that meets or exceeds accessibility standards and is applied consistently across the organisation and in response to community need.</p>	<p>1.5.1</p>	<p>A & I webpage updates December, 2026 - Website update 2027</p>	<p>CEE, Customer Service, Inclusion & Wellbeing</p>
	<p>1E.2 Aim to provide clear program and event information - including venue accessibility features and active transport or public transport options, where available, in a range of accessible formats.</p>	<p>Information is available in a variety of formats to support people to register for, plan for and get to council-run facilities, programs and events.</p>	<p>1.5.1</p>	<p>Ongoing and in response to facility upgrades</p>	<p>Community Centres, Libraries, FABRIK, Region & Place, Comms Engagement & Events, Inclusion & Wellbeing</p>
	<p>1E.3 Aim to improve how people move around the community through clearer, more accessible and reliable wayfinding and facility information.</p>	<p>People with disability can navigate community hubs more easily.</p>	<p>1.5.1</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Comms Engagement & Events, Region & Place, Sport & Rec, Open Space, Inclusion & Wellbeing</p>

Priority Area F: Transportation					
NA - not an identified priority for local government, being addressed by other state authorities.	1F.1 Seek opportunities to advocate to governments and transport providers for more accessible and connected transport services to key employment hubs in our district.	Council makes use of opportunities to advocate on behalf of the AHC community.	NA	When opportunity allows	Inclusion & Wellbeing
Priority Area G: Collaboration, consultation and innovation					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are actively involved in government decisions that affect their lives.	1G.1 Provide opportunities for people with disability to actively shape access and inclusion in the Adelaide Hills Council.	Council maintains a Disability Inclusion Network with flexible participation options.	1.7.2	Ongoing	Inclusion & Wellbeing
	1G.2 Make it easier for people with disability to participate in council's community engagement activities.	Staff are supported to deliver engagements that are more accessible and inclusive of people with disability.	1.7.1	Ongoing	Comms Engagement & Events
Domain 2: Education and Employment					
Priority Area A: Targeted Transitional Supports					

AHC will support the STATE Outcome: people with disability have supportive environments to learn, grow, and transition throughout their life.	2A.1 Continue to offer meaningful & flexible volunteering opportunities that welcome and support people with a wide range of strengths and abilities where the role allows it.	People with disability report a positive volunteer experience at council.	2.3.5	Ongoing	Volunteering, Libraries, Volunteer Leaders, Fabrik
Priority Area B: Access to Employment Opportunities					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability have opportunities to achieve, develop and success in their chosen fields.	2B.1 Explore how to support initiatives and programs that build the work skills of people with disability and improve their pathways to employment, including linking with local inclusive employment services.	A number of programs and initiatives that help pathways to employment for people with disability, including linking with local inclusive employment services, are identified and shared with the community.	2.4.3	2030	People & Culture, Community Wellbeing
	2B.2 Explore ways to embed disability inclusion into the Recruitment and Retention Strategy so that job descriptions, applications and interview formats reflect inclusive employment practices.	People with disability apply for Council roles - where appropriate.	2.4.3	2030	People & Culture
	2B.3 Support local businesses to understand the benefits of employing people with disability.	Local businesses have access to opportunities to broaden their understanding of the benefits of employing people with disability.	3.1.1		
Priority Area C: Inclusive Working Environments					

AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability have access to supportive places to earn.	2C.1 Continue building a workplace culture that is fair, welcoming and inclusive of all people, including people with disability and aligns with the Recruitment and Retention Strategy.	Council staff experience the workplace as inclusive and welcoming, and council meets its related legislative requirements.	2.5.1	2027 then ongoing	People & Culture
Domain 3: Personal and Community Support					
Priority Area A: Accessibility					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability can easily access community supports and services.	3A.1 Explore opportunities to help community members find and connect with disability, health and wellbeing services through council facilities and events.	Council maintains partnerships that help link people with disability to health and wellbeing information and services.	3.1.1	Ongoing	Inclusion & Wellbeing, Community Centres, Libraries, Comms Engagement & Events
Priority Area B: Information Sharing					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability receive more coordinated and effective support when services work together and share information.	3B.1 Actively contribute to and participate in Local Government Access Inclusion Network and Inclusive SA Communities of Practice meetings to stay abreast of developments that support the delivery of the DAIP.	Council contributes to and stays informed of the sector and state developments in disability access and inclusion.	3.3.1	Ongoing	Inclusion & Wellbeing

	3B.2 Maintain awareness of service providers and relevant networks to ensure community are aware of services.	Council stays abreast of services in the area and maintains networks with relevant service providers in the area to identify shared priorities and service gaps.	3.1.1	Ongoing	Inclusion & Wellbeing Community Centres
Priority Area C: Programs					
AHC will support the State Outcome: Government-funded programs and services include disability-specific provisions to enable full and equal participation.	3C.1 Promote grant opportunities to increase applications and consider funding levels in response to demonstrated community demand for accessible and inclusive projects and events.	Council receives applications for grants for accessibility and inclusion projects and events.	3.5.1	Ongoing	Region & Place (Grants and Events)
	3C.2 Continue to embed into existing programs opportunities that support residents with disability to connect with others, and discover and participate in inclusive activities that are welcoming and accessible for people of all ages, abilities, cultures and identities.	People with disability report improved connection and inclusion after attending a council event or program.	1.2.3	Ongoing	Community Centres, Libraries, FABRIK, Community Development
Domain 4: Health and Wellbeing	IS NOT IDENTIFIED AS A PRIORITY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT - BEING ADDRESSED BY OTHER STATE AUTHORITIES				

Domain 5: Safety, Rights and Justice					
Priority Area A: Responding to Emergencies					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are kept safe during emergencies with their needs planned for and prioritised.	<p>5A.1 Continue to support appropriate community-led readiness initiatives through council's community resilience role - noting that community are responsible for their own safety during an emergency.</p>	<p>People with disability are considered in council's emergency preparedness and response.</p>	5.2.1	Ongoing	Community Resilience
	<p>5A.2 Council will continue to promote the importance for all community members to keep themselves safe during an emergency by offering information regarding preparation and planning that is of particular relevance to people with disability.</p>	<p>People with disability will have access to information on keeping themselves safe during an emergency.</p>	5.2.1	Ongoing	Community Resilience

Our Roles

Depending on the action, Council may act as a connector, responder, partner, facilitator, advocate, funder or regulator.

Monitoring and Reporting

We will track progress and report.

- **Governance:** Assign clear owners for each action and involve input from community members with lived experience.
- **Measures:** Use practical indicators aligned to State Plan domains (e.g., number of accessible upgrades, training completions, accessibility features published, participation rates etc).
- **Reporting:** Provide annual updates to DHS and Council.
- **Review:** Conduct a mid-term review and a final evaluation to identify outcomes and next steps.
- **Continuous improvement:** Use community feedback, co-design and ongoing engagement with Access and Inclusion Champions to refine actions over time.



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Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL

Appendix 2

Community Engagement Outcomes Report

Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030

Community Engagement Outcomes Report

May 2026



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1. Introduction

Under the Disability Inclusion Act 2018, councils are required to maintain a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP), which aligns with the State DAIP and is reviewed in line with each new 4-year State Plan cycle (2025-2029).

From November 2025 to February 2026, we asked our community to share their ideas and feedback about what should be included in our DAIP 2026-2030.

We heard from individuals, groups and organisations from right across our community. All of the important information our community shared was used to develop our draft DAIP 2026-2030.

On the 15 April 2026, we opened community engagement seeking feedback on our draft DAIP 2026-2030. We asked our community what they thought of the draft Plan and to provide any feedback about what they liked and anything that was missing or that could be improved.

We encouraged community members with disability, people who care for or support someone with disability and the wider community to participate. We also encouraged all staff leaders with overlap with the DAIP to participate.

Feedback received was collected via an online and hardcopy feedback form, and written submissions received via email.

We had a total of six engagement responses during the engagement period. You can see the full spread of engagement participation activities below in *Table 2: Participation Source*.

This report presents feedback received during the engagement period and will be presented to Council and made available to those who participated in the consultation on Council's Engagement Platform.

2. Summary of Engagement

Engagement approach

The purpose of the engagement was to assist us to understand our communities' level of support for the draft DAIP 2026-2030.

A community engagement plan was developed, and community engagement was undertaken between 15 April and 6 May 2026.

Our engagement approach aimed to provide detail about our role working with State Government to achieve the outcomes of the State DAIP and how community ideas and feedback shared during the first phase of engagement had been incorporated into our draft DAIP.

Questions were asked to determine participants level of support for the draft DAIP, and any additional feedback or comments.

A feedback form was developed and provided online and in hardcopy format. It contained both closed and open style questions.

Feedback could be provided via any of the following options:

- Online - complete the online feedback form, or upload a file at engage.ahc.sa.gov.au.
- Hardcopy feedback - collect a hardcopy feedback form from any of our libraries or customer service centres or print your own from the Document Library.
- In writing - submit feedback in writing via email (engage@ahc.sa.gov.au) or via letter addressed to 63 Mount Barker Rd, Stirling SA 5152.
- Call - give us a phone call on 8408 0400.

Distribution and promotion

The opportunity to provide feedback was promoted through a number of channels including:

- Courier Advertisement on 15 April 2026.
- Adelaide Hills Council Website and Community Engagement Hub Page.
- Email campaign to engagement subscribers with relevant categories of interest and who participated in the first phase of engagement.
- Information and hardcopy feedback forms available at libraries/customer service centres at Gumeracha, Stirling, Norton Summit and Woodside.
- Emails to relevant community and stakeholder groups.
- Email to Elected Members to share.
- Social media posts.
- Inclusion in Hills Voice e-newsletter.

Email and social media promotion statistics are presented below:

Table 1 Promotional statistics

Media	Number of posts / emails / Newsletter	Reach	Engagement
Adelaide Hills Council Facebook	1 post	529 views	2 reactions

Adelaide Hills Council LinkedIn	1 post	310 impressions, 22 engagements	9 reactions, 13 clicks
Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub emails	2	2,445	980 opened, 74 clicked
Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub page	-	227 views / 88 visitors	7 contributors / 3 followers (includes 3 Access and Inclusion Champions EOIs)

A copy of information provided on Council's Engagement Platform and feedback form is available in Appendix A.

All verbatim comments received via written feedback, are included in Appendix B.

All e-newsletters, advertisements and social media posts are provided in Appendix C.

3. Participation

This section provides details about participation during the engagement period.

Participation source

The following table displays how participants provided feedback.

Table 2 Participation Source

Activity	Number Participating
Online and hardcopy feedback forms	4
Written submissions (letter and email)	2
Total Consultation Participation	6

4. What We Heard

All six feedback responses received via feedback form and email, shared support for the draft DAIP. When asked “what do you think of the draft DAIP?” the four respondents who completed the feedback form selected “I like it”. The two responses received via email stated that they supported the draft DAIP. You can see the verbatim responses in Appendix B.

The below section provides a summary of key themes of feedback received across all feedback streams.

Table 3 Key themes of community feedback

Theme	Detail
Support for the draft DAIP	General statements of support for the draft Plan and for specific sections included in the plan.
Implementation process	Question about how council will ensure a high standard of implementation when it comes to universal design and co design.
Employment	Question about inclusion of an AHC employment target for people with disability and how council will assist people with a disability to be referred to local employment services. Support for businesses to work with people with a disability.
Lived experience guidance	Request to strengthen the description around councils commitment to seek lived experience / professional guidance.
LGBTIQA+	Support for engagement with LGBTIQA+ community as part of first phase of engagement.
Preventative health	Support for preventative health measures relevant to a council's responsibility.
Inclusion in existing activities	Empowering and supporting community groups to work with people with a disability to involve them in existing activities and programming.
Support for Easy Read DAIP	Commentary that document covers the key points really well and is appropriate for sharing with program members for feedback and awareness.

5. Conclusion

All feedback received during the engagement period, shared support for the draft DAIP 2026-2030.

Key themes of feedback and specific recommendations have been considered, and the following amendments have been made to the final draft DAIP being present to Council requesting endorsement, in June 2026. Following the outcomes of community engagement,

some amendments have been made to the draft Plan to address factors that were important to our community and to address formatting to improve legibility

Table 4 Amendments / revisions to the draft DAIP

Requested change / addition	Council response / suggested amendments
<p>Since LGBTQIA+ as a priority group are required in the DAIPs, it may be useful for this to be explicitly outlined (as has been done with the domains). This ensures that the council remains aware of the requirements to consider each of the priority groups.</p>	<p>Added:</p> <p>'State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025 - 2029: addressing the needs of priority groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal peoples with disability • People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with disability • Women with disability • Children with disability • People with disability who identify as LGBTQIA+ • People with significant intellectual disability or who have high levels of vulnerability due to disability • People with disability who live in regional communities.' <p>Added to the Legislative and Policy Alignment section, page 10.</p>
<p>The description of 1B.3 (lived-experience) sets a low bar that council will draw on lived experience/professional guidance *where possible*, and that the success measure is council *inviting* lived experience/expert guidance</p>	<p>Amended 1B.3 AHC Action to:</p> <p>'1B.3 Draw on lived-experience and professional guidance to shape access and inclusion initiatives - including from priority groups where possible.'</p> <p>Amended AHC 4-year measure of success to:</p> <p>'Council is receiving and implementing lived experience feedback and expert guidance to inform the design of access and inclusion across a number of initiatives.'</p>
<p>Has council considered an employment target for employing people with a disability (in council)?</p> <p>Should this be included in the DAIP?</p>	<p>It is not a legislative requirement of Councils to provide employment targets for employing people with a disability in council.</p> <p>This has not been included in the Plan to avoid setting unrealistic expectations. Rather, the intent of the Plan is to strengthen AHC recruitment processes to ensure inclusive recruitment practices for the right candidate, strengthen warm referrals to local inclusive employment services and support local businesses to be more aware of the benefits of employing people with disability.</p>

<p>Can council include information on how it will assist people with a disability be referred to local employment services to assist increasing employment outcomes for PWD?</p>	<p>Amended action 2B.1 to:</p> <p>‘2B.1 Explore how to support initiatives and programs that build the work skills of people with disability and improve their pathways to employment, including linking with local inclusive employment services.’</p> <p>Amended AHC 4-year measure of success to:</p> <p>‘A number of programs and initiatives that help pathways to employment for people with disability, including linking with local inclusive employment services, are identified and shared with the community.’</p>
<p>How will council promote employing PWD to local businesses?</p>	<p>Added the action:</p> <p>‘2B.3 Support local businesses to understand the benefits of employing people with disability.’</p> <p>And AHC 4-year measure of success:</p> <p>‘Local businesses have access to opportunities to broaden their understanding of the benefits of employing people with disability.’</p>
<p>*should section 2.4.3 be expanded?</p>	<p>Amending and adding the above 2 actions has broadened this section.</p>
<p>The DAIP Actions would be easier to read as a table if positioned landscape and spacing improved.</p>	<p>Formatting has been edited to reflect this request.</p>
<p>Covers a range of topics such as universal design and co design which are good but processes must be put in place to ensure these are working to a high standard.</p>	<p>Added ‘To ensure a high standard of implementation’ our approach is strength-based and integrated - in the About this Plan section, page 7.</p>

6. Appendices

Appendix A - Information Provided and Feedback Form

Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub






What's happening

From November 2025 to February 2026, we asked you to share your ideas and feedback about what should be included in our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030.

We heard from individuals, groups and organisations from right across our community. You can find out what we heard by following the [Phase 1](#) link below.

All of the important information our community shared has been used to develop our draft DAIP 2026-2030. We are excited to share this draft Plan with you and find out what you think. What do you like? Is there anything missing?

Community engagement is open until Wednesday the 6 May 2026.

		
<p>Phase 2 - View our Draft DAIP</p> <p>View our draft Plan and provide your feedback.</p> <p>View Draft DAIP ></p>	<p>Phase 1 - Find out what we heard</p> <p>Find out what we heard during early conversations with our community.</p> <p>View Phase 1 ></p>	<p>Background information</p> <p>View information about our role and the key priority areas and groups under the State Plan.</p> <p>Background ></p>

Would you like to become an Adelaide Hills Access and Inclusion Champion?

[Expression of Interest Form](#)

Timeline

-  **Community Engagement - Phase 2**
15 April to 6 May 2026.
Seeking feedback on our draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030.

[See more](#)

Who's Listening

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The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower is a simple tool for someone to share that they have a disability or condition that may not be immediately apparent.

About our draft DAIP

The draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2026 – 2030) sets out how Adelaide Hills Council will work with people with disability, carers, families, businesses, the wider community and our staff to remove barriers and create more inclusive places, services and opportunities across the Hills.





	
Draft DAIP	Easy Read Draft DAIP
View document >	View document >

Your feedback	Our approach	Why does this plan matter?	Documents
----------------------	--------------	----------------------------	-----------

Providing feedback

There are a variety of ways you can share your feedback. If you need assistance to provide your feedback, please contact us.

Share your feedback via one of the following ways:

			
Complete our feedback form	Chat with our staff	Upload a drawing, video or audio file	Send us an email
Share your feedback >	Call us on 8408 0400	Go to uploads >	Email us at engage@ahc.sa.gov.au >

Complete our feedback form to let us know what you think of the draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030.

You can skip past any question you don't want to answer, or you can collect a hardcopy survey form from one of our libraries if you would prefer to complete the form by hand.

Download the Easy Read version of the survey using the button below.



Printable feedback form



Easy read feedback form

Open

🕒 Open until 06/05/2026 at 11:59 pm

</> Embed

Feedback Form - Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Open

Upload your feedback

Upload a drawing, video or audio file that shares your ideas and feedback to help us develop our new Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

You can upload up to 5 files that share your ideas and experiences.

 **Choose file...**

Max files: 5 Allowed file types: pdf,doc,docx,txt,xls,xlsx,rtf,png,gif,jpg,jpeg Size limit: 5.00 MB

Submit

Feedback Form – Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan



Help us to finalise our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030.

You can skip past any question you don't want to answer, and once you have completed your form you can return it by:

- Dropping it into an Adelaide Hills Council library or customer service centre.
- Mailing it to 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling SA 5152.
- Emailing it to engage@ahc.sa.gov.au.



Engagement closes on Wednesday 6 May 2026. This submission form is also available online at engage.ahc.sa.gov.au.

About you

The below questions help us to understand who we are engaging with. All demographic questions are optional.

1. Your name

2. Your suburb, township or locality

3. Your age group

Select one answer only	
<input type="radio"/> Under 14 years	<input type="radio"/> 55 to 64 years
<input type="radio"/> 15 to 24 years	<input type="radio"/> 65 to 74 years
<input type="radio"/> 25 to 34 years	<input type="radio"/> 75 to 84 years
<input type="radio"/> 35 to 44 years	<input type="radio"/> 85 years and above
<input type="radio"/> 45 to 54 years	

4. What is your connection to the Adelaide Hills Council area?

Select all that apply
<input type="checkbox"/> I live here
<input type="checkbox"/> I work here
<input type="checkbox"/> I volunteer here
<input type="checkbox"/> I visit here to attend programs
<input type="checkbox"/> I visit here for recreation
<input type="checkbox"/> I am part of an advisory group or governance group here
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a member of a community or sporting group here
<input type="checkbox"/> I care for someone who lives here
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)

5. Which of the below option/s best describes you?

Select all that apply
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a person with a disability
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a carer of someone with a disability
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a disability worker
<input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say (please go to question 8)
<input type="checkbox"/> I am none of the above (please go to question 8)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)

6. What type of disability do you or the person you care for have?

Select all that apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychosocial
<input type="checkbox"/> Sensory	<input type="checkbox"/> Invisibly disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
<input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual	

7. Do you or the person you care for identify with any of the following priority groups?

Select all that apply
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal people
<input type="checkbox"/> Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people
<input type="checkbox"/> Women
<input type="checkbox"/> Children
<input type="checkbox"/> LGBTIQ+ people
<input type="checkbox"/> People with a significant intellectual disability or high levels of vulnerability
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say

Your feedback

8. What do you think of the draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030?

Select one answer only
<input type="radio"/> I like it
<input type="radio"/> It's ok
<input type="radio"/> I don't like it
<input type="radio"/> I'm not sure

9. Please provide more feedback about your response

What do you like? Is there anything missing?

Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Easy Read Feedback Form



We would like your help to review our draft **Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030**.

The Disability Access and Inclusion draft Plan will help make the Adelaide Hills Council area a better and fairer place for everyone.

In this book we will call it **the Plan**.



We need the Plan because:

- Many people in our community have a disability.
- Some people will get a disability:
 - o As they get older.
 - o If they have an accident
 - o If they become sick.



The Plan runs from 2026 to 2030.



You can view the easy read draft DAIP by visiting Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub

www.engage.ahc.sa.gov.au

You can also collect a copy from one of our libraries or customer service centres at the below locations:



- Stirling Coventry Library – 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling.
- Woodside Library – 26 Onkaparinga Road, Woodside.
- Gumeracha Library – 45 Albert Street, Gumeracha.
- The Summit Community Centre – 4 Crescent Drive, Norton Summit.



Please call council on 8408 0400 if you need any assistance.

Community engagement closes on Wednesday 6 May 2026.



You

About you

Your name

Your suburb or township



Your email or phone number

If you would like to stay in the loop.



Your feedback

What do you think of the easy read draft
Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-
2030?

Put a tick or cross next to 1 answer below.



I like it



It's ok



I don't like it



I'm not sure



Do you have feedback about the draft

Plan you would like to share?

This could be about what you like or don't like
or if anything is missing.



**T H A N K
Y O U**



Thank you for your feedback.

Please hand your completed form to staff at an Adelaide Hills Library or Customer Service Centre, by Wednesday 6 May 2026.

Or you can mail your completed feedback form to Adelaide Hills Council at 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling SA 5152.

Image credit

Envato website artists and photographers: Lady waving - by Sangiao_photography

Person thinking - by DC_Studio

Person writing – by ADDICTIVE_STOCK

Thank you - by kenishirotie

Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-30



Share your feedback

Share your feedback on our draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030 (DAIP).

The draft DAIP sets out how Adelaide Hills Council will work with people with disability, carers, families, businesses, the wider community and our staff to remove barriers and create more inclusive places, services and opportunities across the Hills.



Development of our draft DAIP

From November 2025 to February 2026, we asked our community to share ideas and feedback about what should be included in our draft Plan.

We heard from individuals, groups and organisations from right across our community. You can find out what we heard by visiting Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub.

All of the important information our community shared has been used to develop our draft DAIP.

We are excited to share this draft Plan with you and find out what you think. What do you like? Is there anything missing?

You can view the draft DAIP by visiting Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub or popping into one of our libraries or customer service centres in Stirling, Woodside Gumeracha or Norton Summit.

How can I provide my feedback?

There are a variety of ways you can share your feedback. If you need assistance to provide your feedback, please contact us.

Share your feedback via one of the following ways:

- Online - complete the online feedback form or upload a file at engage.ahc.sa.gov.au or via the QR code below.
- Hardcopy - collect a hardcopy feedback form from one of our libraries or customer service centres at Stirling, Woodside, Gumeracha and Norton Summit.
- Writing - send us an email to engage@ahc.sa.gov.au or mail a letter to 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling SA 5152
- Call - give us a phone call on 8408 0400

This engagement closes Wednesday 6 May 2026.

08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



Appendix B – Verbatim responses across all written feedback streams

What do you think of the draft DAIP?	Please provide more information about your response.
I like it	<p>Covers a range of topics such as universal design and co design which are good but processes must be put in place to ensure these are working to a high standard.</p> <p>Empowering business and community groups to work with people with a disability is another area of interest to me that can really include people with a disability in existing programs which is easier than making separate program and reduces stigma. Understanding that disability is a complex problem with no one way to support inclusion is important but is not too difficult try to do. Although there is a state strategy for autism understanding the other types of neurodiverse people and including them in this discussion is important noting again that they are complex. Supporting preventative health measures relevant to a councils responsibility can also assist people with a disability to improve their wellbeing both mental and physical but must ensure that they are accessible to them such as footpaths, public building design standards, ease of access to parks, flexibility of volunteer programs. This will also benefit the rest of the community.</p>
I like it	<p>Great document overall.</p> <p>It's great that LGBTIQ+ have been consulted and that this is reported in the document (pg 13)</p> <p>Since LGBTIQ+ as a priority group are required in the DAIPs, it may be useful for this to be explicitly outlined (as has been done with the domains). This ensures that the council remains aware of the requirements to consider each of the priority groups.</p> <p>The description of 1B.3 (lived-experience) sets a low bar that council will draw on lived experience/professional guidance *where possible*, and that the success measure is council *inviting* lived experience/expert guidance. I would suggest that a most appropriate success indicator is that council is *receiving* and/or *implementing* lived experience feedback, rather than just *inviting*. And that it may be more appropriate for the action to not have the "where possible" qualification as lived experience and professional guidance should always shape access and inclusion. It would be stronger to: 1B.3 Draw on lived-experience and professional guidance to shape access and</p>

	<p>inclusion initiatives - including from priority groups where possible.</p> <p>Thanks - keep up the great work</p>
I like it	<p>Has council considered an employment target for employing people with a disability (in council)?</p> <p>Should this be included in the DAIP?</p> <p>Can council include information on how it will assist people with a disability be referred to local employment services to assist increasing employment outcomes for PWD?</p> <p>How will council promote employing PWD to local businesses?</p> <p>*should section 2.4.3 be expanded?</p>
I like it	<p>The content and key actions align to the understanding we have of the Adelaide Hills objectives and areas for improvement. The DAIP Actions would be easier to read as a table if positioned landscape and spacing improved.</p>
NA received via email	<p>Hi Yve</p> <p>I've re-read the DAIP and it looks good. I don't have any further feedback to add.</p> <p>Kind regards</p> <p>██████████</p>
NA received via email	<p>Hi Yve,</p> <p>The draft Plan looks impressive - a great job. Let's be optimistic that the words will translate to good outcomes !</p> <p>Regards ██████████</p>

<p>What do you think of the easy read version of the draft DAIP?</p>	<p>Please provide more information about your response.</p>
I like it	<p>Covers the key points really well and is appropriate for us to share with our program members for feedback and awareness.</p>

Appendix C – Advertisements and social media posts

Social Media Posts

Adelaide Hills Council
April 24 at 8:00 AM · 🌐

We'd love your feedback, 🗣️ on our 'Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030'. 🏡 It aims to create a community where everyone feels they belong and can fully participate in community life.

👁️ View the draft and share your thoughts 📄 <https://ow.ly/alPe50YMoK9>

📅 Have your say by Wednesday 6 May 2026.

Share your feedback
Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-30

Adelaide Hills COUNCIL

👍 2

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

Share your feedback


Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-30




The draft Plan sets out how we'll work with people with a disability, carers, community and business to make the Hills more inclusive.

Share your feedback on the draft plan by Wednesday 6 May 2026.

Scan to find out more:

 engage.ahc.sa.gov.au

 mail@ahc.sa.gov.au

 8408 0400



Email - Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub Email - 20 April 2026

Share your feedback on our draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030

Hi {{Username}}

From November 2025 to February 2026, we asked you to share your ideas and feedback about what should be included in our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030.

All of the important information shared has been used to develop our draft DAIP 2026-2030. We'd now like your help to find out if we heard you correctly. What do you think of the draft Plan? Is there anything missing or that could be improved?

You can view the draft DAIP and share your feedback, by visiting Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub or popping into one of our libraries or customer service centres at Stirling, Woodside, Gumeracha or Norton Summit.

We have an easy read version of the draft DAIP and feedback form available online and at customer service centres.

We look forward to receiving your feedback. Engagement closes on Wednesday 6 May 2026.

[Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030](#)

Thank you.

Melissa Clarke

Community Engagement Coordinator

May Newsletter - Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub

Hi {{Username}}

We would like to welcome you to May with a couple of engagement updates and an opportunity to get out and enjoy some doing this Saturday 2 May.

May 2026 Engagement Update:

Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030

There are a few days left to share your feedback on our draft DAIP with engagement closing on Wednesday 6 May 2026. Our draft Plan has been developed around all of the important information our community shared during December 2025 and January 2026.

🗣️ We'd really like to know what you think of the draft Plan. 🙌 What do you like? 💡 Is there anything missing or that could be improved on?

You can view the draft DAIP and share your feedback by visiting [Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub](#) or popping into one of our libraries or customer service centres.

Day of Doing - Saturday 2 May

This Saturday 2 May is the Day of Doing. You might see small, community-led activities popping up across Hills townships. 🌱 We're excited to have partnered with [Town Team Movement](#) to bring this day to life.

You can get involved by [checking out the activity map](#) and heading out to connect with your community. 🍷🌿 From BBQs and workshops to art, nature and neighbourhood projects, there are activities happening across 16 suburbs and townships.

Didn't get a chance to register? No worries! You can still get in on the action by doing something simple like: 🎨 Chalk art, 🍷 a neighbourhood BBQ, 🥕 or sharing local produce.

Taking part? 📱 Share your day using #DayOfDoing and tag [Adelaide Hills Council](#) and [Town Team Movement](#) on social media.

Community Engagement Framework and Policy

Thank you to everyone who shared their feedback and ideas around our [draft Community Engagement Policy](#) and [draft Community Engagement Framework](#) during March and April 2026.

We are currently reviewing the information shared and looking at how we can incorporate community ideas and feedback into the final draft documents to be presented to Council in the middle of the year.

[Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub](#)

Thank you and have a great weekend.

Melissa Clarke

Community Engagement Coordinator



08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au

ahc.sa.gov.au



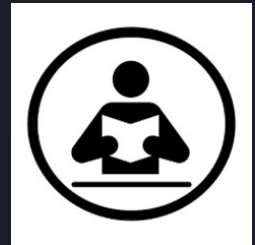
Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL

Appendix 3

DAIP – Easy Read Version

Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Draft Plan 2026 to 2030



Easy Read



Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL

About this book.



This is an Easy Read book.

Easy Read uses simple words and pictures.

Some words are written in **bold**.

bold

We will explain what those words mean.



Adelaide Hills Council wrote this plan.

When you see 'we' or 'us', it means Adelaide Hills Council.



This plan is about Adelaide Hills Council's Disability Access and Inclusion draft Plan for 2026 to 2030.

We will call it 'our Plan'.

This is a short version of our Plan.

It tells you the most important ideas.

The full Plan is on our website.

www.ahc.sa.gov.au





You can ask someone you trust to help you read and understand this book.



We would like to recognise that Adelaide Hills Council is on the land of Peramangk and Kurna peoples.

We pay respect to their people and land.

Contents

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About our new Plan.....	4
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Goal 3: Personal and Community Support.....	13
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About our new draft Plan

Adelaide Hills Council has a new **Disability Access and Inclusion draft Plan**.



The Disability Access and Inclusion draft Plan will help make the Adelaide Hills Council area a better and fairer place for everyone.

In this book we will call it **the Plan**.

We need the Plan because:



- Many people in our community have a disability.
- Some people will get a disability:
 - As they get older.
 - If they have an accident
 - If they become sick.



The Plan runs from 2026 to 2030.



About Adelaide Hills Council

Adelaide Hills Council is a local government Council in the Adelaide Hills.



We look after:

- Libraries.
- Community Centres
- Parks
- **Recreation facilities**

Recreation facilities are places where people can do activities.



- Paths
- Car parks

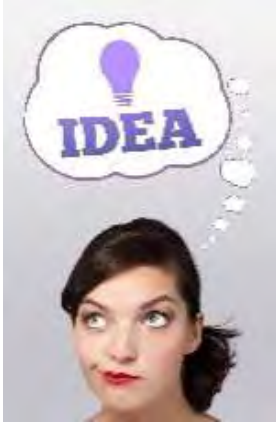


In the Adelaide Hills Council region, there are:

- 57 towns and local areas
- 16,267 households
- About 42,368 people



We want to make sure that we are building a community where everyone belongs.



How we made the Plan

We asked people with disability and their supporters to tell us their ideas.



We thought about what we had already done well.



We thought about things we plan to do to help the whole community join in and feel they belong.



Our achievements

In our last Plan, we worked hard to make the community more inclusive and accessible.

The Plan had 39 **actions**, and we did nearly all of them.

Actions are the things we do to reach our goals.

Some things we did were:



Built a new Changing Places space at Fabrik.



Put 2 communication boards at Sheer Park Mylor and Protea Reserve Crafers.



Upgraded an accessible carpark at The Summit Community Centre.



Held a come and try day with Woodside Warriors Soccer Club.



The 4 main goals

We have 4 main goals for our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

Each goal has a list of actions.



The goals are:

Goal 1: Inclusive Environments and Communities.

Goal 2: Education and Employment.

Goal 3: Personal and Community Support.

Goal 4: Safety, Rights and Justice.

We talk about each goal in more detail on the following pages.

Goal 1: Inclusive Environments and Communities



What is the goal?

To make the environment and community inclusive for everyone.



We want people with disability to feel safe and that they belong.

What we will do.

Make it easier to **access** our programs, events, workshops and art displays.

Access means take part in.



Make sure our Council staff and volunteers do training about disability access and inclusion.



This will help them understand the needs of people with disability.

Make sure there are toilets that are easy to enter and use.



Use **universal design** in new projects whenever we can.

Universal design means making places easy for everyone to use.



This includes:

- Ramps.
- Footpaths.
- Signs that are easy to read.



Make sure our Council information is available in different formats like Easy Read.

Make sure people with disability have the chance to have a say in things that are important to them.

Goal 2: Education and Employment.

What is the goal?



We want people with disability in the Adelaide Hills to have the same opportunities for:

- Jobs.
- **Volunteering.**

Volunteering means learning and experiencing work without being paid.



What we will do.

Offer volunteering roles that are accessible and **meaningful** for people with disability.

Meaningful means it is something that fits with what you like and what you can do.



Work with local businesses to look for ways to help them be good employers for people with disability.

Check how we hire people to make sure it is fair for everyone.

This means looking at:

- Job ads.
- How people apply.
- How we do interviews.

Goal 3: Personal and Community Support.



What is the goal?

We want services to be easy to access and put people first.

What we will do.

Help services to offer **outreach** so more people can access them.



Outreach is where the service comes to places where people already feel safe and often use.

Make sure our staff know which services work in the Adelaide Hills.



We will give **grant** opportunities to projects that help people with disabilities.

A grant is money for a community project.

We will help people with disability connect with their community by making sure our programs are accessible for all.

Goal 4: Safety, Rights and Justice.



What is the goal?

We want people with disability to feel prepared to know what to do during an emergency.



What we will do.

Support community with appropriate emergency readiness **initiatives**.

An initiative is an idea of how to do something.



Help people with disability to know how to keep themselves safe during an emergency.



How Council will use this Plan

Council will use this Plan by:

- Including the Plan in our work.
- Putting Council money towards the Plan.



We will keep trying to improve how the Plan helps people with disability.

We will do this by:

Asking for feedback from people with disability.

Planning projects with people with disability.



Asking for advice from Council's Access and Inclusion Network.

We will write a report each year.

It will be shared with:

- Council.
- State Government.
- Adelaide Hills community.



Words list

Accessible

Accessible means everyone can use it.

Recreation Facilities

Recreation facilities are places where people can do activities.

Advisors

Advisors are people who know about things and can give good ideas.

Actions

Actions are the things we do to reach our goals.

Access

Access means take part in.

Volunteering

Volunteering means learning and experiencing work without being paid.

Meaningful

Meaningful means it is something that fits with what you like and what you can do.

Outreach

Outreach is where the service comes to places where people already feel safe and often use.

Grant

A grant is money for a community project.

Initiative

An initiative is an idea of how to do something.

Appendix 4

*Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026-2030
(tracked changes)*

Draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030

Formatted: Font: Gotham Bold, 28 pt

SECOND EDITION



Acknowledgement of Country

2



Adelaide Hills Council acknowledges that we undertake our business on the traditional Country of the Peramangk and Kurna peoples.

We pay our respect to Ancestors and Elders past and present as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land, for they hold the memories, traditions, spiritual relationships, culture and hopes of the First Nations of Australia.

We are committed to working together to ensure that Peramangk and Kurna culture and traditions are sustained, valued and continuing.

Together we will care for Country for the generations to come and in this context the decisions we make should be guided by the principle that nothing we do should decrease our children's ability to live on this land.

08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



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Community Engagement	13
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Mayor's Message

4



As Mayor of Adelaide Hills Council, I am pleased to present our Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2030.

This plan reflects our ongoing commitment to building a community where everyone belongs and where barriers to inclusion in community life are removed.

Inclusion is a part of everyday life in the Adelaide Hills. It benefits everyone – including people with disability, of all ages, cultures, identities and experiences. As a council, we will show leadership, model inclusive practice, and work towards making sure our services, facilities and information are accessible to all.

Our inaugural DAIP resulted in meaningful progress in improving access and inclusion for our Hills community. Examples of this include:

A new changing places facility at Fabrik in Lobethal, new communication boards at Sherry Park Mylor and Protea Reserve Crafers, disability awareness training for staff and inclusion of people with lived experience of disability in community engagement and advisory roles.

This next Plan sets clear, practical actions. It focuses on continuing to remove barriers, designing for inclusion from the start, and partnering with our community – especially people with lived experience – so that everyone can belong, participate and thrive.

On behalf of Council, thank you to everyone who has contributed to past initiatives and to the development of this Plan.

Contact Us

5

The DAIP will be published on our website: www.ahc.sa.gov.au.

If you need this document in another format, such as an Easy Read or a fully accessible Word version, please contact Council's Community Development team on (08) 8408 0400 or email: mail@ahc.sa.gov.au.



08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



Our Vision and Aspirations

6



Vision

An Adelaide Hills where everyone belongs, can participate fully, and can access and enjoy our places, services and community life.

Aspiration

Disability is a natural and valued part of human diversity in our community.

People with disability are not a single group. Experiences, identities and strengths are diverse.

We will strive to remove barriers before they exclude, and design our towns, landscapes, services and events so that people of all abilities can live, connect and thrive.

We will listen to lived experience, especially from priority groups, and include those voices in planning, design and delivery.

By designing inclusively, working in partnership, and being flexible, we will increase participation and create a community where everyone belongs.

08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au


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About this Plan

7

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2026 – 2030) sets out how Adelaide Hills Council will work with people with disability, carers, families, businesses, the wider community and our staff to remove barriers and create more inclusive places, services and opportunities across the Hills.

[To ensure a high standard of implementation.](#) Our approach is strength-based and integrated:

People with disability contribute skills, leadership and perspectives across all areas of community life.

We focus on universal design — designing environments so they can be used by as many people as possible without needing adaptation.

We design for belonging and participation, so people can take part in ways that reflect their strengths, identities and choices.

Autism Inclusion

The DAIP recognises autism as part of disability diversity. Actions consider sensory, communication and participation needs across environments, services and engagement activities.

Why this Plan Matters

For community members: It helps make public places easier to move around, information easier to understand, events more welcoming, and services easier to use.

For families and carers: It reduces everyday barriers and supports inclusion in community life.

For local businesses and community groups: It provides guidance and partnerships to improve accessibility and attract more customers and participants.

For Council: It aligns our work with South Australian law and national strategies and turns our values into clear actions and measurable outcomes.

08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



Our Community

Our Region

Adelaide Hills Council works on Peramangk and Kaurna Country. Our district spans 795 km², located 10–40 km from the Adelaide CBD, across 57 townships/localities and 16,267 households, with an estimated population of 42,368.

Our area includes the hills face from Rostrevor and Teringie up to Kersbrook and Gumeracha in the north, west to Woodside and Oakbank, and south to Scott Creek and Mylor.

Council facilities include offices in Stirling and Woodside, a Resource Recovery Centre in Heathfield, the Fabrik Arts and Heritage Hub in Lobethal, 16 historic cemeteries, libraries, service centres and community centres in Stirling, Woodside, Gumeracha and Norton Summit. We also support The Hut Community Centre (Aldgate) and the Adelaide Hills Swimming Centre (Woodside). These places support connection, participation and belonging.



Our People

9

According to the 2021 Census, 1,540 people (3.8%) in the Adelaide Hills reported needing help with core activities due to disability. This provides insight into residents with higher support needs but does not capture all disability. Many people with disability do not need daily assistance yet still face barriers. This is why Council plans for inclusion using universal design to benefit everyone.



Our Workforce and Volunteers

Council is an equal opportunity employer with around 193 employees across a range of roles (administration, field crews, management, community development, property, biodiversity and more). We also have an average of 157 volunteers each year supporting the community.

We are building an inclusive workplace. We have a Reasonable Adjustment Policy and Procedures (adopted October 2018).

08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL

Strategic Context

10

This DAIP meets our obligations under South Australian law and aligns our work with state and national strategies.

Legislative and Policy Alignment

- Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA): requires all councils to prepare and implement a DAIP.
- State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025 - 2029: our actions align to its domains:
 1. Inclusive environments and communities
 2. Education and employment
 3. Personal and community support
 4. Health and wellbeing*
 5. Safety, rights and justice

*NB The Health and Wellbeing Domain is not identified as the responsibility of Council and will be addressed by other state authorities.

[State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025 -- 2029, addressing the needs of priority groups:](#)

- [Aboriginal peoples with disability](#)
 - [People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with disability](#)
 - [Women with disability](#)
[Children with disability](#)
 - [People with disability who identify as LGBTIQ+](#)
 - [People with significant intellectual disability or who have high levels of vulnerability due to disability](#)
 - [People with disability who live in regional communities.](#)
- Australia's Disability Strategy 2021 - 2031 and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities guide our commitment to human rights, participation and inclusion.
 - SA Autism Strategy (launched June 2024): provides a five - year roadmap to improve the lives of Autistic people and their families and works alongside the State Disability Inclusion Plan.
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Alignment to Council's Strategies and Plans

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) works alongside many other Council plans. It is not a separate or standalone document — it fits within Council's broader strategic direction and supports the goals already set for our community.

Council's Strategic Plan sets the overall vision for how we want the Adelaide Hills to grow, connect and thrive. The DAIP supports this vision by ensuring that access and inclusion are built into the way we design places, plan services and make decisions.

The DAIP also aligns with a number of more detailed Council plans — such as those for infrastructure, community services, libraries, youth, recreation and local economic development. These plans guide how we deliver specific projects and services. The DAIP ensures that inclusion is considered across all of them, so accessibility isn't an afterthought but part of everyday practice.

The DAIP strengthens the work Council is already doing. It connects with existing strategies, guides future planning, and ensures that access and inclusion are at the heart of our long-term vision for the community.

Why this Matters to Residents

- Aligning our DAIP with state and national priorities helps us:
- Work together for collective impact
- Use shared indicators and data sources to measure progress
- Target actions that make a real difference locally.

What is Disability

Plain English Definition

Disability is when a person has a condition that makes it harder to do everyday activities or take part in community life.

It may affect how a person moves, sees, hears, thinks, learns, communicates or interacts.

Often, the main barriers are inaccessible places, information or attitudes — not the person.

Legal Context (South Australia)

Under the Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA), disability includes cognitive, neurological or sensory impairments (or a combination). When these interact with barriers, they can hinder a person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Adelaide Hills Council is committed to removing barriers so everyone can participate.



Community Engagement

How We Engaged

- Internal meetings: more than 13 meetings across Council departments to identify opportunities and improvements.
- Community Forum: held on 27 November 2025 at The Village Well focused on access and inclusion.
- Drop-in sessions: in Stirling Library, Gumeracha Library, and Fabrik Christmas Market to gather local insights across the region.
- Online Engagement: Community Engagement Portal
- Targeted conversations: with disability services, peak organisations, AHC Access and Inclusion Advisors, and residents who requested a 1:1 discussion.
- Inclusion of priority groups: including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, young people, parents and carers, and LGBTIQ+ people.
- Experts in disability inclusion supported the process, most with lived experience.

What We Heard (Common Themes)

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- Improve footpath accessibility, especially in main streets and around schools. 14
- Involve lived experience throughout the life of the Plan (co-design, testing, feedback).
- Increase accessible parking.
- Support local businesses to improve accessibility.
- Share accessible features of Council facilities online.
- Introduce the Sunflower Lanyard to support accessible events and services.
- Raise community awareness about access needs and inclusive attitudes.
- Embed universal design in planning and projects.
- Strengthen employment pathways and opportunities.
- We sincerely thank everyone who contributed their time, experience and ideas.

Inaugural DAIP Achievements

Highlights from the previous Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2020-2024)

Over the life of the 2020-2024 DAIP, Adelaide Hills Council delivered, or was in the progress of delivering, almost 90% of the 39 endorsed actions.

Key achievements included:

- A new changing places facility at Fabrik Arts + Heritage Hall in Lobethal
- New communication boards at Sheer Park Mylor and Protea Reserve Crafers
- We have 26 accessible carparks which include 3 new ones located in Federation Park, Sherry Park and Mylor Tennis Club plus upgrading the disability carpark at The Summit Community Centre
- Disability awareness training for staff.
- Inclusion of people with disability in community engagement and advisory roles.
- Stronger partnerships with local disability service providers, including NDIS.

These achievements reflect Council's dedication to providing a strong foundation for the 2026-2030 Plan.



DAIP Actions

STATE Domain, Priority Area & Outcome	AHC Action to support the State's Priority Areas & Outcomes	AHC 4-year measure of success	STATE Mandatory Measures	AHC Timeframe	AHC Responsibility
Domain 1: Inclusive environments and communities					
Priority Area A: Active Participation					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are active participants in accessible and inclusive communities.	1A.1 Explore ways to make it easier for people with disability to access information about, register for and attend council-run events and programs.	The needs of people with disability are consistently embedded in event and program planning and delivery across council.	1.1.2	An initial period of 6 months to set up anything new then business as usual	Region & Place, Community Centres, FABRIK, Libraries, Comms, Engagement & Events, Positive Ageing
	1A.2 Expand opportunities for people with disability to participate in arts and culture programs, exhibitions and performances at council-run venues, programs and events, where possible.	A variety of accessible arts and culture opportunities are available to people across council-run facilities and events to participate in.	1.1.2	Ongoing	Community Centres, Libraries, FABRIK, Community Development, Comms Engagement & Events

	1A.3 Through event and program planning we will give consideration to identifying and designating quiet/low-sensory spaces or times, and if available, communicate this in promotions.	Community members have low sensory times/spaces available to access events and programs where and when available.	1.3.2 (a)	End of 2026 then business as usual	Community Centres, Libraries, FABRIK, Region & Place, Comms Engagement & Events
	1A.4 Encourage and support community groups, local sporting clubs, community-run events and program providers to co-design and deliver accessible and inclusive programs and events.	Community groups have access to information to be able to offer accessible and inclusive initiatives.	1.1.2	Ongoing in response to community need	Sport & Recreation, Community Centres, Region & Place, Community Development
	1A.5 Offer accessible exercise programs as part of community centre programs that encourage movement, inclusion and wellbeing as part of a preventative health strategy.	People with disability or people with mobility impairment can access exercise classes for strength, movement and wellbeing.	1.2.1(b)	Ongoing	Community Centres
Priority Area B: Inclusive Communities and Attitudes					

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<p>AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are respected and included in their communities, where inclusive attitudes and behaviours are widely demonstrated.</p>	<p>1B.1 Build confidence, knowledge and skills of Council leadership, Elected Members, staff and volunteers to integrate inclusive practice into their work through disability awareness training, including mandatory training for roles that directly engage with people with disability.</p>	<p>Leadership, Elected Members, staff and volunteers are able to offer meaningful engagement with people with lived experience.</p>	<p>1.2.1 (a)</p>	<p>At induction for volunteers, when onboarding staff and Elected Members, and when updating of training is needed</p>	<p>People & Culture, Volunteering, Governance, Fabrik</p>
	<p>1B.2 Explore how to improve understanding of Universal Design within targeted council teams and for project managers who design buildings, infrastructure and communications.</p>	<p>Council staff involved in design work are trained in and are applying Universal Design principles.</p>	<p>1.3.2 (b)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Civil Services, Property, CEE, Region & Place, Development Services, (People & Culture as support)</p>
	<p>1B.3 Draw on lived-experience and professional guidance to shape access and inclusion initiatives - including from priority groups where possible.</p>	<p>Council is inviting receiving and implementing lived experience feedback and expert guidance to inform the design of access and inclusion across a number of initiatives.</p>	<p>1.2.3</p>	<p>New initiatives or projects</p>	<p>Inclusion & Wellbeing, Community Development, Comms Engagement & Events</p>
<p>Priority Area C: Universal Design</p>					

<p>AHC will support the STATE Outcome: Everyone in South Australia can access and enjoy inclusive and accessible natural and built environments.</p>	<p>1C.1 Embed universal design and accessibility requirements into all new, and where feasible, upgraded Council facilities, so they are usable and welcoming for the widest range and diversity of people.</p>	<p>Universal Design is routinely prioritised in new and renewed council buildings and fit-outs, meeting council's obligations under the Discrimination Inclusion Act 2018 and the State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025-2029.</p>	<p>1.3.2 (b)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Assets, Sport & Rec, Region & Place, Civil Services, Property, Open Space</p>
<p>▲</p>	<p>1C.2 Consider opportunities for accessible sport, physical activity and recreation across open spaces, trails, parks, reserves and playgrounds.</p>	<p>There's 'something for everyone' across council's open space infrastructure and playgrounds.</p>	<p>1.3.3</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Sport & Recreation, Assets, Civil, Open Space</p>
	<p>1C.3 Apply solutions that address Universal Design and accessibility requirements whenever practical when installing, renewing, or maintaining infrastructure (including council footpaths, crossings and roads).</p>	<p>Universal Design solutions are routinely considered in infrastructure installation, renewal and maintenance.</p>	<p>1.3.2 (a), 1.3.2 (b), 1.3.3</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Assets, Civil Services</p>
	<p>1C.4 Make it easier for council to identify where accessibility improvements are needed across facilities, infrastructure and services.</p>	<p>Council uses data from community complaints, lived experience and accessibility audits to help prioritise accessibility improvements across facilities and services.</p>	<p>1.3.2 (a)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Assets, CEE, Region & Place, Customer Service, Rangers, IT, Community Development</p>

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	1C.5 Encourage and support local businesses to enhance inclusion and accessibility through voluntary recognition, incentives, and guidance.	An increase in number local businesses that have become more accessible, and community members say they find it easier to shop and use local services.	1.2.1 (a), 1.2.1 (b)	12 months to initiate then ongoing	Region & Place
	1C.6 Showcase Fabrik as a model for making heritage places inclusive for everyone.	More heritage facilities improved for accessibility, with Fabrik demonstrating what successful upgrades look like.	1.3.2 (a)		Fabrik, Comms Engagement & Events
	1C.7 Explore a plan to improve the supply, placement and usability of accessible parking (and lighting) across Council facilities and town centres.	People can find and use accessible parking more easily, including at night.	1.3.2 (a)	December, 2026	Assets, Region & Place
Priority Area D: Accessible Facilities					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability can access public toilets that meet their needs when out in the community.	1D.1 Review the minimum accessibility standards for toilets in open spaces to ensure both the facility and fixtures are useable and fit for purpose for the broadest range and diversity of people.	The useability of toilet facilities by people with a wide range of accessibility needs is prioritised in council's new builds, refurbishments and open spaces.	1.4.1	Ongoing	Assets, Sport & Rec, Property
Priority Area E: Communications and Information					

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AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability can find the information they need in the format(s) they need.	1E.1 Continue to explore ways to make it easier to find and navigate information about council's disability and inclusion initiatives, access and understand Council information and communicate with Council.	Council provides high quality communication and online experience that meets or exceeds accessibility standards and is applied consistently across the organisation and in response to community need.	1.5.1	A & I webpage updates December, 2026 - Website update 2027	CEE, Customer Service, Inclusion & Wellbeing
	1E.2 Aim to provide clear program and event information - including venue accessibility features and active transport or public transport options, where available, in a range of accessible formats.	Information is available in a variety of formats to support people to register for, plan for and get to council-run facilities, programs and events.	1.5.1	Ongoing and in response to facility upgrades	Community Centres, Libraries, FABRIK, Region & Place, Comms Engagement & Events, Inclusion & Wellbeing
	1E.3 Aim to improve how people move around the community through clearer, more accessible and reliable wayfinding and facility information.	People with disability can navigate community hubs more easily.	1.5.1	Ongoing	Comms Engagement & Events, Region & Place, Sport & Rec, Open Space, Inclusion & Wellbeing
Priority Area F: Transportation					
NA - not an identified priority for local government, being addressed by other state authorities.	1F.1 Seek opportunities to advocate to governments and transport providers for more accessible and connected transport services to key employment hubs in our district.	Council makes use of opportunities to advocate on behalf of the AHC community.	NA	When opportunity allows	Inclusion & Wellbeing

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Priority Area G: Collaboration, consultation and innovation					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are actively involved in government decisions that affect their lives.	1G.1 Provide opportunities for people with disability to actively shape access and inclusion in the Adelaide Hills Council.	Council maintains a Disability Inclusion Network with flexible participation options.	1.7.2	Ongoing	Inclusion & Wellbeing
	1G.2 Make it easier for people with disability to participate in council's community engagement activities.	Staff are supported to deliver engagements that are more accessible and inclusive of people with disability.	1.7.1	Ongoing	Comms Engagement & Events
Domain 2: Education and Employment					
Priority Area A: Targeted Transitional Supports					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: people with disability have supportive environments to learn, grow, and transition throughout their life.	2A.1 Continue to offer meaningful & flexible volunteering opportunities that welcome and support people with a wide range of strengths and abilities where the role allows it.	People with disability report a positive volunteer experience at council.	2.3.5	Ongoing	Volunteering, Libraries, Volunteer Leaders, Fabrik
Priority Area B: Access to Employment Opportunities					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability have opportunities to achieve, develop and success in their chosen fields.	2B.1 Explore how to support initiatives and programs that build the work skills of people with disability and improve their pathways to employment, including linking with local inclusive employment services.	A number of programs and initiatives that help pathways to employment for people with disability, including linking with local inclusive employment services , are identified and shared with the community.	2.4.3	2030	People & Culture, Community Wellbeing

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	2B.2 Explore ways to embed disability inclusion into the Recruitment and Retention Strategy so that job descriptions, applications and interview formats reflect inclusive employment practices.	People with disability apply for Council roles - where appropriate.	2.4.3	2030	People & Culture
	2B.3 Support local businesses to understand the benefits of employing people with disability.	Local businesses have access to opportunities to broaden their understanding of the benefits of employing people with disability.	3.1.1		
Priority Area C: Inclusive Working Environments					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability have access to supportive places to earn.	2C.1 Continue building a workplace culture that is fair, welcoming and inclusive of all people, including people with disability and aligns with the Recruitment and Retention Strategy.	Council staff experience the workplace as inclusive and welcoming, and council meets its related legislative requirements.	2.5.1	2027 then ongoing	People & Culture
Domain 3: Personal and Community Support					
Priority Area A: Accessibility					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability can easily access community supports and services.	3A.1 Explore opportunities to help community members find and connect with disability, health and wellbeing services through council facilities and events.	Council maintains partnerships that help link people with disability to health and wellbeing information and services.	3.1.1	Ongoing	Inclusion & Wellbeing, Community Centres, Libraries, Comms Engagement & Events

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Priority Area B: Information Sharing					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability receive more coordinated and effective support when services work together and share information.	3B.1 Actively contribute to and participate in Local Government Access Inclusion Network and Inclusive SA Communities of Practice meetings to stay abreast of developments that support the delivery of the DAIP.	Council contributes to and stays informed of the sector and state developments in disability access and inclusion.	3.3.1	Ongoing	Inclusion & Wellbeing
	3B.2 Maintain awareness of service providers and relevant networks to ensure community are aware of services.	Council stays abreast of services in the area and maintains networks with relevant service providers in the area to identify shared priorities and service gaps.	3.1.1	Ongoing	Inclusion & Wellbeing Community Centres
Priority Area C: Programs					
AHC will support the State Outcome: Government-funded programs and services include disability-specific provisions to enable full and equal participation.	3C.1 Promote grant opportunities to increase applications and consider funding levels in response to demonstrated community demand for accessible and inclusive projects and events.	Council receives applications for grants for accessibility and inclusion projects and events.	3.5.1	Ongoing	Region & Place (Grants and Events)

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	3C.2 Continue to embed into existing programs opportunities that support residents with disability to connect with others, and discover and participate in inclusive activities that are welcoming and accessible for people of all ages, abilities, cultures and identities.	People with disability report improved connection and inclusion after attending a council event or program.	1.2.3	Ongoing	Community Centres, Libraries, FABRIK, Community Development
Domain 4: Health and Wellbeing	IS NOT IDENTIFIED AS A PRIORITY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT - BEING ADDRESSED BY OTHER STATE AUTHORITIES				
Domain 5: Safety, Rights and Justice					
Priority Area A: Responding to Emergencies					
AHC will support the STATE Outcome: People with disability are kept safe during emergencies with their needs planned for and prioritised.	5A.1 Continue to support appropriate community-led readiness initiatives through council's community resilience role - noting that community are responsible for their own safety during an emergency.	People with disability are considered in council's emergency preparedness and response.	5.2.1	Ongoing	Community Resilience

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	<p>5A.2 Council will continue to promote the importance for all community members to keep themselves safe during an emergency by offering information regarding preparation and planning that is of particular relevance to people with disability.</p>	<p>People with disability will have access to information on keeping themselves safe during an emergency.</p>	<p>5.2.1</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Community Resilience</p>
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Our Roles

Depending on the action, Council may act as a connector, responder, partner, facilitator, advocate, funder or regulator.

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Monitoring and Reporting

We will track progress and report.

- **Governance:** Assign clear owners for each action and involve input from community members with lived experience.
- **Measures:** Use practical indicators aligned to State Plan domains (e.g., number of accessible upgrades, training completions, accessibility features published, participation rates etc).
- **Reporting:** Provide annual updates to DHS and Council.
- **Review:** Conduct a mid-term review and a final evaluation to identify outcomes and next steps.
- **Continuous improvement:** Use community feedback, co-design and ongoing engagement with Access and Inclusion Champions to refine actions over time.

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**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday 9 JUNE 2026
AGENDA BUSINESS ITEM**

Item:	12.5
Responsible Officer	Greg Georgopoulos Chief Executive Officer Office of the Chief Executive
Subject:	Caretaker Policy Review and Frequency of Meetings during Caretaker
For:	Decision

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's consideration of the proposed draft Caretaker Policy and, if supported, to resolve to adopt the Policy.

This report also seeks Council's consideration of meeting arrangements during the caretaker period, including a proposed reduction in the frequency of ordinary Council meetings.

With the Local Government Election scheduled for November 2026 and the caretaker period to commence on 8 September 2026, it is timely for Council to review the Caretaker Policy and frequency of ordinary Council meetings.

RECOMMENDATION

Council resolves:

- 1. That the report be received and noted.**
 - 2. With an effective date of 16 June 2026, to revoke the current *Caretaker Policy* and to approve the proposed draft *Caretaker Policy*, as per Appendix 2.**
 - 3. To hold at least one candidate public meeting, as per section 91B of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*, and as contained in the proposed draft *Caretaker Policy*, as per Appendix 2.**
 - 4. That during the election caretaker period, the frequency of ordinary Council meetings be reduced from two (2) meetings per month to one (1) meeting per month.**
 - 5. That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the draft *Caretaker Policy*.**
-

1. BACKGROUND

Frequency of Council meetings during Caretaker

Council currently meets on a fortnightly cycle, with two (2) ordinary Council meetings held each month.

During the election caretaker period, Council's ability to make designated decisions is restricted under the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*, and there is generally a reduced volume of reports and decisions requiring formal resolution.

In this context, a reduction in the frequency of Council meetings during the caretaker period is considered appropriate and consistent with good governance practice.

It is therefore proposed that, for the duration of the caretaker period, Council move to one (1) ordinary Council meeting per month. This approach remains compliant with section 81(2) of the *Local Government Act 1999*, which requires that at least one ordinary meeting be held in each month.

The proposed arrangement is expected to provide a number of practical benefits, including:

- reducing meeting commitments during an already busy election period
- decreasing the preparation time required for meetings
- enabling Elected Members to focus on community engagement and election-related commitments
- avoiding the need to attend meetings where there is limited business to consider

This approach also aligns with the reduced volume of business typically experienced during caretaker, while maintaining the ability for Council to respond to urgent or time-critical matters through the calling of Special Council meetings, where required.

The proposed change to meeting frequency is an operational decision and does not form part of the Caretaker Policy itself. The arrangement would apply only for the duration of the caretaker period, after which normal meeting schedules would resume.

To assist Council's consideration, the table below provides an indicative comparison of the current meeting schedule and the proposed meeting schedule during the caretaker period.

Current schedule of meetings	Proposed schedule of meetings
8 September Ordinary Council meeting	Nil
22 September Ordinary Council meeting	22 September Ordinary Council meeting
13 October Ordinary Council Meeting	Nil
27 October Ordinary Council Meeting	27 October Ordinary Council Meeting
10 November Ordinary Council Meeting	Nil
24 November Ordinary Council Meeting	24 November Ordinary Council Meeting
8 December Ordinary Council Meeting (New Council to determine)	8 December Ordinary Council Meeting (New Council to determine)

Caretaker Policy

Council first adopted a Caretaker Policy in May 2010 following amendments to the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* which introduced mandatory caretaker arrangements for councils during election periods.

The current Caretaker Policy was last comprehensively reviewed and adopted by Council in March 2022 (resolution 62/22) in preparation for the November 2022 Local Government Election. Minor amendments were subsequently made in February 2025 (resolution 77/25) and November 2025 (resolution 402/25) to address changes arising from resolution 430/24 and the later revocation of that resolution, which related to references to the Mayor. No further substantive review of the Policy has occurred since 2022.

The current draft Policy is informed by the LGA's revised model Caretaker Policy released in March 2026. To assist Council's consideration, both a track-changed version of the Policy (**Appendix 1**) and a clean version (**Appendix 2**) are provided.

Section 91A of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* provides that a Caretaker policy must prohibit the following during an election period:

- (a) the making of a designated decision; and
- (b) the use of council resources for the advantage of a particular candidate or group of candidates

In general terms, a 'designated decision' is a decision:

- (a) relating to the employment, termination or remuneration of a chief executive officer, with some exceptions; or
- (b) to enter into a contract, arrangement or understanding (other than a prescribed contract) the total value of which exceeds whichever is the greater of \$100 000 or 1% of the council's revenue from rates in the preceding financial year, with some exceptions

In addition to the mandatory requirements of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*, the Policy includes provisions that provide further guidance to Council Members and staff in relation to matters that may arise during the election period.

These provisions expand on the legislative framework, including the required prohibition on the use of Council resources for the advantage of a candidate, and address broader governance and operational considerations. They include policy positions relating to:

- use of Council resources
- Council publications and media
- attendance at events and functions
- stationery and equipment
- Council staff responsibilities
- equity in assistance to candidates
- public consultation
- the handling of Code of Conduct complaints
- the treatment of other significant decisions that, while not 'designated decisions', may be inappropriate to progress during the election period

The draft Policy also includes a provision addressing whether Council will hold a public meeting of candidates during the election period, as contemplated by section 91B of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*.

Under section 91B, councils are required to hold at least one public meeting of candidates unless the caretaker policy specifies that a meeting will not be held and includes a certified statement from the principal member outlining the reasons. The Act does not prescribe any specific basis for a decision not to hold a meeting, leaving this as a policy matter for individual councils.

The draft Policy has been prepared on the basis that Council will hold a public meeting of candidates, consistent with the default legislative position. This approach aligns with the LGA Model Caretaker Policy, with the inclusion of an explicit statement confirming Council's intent to hold a meeting for clarity.

2. ANALYSIS

➤ Strategic Management Plan/Functional Strategy/Council Policy Alignment

Strategic Plan 2024 – Your Place, Your Space

Goal 4 Organisation

Objective 02 Operate with integrity using best practice governance processes.

Priority 02.01 Demonstrate accountable and transparent decision making.

The review of Council's Caretaker Policy is an important element of Council's commitment to open and transparent decision making which facilitates public accountability.

➤ Legal Implications

Section 91A of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* (the Elections Act) requires councils to prepare and adopt a caretaker policy to govern the conduct of the council and its staff during the election period for a general election.

Section 91A(2) of the Elections Act stipulates that during an election period the caretaker policy must at a minimum:

- (a) prohibit the making of a designated decision and
- (b) prohibit the use of council resources for the advantage of a particular candidate or group of candidates,

A 'designated decisions' is defined as follows:

designated decision means a decision—

- (a) relating to the employment or remuneration of a chief executive officer, other than a decision to appoint an acting chief executive officer; or
- (b) to terminate the appointment of a chief executive officer; or
- (c) to enter into a contract, arrangement or understanding (other than a prescribed contract) the total value of which exceeds whichever is the greater of \$100 000 or 1% of the council's revenue from rates in the preceding financial year,

other than a decision of a kind excluded from this definition by regulation;

The Elections Act stipulates that any designated decision made by a council during an election period without a ministerial exemption is invalid and that Council would be liable to pay compensation to any person who relied on such an invalid decision.

Section 91B of the Elections Act requires a council to hold a public meeting of candidates, except where the Council’s caretaker policy provides that a public meeting of candidates will not be held.

91B—Council to hold public meeting for general election except in certain circumstances

- (1) A council must, during the period commencing after the close of nominations and before polling day for a general election, hold at least 1 meeting involving any candidates who wish to participate and members of the public relating to—
 - (a) issues in the community relevant to the election; and
 - (b) informing members of the public of the policies and views of candidates.
- (2) A meeting held by a council under this section may be held remotely using audio visual technology or any other means of communication determined appropriate by the council (and nothing in this section is to be taken to require candidates and members of the public to be physically present at the meeting).
- (3) A meeting held by a council under this section must be presided over by the chief executive officer of the council, or a person appointed by the chief executive officer (who must not be a candidate in the general election).
- (4) This section does not apply in relation to a council if the council's caretaker policy—
 - (a) provides that a public meeting of a kind referred to in this section will not be held in respect of general elections; and
 - (b) includes a statement, certified by the principal member, setting out the council's reasons for not holding a public meeting.

The term ‘election period’ has the following meaning for the purposes of the Elections Act however the colloquial term ‘caretaker period’ is used interchangeably:

election period in relation to an election, means the period commencing on—

- (a) the day of the close of nominations for the election; or
- (b) if a council has specified a day (being a day that falls earlier than the day of the close of nominations) in its caretaker policy—the specified day,

and expiring at the conclusion of the election;

Note that for the 2026 Local Government Election the close of nominations is 12pm (noon) Tuesday 8 September 2026 and while close of voting (polling day) will conclude at 5pm on 11 November, scrutiny and count doesn’t occur until Saturday 14 November. Therefore, for the purposes of the policy, the conclusion of the election is specified as Saturday 14 November.

➤ **Risk Management Implications**

The revision and adoption of the Caretaker Policy will assist in mitigating the risk of:

Designated decisions being made during the election period which leads to those decisions being invalid and compensation being payable for loss or damage arising from those decisions.

Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Target Risk
Extreme (4A)	Medium (4E)	Medium (4E)

Note that compliance with the Policy is the key control to achieving the residual risk rating.

➤ **Financial and Resource Implications**

There are no specific budget or resource implications in relation to this Policy.

There are restrictions placed on procurement decisions valued at the greater of \$100,000 or 1% of Council's rate revenue however there are some exceptions which are set out in the Policy.

➤ **Customer Service and Community/Cultural Implications**

It is a long established principle that outgoing elected bodies should not use public resources for election campaigning, nor make decisions which may unreasonably, inappropriately, or unnecessarily bind an incoming council.

➤ **Sustainability Implications**

Not applicable.

➤ **Engagement/Consultation conducted in the development of the report**

Consultation on the development of this report was as follows:

Council Committees: Not applicable.
Council Workshops: Information or Briefing Session 18 May 2026
Advisory Groups: Not applicable.
External Agencies: Not applicable.
Community: Not applicable.

➤ **Additional Analysis**

The current review of the Caretaker Policy has resulted in a number of proposed changes, which are shown at **Appendix 1** in track-changed form. Many of the changes reflected in **Appendix 1** relate to reordering of content, improved clarity and drafting refinements, rather than new policy content.

The substantive changes arising from the review are as follows:

1. The inclusion of a definition for a 'public meeting of candidates'
2. The inclusion of provisions addressing the holding of a public meeting of candidates, consistent with section 91B of the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999.
3. The expansion of the list of Council resources that may only be used by Council Members in the performance of their ordinary duties. This list is optional and is drawn from the Local Government Association's Model Caretaker Policy.

3. OPTIONS

Council has the following options:

- I. To approve the draft Caretaker Policy, with or without amendment
- II. To determine not to approve the draft Caretaker Policy at this time.

4. APPENDICIES

- (1) Draft Caretaker Policy (track changed version)
- (2) Draft Caretaker Policy (clean version)

Appendix 1

Draft Caretaker Policy (track changed version)

Caretaker



Policy Number: GOV-06

Responsible Department(s): Governance

Other Relevant Policies: Behavioural Management Policy
~~Code of Conduct for Council Employees~~
Procurement [Policy](#)
Disposal of [Assets Policy](#)
~~Assets~~
Council Member Allowances & Support [Policy](#)
Council Member Training & Development [Policy](#)

Other Relevant Procedure(s): Nil

Policies superseded by this policy: Caretaker Policy, 25/~~1102~~/25, ~~resolution 402/25 Item 12.10, 77/25~~

Adopted by: Council

Date of Adoption: ~~9 June 2026~~25 November 2025

Effective From: ~~16 June 2026~~26 November 2025

Next Review: Prior to the Election Period of the next Local Government General Election

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Version Control

Version:	Effect Date:	Description of Changes:	Approver:
1.0	10/06/2014	Policy Review	Council - Res 35/14
2.0	05/06/2018	Policy Review	Council - Res 116/18
3.0	22/03/2022	Policy Review	Council - Res 62/22
4.0	25/02/2025	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Replacement of "Mayor" with "Deputy Mayor" in clause 7.8 and 13.2, as per the requirements of resolution 430/24.2. Insertion of a cover page.	Council - Res 77/25
5.0	25/11/2025	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Replacement of "Deputy Mayor" with "Mayor" in clause 7.8 and 13.2, as per the revocation of Part 3(h) of Resolution 430/24 as provided for by Resolution 402/25.2. New template.	Council - Res 402/25
6.0	09/06/2026	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Policy Review	Council - Res xx/26

1. INTRODUCTION

~~1.1 The Local Government (Elections) Act 1999 (the Elections Act) was amended in 2009 to require each Council to prepare and adopt a caretaker policy to govern the conduct of the Council and its staff during the election period for a general election. Section 91A of the Elections Act stipulates that the caretaker policy must at a minimum prohibit the making of certain designated decisions by the Council during an election period.~~

~~1.2 This policy was updated following the commencement of section 188 of the Statutes Amendment (Local Government Review) Act 2021, which amended section 91A of the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999.~~

1.1 This policy affirms Council's commitment to fair and democratic elections, and adherence to this principle and includes a commitment to comply with the statutory caretaker period requirements under section 91A of the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999 (SA)

1.3.2 This policy also deals with council's approach to holding a public meeting involving candidates for a general election under section 91B of the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

~~2.1 It is a long established democratic principle that outgoing elected bodies should not use public resources for election campaigning, nor make decisions which may unreasonably, inappropriately, or unnecessarily bind an incoming Council.~~

~~This Policy affirms Council's commitment to fair and democratic elections, and adherence to this principle. This Policy includes a commitment to comply with the requirements of Section 91A of the Elections Act.~~

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the Policy are to guide the conduct of the Adelaide Hills Council during the lead up to a local government general election and provide information regarding decision making during an election period to ensure that:

- (a) The incumbent Council does not make certain decisions that will be binding on an incoming Council and limit its freedom
- (b) Incumbent elected members do not receive, and are not perceived to receive, any advantage or disadvantages over other candidates as a result of their position on Council
- (c) The day-to-day business of the Council continues efficiently and as normal as possible

~~(d) Council resources are not diverted for or influenced for electoral purposes.~~

~~(a) Council's approach to the holding of a public meeting involving candidates for a general election is determined transparently and in accordance with section 91B of the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999.~~

~~(b)(e)~~

3. ~~SCOPE APPLICATION OF POLICY~~

~~3.1 This Policy applies throughout the election period for a general-general election and applies to Council, Council Members and Council staff.~~

~~3.2 This Policy does not apply to supplementary local government elections~~

~~For the purposes of the Local Government Elections of November 2022, the policy commences on the Closing of Nominations, 12pm (noon) Tuesday 06 September 2022 and ends at the conclusion of the election, when results have been declared.~~

4. ~~POLICY COVERAGE~~

~~4.1 This Policy applies during an election period of Council to cover:~~

~~(a) designated decisions as defined in the Elections Act that are made by Council; and~~

~~(b) use of Council resources, including:~~

- ~~materials published by Council;~~
- ~~attendance and participation at functions and events;~~
- ~~access to Council information;~~
- ~~media services issues; and~~
- ~~responsibilities of Council Employees; and~~

~~and captures all 'designated decisions' of Council, a committee of Council, or a delegate of the Council – refer to Clause 6.2.~~

~~4.3 This Policy forms part of (and is to be read in conjunction with) the Council's Council Member Conduct Policy and the Code of Conduct for Council Employees in accordance with section 91A(7) of the Elections Act.~~

5.4. DEFINITIONS

5.14.1 In this Policy:

Chief Executive Officer means the appointed Chief Executive Officer or Acting Chief Executive Officer or nominee for the Adelaide Hills Council.

Council Employee means any person that is employed full-time, part-time or casually by the Council who receives remuneration for their work ~~with the Adelaide Hills Council.~~

Council Member means an elected member of the Adelaide Hills Council.

Election period means the period commencing on the day of the close of nominations for a general election and expiring at the conclusion of the general election (when the last result of the election is certified by the returning officer under the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*).

Designated Decision means a decision:

- (a) relating to the employment or remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer, other than a decision to appoint an acting Chief Executive Officer or to suspend the Chief Executive Officer for serious and wilful misconduct;
- (b) to terminate the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer;
- (c) to enter into a contract, arrangement or understanding (other than a contract for road construction, road maintenance or drainage works) the total value of which exceeds whichever is the greater of \$100,000 or 1% of the Council's revenue from rates in the preceding financial year, except if the decision:
 - i. relates to the carrying out of works in response to an emergency or disaster within the meaning of the *Emergency Management Act 2004* (SA), or under section 298 of the *Local Government Act 1999* (SA);
 - ii. is an expenditure or other decision required to be taken under an agreement by which funding is provided to the Council by the Commonwealth or State Government or otherwise for the Council to be eligible for funding from the Commonwealth or State Government;
 - iii. relates to the employment of a particular Council employee

(other than the Chief Executive Officer);

- iv. is made in the conduct of negotiations relating to the employment of Council employees generally, or a class of Council employees, if provision has been made for funds relating to such negotiations in the budget of the Council for the relevant financial year and the negotiations commenced prior to the election period; or
- v. relates to a Community Wastewater Management Systems scheme that has, prior to the election period, been approved by the Council;

General Election means a general election of council members held:

- (a) under section 5 of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*; or
- (b) pursuant to a proclamation or notice under the *Local Government Act 1999*.

Minister means the Minister for Local Government or other minister of the South Australian government vested with responsibility for the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*.

Public meeting of candidates means a meeting of the kind set out in section 91B(1) of the *Local Government (Election) Act 1999*.

~~6. PURPOSE~~

~~6.1 During a Local Government election period, Council will assume a 'Caretaker mode', and will avoid actions and decisions which could be perceived as intended to affect the results of an election or otherwise to have a significant impact on or unnecessarily bind the incoming Council.~~

~~6.2 The purpose of this Policy is to clearly set the parameters that Council will operate within during an election period. Caretaker provisions are required pursuant to section 91A of the Elections Act and are generally regarded as necessary for the promotion of transparent and accountable government during an election period.~~

~~5. POLICY STATEMENT: DECISIONS DURING AN ELECTION PERIOD~~

~~7. Designated decisions SIGNIFICANT DECISIONS~~

5.1

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7.1 Scope

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5.1.1 The Council is prohibited from making a designated decision during an election period without ministerial exemption.

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5.1.2 A decision of the Council includes a decision of:

- a committee of Council; and
- a delegate of Council.

5.1.3 Only specific types of decisions will be designated decisions under section 91A of the Elections Act. The designated decisions are outlined below.

5.2 Decisions relating to the employment of the Chief Executive Officer

5.2.1 Any decision relating to the employment, remuneration or termination of the Chief Executive Officer, other than a decision to:

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(a) appoint an acting Chief Executive Officer; or

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(b) suspend a Chief Executive Officer for serious and wilful misconduct, will be a designated decision.

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5.3 Specific contracting decisions

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5.3.1 Certain council decisions regarding specific types of contracts made during an election period will be designated decisions.

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5.3.2 Generally, a decision to enter into a contract, arrangement or understanding (other than a 'prescribed contract') the total value of which exceeds whichever is the greater of \$100,000 or 1% of the council's revenue from rates in the preceding financial year will be a designated decision. However, there are exclusions from this general position provided in section 91A of the Elections Act and the *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 2010 (the Elections Regulations)*.

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5.3.3 Prescribed contracts are expressly excluded from the types of contracts which are able to be the subject of a designated decision. A 'prescribed contract' is defined in section 91A of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* to mean a contract entered into by a council for the purpose of undertaking road construction, road maintenance or drainage works.

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5.3.4 Other types of contracts are excluded from being the subject of a designated decision by Regulation 12 of the *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 1999*. These types of decisions are decisions:

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(i) relating to the carrying out of works in response to an emergency or disaster within the meaning of the *Emergency Management Act 2004*, or under section 298 of the *Local Government Act 1999*

(ii) for an expenditure or other decision required to be taken under the *Commonwealth or State Government or otherwise for the council to be*

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- eligible for funding from the Commonwealth or State Government
- (iii) relating to the employment of a particular council employee (other than the chief executive officer)
- (iv) made in the conduct of negotiations relating to the employment of council employees generally, or a class of council employees, if provision has been made for funds relating to such negotiations in the budget of the council for the relevant financial year and the negotiations commenced prior to the election period
- (v) relating to a Community Wastewater Management Systems scheme that has, prior to the election period, been approved by the council

5.4 Significant decisions

5.4.1 So far as is reasonably practicable, the Chief Executive Officer should avoid scheduling significant decisions (including major policy decisions) for consideration during an 'election period' and ensure that such decisions:

- are considered by Council prior to the 'election period'; or
- are scheduled for determination by the incoming Council.

5.4.2 A 'significant decision' is any major policy or other decision which will significantly affect the Council area or community or will bind the incoming Council.

5.4.3 A 'major policy' decision includes any decision (not being a designated decision):

- to spend unbudgeted monies;
- to conduct unplanned public consultation;
- to endorse a new policy;
- to dispose of Council land;
- to approve community grants;
- to progress any matter which has been identified as an election issue; and
- any other issue that is considered a major policy decision by the Chief Executive Officer.

5.4.4 The determination as to whether or not any decision is significant will be made by the Chief Executive Officer, after consultation with the Mayor or Chairperson (as relevant).

5.4.5 The Chief Executive Officer must keep a record of all such determinations made by Chief Executive Officers (including by previous Chief Executive Officers) and make this list available to candidates upon request.

5.4.6 Where the Chief Executive Officer has determined that a decision is significant, but circumstances arise that require the decision to be made during the election period, the Chief Executive Officer will report this to the Council.

5.4.7 The aim of the Chief Executive Officer's report is to assist Council Members assess whether the decision should be deferred for consideration by the incoming Council.

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5.4.8 The Chief Executive Officer's report to Council will address the following issues (where relevant):

- why the matter is considered 'significant';
- why the matter is considered urgent;
- what are the financial and other consequences of postponing the matter until after the election, both on the current Council and the incoming Council;
- whether deciding the matter will significantly limit options for the incoming Council;
- whether the matter requires the expenditure of unbudgeted funds;
- whether the matter is the completion of an activity already commenced and previously endorsed by Council;
- whether the matter requires community engagement;
- any relevant statutory obligations or timeframes; and
- whether dealing with the matter in the election period is in the best interests of the Council area and community.

5.4.9 Council will consider the Chief Executive Officer's report and determine whether or not to make the decision.

5.5 Consequence of contravening this policy

5.5.1 A designated decision made by Council during an election period is invalid, except where an exemption has been granted by the Minister.

5.5.2 Any person who suffers loss or damage as a result of acting in good faith on a designated decision made by the Council in contravention of this Policy is entitled to compensation from the Council for that loss or damage.

5.5.3 Disciplinary consequences or prosecution may result for a breach of this Policy or the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*.

5.6 Application for exemption

5.6.1 If the Council considers that it is faced with extraordinary circumstances which require the making of a designated decision during an election period, the Council may apply in writing to the Minister for an exemption to enable the making of a designated decision that would otherwise be invalid under section 91A of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* and this Policy.

5.6.2 If the Minister grants an exemption to enable the making of a designated decision that would otherwise be invalid under section 91A of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* and this Policy, then the Council and Council staff will comply with any conditions or limitations that the Minister imposes on the exemption.¹

~~This clause applies to decisions of Council, a committee of Council, or a delegate of Council, including the Chief Executive Officer.~~

¹ Section 91A(4) *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*

~~1.1 'Designated decisions' prohibited by the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*~~

~~The following outlines those decisions which are expressly prohibited by section 91A of the Elections Act. A designated decision means a decision:~~

- ~~(a) relating to the employment or remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer, other than a decision to appoint an acting Chief Executive Officer; or~~
- ~~(b) to terminate the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer; or~~
- ~~(c) to enter into a contract, arrangement or understanding (other than a prescribed contract) the total value of which exceeds whichever is the greater of \$100 000 or 1% of the Council's revenue from rates in the preceding financial year; or~~

~~A "prescribed contract" means a contract entered into by the Council for the purpose of undertaking road construction or road maintenance or drainage works.~~
- ~~(d) allowing the use of Council resources for the advantage of a particular candidate or group of candidates (other than a decision that allows the equal use of Council resources by all candidates for election),~~

~~other than a decision of a kind excluded from the definition of "designated decision" by regulation.~~

~~Regulation 12 of the *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 1999* (the Election Regulations) sets out those decisions referred to in Section 91A(8)(c) as excluded from the definition of a "designated decision" if the decision:~~

- ~~(a) a decision of a kind referred to in paragraph (c) of the definition if the decision—~~
 - ~~(i) relates to the carrying out of works in response to an emergency or disaster within the meaning of the *Emergency Management Act 2004*, or under section 298 of the *Local Government Act 1999*; or~~
 - ~~(ii) is an expenditure or other decision required to be taken under the Commonwealth or State Government or otherwise for the council to be eligible for funding from the Commonwealth or State Government; or~~

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~~(iii) — relates to the employment of a particular council employee (other than the chief executive officer); or~~

~~(iv) — is made in the conduct of negotiations relating to the employment of council employees generally, or a class of council employees, if provision has been made for funds relating to such negotiations in the budget of the council for the relevant financial year and the negotiations commenced prior to the election period; or~~

~~(v) — relates to a Community Wastewater Management Systems scheme that has, prior to the election period, been approved by the council;~~

~~(b) — a decision of a kind referred to in paragraph (a) of the definition if the decision is for the suspension of a chief executive officer for serious and wilful misconduct.~~

1.2 — Consequence of a making a designated decision during the election period

~~A designated decision made by the Council during the election period, without an exemption from the Minister, is invalid.~~

~~Any person who suffers loss or damage as a result of acting in good faith in reliance on a designated decision made in contravention of the Policy is entitled to compensation from the Council for that loss or damage.~~

~~A breach of the Policy is a breach of the Code of Conduct for Council Members (contained within the Council Member Conduct Policy) and Code of Conduct for Council Employees.~~

1.3 — Application for exemption

~~If the Council considers that it is faced with extraordinary circumstances which require the making of a designated decision during an election period, the Council may apply in writing to the Minister for an exemption to enable the making of a designated decision that would otherwise be invalid under s91A of the Elections Act and this Policy.~~

~~If the Minister grants an exemption to enable the making of a designated decision that Council and Council Employees will comply with any conditions or limitations that the Minister imposes on the exemption.~~

1.4 — Scheduling consideration of designated decisions

The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that 'designated decisions' are not scheduled for consideration during the 'election period'.

1.5 Designated decisions made prior to an 'election period'

This Policy applies to actual designated decisions made during an election period, not the announcement of decisions made prior to the election period.

1.6 Other significant decisions which are prohibited by operation of this Policy

Prohibited Decision	Notes
Any major policy or other decisions which will significantly affect the Council area or community or will inappropriately bind the incoming Council	This is a non-legislative policy position of Council

POLICY STATEMENT: USE OF COUNCIL RESOURCES

1.7 Role of the Chief Executive Officer

The determination as to whether any policy decision is major or any other decision is significant will be made by the Chief Executive Officer, after consultation with the Mayor.

1.8 Considerations for urgent decisions

Where the Chief Executive Officer has determined that a decision is a major policy decision or is otherwise significant and therefore is covered by 7.7 above, and circumstances arise that require the decision to be made during the election period, the Chief Executive Officer will report this to Council.

The aim of the Chief Executive Officer's report is to assist Council Members to assess whether the decision should be deferred as a decision for the incoming Council.

The Chief Executive Officer's report to Council will address the following issues, where relevant:

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- (b) Why the matter is considered urgent;
- (c) What are the financial and other consequences of postponing the matter until after the election, both on the current Council and the incoming Council;
- (d) Whether deciding the matter will significantly limit the policy choices of the incoming Council;
- (e) Whether the matter requires the expenditure of unbudgeted funds;
- (f) Whether the matter is the completion of an activity already commenced and previously endorsed by Council;
- (g) Whether the matter requires community engagement;
- (h) Any relevant statutory obligations or timeframes; and
- (i) Whether dealing with the matter in the election period is in the best interests of the Council area and community.

Council will consider the Chief Executive Officer's report and determine whether or not to make the decision.

6. USE OF COUNCIL RESOURCES

6.1.1 Council resources must not be used for the advantage of a particular candidate or group of candidates.

2.

2.1 Use of Council resources and advantage

6.1.2 For clarity, neither the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* nor this Caretaker Policy prohibits a

- a) council providing resources to all members of the public, which incidentally includes all candidates for election
- b) a council providing resources to all candidates equally

6.1.3 The following council resources must not be used for the advantage of a particular candidate or group of candidates and may only be used by council members, where necessary, in the performance of their ordinary duties as a council member:

- Mobile phones
- Council vehicles
- Council provided business cards
- Council-provided computers and other office equipment beyond that provided to members of the public (e.g. in a public library)
- Council logos
- Requests to council employees to perform tasks which would confer an advantage on a candidate or group of candidates
- The ability to issue invitations to council events

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- Council travel arrangements (e.g. access to council-negotiated rates for flights, accommodation or hire cars)
- Access to areas that members of the public cannot access, including areas within the property of third parties (e.g. a 'Mayor's Parlour' at a suburban football oval)
- Councils produced promotional brochures and documents
- materials published by Council
- facilities and goods owned by the Council
- attendance and participation at functions and events
- access to Council information
- media services issues
- stationery and equipment.

~~Council notes that Section 91A(8)(d) of the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999 requires Council to prohibit the use of Council resources for the advantage of a particular candidate or group of candidates. This includes a candidate or candidates who are currently elected Members of the Council.~~

~~7.1.1 The concept of 'advantage' is broad and for the purposes of this Policy an advantage will be conferred where a decision allowing the use of Council resources favours one candidate over another.~~

~~Council resources cover a wide range of personnel, goods, services, information and opportunities and may include:~~

~~materials published by Council;~~

~~facilities and goods owned by the Council;~~

~~attendance and participation at functions and events;~~

~~access to Council information;~~

~~media services issues; and~~

~~stationery and equipment.~~

6.1.4 Council Members and Employees will ensure that due propriety is observed in the use of Council resources and must exercise appropriate judgement in this regard. [Attachment A provides further guidance to staff and Elected Members on the appropriate use of Council resources during caretaker period.](#)

7.1.26.1.5 Council members who use Council resources for the purposes of an election campaign may also be in breach of their other legislative and behavioural obligations, such as improper use of information or position to gain personal advantage.² This may amount to misconduct in public administration as defined under the Ombudsman Act 1972 and be the subject of a complaint to the relevant authority.

~~Council resources must be used exclusively for normal Council business during an election period and, must not be used in connection with an election other than uses strictly relating to the election process.~~

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²See, for example, s62(3), s62(4) and 78(3) of the Local Government Act and behavioural standard 2.7.

7. COUNCIL EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES DURING AND ELECTION PERIOD

7.1 Prior to any election period, the Chief Executive Officer will ensure that all Council Members and Council Employees are advised in relation to the application of this Policy.

7.2 Council Employees in the course of their duties must not;

- (a) Undertake an activity that may affect voting in the election, except where the activity relates to the election process and is authorised by the Chief Executive Officer;
- (b) Authorise, use or allocate a Council resource for any purpose which may influence voting in the election, except where it only relates to the election process and is authorised by the Chief Executive Officer; and
- (c) Assist Council Members in ways that are or could create a perception that they are being used for electoral purposes. In any circumstances where the use of Council resources might be construed as being related to a candidate's election campaign, the incident must be reported to and advice sought from the Chief Executive Officer.

7.3 Any assistance and advice provided to candidates as part of the conduct of the Council elections will be provided equally to all candidates. The types of assistance that are available will be documented and communicated to candidates in advance of the election period.

7.4 Payment or reimbursement of costs relating to Council Members out-of-pocket expenses incurred during an election period will only apply to necessary costs that have been incurred in the performance of normal Council duties. No reimbursements will be provided for campaigning, or for expenses that could be perceived as supporting or being connected with a candidate's election campaign.

8. PUBLIC CONSULTATION DURING AN 'ELECTION PERIOD'

8.1 It is prohibited under this Policy for discretionary public consultation to be undertaken during the 'election period' on an issue which is contentious unless Council specifically resolves otherwise.

8.2 For the purpose of this provision, discretionary public consultation means consultation which is not legislatively mandated and is a process which involves an invitation or invitations to individuals, groups or organisations or the community generally to comment on an issue, proposed action or proposed policy.

8.3 This Policy does not prevent any mandatory public consultation required by the Local Government Act 1999 or any other Act which is required to be undertaken to enable the Council to fulfil its functions in relation to any matter or decisions which are not prohibited by law or by this Policy.

8.4 In determining whether discretionary consultation should occur, Council will have regard to whether the consultation may reasonably be perceived as favouring or being closely associated with a particular

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candidate or group of candidates.

8.5 Where public consultation is approved to occur during an election period, the results of that consultation will not be reported to Council until after the 'election period', except where it is necessary for the performance of functions as set out at clause 8.3 above.

9. PUBLIC MEETING OF CANDIDATES

9.1 In accordance with section 91B of the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999, Council will hold at least one public candidate information session (public meeting of candidates) during the period commencing after the close of nominations and before polling day for each general election.

9.1.2 The session will be open to any candidates who wish to participate and members of the public, and will relate to issues in the community relevant to the election and inform members of the public of the policies and views of candidates.

9.3 The session will be presided over by the Chief Executive Officer or a person appointed by the Chief Executive Officer (who must not be a candidate), and may be held in-person or remotely using audio-visual technology.

10. HANDLING CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS DURING AN ELECTION PERIOD

10.1 Any complaint against a Council Member who is also a candidate for re-election made under the Council's *Behavioural Management Policy* during an election period will not be heard or determined by the Council during that period.

10.2 The Chief Executive Officer, upon receiving a complaint against a Council Member, who is also a candidate for re-election, will assume the responsibilities allocated to the Mayor under the Council's *Behavioural Management Policy*.

10.3 If the Council Member against whom the complaint is made is not returned to office after the election, the complaint will lapse.

10.4 Council recognises that the Electoral Commissioner has the role of investigating any alleged breach of the *Local Government (Election) Act 1999*, including alleged illegal practices.

11. DELEGATION

11.1 The Chief Executive Officer has the delegation to:

- Approve, amend and review any procedures that shall be consistent with this Policy;
and
- Make any legislative, formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the Policy during the period of its currency.

12. AVAILABILITY OF THE POLICY

12.1 This Policy will be available via the Council's website www.ahc.sa.gov.au.

9.2 Use of Council resources for personal benefit

9.2.1 The use of Council resources for personal benefit is distinct from a designated decision of a Council regarding the use of Council resources for the advantage of a particular candidate or group of candidates.

9.2.2 The use of Council resources for personal benefit is regulated by legislation other than s91A of the Elections Act. The use of Council resources by a Council Member for the purposes of an election campaign will be a use of those resources for personal benefit. Council Members standing for re-election to Council must take care that they only use Council resources for normal Council business and not to assist them in campaigning.

9.2.3

9.2.4 The general duties on Council Members under s62 of the Local Government Act 1999 include offences for improper use of information or position to gain personal advantage for the Council Member or another person.

9.2.5

9.2.6 Section 78 of the Local Government Act 1999 provides for the use of Council resources by Council Members. Section 78(3) of the Local Government Act states:

A member of a council must not use a facility or service provided by the council under this section for a purpose unrelated to the performance or discharge of official functions or duties (unless the use has been approved by the council and the member has agreed to reimburse the council for any additional costs or expenses associated with this use).

9.2.7 The Code of Conduct for Council Members (contained within the Council Member Conduct Policy) also prohibit the use of Council resources for private purposes without authorisation.

9.2.8 The use of Council resources for personal benefit in breach of these requirements could be corruption or misconduct for the purpose of the Independent Commission Against

9.2.9 Corruption Act 2012, the Ombudsman Act 1972 and be the subject of a complaint to the relevant authority.

9.2.10 Conduct of a public officer that results in a substantial mismanagement of public resources may also be the subject of a complaint to the relevant authority.

9.2.11 Disciplinary consequences or prosecutions may ultimately result from the unauthorised use of Council resources for private purposes.

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Attachment A

Prohibition on publishing certain materials during an 'election period'

A decision by Council to publish information for the advantage of a particular candidate or group of candidates (other than a decision which allows for the equal use of Council resources by all candidates for election) is a designated decision and is prohibited by s91A of the Elections Act. Publishing includes publication by any medium, including but not limited to leaflets, newspapers, posters, email, websites, radio or television.

Council have a statutory responsibility to publish certain information regarding general elections. Under s12(b) of the Elections Act, Council is responsible for the provision of information, education and publicity designed to promote public participation in the electoral processes for its area, to inform potential voters about the candidates who are standing for election in its area and to advise its local community about the outcome of the elections conducted in its area.

All election materials published by Council should fall within the types of material described in s12(b) of the Elections Act and not contain any material which would advantage a particular candidate or candidates.

'Electoral material' is defined in the Elections Act as 'an advertisement, notice, statement or representation calculated to affect the result of an election or poll'. Given that the purpose of electoral material is to persuade voters towards a particular candidate or group of candidates, it will not be appropriate for Council to publish electoral material.

Council Members are, however, permitted to publish campaign material on their own behalf (provided that they comply with ss 27 and 28 of the Elections Act)). Council Members should not assert or imply that the electoral material originates from, or is endorsed by, Council. A Council Member also should not use Council resources to create or distribute his or her electoral material, including through the use of Council stationery, computers, printers, photocopiers, Council Employees or the application of Council logos.

Council website

During an 'election period', new material which is prohibited by this Policy will not be placed on the Council website. Any information which refers to the election will only relate to the election process by way of information, education or publicity. Information about Council Members will be restricted to names, contact details, titles, membership of committees and other bodies to which they have been appointed by the Council.

Other Council publications

Insofar as any Council publications, such as the Annual Report, are required to be published during

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an election period, the content contained within them regarding Council Members will be restricted to that strictly required by the *Local Government Act 1999* and Regulations.

Council publications produced before an election period containing material which might be construed as electoral material will not be circulated or displayed during the election period. However, they may be made available to members of the public on request.

Attendance at Events and Functions During an Election Period

Events and functions means gatherings involving external stakeholders to discuss, review, acknowledge, communicate, celebrate or promote a program, strategy or issue which is of relevance to Council and its community and may take the form of conferences, workshops, forums, launches, promotional activities, and social occasions such as dinners, receptions and balls.

A key consideration is the capacity in which [they-Council Members](#) have been invited to the event. If they have been invited as a Council Member (i.e. Councillor Smith is invited to...) then their attendance will be in the course of Council duties. If however they are invited in a private capacity (i.e. Mr Smith is invited to...) then their attendance will not be taken to be in the course of Council duties.

It is therefore important for the Council Member to clarify the nature of the invitation to the event and prudent for the Council Member to use their best endeavours to clarify [Page](#)

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to event participants the capacity in which they are attending, particularly if intending to address the participants or undertake campaigning activities.

2.1.1 Events etc staged by external bodies

Council Members may continue to attend meetings, events and functions staged by external bodies during an election period. This includes but is not limited to LGA and regional LGA meetings, including the LGA Annual General Meeting.

2.1.2 Council organised events and functions

Council organised events and functions held during the election period will be reduced to only those essential to the operation of the Council.

Addresses by Council Members

Council Members must not give speeches or keynote addresses at Council organised or sponsored events and functions during an election period.

Access to Council Information

Council Members continue during an election period to have a statutory right under s61 of the *Local Government Act 1999* to access Council information relevant to the performance of their functions as a Council Member. This right should be exercised with caution and limited to matters that the Council is dealing with within the objectives and intent of this Policy. Any Council information so accessed that is not publicly available must not be used for election purposes.

Council Members should take care that access to Council documents is in connection with the performance or discharge of their functions or duties of the member. Access to Council documents for the purpose of campaigning or to gain an advantage in an election is an improper use of information gained by virtue of the Council Member's position as a member of Council.

All candidates (including those that are Council Members) have equal rights of access to public information relevant to their election campaigns from Council administration.

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Neither Council Members nor candidates will be provided with information or advice from Council Employees that might be perceived to support an election campaign, and there shall be transparency in the provision of all information and advice during an election period.

Information and briefing material

Information and briefing material prepared or secured by Council Employees for a Council Member during an election period must be necessary to the carrying out of the Council Member's role and, where appropriate, provided to any candidate seeking the same information. Queries by Council Employees regarding the provision of information will be directed to the Chief Executive Officer in the first instance.

Media Service

Council's media services are directly managed by or under the supervision of the Chief Executive Officer, are provided solely to promote Council activities or initiatives and must not be used in any manner that might favour a candidate during an election period.

Media advice

Any request for media advice or assistance from Council Members during an election period will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer. No media advice will be provided in relation to election issues or in regard to publicity that involves specific Council Members.

Media releases / spokespersons

Media releases will not refer to specific Council Members during an election period. Where it is necessary to identify a spokesperson in relation to an issue, the Chief Executive Officer will generally be the appropriate person.

Publicity campaigns

During the election period, publicity campaigns, other than for the purpose of conducting the election in accordance with the requirements of Section 12(b) of the Elections Act, will be avoided wherever possible. Where a publicity campaign is deemed necessary for a Council activity, it must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

In any event, Council publicity during an election period will be restricted to communicating normal Council activities and initiatives without any variation in form or size.

Council Members

Council Members will not use their position as an elected representative or their access to Council Employees and other Council resources to gain media attention in support of an election campaign.

Council Employee Public Statements

During an 'election period', no Council Employee may make any public statement that relates to an election issue unless such statements have been approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

2.2 Stationary and Equipment

Council branding and stationery

No Council logos, letterheads, or other Council branding or Council resources or facilities may be used for, or linked in any way with, a candidate's election campaign.

Equipment and facilities

Equipment and facilities provided to Council Members for the purpose of conducting normal Council business (i.e. iPads, laptops, phones, etc.) must not be used for campaigning purposes.

Council member correspondence during an election period

All correspondence addressed to Council Members regarding Council business will continue to be forwarded to the Council Member.

Correspondence received directly by Council Members (e.g. direct mail, email) can continue to be answered directly by the Council Member.

Council Members should be mindful of their obligations under s62(4) of the *Local Government Act 1999* regarding making improper use of their position as a member of the council for advantage and also the obligations under the *State Records Act 1997* and the Council's *Records and Information Management Policy*.

3. COUNCIL EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES DURING AND ELECTION PERIOD

9.3 Prior to any election period, the Chief Executive Officer will ensure that all Council Members and Council Employees are advised in relation to the application of this

9.4

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10.1.1 Activities that may affect voting

9.5 Council Employees in the course of their duties must not:

- (a) Undertake an activity that may affect voting in the election, except where the activity relates to the election process and is authorised by the Chief Executive Officer;
- (b) Authorise, use or allocate a Council resource for any purpose which may influence voting in the election, except where it only relates to the election process and is authorised by the Chief Executive Officer; and
- (c) Assist Council Members in ways that are or could create a perception that they are being used for electoral purposes. In any circumstances where the use of Council resources might be construed as being related to a candidate's election campaign, the incident must be reported to and advice sought from the Chief Executive Officer.

9.6 EQUITY IN ASSISTANCE TO CANDIDATES

Council confirms that all candidates for the Council election will be treated equally.

9.7 Candidate assistance and advice

9.8 Any assistance and advice provided to candidates as part of the conduct of the Council elections will be provided equally to all candidates. The types of assistance that are available will be documented and communicated to candidates in advance.

9.9

9.10 Election process enquiries

9.11 All election process enquiries from candidates, whether current Council Members or not, are to be directed to the Local Deputy Returning Officer or, where the matter is outside of the responsibilities of the Local Deputy Returning Officer, to the Chief Executive Officer or his/her nominee.

Expenses incurred by Council Members

9.12 Payment or reimbursement of costs relating to Council Members out of pocket expenses incurred during an election period will only apply to necessary costs that have been incurred in the performance of normal Council duties. No reimbursements will be provided for campaigning, or for expenses that could be perceived as

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~~supporting or being connected with a candidate's election campaign.~~

~~4. PUBLIC CONSULTATION DURING AN 'ELECTION PERIOD'~~

~~4.1 Prohibition~~

~~It is prohibited under this Policy for discretionary public consultation to be undertaken during the 'election period' on an issue which is contentious unless Council specifically resolves otherwise.~~

~~For the purpose of this provision, discretionary public consultation means consultation which is not legislatively mandated and is a process which involves an invitation or invitations to individuals, groups or organisations or the community generally to comment on an issue, proposed action or proposed policy.~~

~~This Policy does not prevent any mandatory public consultation required by the Local Government Act 1999 or any other Act which is required to be undertaken to enable the Council to fulfil its functions in relation to any matter or decisions which are not prohibited by law or by this Policy.~~

~~4.2 Approval for public consultation~~

~~9.13 Where public consultation is approved to occur during an election period, the results of that consultation will not be reported to Council until after the 'election period', except where it is necessary for the performance of functions as set out at clause 8.6 above.~~

~~5. HANDLING CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS DURING AN ELECTION PERIOD~~

~~9.14 Any complaint against a Council Member who is also a candidate for re-election made under the Council's Behavioural Management Policy during an election period will not be heard or determined by the Council during that period.~~

~~9.15 The Chief Executive Officer, upon receiving a complaint against a Council Member, who is also a candidate for re-election, about conduct relating to the Council's Behavioural Management Policy, will assume the responsibilities allocated to the Mayor under the Council's Behavioural Management Policy.~~

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9.16 If the Council Member against whom the complaint is made is not returned to office after the election, the complaint will lapse.

9.17

5.1 Council recognises that the Electoral Commissioner has the role of investigating any alleged breach of the Local Government (Election) Act 1999, including alleged illegal practices.

6. DELEGATION

9.19 The Chief Executive Officer has the delegation to:

- Approve, amend and review any procedures that shall be consistent with this Policy; and
- Make any legislative, formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the Policy during the period of its currency.

7. AVAILABILITY OF THE POLICY

This Policy will be available via the Council's website www.ahc.sa.gov.au.

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Appendix 2

Draft Caretaker Policy (clean version)

Policy Number: GOV-06

Responsible Department(s): Governance

Other Relevant Policies: Behavioural Management Policy
Procurement Policy
Disposal of Assets Policy
Council Member Allowances & Support Policy
Council Member Training & Development Policy

Other Relevant Procedure(s): Nil

Policies superseded by this policy: Caretaker Policy, 25/11/25resolution 402/25

Adopted by: Council

Date of Adoption: 9 June 2026

Effective From: 16 June 2026

Next Review: Prior to the Election Period of the next Local Government
General Election

Version Control

Version:	Effect Date:	Description of Changes:	Approver:
1.0	10/06/2014	Policy Review	Council - Res 35/14
2.0	05/06/2018	Policy Review	Council - Res 116/18
3.0	22/03/2022	Policy Review	Council - Res 62/22
4.0	25/02/2025	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Replacement of "Mayor" with "Deputy Mayor" in clause 7.8 and 13.2, as per the requirements of resolution 430/24. 2. Insertion of a cover page. 	Council - Res 77/25
5.0	25/11/2025	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Replacement of "Deputy Mayor" with "Mayor" in clause 7.8 and 13.2, as per the revocation of Part 3(h) of Resolution 430/24 as provided for by Resolution 402/25. 2. New template. 	Council - Res 402/25
6.0	09/06/2026	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policy Review 	Council – Res xx/26

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy affirms Council's commitment to fair and democratic elections, and adherence to this principle and includes a commitment to comply with the statutory caretaker period requirements under section 91A of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* (SA)
- 1.2 This policy also deals with council's approach to holding a public meeting involving candidates for a general election under section 91B of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of the Policy are to guide the conduct of the Adelaide Hills Council during the lead up to a local government general election and provide information regarding decision making during an election period to ensure that:
- (a) The incumbent Council does not make certain decisions that will be binding on an incoming Council and limit its freedom
 - (b) Incumbent elected members do not receive, and are not perceived to receive, any advantage or disadvantages over other candidates as a result of their position on Council
 - (c) The day-to-day business of the Council continues efficiently and as normal as possible
 - (d) Council resources are not diverted for or influenced for electoral purposes.
 - (e) Council's approach to the holding of a public meeting involving candidates for a general election is determined transparently and in accordance with section 91B of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This Policy applies throughout the election period for a general election and applies to Council, Council Members and Council staff.
- 3.2 This Policy does not apply to supplementary local government elections

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 In this Policy:

Chief Executive Officer means the appointed Chief Executive Officer or Acting Chief Executive Officer or nominee for the Adelaide Hills Council.

Council Employee means any person that is employed full-time, part-time or casually by the Council who receives remuneration for their work.

Council Member means an elected member of the Adelaide Hills Council.

Election period means the period commencing on the day of the close of nominations for a general election and expiring at the conclusion of the general election (when the last result of the election is certified by the returning officer under the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*).

Designated Decision means a decision:

- (a) relating to the employment or remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer, other than a decision to appoint an acting Chief Executive Officer or to suspend the Chief Executive Officer for serious and wilful misconduct;
- (b) to terminate the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer;
- (c) to enter into a contract, arrangement or understanding (other than a contract for road construction, road maintenance or drainage works) the total value of which exceeds whichever is the greater of \$100,000 or 1% of the Council's revenue from rates in the preceding financial year, except if the decision:
 - i. relates to the carrying out of works in response to an emergency or disaster within the meaning of the *Emergency Management Act 2004 (SA)*, or under section 298 of the *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)*;
 - ii. is an expenditure or other decision required to be taken under an agreement by which funding is provided to the Council by the Commonwealth or State Government or otherwise for the Council to be eligible for funding from the Commonwealth or State Government;
 - iii. relates to the employment of a particular Council employee (other than the Chief Executive Officer);

- iv. is made in the conduct of negotiations relating to the employment of Council employees generally, or a class of Council employees, if provision has been made for funds relating to such negotiations in the budget of the Council for the relevant financial year and the negotiations commenced prior to the election period; or
- v. relates to a Community Wastewater Management Systems scheme that has, prior to the election period, been approved by the Council;

General Election means a general election of council members held:

- (a) under section 5 of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*; or
- (b) pursuant to a proclamation or notice under the *Local Government Act 1999*.

Minister means the Minister for Local Government or other minister of the South Australian government vested with responsibility for the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*.

Public meeting of candidates means a meeting of the kind set out in section 91B(1) of the *Local Government (Election) Act 1999*.

5. POLICY STATEMENT: DECISIONS DURING AN ELECTION PERIOD

5.1 Designated decisions

5.1.1 The Council is prohibited from making a designated decision during an election period without ministerial exemption.

5.1.2 A decision of the Council includes a decision of:

- a committee of Council; and
- a delegate of Council.

5.1.3 Only specific types of decisions will be designated decisions under section 91A of the Elections Act. The designated decisions are outlined below.

5.2 Decisions relating to the employment of the Chief Executive Officer

5.2.1 Any decision relating to the employment, remuneration or termination of the Chief Executive Officer, other than a decision to:

- (a) appoint an acting Chief Executive Officer; or

(b) suspend a Chief Executive Officer for serious and wilful misconduct, will be a designated decision.

5.3 Specific contracting decisions

5.3.1 Certain council decisions regarding specific types of contracts made during an election period will be designated decisions.

5.3.2 Generally, a decision to enter into a contract, arrangement or understanding (other than a 'prescribed contract') the total value of which exceeds whichever is the greater of \$100,000 or 1% of the council's revenue from rates in the preceding financial year will be a designated decision. However, there are exclusions from this general position provided in section 91A of the Elections Act and the *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 2010 (the Elections Regulations)*.

5.3.3 Prescribed contracts are expressly excluded from the types of contracts which are able to be the subject of a designated decision. A 'prescribed contract' is defined in section 91A of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* to mean a contract entered into by a council for the purpose of undertaking road construction, road maintenance or drainage works.

5.3.4 Other types of contracts are excluded from being the subject of a designated decision by Regulation 12 of the *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 1999*. These types of decisions are decisions:

- (i) relating to the carrying out of works in response to an emergency or disaster within the meaning of the *Emergency Management Act 2004*, or under section 298 of the *Local Government Act 1999*
- (ii) for an expenditure or other decision required to be taken under the Commonwealth or State Government or otherwise for the council to be eligible for funding from the Commonwealth or State Government
- (iii) relating to the employment of a particular council employee (other than the chief executive officer)
- (iv) made in the conduct of negotiations relating to the employment of council employees generally, or a class of council employees, if provision has been made for funds relating to such negotiations in the budget of the council for the relevant financial year and the negotiations commenced prior to the election period
- (v) relating to a Community Wastewater Management Systems scheme that has, prior to the election period, been approved by the council

5.4 Significant decisions

5.4.1 So far as is reasonably practicable, the Chief Executive Officer should avoid scheduling significant decisions (including major policy decisions) for consideration during an 'election period' and ensure that such decisions:

- are considered by Council prior to the 'election period'; or
- are scheduled for determination by the incoming Council.

5.4.2 A 'significant decision' is any major policy or other decision which will significantly affect

the Council area or community or will bind the incoming Council.

- 5.4.3 A 'major policy' decision includes any decision (not being a designated decision):
- to spend unbudgeted monies;
 - to conduct unplanned public consultation;
 - to endorse a new policy;
 - to dispose of Council land;
 - to approve community grants;
 - to progress any matter which has been identified as an election issue; and
 - any other issue that is considered a major policy decision by the Chief Executive Officer.
- 5.4.4 The determination as to whether or not any decision is significant will be made by the Chief Executive Officer, after consultation with the Mayor.
- 5.4.5 The Chief Executive Officer must keep a record of all such determinations made by Chief Executive Officers (including by previous Chief Executive Officers) and make this list available to candidates upon request.
- 5.4.6 Where the Chief Executive Officer has determined that a decision is significant, but circumstances arise that require the decision to be made during the election period, the Chief Executive Officer will report this to the Council.
- 5.4.7 The aim of the Chief Executive Officer's report is to assist Council Members assess whether the decision should be deferred for consideration by the incoming Council.
- 5.4.8 The Chief Executive Officer's report to Council will address the following issues (where relevant):
- why the matter is considered 'significant';
 - why the matter is considered urgent;
 - what are the financial and other consequences of postponing the matter until after the election, both on the current Council and the incoming Council;
 - whether deciding the matter will significantly limit options for the incoming Council;
 - whether the matter requires the expenditure of unbudgeted funds;
 - whether the matter is the completion of an activity already commenced and previously endorsed by Council;
 - whether the matter requires community engagement;
 - any relevant statutory obligations or timeframes; and
 - whether dealing with the matter in the election period is in the best interests of the Council area and community.
- 5.4.9 Council will consider the Chief Executive Officer's report and determine whether or not to make the decision.

5.5 Consequence of contravening this policy

- 5.5.1 A designated decision made by Council during an election period is invalid, except where an exemption has been granted by the Minister.
- 5.5.2 Any person who suffers loss or damage as a result of acting in good faith on a designated decision made by the Council in contravention of this Policy is entitled to compensation from the Council for that loss or damage.
- 5.5.3 Disciplinary consequences or prosecution may result for a breach of this Policy or the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*.

5.6 Application for exemption

- 5.6.1 If the Council considers that it is faced with extraordinary circumstances which require the making of a designated decision during an election period, the Council may apply in writing to the Minister for an exemption to enable the making of a designated decision that would otherwise be invalid under section 91A of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* and this Policy.
- 5.6.2 If the Minister grants an exemption to enable the making of a designated decision that would otherwise be invalid under section 91A of the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* and this Policy, then the Council and Council staff will comply with any conditions or limitations that the Minister imposes on the exemption.¹

6. POLICY STATEMENT: USE OF COUNCIL RESOURCES

- 6.1.1 Council resources must not be used for the advantage of a particular candidate or group of candidates.
- 6.1.2 For clarity, neither the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* nor this Caretaker Policy prohibits a
 - a) council providing resources to all members of the public, which incidentally includes all candidates for election
 - b) a council providing resources to all candidates equally
- 6.1.3 The following council resources must not be used for the advantage of a particular candidate or group of candidates and may only be used by council members, where necessary, in the performance of their ordinary duties as a council member:
 - Mobile phones
 - Council vehicles
 - Council provided business cards
 - Council-provided computers and other office equipment beyond that provided to members of the public (e.g. in a public library)
 - Council logos
 - Requests to council employees to perform tasks which would confer an advantage on a candidate or group of candidates
 - The ability to issue invitations to council events
 - Council travel arrangements (e.g. access to council-negotiated rates for flights, accommodation or hire cars)

¹ Section 91A(4) *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999*

- Access to areas that members of the public cannot access, including areas within the property of third parties (e.g. a ‘Mayor’s Parlour’ at a suburban football oval)
- Councils produced promotional brochures and documents
- materials published by Council
- facilities and goods owned by the Council
- attendance and participation at functions and events
- access to Council information
- media services issues
- stationery and equipment.

6.1.4 Council Members and Employees will ensure that due propriety is observed in the use of Council resources and must exercise appropriate judgement in this regard. **Attachment A** provides further guidance to staff and Elected Members on the appropriate use of Council resources during caretaker period.

6.1.5 Council members who use Council resources for the purposes of an election campaign may also be in breach of their other legislative and behavioural obligations, such as improper use of information or position to gain personal advantage.² This may amount to misconduct in public administration as defined under the Ombudsman Act 1972 and be the subject of a complaint to the relevant authority.

7. COUNCIL EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES DURING AND ELECTION PERIOD

7.1 Prior to any election period, the Chief Executive Officer will ensure that all Council Members and Council Employees are advised in relation to the application of this Policy.

7.2 Council Employees in the course of their duties must not:

- (a) Undertake an activity that may affect voting in the election, except where the activity relates to the election process and is authorised by the Chief Executive Officer;
- (b) Authorise, use or allocate a Council resource for any purpose which may influence voting in the election, except where it only relates to the election process and is authorised by the Chief Executive Officer; and
- (c) Assist Council Members in ways that are or could create a perception that they are being used for electoral purposes. In any circumstances where the use of Council resources might be construed as being related to a candidate’s election campaign, the incident must be reported to and advice sought from the Chief Executive Officer.

² See, for example, s62(3), s62(4) and 78(3) of the *Local Government Act* and [behavioural standard 2.7](#).

- 7.3 Any assistance and advice provided to candidates as part of the conduct of the Council elections will be provided equally to all candidates. The types of assistance that are available will be documented and communicated to candidates in advance of the election period.
- 7.4 Payment or reimbursement of costs relating to Council Members out-of-pocket expenses incurred during an election period will only apply to necessary costs that have been incurred in the performance of normal Council duties. No reimbursements will be provided for campaigning, or for expenses that could be perceived as supporting or being connected with a candidate's election campaign.

8. PUBLIC CONSULTATION DURING AN 'ELECTION PERIOD'

- 8.1 It is prohibited under this Policy for discretionary public consultation to be undertaken during the 'election period' on an issue which is contentious unless Council specifically resolves otherwise.
- 8.2 For the purpose of this provision, discretionary public consultation means consultation which is not legislatively mandated and is a process which involves an invitation or invitations to individuals, groups or organisations or the community generally to comment on an issue, proposed action or proposed policy.
- 8.3 This Policy does not prevent any mandatory public consultation required by *the Local Government Act 1999* or any other Act which is required to be undertaken to enable the Council to fulfil its functions in relation to any matter or decisions which are not prohibited by law or by this Policy.
- 8.4 In determining whether discretionary consultation should occur, Council will have regard to whether the consultation may reasonably be perceived as favouring or being closely associated with a particular candidate or group of candidates.
- 8.5 Where public consultation is approved to occur during an election period, the results of that consultation will not be reported to Council until after the 'election period', except where it is necessary for the performance of functions as set out at clause 8.3 above.

9. PUBLIC MEETING OF CANDIDATES

- 9.1 In accordance with section 91B of the Local Government (Elections) Act 1999, Council will hold at least one public candidate information session (public meeting of candidates) during the period commencing after the close of nominations and before polling day for each general election.
- 9.2 The session will be open to any candidates who wish to participate and members of the public, and will relate to issues in the community relevant to the election and inform members of the public of the policies and views of candidates.
- 9.3 The session will be presided over by the Chief Executive Officer or a person appointed by the Chief Executive Officer (who must not be a candidate), and may be held in-person or remotely using audio-visual technology.

10. HANDLING CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS DURING AN ELECTION PERIOD

- 10.1 Any complaint against a Council Member who is also a candidate for re-election made under the Council's *Behavioural Management Policy* during an election period will not be heard or determined by the Council during that period.
- 10.2 The Chief Executive Officer, upon receiving a complaint against a Council Member, who is also a candidate for re-election, will assume the responsibilities allocated to the Mayor under the Council's *Behavioural Management Policy*.
- 10.3 If the Council Member against whom the complaint is made is not returned to office after the election, the complaint will lapse.
- 10.4 Council recognises that the Electoral Commissioner has the role of investigating any alleged breach of the *Local Government (Election) Act 1999*, including alleged illegal practices.

11. DELEGATION

11.1 The Chief Executive Officer has the delegation to:

- Approve, amend and review any procedures that shall be consistent with this Policy; and
- Make any legislative, formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the Policy during the period of its currency.

12. AVAILABILITY OF THE POLICY

- 12.1 This Policy will be available via the Council's website www.ahc.sa.gov.au.

Attachment A

Prohibition on publishing certain materials during an 'election period'

A decision by Council to publish information for the advantage of a particular candidate or group of candidates (other than a decision which allows for the equal use of Council resources by all candidates for election) is a designated decision and is prohibited by s91A of the Elections Act. Publishing includes publication by any medium, including but not limited to leaflets, newspapers, posters, email, websites, radio or television.

Council have a statutory responsibility to publish certain information regarding general elections. Under s12(b) of the Elections Act, Council is responsible for the provision of information, education and publicity designed to promote public participation in the electoral processes for its area, to inform potential voters about the candidates who are standing for election in its area and to advise its local community about the outcome of the elections conducted in its area.

All election materials published by Council should fall within the types of material described in s12(b) of the Elections Act and not contain any material which would advantage a particular candidate or candidates.

'Electoral material' is defined in the Elections Act as 'an advertisement, notice, statement or representation calculated to affect the result of an election or poll'. Given that the purpose of electoral material is to persuade voters towards a particular candidate or group of candidates, it will not be appropriate for Council to publish electoral material.

Council Members are, however, permitted to publish campaign material on their own behalf (provided that they comply with ss 27 and 28 of the Elections Act)). Council Members should not assert or imply that the electoral material originates from, or is endorsed by, Council. A Council Member also should not use Council resources to create or distribute his or her electoral material, including through the use of Council stationery, computers, printers, photocopiers, Council Employees or the application of Council logos.

Council website

During an 'election period', new material which is prohibited by this Policy will not be placed on the Council website. Any information which refers to the election will only relate to the election process by way of information, education or publicity. Information about Council Members will be restricted to names, contact details, titles, membership of committees and other bodies to which they have been appointed by the Council.

Other Council publications

Insofar as any Council publications, such as the Annual Report, are required to be published during an election period, the content contained within them regarding Council Members will be restricted to that strictly required by the *Local Government Act 1999* and Regulations.

Council publications produced before an election period containing material which might be construed as electoral material will not be circulated or displayed during the election period. However, they may be made available to members of the public on request.

Attendance at Events and Functions During an Election Period

Events and functions means gatherings involving external stakeholders to discuss, review, acknowledge, communicate, celebrate or promote a program, strategy or issue which is of relevance to Council and its community and may take the form of conferences, workshops, forums, launches, promotional activities, and social occasions such as dinners, receptions and balls.

A key consideration is the capacity in which Council Members have been invited to the event. If they have been invited as a Council Member (i.e. Councillor Smith is invited to...) then their attendance will be in the course of Council duties. If however they are invited in a private capacity (i.e. Mr Smith is invited to...) then their attendance will not be taken to be in the course of Council duties.

It is therefore important for the Council Member to clarify the nature of the invitation to the event and prudent for the Council Member to use their best endeavours to clarify to event participants the capacity in which they are attending, particularly if intending to address the participants or undertake campaigning activities.

Council Members may continue to attend meetings, events and functions staged by external bodies during an election period. This includes but is not limited to LGA and regional LGA meetings, including the LGA Annual General Meeting.

Council organised events and functions held during the election period will be reduced to only those essential to the operation of the Council.

Addresses by Council Members

Council Members must not give speeches or keynote addresses at Council organised or sponsored events and functions during an election period.

Access to Council Information

Council Members continue during an election period to have a statutory right under s61 of the *Local Government Act 1999* to access Council information relevant to the performance of their functions as a Council Member. This right should be exercised with caution and limited to matters that the Council is dealing with within the objectives and intent of this Policy. Any Council information so

accessed that is not publicly available must not be used for election purposes.

Council Members should take care that access to Council documents is in connection with the performance or discharge of their functions or duties of the member. Access to Council documents for the purpose of campaigning or to gain an advantage in an election is an improper use of information gained by virtue of the Council Member's position as a member of Council.

All candidates (including those that are Council Members) have equal rights of access to public information relevant to their election campaigns from Council administration.

Neither Council Members nor candidates will be provided with information or advice from Council Employees that might be perceived to support an election campaign, and there shall be transparency in the provision of all information and advice during an election period.

Information and briefing material

Information and briefing material prepared or secured by Council Employees for a Council Member during an election period must be necessary to the carrying out of the Council Member's role and, where appropriate, provided to any candidate seeking the same information. Queries by Council Employees regarding the provision of information will be directed to the Chief Executive Officer in the first instance.

Media Service

Council's media services are directly managed by or under the supervision of the Chief Executive Officer, are provided solely to promote Council activities or initiatives and must not be used in any manner that might favour a candidate during an election period.

Media advice

Any request for media advice or assistance from Council Members during an election period will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer. No media advice will be provided in relation to election issues or in regard to publicity that involves specific Council Members.

Media releases / spokespersons

Media releases will not refer to specific Council Members during an election period. Where it is necessary to identify a spokesperson in relation to an issue, the Chief Executive Officer will generally be the appropriate person.

Publicity campaigns

During the election period, publicity campaigns, other than for the purpose of conducting the

election in accordance with the requirements of Section 12(b) of the Elections Act, will be avoided wherever possible. Where a publicity campaign is deemed necessary for a Council activity, it must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

In any event, Council publicity during an election period will be restricted to communicating normal Council activities and initiatives without any variation in form or size.

Council Members

Council Members will not use their position as an elected representative or their access to Council Employees and other Council resources to gain media attention in support of an election campaign.

Council Employee Public Statements

During an 'election period', no Council Employee may make any public statement that relates to an election issue unless such statements have been approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

Council branding and stationery

No Council logos, letterheads, or other Council branding or Council resources or facilities may be used for, or linked in any way with, a candidate's election campaign.

Equipment and facilities

Equipment and facilities provided to Council Members for the purpose of conducting normal Council business (i.e. iPads, laptops, phones, etc.) must not be used for campaigning purposes.

Council member correspondence during an election period

All correspondence addressed to Council Members regarding Council business will continue to be forwarded to the Council Member.

Correspondence received directly by Council Members (e.g. direct mail, email) can continue to be answered directly by the Council Member.

Council Members should be mindful of their obligations under s62(4) of the *Local Government Act 1999* regarding making improper use of their position as a member of the council for advantage and also the obligations under the *State Records Act 1997* and the Council's *Records and Information Management Policy*.

**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2026
AGENDA BUSINESS ITEM**

Item: 12.6

Responsible Officer: Greg Georgopoulos
Chief Executive Officer
Office of the Chief Executive

Subject: Election Signs Policy

For: Decision

SUMMARY

This report presents a draft Election Signs Policy for Council's consideration and adoption.

Election signage is a recurring issue during election periods, with key concerns relating to community complaints, amenity, and public safety. Council has powers under section 227 of the *Local Government Act 1999* to remove election signs in certain circumstances. However, in the absence of a clear, locally defined policy, there is potential for inconsistent application of these powers and uncertainty for candidates, staff and the community.

The draft policy has been informed by the Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA) Election Signs Guideline (February 2026), which consolidates guidance across Commonwealth, State and Local Government elections and reflects recent legislative amendments. The guideline provides clarity on when election signage may be lawfully placed (section 226) and Council's powers to remove unlawful signage (section 227).

While not legislatively required, a standalone Election Signs Policy will support Council to:

- provide clear and consistent guidance to candidates and the community
- support staff in applying legislative powers consistently and confidently
- reduce confusion, disputes and complaints during election periods

RECOMMENDATION

Council resolves:

1. That the report be received and noted.
 2. With an effective date of 16 June 2026, to approve the draft Election Signs Policy, as per Appendix 1.
 3. That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the draft Election Signs Policy.
-

1. BACKGROUND

A desktop review was undertaken of election signage approaches across South Australian councils. This review identified a number of councils that have a standalone Election Signs Policies (City of Tea Tree Gully, Copper Coast Council, the District Council of Streaky Bay, The District Council of Coober Pedy, Karoonda East Murray District Council).

Where standalone policies exist, they generally follow a consistent structure and approach. These policies typically:

- outline the legislative framework governing election signage
- clarify where signage is permitted or prohibited
- define Council's enforcement powers
- emphasise principles of safety, amenity and equitable treatment of candidates

The proposed draft policy has been developed having regard to this common approach.

In March 2025, the LGA released revised guidance relating to State and Federal election signage following legislative amendments introduced through the *Electoral (Control of Corflutes) Amendment Act 2024* and the *Electoral (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act 2024*. On 1 January 2026 further legislative requirements came into effect under the *Statutes Amendment (Local Government Elections Review) Act 2025*. The LGA guidance has been further consolidated in the LGA Election Signs Guideline (February 2026), which reflects the updated legislative framework.

The updated LGA guidance provides an overview of the legislative framework applying to Commonwealth, State and Local Government elections. It confirms that the regulation of election signage is primarily governed by the *Local Government Act 1999* and the *Electoral Act 1985 (SA)*, with provisions addressing when election signage may be lawfully displayed (including limited exemptions for signs that are hand-held or not affixed to infrastructure) and Council's powers to direct removal or remove unlawful or unsafe signage.

Importantly, the guideline highlights that legislative provisions differ between Commonwealth, State and Local Government elections. These differences relate to definitions, permitted timeframes, and the circumstances in which signage may be displayed on roads and road-related areas. The guideline is therefore intended to provide a consistent reference point to assist councils in interpreting and applying these overlapping legislative regimes.

The policy does not seek to replicate legislative provisions, but rather to provide clear, locally applicable guidance that supports consistent interpretation and application of those provisions within the Council area.

2. ANALYSIS

➤ Strategic Management Plan/Functional Strategy/Council Policy Alignment

Strategic Plan 2024 – Your Place, Your Space

Goal 4 Organisation

Objective 02 Operate with integrity using best practice governance processes.

Priority 02.01 Demonstrate accountable and transparent decision making.

➤ Legal Implications

The proposed draft Election Signs Policy is consistent with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1999* and the *Electoral Act 1985 (SA)*, which regulate the placement and removal of election signage. The policy does not create new powers. It provides guidance to support the consistent application of legislative requirements.

➤ **Risk Management Implications**

The adoption of an Election Signs Policy will assist in mitigating the risk:

that Council is not transparent and accountable.

Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Target Risk
High	Medium	Low

➤ **Financial and Resource Implications**

Not applicable

➤ **Customer Service and Community/Cultural Implications**

There is a community expectation that Council will manage election signage in a consistent and safe manner.

➤ **Sustainability Implications**

Not applicable

➤ **Engagement/Consultation conducted in the development of the report**

Consultation on the development of this report was as follows:

Council Committees: Not Applicable
Council Workshops: Information or Briefing Session, 18 May 2026
Advisory Groups: Not Applicable
External Agencies: Not Applicable
Community: Not Applicable

➤ **Additional Analysis**

Nil

3. OPTIONS

Council has the following options:

- I. To approve the draft Election Signs Policy, with or without amendment
- II. To determine not to approve the draft Election Signs Policy at this time.

4. APPENDICES

- (1) Draft Election Signs Policy (clean version)
-

Appendix 1

Draft Election Signs Policy

The display of Election Signage Policy



Policy Number: GOV-12

Responsible Department(s): Governance

Other Relevant Policies: Caretaker Policy

Other Relevant Procedure(s): Nil

Policies superseded by this procedure Nil

Approved by: Council

Date of Approval 9 June 2026

Effective From: 16 June 2026

Next Review: June 2029

Version Control

Version:	Effect Date:	Description of Changes:	Approver:
1.0	16/06/2026	New Policy	Council - Res xx/26

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Policy sets out Adelaide Hills Council's position in relation to the placement, management, removal and enforcement of election signs associated with Federal, State and Local Government elections within the Council area.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of this policy are to:
- provide clear guidance to political candidates, the community, staff, and elected members concerning the display of Local, State and Commonwealth election signs within the Council area
 - ensure compliance with current legislation concerning the display of Local, State and Commonwealth election signs
 - clarify Council's role in addressing non-compliant signs.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **"Election"** means any Federal, State or Local Government election, referendum or poll.
- 3.2 **"Election Period"** means the period commencing on the day of the close of nominations for an election and expiring at the conclusion of the election.
- 3.3 **"Public road"** (or **"relevant road"**, as applicable), means a road within the meaning of the *Road Traffic Act 1961* that is open to or used by the public and developed for, or has as one of its main uses, the driving of motor vehicles.
- Note: Although *"public road"* is also defined in section 4(1) of the *Local Government Act 1999*, that definition does not apply for the purposes of this policy.
- 3.4 **"Road-related area"** has the same meaning as in the *Road Traffic Act 1961* and includes an area that is associated with a public road, such as a footpath, nature strip, median strip, traffic island, shoulder, verge, or other area ancillary to a road.
- 3.5 **"Election-related event or activity"** means any organised gathering, meeting, function or event relating to an election, including canvassing for votes, and includes any event or activity prescribed by legislation or regulation, including (without limitation) events or activities referred to in section 115(4) of the *Electoral Act 1985 (SA)*, section 226A(3) of the *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)*, and assemblies within the meaning of the *Public Assemblies Act 1972*.
- 3.6 **"Election sign"** (or **"electoral advertising poster"**) means any poster, notice, sign or other display that contains matter calculated to affect the result of an election, whether Federal, State or Local Government.

3.7 **“Electoral matter”** (or **“electoral advertisement”**) means a matter that is intended, calculated or likely to affect the result of an election, including by promoting or opposing a candidate, political party, group or position.

3.8 **“Moveable sign”** means an electoral advertising poster held by a person (either directly in their hands or by holding an implement or device to which the poster is attached), or a temporary sign or advertisement that is not permanently affixed to land, a building or a structure.

4. SCOPE

4.1 This policy applies to the display, placement, management and removal of election signs in connection with Federal, State and Local Government elections, referenda and polls.

4.2 The policy applies to election signs displayed on public roads and road-related areas, and to Council-controlled land, to the extent permitted by applicable legislation.

4.3 This policy operates in conjunction with the *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)*, the *Electoral Act 1985 (SA)*, the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 (Cth)*, and any other relevant legislation, and does not apply to the display of election signs on private land with the consent of the landowner, except where otherwise required by law.

4.4 The circumstances in which election signs may be displayed on public roads and road-related areas vary slightly depending on whether the election is a Federal, State or Local Government election.

5. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT AND COMPLIANCE

5.1. The placement of election signage for Federal, State and Local Government elections must comply with:

- *Section 226, 226A and 227 of the Local Government Act 1999 (SA);*
- *Section 115 of the Electoral Act 1985 (SA) (for State elections);*
- *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 (Cth) (for Commonwealth elections);*
- *The Road Traffic Act 1961;*
- *The Local Nuisance and Litter Control Act 2016 (SA);*

5.2. Any sign that does not meet legislative exemptions or Council by-law requirements is considered unauthorised and may be subject to removal.

6. POLICY STATEMENT

6.1. The Adelaide Hills Council recognises the importance of free political communication during election periods while maintaining public safety, amenity, and compliance with legislative requirements.

The display of Election Signage Policy

6.2 Council will provide all candidates upon request with a copy of this policy and the LGA Election Signs Guideline (Appendix A), to ensure that all candidates are aware of their responsibilities.

6.3 Commonwealth Elections

6.3.1 A Commonwealth election is an election held under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

6.3.2 The display of electoral advertising posters in respect of a Commonwealth election on a public road or road related area (including any structure, fixture or vegetation on a public road or road-related area) is generally prohibited.

6.3.3 Section 226A(2) of the *Local Government Act 1999* provides however that a person may display a designated electoral advertising poster – being a poster, notice or sign containing matter calculated to affect the result of a Commonwealth election – on a road or road-related area in the following circumstances:

(a) the person is holding the poster, notice or sign (either directly in their hands or by holding an implement or device to which the poster, notice or sign is attached); or

(b) the poster, notice or sign:

(i) is not attached to a building, hoarding or other structure or fixture on a public road or road-related area;

(ii) is exhibited at, or in the vicinity of, a place at which a designated event or activity is being held; and

(iii) is exhibited immediately before, during or immediately after the designated event or activity, provided that the poster, notice or sign is not exhibited at, or in the vicinity of, the place for more than 6 hours.

6.3.4 A designated event or activity means any of the following:

(a) an assembly within the meaning of the Public Assemblies Act 1972; or

(b) an organised gathering, meeting, function or event relating to a Commonwealth election; or

(c) a person canvassing for votes relating to a Commonwealth election; or

(d) any other prescribed gathering, meeting, function or event, or class of gathering, meeting, function or event, prescribed by the regulations.

6.4 State Elections

6.4.1 A State election is an election held pursuant to the *Electoral Act 1983 (SA)*.

- 6.4.2 The display of electoral advertising posters – being a poster, notice or sign containing matter calculated to affect the result of a State election – in respect of a State election on a public road or road related area (including any structure, fixture or vegetation on a public road or road-related area) is generally prohibited.
- 6.4.3 Section 226(3) (caa) of the Local Government Act provides however that an electoral advertising poster related to a State election may be exhibited on a road during the election period for an election where the poster is not prohibited from exhibition pursuant to the Electoral Act or the sign is identical to a sign approved by the State Electoral Commissioner for exhibition during the election period for the purpose of notifying electors of the election.
- 6.4.4 Section 115(2)(b) of the Electoral Act enables a person to display a poster, notice or sign displaying an advertisement containing matter calculated to affect the result of a State election on a public road or road related area where:
- (a) the person is holding the poster, notice or sign (either directly in their hands or by holding an implement or device to which the poster, notice or sign is attached); or
 - (b) the poster, notice or sign:
 - (i) is not attached to a building, hoarding or other structure or fixture on a road or road-related area; and
 - (ii) the poster, notice or sign is exhibited at, or in the vicinity of, a place at which a designated event or activity is being held and
 - (iii) is exhibited immediately before, during or immediately after the designated event or activity, provided that the poster, notice or sign is not exhibited at, or in the vicinity of, the place for more than 6 hours; or
 - (c) the poster, notice or sign is of a kind and exhibited in circumstances prescribed by the Electoral Regulations 2009 (see in particular, Regulation 16(2) of the Electoral Regulations 2009) that being:
 - (i) the exhibition of an electoral advertising poster that is attached to an office or committee room of a political party, member of Parliament or candidate in an election, provided that the place of exhibition is more than 100 metres from the entrance to a polling booth open for polling.
 - (ii) the exhibition of an electoral advertising poster that is adhered to a vehicle or exhibited on the roof of, or a trailer attached to a vehicle
 - (iii) the exhibition of an electoral advertising poster that is attached to fencing or fixtures in or around the following:

- (1) An enclosed area of land commonly used for playing sports or games, or accommodating the spectators at any sport or game
- (2) An enclosed area of land contiguous to, and used in connection with, such land.

(iv) the exhibition of an electoral advertising poster at a show or fair by a political party or member of Parliament, or a candidate or group in an election if

- (1) The show or fair is organised by a person or body that is not a political party, associated entity, member of Parliament, a candidate in an election, or if the exhibitor holds or sponsors a stall at the show or fair or pays money in sponsorship of the show or fair.

(vi) the exhibition of an electoral advertising poster that is adhered to a person's rubbish bin if the bin is placed on the kerbside by the person in the usual way for the purposes of a regular roadside rubbish collection service

6.4.5 A designated event or activity means any of the following:

- (a) an assembly within the meaning of the *Public Assemblies Act 1972*; or
- (b) an organised gathering, meeting, function or event relating to a State election; or
- (c) a person canvassing for votes relating to a State election; or
- (d) any other prescribed gathering, meeting, function or event, or class of gathering, meeting, function or event.

6.5 Local Government Elections

6.5.1 A Local Government Election is an election held under the *Local Government Act 1999* or the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999 (SA)*.

6.5.2 The display of electoral advertising posters in respect of a local government election on a public road (including any structure, fixture or vegetation on a public road) is generally prohibited.

6.5.3 Section 226(2b) of the Local Government Election Act 1999 provides however that a local electoral poster is not prohibited in the following circumstance:

- (a) the person is holding the local electorate poster (either directly in their hands or by holding an implement or device to which the poster, notice or sign is attached); or
- (b) the local electorate poster:

(i) is not attached to a building, hoarding or other structure or fixture on a road or road-related area; and

(ii) is exhibited at, or in the vicinity of, a place at which a designated event or activity is being held; and

(iii) is exhibited immediately before, during or immediately after the designated event or activity, provided that the local electoral poster is not exhibited at, or in the vicinity of, the place for more than 6 hours.

6.5.4 In addition to the above requirements (which are specific to Local electoral posters), it is also the case pursuant to section 226(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 that a local electoral poster, just like any other moveable sign, must

(a) comply with the requirements of the Council's by-laws regarding the design and structure;

(b) be placed in a position that complies with the requirements of Council's by-laws;

(c) comply with any other relevant requirements of Council's by-laws; and

(d) not unreasonably restrict the use of the road or endanger the safety of members of the public.

6.6 Standard Conditions for Display of Election Signs

6.6.1 Where election signs are permitted to be displayed under this policy, the following standard conditions apply:

- Election signs must not restrict the use of the road.
- Election signs must not endanger the safety of members of the public.
- Election signs must not be inaccurate or misleading.
- Election signs must be removed promptly after the election period.
- The person or organisation responsible for an election sign is responsible for its installation, maintenance, and removal.

6.6.2 Council may require the removal of any election sign that does not comply with this policy or applicable legislation.

6.6.3 Council does not regulate or assess the content of election signage. Matters relating to the content of electoral advertising are the responsibility of the relevant electoral authority and are governed by the *Electoral Act 1985* (SA) or the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, as applicable. Any concerns regarding the content of election signage should be directed to the

Electoral Commission of South Australia (for State elections and Local Government elections) or the Australian Electoral Commission (for Commonwealth elections).

6.7 Prohibited Locations and Restrictions

6.7.1 Election signs must not be displayed:

- on a public road or road-related area, except where expressly permitted under this policy;
- on trees, poles, traffic signs, street furniture or other infrastructure on public roads;
- on Council-owned or Council-controlled land or structures without Council consent; or
- in any location where the sign creates a safety risk, restricts access, or obstructs traffic or pedestrians.

6.7.2 Election signs must not be displayed in a manner that is misleading, unsafe, or causes damage to public or private property.

6.8 Candidate and Political Party Responsibilities

6.8.1 Candidates, political parties and campaign organisers are responsible for:

- ensuring election signs comply with this policy and applicable legislation;
- informing volunteers and supporters about appropriate sign placement; and
- removing election signs promptly after the election period.

6.8.2 Council encourages candidates and parties to regularly check the condition and placement of election signs.

6.9 Enforcement and Powers of Authorised Officers

6.9.1 Council may take action in relation to election signs that are displayed in breach of this policy or applicable legislation.

6.9.2 Authorised Council officers may:

- request the removal of a non-compliant election sign;
- remove a sign where it poses an immediate safety risk, or where the responsible person cannot be identified; and
- take further action as permitted under relevant legislation.

6.9.3 Where appropriate, Council may refer matters to the Electoral Commission of South Australia or the Australian Electoral Commission.

7. Sign Removal, Notification and Storage

7.1 Where Council removes an election sign, reasonable efforts will be made to notify the responsible person.

7.2 Removed signs may be stored for a limited period and may be disposed of if not collected within that time.

7.3 Council is not responsible for damage to, or loss of, election signs that are removed due to non-compliance or safety concerns.

8. COMPLAINTS

8.1 Concerns or complaints about election signage may be raised with Council by contacting customer service via email mail@ahc.sa.gov.au or phone (08) 8408 0400.

8.2 Where Council receives a complaint or identifies an election sign that may not comply with this policy, an authorised Council officer may investigate the matter and, where appropriate, contact the responsible person or take action consistent with this policy and applicable legislation.

9. DELEGATION

9.1 The Chief Executive Officer has the delegation to:

- Approve, amend and review any procedures that shall be consistent with this Policy; and
- Make any legislative, formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the Policy during the period of its currency.

10. AVAILABILITY OF THE POLICY

10.1 This Policy will be available via the Council's website www.ahc.sa.gov.au.

**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2026
AGENDA BUSINESS ITEM**

Item: 12.7

Responsible Officer: Greg Georgopoulos
Chief Executive Officer
Office of the CEO

Subject: Southern and Hills Local Government Association

For: Decision

SUMMARY

The Southern and Hills Local Government Association (SHLGA) is seeking to apply to the Minister for Local Government for a further exemption from the requirement to establish an Audit Committee, with the current exemption expiring on 30 June 2026.

To proceed with this application, SHLGA requires formal support from each of its constituent councils.

This report seeks Council's endorsement to support SHLGA's application.

An Information Paper has been provided by the SHLGA, included at **Appendix 1**, to support Council's consideration of the matter.

RECOMMENDATION

Council resolves:

1. That the report be received and noted.
 2. To endorse the Southern and Hills Local Government Association applying to the Minister for an exemption, for a period of up to five (5) years, from the requirement to establish an Audit Committee, pursuant to Regulation 18 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011*.
 3. That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to provide written confirmation of this resolution to the Southern and Hills Local Government Association in support of its application.
-

1. BACKGROUND

The Southern and Hills Local Government Association (SHLGA) is a regional subsidiary comprising six constituent councils: Adelaide Hills Council, Alexandrina Council, District Council of Yankalilla, City of Victor Harbor, Kangaroo Island Council, and Mount Barker

District Council. Governance is undertaken by a Board comprising the Mayors and Chief Executive Officers of each constituent council, in accordance with the SHLGA Charter.

SHLGA operates primarily as a regional advocacy and coordination body, with a limited operational scope and modest financial activity. It has no employees, no significant physical assets, and undertakes no commercial or regulatory functions.

At its meeting on 15 May 2026, the SHLGA Board considered the upcoming expiry of its current Audit Committee exemption and resolved to seek the support of constituent councils to apply for a further exemption.

In doing so, the Board noted that SHLGA continues to operate as a low-risk entity, with existing governance and financial management arrangements considered appropriate to its scale and functions. The Board further noted that establishing an Audit Committee would introduce additional administrative and financial burden that is not proportionate to SHLGA's operations.

Support from all constituent councils is required to enable SHLGA to submit an application to the Minister.

2. ANALYSIS

➤ Strategic Management Plan/Functional Strategy/Council Policy Alignment

Strategic Plan 2024 – Your Place, Your Space

Goal 4 Organisation

Objective 02 Operate with integrity using best practice governance processes

Priority 02.1 Demonstrate accountable and transparent decision making

➤ Legal Implications

The Southern and Hills Local Government Association (SHLGA) is a regional subsidiary established under Schedule 2 of the *Local Government Act 1999*.

Pursuant to clause 30 of Schedule 2 and Regulation 18 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011*, regional subsidiaries are required to establish and maintain an Audit Committee unless exempted by the Minister for Local Government.

The SHLGA currently holds a Ministerial exemption from this requirement, which expires on 30 June 2026.

To obtain a further exemption, SHLGA must submit an application to the Minister supported by resolutions from all constituent councils.

Council's resolution in this matter will inform whether SHLGA is able to proceed with its application for a further exemption. Adelaide Hills Council is the last SHLGA constituent council to consider the matter. All other SHLGA constituent councils have resolved to endorse the request for exemption.

➤ **Risk Management Implications**

The timely endorsement of the SHLGA’s application will assist in mitigating the risk of:

Poor governance practices occur which lead to a loss of stakeholder (i.e. customer and regulator) confidence and/or legislative breaches.

Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Target Risk
Extreme (5C)	Low (3E)	Low (3E)

➤ **Financial and Resource Implications**

Not applicable

➤ **Customer Service and Community/Cultural Implications**

Not applicable

➤ **Sustainability Implications**

Not applicable

➤ **Engagement/Consultation conducted in the development of the report**

Consultation on the development of this report was as follows:

Council Committees: Not Applicable

Council Workshops: Not Applicable

Advisory Groups: Not Applicable

External Agencies: Not Applicable

Community: Not Applicable

➤ **Additional Analysis**

Nil

3. OPTIONS

Council has the following options:

- I. To resolve to endorse the SHLGA applying to the Minister for an exemption from the requirement to establish an Audit Committee.
- II. To resolve not to endorse the SHLGA applying to the Minister for an exemption from the requirement to establish an Audit Committee.

4. APPENDICES

- (1) Information Paper from the SHLGA

Appendix 1

Information Paper from the SHLGA



Information Paper:

Southern & Hills Local Government Association (SHLGA) – Application for Exemption from Audit Committee Requirement

Purpose

This Information Paper has been prepared to seek Constituent Council’s support for SHLGA to apply to the Minister to continue its exemption from the requirement to establish and maintain an Audit Committee.

Key Points

The following key points summarise the rationale for SHLGA seeking continued exemption and the basis on which constituent council support is requested:

- SHLGA’s current exemption from the requirement to establish an Audit Committee expires on 30 June 2026, and a new application requires formal support from all constituent councils.
- SHLGA has strong governance and financial management arrangements in place, including Board oversight, a Management Committee, internal controls framework, formal policies, and annual external audit.
- SHLGA meets all of the Minister’s assessment criteria for exemption, including appropriate internal controls, compliance with legislation, transparent reporting to councils, and a low financial risk profile.
- Establishing an Audit Committee would introduce additional cost and administrative burden without materially benefitting SHLGA’s robust governance or financial oversight arrangements.

Background

The Southern and Hills Local Government Association (SHLGA) is a regional subsidiary established under the *Local Government Act 1999* and governed by its [Charter](#).

Under clause 30 of Schedule 2 of the Act, a regional subsidiary may seek an exemption from the requirement to establish and maintain an Audit Committee. The ability to seek a Ministerial exemption contemplates circumstances where, like SHLGA, a regional subsidiary is not financially or administratively complex enough to warrant the resourcing of an Audit Committee.

In 2021, the Minister for Local Government granted SHLGA exemption from the requirement to establish an Audit Committee. This exemption expires on 30 June 2026.

Regulation 18 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011* requires that:

- Each constituent Council must resolve to support an application; and
- An application must be submitted to the Minister addressing specified assessment criteria.

SHLGA is therefore seeking resolutions from all Constituent Councils to support a further application for exemption.

SHLGA Operating Context

SHLGA operates as a low-risk regional subsidiary, with:

- No employees (operates through contracted executive and corporate support)
- No high value assets such as property, fleet, plant, or equipment
- A relatively modest annual operating budget (<\$200,000)
- No commercial or regulatory functions
- Revenue primarily derived from annual member subscriptions

SHLGA's primary role is regional advocacy, coordination and collaboration on behalf of its six Constituent Councils.

Governance and Financial Management Framework

While SHLGA is not a financially or administratively complex regional subsidiary, it expends public funds and must have a robust governance and financial framework in place. The following is an overview of the checks and balances that are in place to ensure the adequacy of SHLGA's systems and practices.

1. Charter and Legislative Compliance

SHLGA operates under a formal Charter adopted by the six SHLGA Constituent Councils and approved by the Minister for Local Government. The Charter:

- Establishes a Board of Management with two nominated representatives from each Constituent Council
- Requires preparation of annual budgets and a rolling four-year business plan
- Mandates quarterly financial reporting and annual audited financial statements
- Requires compliance with the Act and associated regulations

The Board is responsible for governing and overseeing the subsidiary and must exercise care, diligence and skill in managing its affairs. Board Agendas and Minutes are published on the SHLGA website.

Copies of budgets, business plans, annual reports, and audited financial statements are provided to Constituent Councils.

2. SHLGA Management Committee

The SHLGA Board has established a Management Committee under its Charter to provide additional oversight of operational, financial and governance matters between Board meetings. The Committee comprises the President (Chair), Deputy President and two Council CEOs, ensuring a mix of elected member leadership and professional expertise.

The Management Committee meets as required and provides a proportionate and effective governance mechanism for SHLGA's scale and risk profile. It strengthens oversight, supports accountability, and complements existing arrangements including Board governance, internal controls and external audit.

3. Internal Controls Policy and Framework

SHLGA has adopted a formal Internal Controls Policy aligned to the SA Better Practice Model, which:

- Ensures risks relating to public resources are appropriately managed
- Supports compliance, transparency and accountability
- Is overseen by the Board and implemented by the Executive Officer.

This is supported by an Internal Controls Framework which identifies key financial and operational risks, documents control activities across all financial processes, includes Board oversight and reporting mechanisms, and is reviewed annually (internally and externally) to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

4. Financial Management and Cash Controls

SHLGA has a dedicated Cash Management and Investments Policy which ensures appropriate authorisation of all payments, monthly reconciliations and quarterly reporting to the Board, and Board approval of investments.

5. External Audit and Reporting

SHLGA:

- Appoints an external auditor in accordance with legislation

- Prepares annual financial statements subject to audit
- Provides audited financial statements and annual reports to constituent councils
- Considers audit findings and recommendations at Board level

These arrangements provide independent assurance over financial management and internal controls.

Assessment Against Ministerial Criteria

The following table provides an assessment of SHLGA's operations against the Minister's criteria for considering an Audit Committee exemption.

Criteria	Assessment
1. Internal control policies and procedures are in place and periodically reviewed	SHLGA maintains appropriate financial management and governance controls consistent with its size and function, aligned with LGA Better Practice guidance. Controls are reviewed periodically and subject to scrutiny through an annual external audit.
2. External auditor has confirmed internal controls are sufficient	SHLGA is subject to annual external audit. Audit opinions have not identified material issues and provide assurance that financial processes and controls are operating appropriately.
3. Auditor reports are circulated to constituent Councils	Audited financial statements and auditor reports are required to be provided to constituent Councils by 30 September each year. This is included as part of the Annual Report.
4. Compliance with legislative obligations	SHLGA is consistently complying with its obligations under the Act and associated Regulations. Governance practices are consistent with legislative requirements for regional subsidiaries.
5. Value of assets is not unduly high	SHLGA has modest cash reserves invested with LGFA. SHLGA does not own any high value assets.
6. Level of annual operating expenditure is not unduly high	SHLGA operates with a modest annual budget (<\$200,000), reflecting its coordination and advocacy role. SHLGA does not have any borrowings.
7. Income does not predominantly derive from	SHLGA's income is derived from constituent Council contributions and external grants rather than direct rates or

rates or charges on ratepayers	charges levied on ratepayers.
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SHLGA continues to meet the Minister’s criteria for exemption as a low-risk organisation with proportionate governance arrangements.

The combination of strong Board oversight, formal policies and frameworks, external audit assurance and transparent reporting to constituent councils provides an appropriate level of financial governance and risk management.

Conclusion

SHLGA has robust governance, financial management and risk oversight arrangements in place that meet the intent of the legislative framework without the need for an Audit Committee.

Establishing an Audit Committee would introduce additional administrative burden and cost that is not commensurate with SHLGA’s size, risk profile or operational complexity, and would not materially enhance governance outcomes.

Constituent Councils can rely on the mechanisms established under the Charter if they require any additional information or assurance about the governance and financial management of SHLGA.

If an exemption application is not supported, SHLGA will be required to establish Terms of Reference, recruit and induct Committee members, budget for new sitting fees and additional meeting expenses, and redirect operating resources (estimated at 80-120 hours per year) to administering the Committee.

Template Council Resolution

Suggested wording for a Council Resolution is:

That [insert Council]:

- 1. Supports the Southern & Hills Local Government Association (SHLGA) applying to the Minister for an exemption from the requirement to establish an Audit Committee pursuant to Regulation 18 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011; and*
- 2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to provide written confirmation of this resolution to SHLGA to support its application.*

Administration Reports Information Items

**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2026
AGENDA BUSINESS ITEM**

Item: 13.1

Responsible Officer: Gary Lewis
Director Corporate Services
Corporate Services

Subject: Response to ESCOSA – Local Government Advice 2026-27 to 2029-30: Draft framework and Approach

For: Information

SUMMARY

Following the initial 4 year cycle of the Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) Local Government Advice Scheme, in anticipation of the commencement of the next cycle and to aid in the delivery of an improved service, ESCOSA sought feedback from all SA councils regarding the scheme, including proposed changes and improvements.

At the Council meeting on 12 May 2026, the correspondence from ESCOSA requesting feedback was presented. A response was initially requested by Friday 22 May 2026 which was then extended to 12 June 2026.

Attached as **Appendix 1** is the response which will be provided to ESCOSA.

RECOMMENDATION

Council resolves:

1. That the response to *ESCOSA – Local Government Advice 2026-27 to 2029-30: Draft framework and Approach* report be received and noted.
-

1. BACKGROUND

Following a review of the correspondence on 12 May 2026, Council resolved as follows:

14.3 Essential Services Commission of SA regarding the Local Government Advice Scheme

Moved Leith Mudge
S/- Mark Osterstock

182/26

Council resolves:

- 1. That the correspondence is received and noted.**
- 2. That the Chief Executive Officer prepare and submit a short response to the consultation.**

Carried Unanimously

This report, including Appendix 1, is the proposed response. The report was prepared by the Administration, in consultation with BRM Advisory.

2. ANALYSIS

➤ **Strategic Management Plan/Functional Strategy/Council Policy Alignment**

Strategic Plan 2024 – Your Place, Your Space

Goal Organisation

Objective O2 Operate with integrity using best practice governance processes.

Priority O2.1 Demonstrate accountable and transparent decision making

The provision of Council’s response into a public forum increases the transparency of its decision making.

➤ **Legal Implications**

Not applicable.

➤ **Risk Management Implications**

Failure to advocate for an appropriate framework for ESCOSA to utilise to undertake its review will lead to a loss of community, sector and stakeholder confidence in Council.

Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Target Risk
Med	Low	Low

➤ **Financial and Resource Implications**

Not applicable.

➤ **Customer Service and Community/Cultural Implications**

Not applicable.

➤ **Sustainability Implications**

Not applicable.

➤ **Engagement/Consultation conducted in the development of the report**

Not applicable.

Consultation on the development of this report was as follows:

Council Committees: Not applicable.

Council Workshops: Not applicable.

Advisory Groups: Not applicable.

External Agencies: Not applicable.

Community: Not applicable.

➤ **Additional Analysis**

This report provides Elected Members with an overview of ESCOSA's proposed framework for the second cycle of the Local Government Advice Scheme (Scheme) for 2026–2030. The consultation signals a shift in focus from establishing a baseline view of council financial sustainability to assessing how effectively councils have responded to prior advice, strengthened their planning practices, and communicated financial decisions to their communities.

Purpose and context

Councils have been invited to provide a submission to ESCOSA on its proposed Framework and Approach for the second cycle of the Scheme. In practical terms, the Scheme requires ESCOSA to provide independent advice on a council's long-term financial sustainability, including its long-term financial planning, asset management settings, and broader revenue approach. While the Scheme is advisory rather than directive, its influence is significant because ESCOSA's advice and Council's response are both published, creating a strong accountability and transparency mechanism.

Background to the second cycle

The first cycle of the Scheme, which ran from 2022 to 2026, established an initial baseline across the sector. ESCOSA is now consulting on how the Scheme should operate for the next four-year period. Its stated intent is to move beyond a one-off diagnostic assessment and place greater emphasis on whether councils have acted on earlier advice, improved their financial management practices, and strengthened the way they explain service levels, costs, and rates to their communities.

Key issue identified by ESCOSA

ESCOSA has indicated that, across the sector, some councils are still not consistently engaging with the core disciplines that underpin long-term financial sustainability. These include:

- understanding the services valued by the community,
- identifying the full cost of providing and renewing those services over time, and
- clearly communicating how rates revenue supports those service outcomes.

Where these fundamentals are weak, there is a risk that rates decisions become disconnected from service levels, asset renewal is deferred or underfunded, and financial pressures accumulate over time without a clear public narrative.

What ESCOSA is proposing to change

For the second cycle, ESCOSA is proposing a more targeted and performance focused assessment model. Rather than repeating the same baseline analysis undertaken in the first cycle, the Commission proposes to focus on three broad matters:

- (1) how councils have responded to previous advice,
- (2) what material changes have occurred in their operating or financial context since the last review, and
- (3) how their current practices compare with sector-observed good practice in areas such as governance, long-term planning, asset management, and community engagement.

This represents a clear shift from asking what a council's financial position is, to asking how well council is managing improvement over time.

Council statements and sustainability ratings

A further proposed change is the requirement for councils to provide short written statements addressing their response to first-cycle advice and any material change in circumstances since the previous review. The intent is to give councils a clearer opportunity to explain the rationale for decisions already taken, describe progress made, and provide context before ESCOSA forms its assessment. ESCOSA also proposes to retain financial sustainability ratings, including both a current view and a forward-looking ten-year outlook. These ratings remain important because they will continue to be published and are likely to carry reputational weight, even though they are informed by professional judgement rather than a purely formula-based test.

Emerging areas of focus

ESCOSA has also flagged a number of emerging pressures that may receive greater emphasis in the second cycle, including climate related impacts on infrastructure, growth related infrastructure funding pressures, workforce and organisational capacity constraints, and the quality of community engagement on financial decisions. These matters are relevant because they affect not only a council's underlying financial position, but also its ability to explain trade-offs and maintain community confidence in long-term planning decisions.

What Council is being asked to comment on

The consultation paper seeks feedback on whether the proposed assessment model is appropriate, whether the information requirements are proportionate and reasonable, whether the framework adequately recognises differences in council size and context, and whether the proposed assessment categories are sufficiently clear and fair.

In preparing a submission, Council has not responded to every question in equal detail but should focus on the matters most relevant to its own experience and the practical operation of the Scheme.

Implications for Adelaide Hills Council

For Council, the practical implication of the proposed second-cycle model is that future assessment will place greater weight on accountability, evidence of improvement, and the clarity with which Council can explain its financial settings. The focus is not simply on whether plans exist, but on whether Council can demonstrate that previous advice has been considered, governance processes are sound, assumptions are defensible, and the relationship between service levels, long-term costs, and rating decisions is transparent.

The proposed framework also reinforces the likelihood of stronger benchmarking against sector good practice and continued public visibility of ESCOSA's findings. Although the additional reporting requirement appears relatively targeted, the public nature of the process means that Council's response, progress, and overall sustainability position may continue to have reputational implications. This increases the importance of maintaining clear internal alignment across strategic planning, asset management, long-term financial planning, and community engagement.

Key takeaway

Overall, the Scheme is evolving from a largely diagnostic review into a more explicit accountability framework. The central question for councils is no longer only whether their finances appear sustainable at a point in time, but whether they can clearly demonstrate improvement, sound decision making, and a credible connection between rates, services, asset stewardship, and community expectations.

Next step

Administration has prepared a draft submission for Elected Member review. This is attached as **Appendix 1**. Council's submission to ESCOSA is due by 12 June 2026, and the proceeding draft response is intended to support consideration of the key issues raised in this briefing note.

3. OPTIONS

Council has the following options:

1. To note the report titled *Response to ESCOSA – Local Government Advice 2026-27 to 2029-30: Draft framework and Approach* and approve for the Chief Executive Officer to provide the response to ESCOSA.
2. To note the report titled *Response to ESCOSA – Local Government Advice 2026-27 to 2029-30: Draft framework and Approach* and provide alternative direction to the Chief Executive Officer in relation to the matter.

4. APPENDICES

(1) Response to ESCOSA – Local Government Advice 2026-27 to 2029-30: Draft framework and Approach

Appendix 1

*Response to ESCOSA Local Government Advice 2026-27
to 2029-30: Draft framework and approach.*

ESCOSA Local Government Advice Scheme – Second Cycle Consultation (May 2026)

Consultation Questions and AHC Response

Adelaide Hills Council (AHC) supports the continuation of the Local Government Advice Scheme and recognises the value of an independent, transparency based advisory framework to strengthen long-term financial sustainability across the sector. Council's responses to the consultation questions are generally supportive of the proposed second-cycle direction, including its stronger focus on progress over time, material change and observed practice.

At the same time, AHC's first-cycle experience demonstrated that the Scheme's effectiveness depends heavily on the quality of engagement, the accuracy of contextual understanding, and the extent to which councils have a meaningful opportunity to clarify assumptions, data interpretation and local circumstances before conclusions are finalised. In this context, AHC's submission seeks to support the intent of the Scheme while advocating for a more proportionate, transparent and context sensitive approach in the second cycle.

Question 1

Are there aspects of the advisory model that could be strengthened to improve its effectiveness while preserving councils' decision-making autonomy?

AHC supports continuation of the advisory model and agrees that its value lies in transparency-based accountability without displacing local decision-making autonomy. However, Council's first-cycle experience demonstrated that the effectiveness of the model depends heavily on the quality of engagement and the extent to which local context is properly understood before conclusions are formed. In AHC's view, the model would be strengthened by better recognition of practical council planning cycles and decision lead times, together with a more structured opportunity for councils to clarify assumptions, data interpretation and material risks before advice is finalised. This would improve accuracy and relevance.

Question 2

In what ways has the scheme's first cycle promoted change in council's approach, and what could be done to strengthen the scheme's capacity to drive sustained improvements in financial management practices and community outcomes?

AHC's first-cycle experience suggests the Scheme has the potential to promote useful change where the advice is well grounded in council context, clearly linked to practical improvement priorities, and supported by meaningful engagement.

In some areas, the process did assist in sharpening attention on long-term planning, asset management maturity, and the need for clearer communication of financial choices. However, Council did not consider all aspects of the first-cycle assessment to be sufficiently reflective of AHC's circumstances, and some findings and recommendations were not accepted as an accurate or balanced representation of Council's position.

To strengthen the Scheme's capacity to drive sustained improvement, ESCOSA should place greater emphasis on implementation pathways and proportionality, including clearer examples of what good practice looks like over time and more explicit recognition of the distinction between matters within council control and broader external pressures. Council also considers that stronger engagement during the assessment process would materially improve the quality and usefulness of advice, particularly

where interpretation of assumptions, planning settings or local operating conditions may affect the conclusions reached.

Question 3

Should the Commission maintain a four-year rotational schedule on the same basis as the first round – so that councils have a consistent four-year cycle? If not, why not?

AHC supports maintaining the four-year rotational schedule. It provides a reasonable balance between accountability and the time required for councils to embed improvements through strategic planning, Asset Management Plan refresh cycles, and annual budget processes.

Question 4

Was the information gathered and the advice given in the first cycle appropriate and proportionate? Are there ways in which they could be streamlined or improved for the second cycle?

For AHC, the first-cycle process was only partially appropriate and proportionate. While the Scheme's intent is supported, Council's experience was that engagement from ESCOSA was limited and that some conclusions and recommendations did not adequately reflect Council's circumstances, planning context or the opportunity for clarification before advice was finalised. This reduced Council's confidence in aspects of the final output and, in AHC's view, limited the practical value of some of the advice provided.

For the second cycle, AHC supports a more streamlined approach that relies primarily on publicly available strategic and statutory documents, with targeted follow-up only where risks are material or where information requires validation. A practical improvement would be a more consistent data verification and draft discussion step before advice is issued, so that councils have a fair opportunity to correct errors, explain assumptions and provide context on matters that may otherwise be misinterpreted.

Question 5

Are there additional themes or observed practices that the Commission should address in an updated version of the Observed Practices document? Are there areas where the Commission's observations could be strengthened with additional data, benchmarking or analysis?

AHC considers the Observed Practices document can be a useful reference point, provided it remains genuinely contextual and does not evolve into a de facto compliance benchmark. Its value is greatest where it helps councils understand broad markers of good practice while still allowing for differences in size, service scope, growth context, capability and financial capacity. In Council's view, the document would be strengthened by clearer explanation of how qualitative benchmarking will be applied across diverse council environments and by more explicit acknowledgement of areas where data comparability is limited and professional judgement is unavoidable.

Additionally, AHC also considers that organisational capacity and workforce planning warrant more explicit recognition, given their significant influence on planning quality, asset management maturity and delivery capability across the sector.

Finally, AHC would be supportive of a language shift from "failure to engage with the basics" to "capacity constrained stewardship". For context, this reflects that some councils are experiencing structural or capacity constraints in maintaining contemporary strategic asset stewardship practices. For many low-growth councils, the issue isn't unwillingness, it is a lack of, or a combination of a lack of:

1. Under-resourced technical teams
2. An inability to recruit specialists
3. Ageing asset portfolios
4. Compliance growth outpacing capability
5. Escalating State-imposed reporting obligations

Question 6

To what extent have councils found the first-cycle advice and the Observed Practices document useful in informing their planning and decision-making? What could be done to increase the practical value of the Commission's outputs?

AHC considers the first-cycle advice and Observed Practices outputs are most useful when they identify a small number of material improvement priorities and provide practical prompts that councils can translate into clearer community-facing narratives about service levels, lifecycle costs and rates impacts. In AHC's case, the practical value of the first-cycle outputs was mixed. Some elements were useful in highlighting areas for review, but their overall usefulness was reduced where findings were not seen as sufficiently contextualised or where recommendations were not accepted as fully grounded in Council's circumstances.

Practical value would increase if ESCOSA provided clearer worked examples, more explicit guidance on how qualitative judgements are formed, and more consistent distinction between matters within council control and broader external constraints such as cost escalation, workforce scarcity and grant uncertainty.

Question 7

Does the Commission's characterisation of 'the basics' - understanding what the community values, the full lifecycle cost of delivery, and transparent communication to ratepayers - adequately capture the foundational disciplines that the scheme should promote? Are there other foundational practices that should be given similar prominence?

AHC agrees that ESCOSA's description of "the basics" broadly captures the core disciplines that underpin long-term sustainability, including understanding community-valued services, identifying full lifecycle costs, and communicating the relationship between services, costs and rates. These are sound fundamentals. However, AHC's first-cycle experience also suggests that strong articulation of the basics must be matched by careful contextual application in practice. Without that, there is a risk that broad principles are applied too generically or do not adequately reflect the operating realities of individual councils.

AHC also suggests explicit recognition of organisational capacity and workforce planning as a foundational enabler, as many observed weaknesses in planning quality, asset data currency and forecasting robustness are influenced by capability constraints rather than a lack of intent or awareness.

Question 8

Do stakeholders consider that the three proposed assessment areas provide an appropriate framework for the second cycle? Are there additional areas that the Commission should consider?

AHC considers the three proposed assessment areas to be an appropriate framework for the second cycle. They reflect a sensible evolution from baseline diagnosis toward review of progress; material change and alignment with observed good practice. That said, the usefulness of the framework will depend on how proportionately and consistently it is applied. In AHC's view, the second cycle should not simply reproduce first-cycle judgements under a new structure but should provide a more balanced and better contextualised assessment of council circumstances and progress over time.

No additional assessment areas are proposed at this stage, although AHC encourages ESCOSA to maintain a clear emphasis on materiality so that the Scheme remains focused on meaningful outcomes rather than process expansion.

Noting the above, the framework should explicitly recognise the cumulative financial impact of State Government cost shifting to councils, including devolved service expectations, regulatory compliance obligations, asset transfer responsibilities, and co-contribution funding models that place disproportionate strain on low-growth councils with limited revenue elasticity. The outcome of this cost shifting may result in a perception that low-growth councils are underperforming when financial stress is driven by external obligations which they cannot control.

Question 9

Is the proposal to require written statements from councils in relation to Assessment Areas 1 and 2 reasonable and proportionate? What guidance would be helpful in relation to the content and format of those statements?

AHC supports the proposal for two written statements as a reasonable and proportionate mechanism to provide context and explain progress, provided the requirements are clearly framed and duplication is minimised. AHC sees particular value in this proposal because it creates a more formal opportunity for councils to explain actions taken, departures from prior advice, and material contextual changes that may affect interpretation of performance or sustainability.

Question 10

Which characteristics should be considered by the Commission to take account of the significant diversity among South Australian councils when applying the observed practices benchmarks in Assessment Area 3?

AHC strongly supports explicit consideration of diversity factors such as population and rate base scale, service scope, geographic context, growth versus stable conditions, workforce capacity, access to expertise, and community capacity to pay. In AHC's view, it is not enough to acknowledge these factors in principle, ESCOSA should also be more transparent about how they will be applied in practice so that benchmarking and qualitative judgements are seen to be fair, consistent and genuinely reflective of local circumstances.

Question 11

Are there emerging issues, beyond those identified above, that the Commission should consider in the second cycle of the scheme?

AHC agrees with ESCOSA's identified emerging issues, including climate adaptation, growth infrastructure, workforce and capability constraints, and community engagement on financial matters.

Council also considers there are additional pressures that should be recognised more explicitly, including ICT and cyber security cost escalation, operating model shifts from capital to operating expenditure, , regulatory change, and the impact of major project activity on local labour and materials markets.

Council also considers that intergovernmental fiscal pressure should be added as an emerging issue. Increasing transfer of service expectations, compliance obligations, and financial responsibility from higher levels of government to local government, without the associated increase in grants/funding is materially affecting long-term financial sustainability, particularly for low-growth councils with limited revenue flexibility.

Council would further like to propose that the Commission give consideration to social change as an asset sustainability risk. Declining volunteer participation, changing patterns of community association, reduced club governance capacity and shifting community expectations are materially altering the utilisation and sustainability profile of many council-owned community assets. This is highly relevant to peri-urban and regional council

Finally, AHC considers that an additional emerging issue which should be considered is that of low growth/static revenue councils. Councils operating in low-growth or static population environments face a structurally different sustainability challenge to growth councils: maintaining extensive legacy asset networks and service expectations across constrained or declining rate bases, with limited capacity to distribute fixed costs across new development. This is fundamentally different to the challenges which growth-corridor councils face

Question 12

Are the proposed five assessment categories clear, meaningful and appropriately graduated? Should any categories be added, removed or redefined?

AHC considers the proposed five assessment categories to be generally clear and appropriately graduated. However, because the categories will be published and may carry significant reputational implications, it is important that category assignment is accompanied by a clear explanation of the main drivers and the extent to which risks are within council control or externally driven. Without that supporting explanation, there is a risk that the categories may oversimplify complex circumstances or imply a level of certainty that is not warranted by the underlying analysis.

Additionally, there appears to be a focus around maintenance of current service levels as a key indicator of financial sustainability. Council would observe that strategic divestment, consolidation, or repurposing of underutilised community assets may represent sound long-term stewardship where demographic, financial and utilisation evidence demonstrates that retention is unsustainable. Whilst this may appear to be a decrease in service levels in the short term, the characteristics of the assets, the reasons for their divestment and the resulting community benefits obtained may in fact make councils more financially sustainable. As such, the focus on maintaining current service levels as a key indicator of financial sustainability may be slightly narrowing the definition of financial sustainability.

Question 13

Is the approach of providing both a current and a forecast assessment appropriate? Are there risks or benefits that the Commission should consider in adopting this dual-assessment approach?

AHC supports providing both a current and forecast assessment, as this better reflects the long-term nature of council service delivery and asset stewardship and can improve visibility of emerging risks.

Question 14

Are the proposed information requirements for the second cycle appropriate and proportionate? Are there additional information items that the Commission should require, or existing items that could be removed or streamlined?

AHC supports retaining the core first-cycle information base, supplemented by the two written statements, provided the process prioritises existing public documentation and avoids bespoke data requests unless clearly material.

Question 15

What guidance would be most helpful to councils in preparing the two written statements? Are there particular areas where councils would benefit from worked examples or templates?

AHC considers worked examples and simple templates would be the most helpful form of guidance for councils preparing the two written statements. In particular, ESCOSA should provide a concise example response format for Statement 1, including the type of evidence and outcomes expected, together with a practical materiality and structure guide for Statement 2. Clear guidance of this kind would improve consistency across the sector and help councils focus on the matters most relevant to the assessment.

Appendix Questions

Question A1

Is the analytic framework set out in this appendix clear and comprehensive? Are there additional analytic considerations that the Commission should incorporate?

AHC considers the staged analytic framework to be broadly clear and logically sequenced. The progression from refreshing baseline evidence to assessing response to prior advice, material changes and observed practices is sensible. However, AHC considers the framework would be strengthened by a more explicit materiality lens and greater transparency about how qualitative judgement is applied. Given the public and potentially reputational nature of ESCOSA's conclusions, confidence in the framework depends not only on its structure but on the consistency, fairness and contextual sensitivity of its application.

When looking at Financial Management and specifically cost control and efficiency, Council would suggest that weight and consideration be given to controllable vs uncontrollable cost drivers, as their impacts may appear the same but are very different indicators of council performance. Expenses which are impacted by council decisions and actions such as operational efficiency, service levels, asset rationalisation and procurement strategies should be considered. However, a lower level of scrutiny should be applied to number of areas over which council has limited control as legislated compliance requirements, transferred infrastructure obligations, emergency response expectations, mandated co-funding models, insurance escalation, industrial award escalation and regulatory reporting expansion. This avoids unfairly benchmarking councils against pressures outside their control.

Additionally, Council would consider undertaking asset ratio analysis to help contextualise a council's asset position, with a focus on number of assessments/rate payers rather than simply the dollar value of rates collected. Low-growth councils often carry disproportionate legacy infrastructure footprints. This analysis could potentially include:

1. Asset footprint per Capita
2. Renewal liability per ratable assessment

3. Utilisation adjusted maintenance burden
4. Any number of other metrics, with a focus on number of assessments/capita.

Question A2

Are the seven dimensions proposed for Assessment Area 3 (observed practices) the right dimensions? Should any be added, removed or refined?

AHC supports the seven proposed dimensions as a sound overall structure, covering the main elements relevant to long-term sustainability. AHC also considers there is merit in more explicitly recognising organisational capacity and workforce planning, as well as climate resilience and risk, whether as sub-dimensions or explicit overlays. These factors are increasingly material to councils' ability to plan effectively, maintain assets, and deliver sustainable services, and their influence should be visible in the assessment framework.

In summary, AHC supports ESCOSA's proposed second-cycle framework, but considers its success will depend on how fairly, consistently and proportionately it is applied in practice. Council encourages ESCOSA to strengthen draft-stage engagement, improve transparency in the use of qualitative judgement and benchmarking, recognise the diversity and operating constraints of councils more explicitly, and ensure published assessments are accompanied by sufficient explanation and context. With these refinements, the second-cycle would be better positioned to provide credible, practical and constructive advice that supports both improved financial management and more informed local decision-making. It will also be more reflective that many low-growth councils are not failing because they are managing poorly; they are struggling because they are being asked to sustain yesterday's infrastructure footprint with tomorrow's compliance burden and today's constrained revenue base.

**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2026
AGENDA BUSINESS ITEM**

Item:	13.2
Responsible Officer:	Jess Charlton Director Community and Development
Subject:	Integrated Planning Program – Engagement Approach to Support Delivery of Goal 3 Priorities
For:	Information

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to outline how the Integrated Planning Program (the Program) is bringing together a suite of interrelated strategic initiatives to support delivery of Strategic Plan Goal 3 – Built Form and Economy, using community engagement and evidence-building as core delivery tools.

The Program responds to a core challenge previously raised with Council: how to bring a range of strategic documents together in a unified way, without creating confusion for the organisation or the community. The proposed model addresses this by nesting the key outputs in a clear and connected sequence: the Housing Strategy, Local Area Plan, Township and Precinct Planning Framework and Placemaking Framework, all supported by a foundational Township and Settlement Study and a structured engagement approach.

This is an innovative but disciplined delivery model. It is designed to produce practical, well-tested outcomes by inviting the community into the work early, not simply asking people to respond to finished products, but drawing on lived experience, local knowledge and aspirations to help shape the program. At the same time, all work is supported by technical analysis, feasibility and Council’s delivery role, ensuring the Program remains realistic, sequenced and ready for implementation.

Engagement is considered critical to this approach and therefore is embedded from the outset as a way of building the evidence base, testing assumptions and shaping options across multiple projects in parallel. This provides a stronger platform for decision-making, helps reduce rework and duplication, and creates a clearer line of sight between what the community is telling us, what the evidence shows, and what Council may ultimately be asked to consider.

The engagement program is paced through four deliberate quarterly phases across the next 12 months:

- gathering lived experience and existing insight
- shaping vision, principles and development scenarios
- testing feasibility and place-based preferences; and
- working through any trade-offs toward a preferred community-supported scenario.

Each phase produces clear outputs that are reviewed through formal gateways, providing assurance to Council and staff that the work is progressing in a transparent, disciplined and deliverable way.

Council remains the decision-maker at all times. Community engagement and any deliberative elements are used to inform, strengthen and de-risk Council decision-making, not replace it. This report is intended to provide assurance that the Administration can progress with confidence into this delivery model.

Additional details regarding the engagement-led approach and activities are provided at **Appendix 1**.

RECOMMENDATION

Council resolves:

- 1. That the Integrated Planning Program – Engagement Approach to Support Goal 3 Priorities report be received and noted.**
 - 2. That Council note and support the use of structured community engagement as a core delivery tool for the development and integration of Strategic Plan Goal 3 initiatives, noting that engagement outputs provide input to, but do not replace, formal Council decision-making.**
 - 3. That Council note the proposed Phase 1 engagement led delivery activities and timing, and acknowledge that subsequent phases will be progressed through integrated quarterly gateways and Council workshops in accordance with the program governance structure.**
-

1. BACKGROUND

Delivering on Strategic Plan Goal 3 – Built Form and Economy

Achieving *Strategic Plan Goal 3 – Built Form and Economy* requires a suite of interrelated strategies and initiatives that respond to what our communities need and want for the future, informed by both evidence and engagement. This includes the preparation of a Housing Strategy, Local Area Plan, Township and Precinct Planning Framework, Placemaking framework and supporting infrastructure integration, with the Township and Settlement Study providing a foundational evidence base for the broader program. Taken together, these initiatives are not separate workstreams, but part of a broader planning conversation about how growth, identity, liveability and infrastructure are considered in a coordinated way across the Hills.

An integrated approach that maximises available resources

It is for this reason that the integrated approach has emerged as the most effective way to organise the work. These projects are mutually dependent and are best understood as a connected program rather than a series of stand-alone documents. Decisions about housing yield, built form character, heritage protection, infrastructure capacity, township identity, place activation and economic development cannot be resolved sequentially or in isolation without creating delivery risk, duplication or rework. By bringing this work together, Council is better placed to understand the full picture, while the community is invited into a clearer and more coherent conversation about the future of the hills.

Integration streamlines sequencing and reduces risk

A defining feature of this approach is that engagement is treated as a delivery mechanism: a way to build the evidence base, surface priorities, test trade-offs and shape options in a disciplined sequence before formal decisions are required. This makes the model both innovative and practical, one that honours community knowledge while maintaining a clear focus on deliverability, governance and implementation, and gives Council confidence that the work can progress in a structured and manageable way.

2. ANALYSIS

➤ **Strategic Management Plan/Functional Strategy/Council Policy Alignment**

Strategic Plan 2024 – Your Place, Your Space

Goal 3 Built Form and Economy

Objective BFE1 Guide development that fosters vibrant and resilient communities, promotes appropriate design and enhances liveability.

The Integrated Planning Program delivers Goal 3 through a coordinated suite of strategies and frameworks. The engagement-led delivery model ensures that lived experience, place-based values and feasibility and infrastructure realities inform the sequencing and integration of these initiatives prior to statutory and budget decisions.

The approach supports alignment between the Strategic Plan, Annual Business Plan and quarterly performance reporting, by providing Council with a clear line of sight between engagement activity, evidence generation and delivery outcomes.

➤ **Legal Implications**

The Program including the engagement activities will respond to Council’s statutory responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 1999* and the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*.

➤ **Risk Management Implications**

The approach will assist in mitigating the risk of:

Strategic planning decisions for Strategic Plan Goal 3 being developed without sufficient shared understanding, community-informed evidence or early testing of trade-offs, leading to misalignment between community expectations, technical feasibility and Council decision-making, and resulting in increased reputational risk, delivery delays, rework, and challenges to adopted outcomes.

Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Target Risk
High	Medium	Low

Embedding engagement in this way reduces strategic, reputational and delivery risk by ensuring alignment between community expectations, technical feasibility and governance timing. Risks associated with election-year constraints are also mitigated through front-loaded engagement and clearly defined decision gateways that factor in caretaker and election timing.

➤ **Financial and Resource Implications**

Engagement activity supports efficient use of staff resources by reducing rework and duplication across the integrated projects while also building internal capacity. All activity is being delivered within approved budgets. Any future financial implications arising from preferred strategies or delivery pathways will be subject to separate Council consideration through the Annual Business Plan and budget process.

➤ **Customer Service and Community/Cultural Implications**

The engagement-led delivery approach prioritises accessibility, cultural safety and supported participation, particularly for under-represented cohorts. This aligns with Council commitments relating to reconciliation, access and inclusion, youth engagement and building community trust during a period of broader social and economic uncertainty.

➤ **Sustainability Implications**

The Program contributes to social sustainability by strengthening community capability, trust and stewardship of place. Environmental and economic sustainability considerations are likely to be embedded through the integration of engagement outputs into the strategies and frameworks.

➤ **Engagement/Consultation conducted in the development of the report**

Consultation on the development of this report was as follows:

<i>Council Committees:</i>	N/A
<i>Council Workshops:</i>	2 March 2026 and 1 June 2026
<i>Advisory Groups:</i>	N/A
<i>External Agencies:</i>	N/A
<i>Community:</i>	N/A

Engagement undertaken to develop this report has been internal and includes coordination with relevant project leads, senior staff and the Executive Leadership Team. Council was also briefed on the proposed integrated approach at two Council workshops held on 2 March 2026 and 1 June 2026. No external community engagement has occurred at this stage, with Phase 1 engagement activity subject to the approach and sequencing outlined in this report.

➤ **Additional Analysis**

Community Co-Design

Community co-design within the Integrated Planning Program is intended to move beyond traditional consultation by creating structured opportunities for the community to contribute to the framing of issues, articulation of values and testing of future options over time. This allows local knowledge and lived experience to inform not only the content of individual strategies, but also how the broader program is shaped, sequenced and understood.

This engagement-led approach is deliberately phased and paced, recognising the complexity and sensitivity of decisions under Strategic Plan Goal 3. Rather than attempting to resolve multiple issues at once, the Program progresses through four clear phases across the year:

1. Phase 1 focuses on lived experience data and existing insight to inform the Housing Strategy, Local Area Plan and Township and Precinct Planning Framework.
2. Phase 2 explores vision, aspirations, principles and housing typology preferences to develop preferred development scenarios.
3. Phase 3 tests those preferences through a practical, place-based feasibility lens.
4. Phase 4 works through ‘trade-offs’ to support the emergence of a community-supported development scenario for Council to consider.

Each phase produces a set of tangible outputs, such as evidence briefs, place-based insights, preferred scenarios and tested assumptions, which are reviewed through formal decision gateways. This gives Council and staff assurance that community input has been appropriately considered, technical implications are understood, and risks have been identified before the next stage proceeds. In this way, engagement directly supports delivery rather than sitting alongside it.

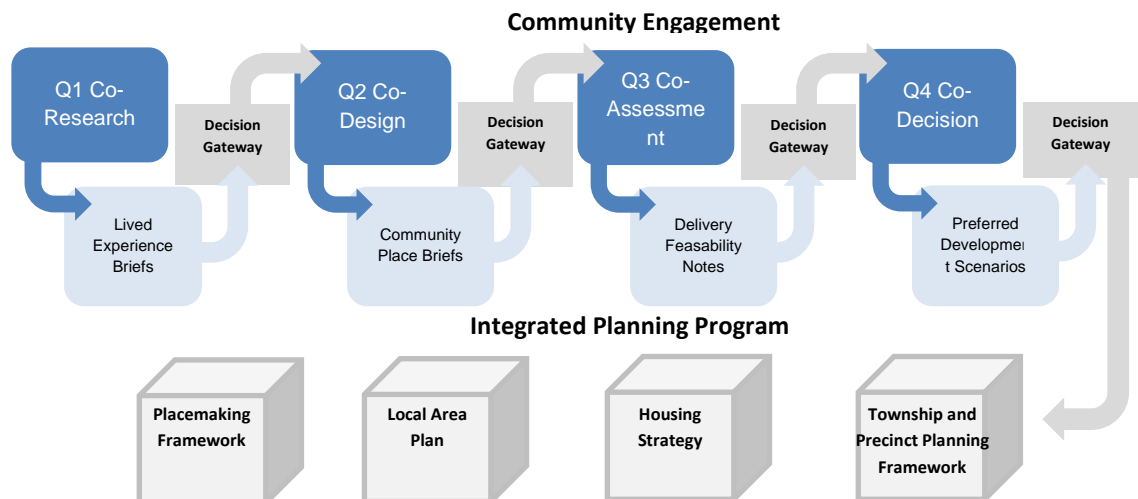


Figure 1 – Integrated Planning Program community engagement process.

This approach directly supports delivery of the projects identified in the Strategic Plan for Goal 3, including Housing Strategy (BFE1.1), Town and Precinct Planning (BFE2.2), Placemaking Framework (BFE2.1) and infrastructure integration (BFE3).

Phase 1 – Co Research

Engagement during this phase is intentionally focused on establishing the issues, values, constraints and design criteria that will inform subsequent drafting and feasibility work across the Program.

The Phase 1 engagement window is scheduled from 17 June to 15 July 2026, supported by preparatory work, results processing and Council touchpoints that help maintain visibility and governance across the process. Phase 1 engagement activity includes:

- Focuses on lived experience and place-based insight, particularly from voices less commonly heard in strategic land use processes.
- Draws on existing insight, including the recent Community Perception Survey, so the Program is not starting from zero.

- Uses existing networks and discrete cohort discussions to surface challenges and opportunities of living in the Hills, while informing the shared evidence base for the Program.
- Provides a research-led first step that helps answer how the Program will hear beyond the usual voices, before broadening engagement in Phase 2 through more open co-design and scenario testing.

This phase does not generate draft strategies or spatial solutions. Its primary output is an engagement evidence base that enables efficient, aligned progression of multiple projects into Phase 2 planning and engagement.

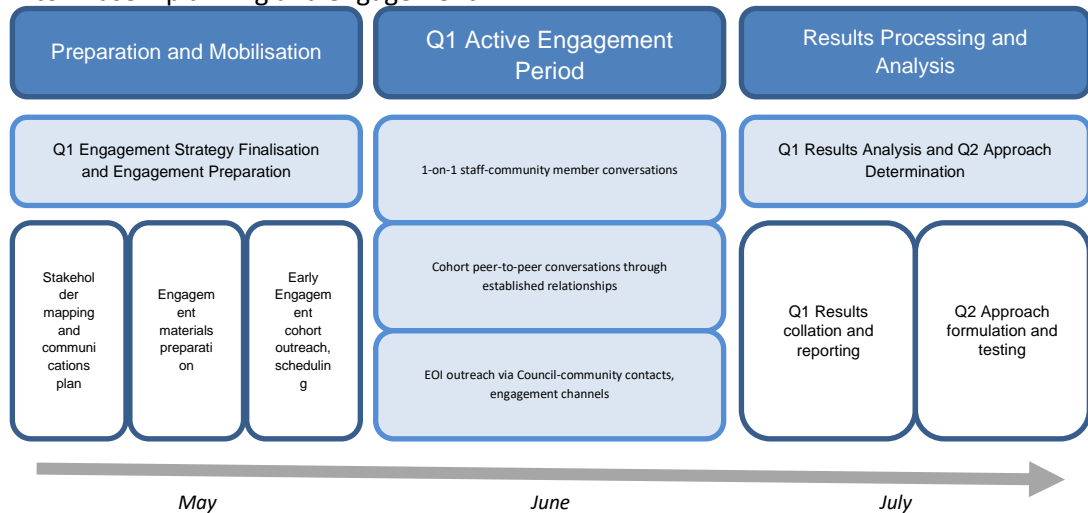


Figure 2 – Proposed Phase 1 work program.

Governance and Decision Making

As the Program moves from research and co-design into scenario development and decision gateways, governance plays an important enabling role in keeping the work connected, timely and decision-ready. In this context, engagement outputs are integrated into the program governance structure as key delivery inputs that help inform sequencing, support coordination across projects and provide a clear basis for Council consideration at each quarterly gateway.

Council remains the formal decision-maker at all stages, with governance arrangements designed to support that role by ensuring the right evidence, insights and delivery considerations are brought forward at the right time. Engagement outputs are presented to inform Council deliberation, strengthen strategic alignment and reduce delivery risk, rather than operate as binding outcomes. In practice, this means:

- No delivery gate proceeds without the required engagement artefacts.
- Council receives a single integrated report at the end of each phase, rather than multiple project-specific reports.
- Council workshops are scheduled ahead of each gateway to support early input and risk management.

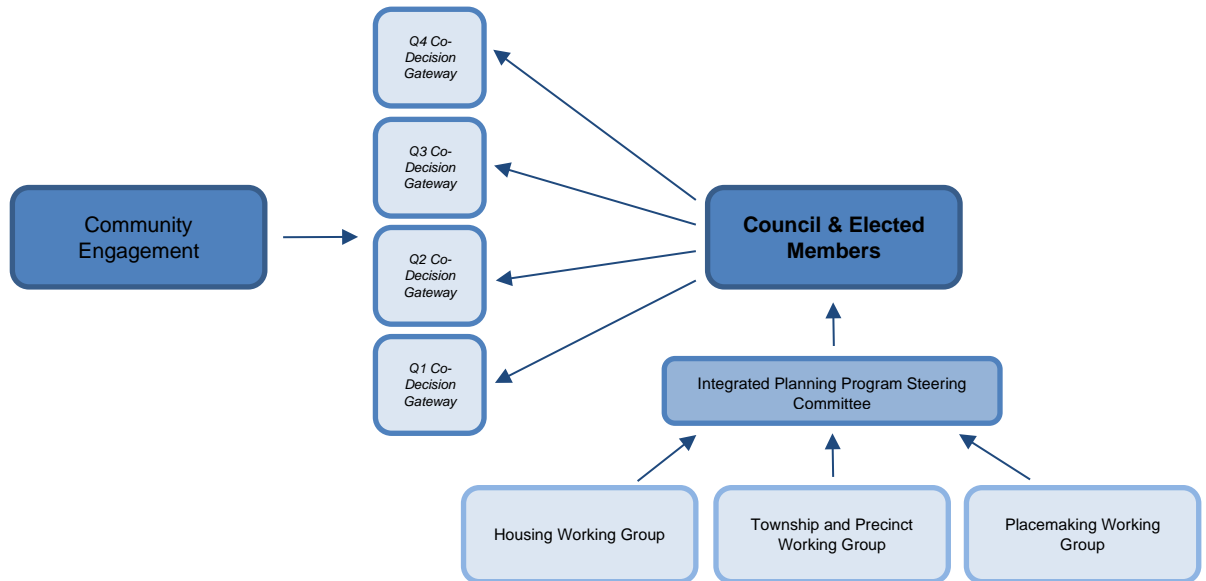


Figure 3 – Proposed governance structure.

Taken together, the engagement approach, phased work program and governance structure provide a practical and considered pathway for progressing a complex body of work in a coordinated way. They aim to create the conditions for Council to move forward with confidence, while ensuring that future decisions are informed by a stronger evidence base, clearer community insight and a more integrated understanding of place, growth and infrastructure.

Given the long-term implications of this work for the Hills, it is important that the Program proceeds in a way that is not only timely and innovative, but also careful, transparent and well-grounded from the outset.

3. OPTIONS

As an information report, Council is limited to receiving and noting the approach outlined above. Following receipt of the report, the Administration will commence Phase 1 (Co-Research) engagement activity in accordance with the approach, sequencing and governance arrangements as described in this report.

4. APPENDICES

- (1) Integrated Planning Program - Community Engagement Approach Summary

Appendix 1

*Integrated Planning Program - Community Engagement
Approach Summary*

Community Engagement Summary

Integrated Strategic Planning Program

ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

- Design and adopt, in collaboration with community, a suite of strategies and frameworks that defines how Council plans, sequences and invests in housing, township planning and placemaking, from strategy to delivery over the next 10-15 years.
- Develop a replicable, reinforcing set of methodologies for collaborative community design, development and decision making that can be used in future projects.
- Create consistent and clear avenues for open communication between Council and the community
- Clearly communicate the roles, responsibilities and commitments Council has in relation to housing, township planning and placemaking and develop pathways which empower community and strengthen agency in relation to these matters.
- Create opportunities for community members to provide feedback and shape projects happening within their community.
- Provide opportunities for residents to shape the future of housing, townships and placemaking within the LGA with each other, their local area and the surrounding community.
- Nurture a relationship of trust and transparency between Council and residents, demonstrating genuine commitment to representation and action on the issues affecting the community.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE AND DELIBERATIVE STRUCTURE

To strengthen transparency, accountability and continuity of engagement, the Integrated Strategic Planning Program will adopt a staged participatory governance model linking community input directly with decision-making.

The model comprises three interconnected layers which will form as the program progresses:

1. Core Co-Design Groups (Foundational)

- Representative of priority cohorts and key community perspectives
- Selected through expression of interest and targeted invitation
- Functions as the central deliberative body across all program phases
- Participates in co-research, co-design, co-assessment and co-decision

2. Community Working Groups (Emergent)

- Flexible groups linked to cohorts, townships or themes
- Participants contribute through facilitated sessions and peer-led community conversations
- Insights are fed back into the Core Co-Design Group

3. Community Advisory (Emergent)

- Mix of sector experts, advocates and community leaders
- Provides independent challenge, systems thinking and accountability
- Reviews outputs at key decision gateways

Circular engagement principle:

Each phase will include structured 'return to community' loops, where outputs are shared back, tested, refined and validated prior to progressing.

COMPLEXITY AND SENSITIVITY

The proposed approach will see Council engaging in a collaborative way that strengthens transparency, accountability and shared understanding throughout the process. Over time, the program may explore more participatory approaches to informing decision-making, while ensuring Council retains clear governance oversight and accountability. This is intended to support stronger relationships between Council and community, aligned with Council values and focused on building lasting trust between residents and representatives.

The approach also seeks to engage with underrepresented communities first, with the intent being that those with the greatest unacknowledged needs in the Adelaide Hills Council area set the parameters and scene for any future decision making around housing and longer-term land use planning.

This program sits across the 'Involve → Collaborate → Empower' end of the Tamarack community-led spectrum.

- Q1: Involve / Collaborate (lived experience and co-research)
- Q2–Q3: Collaborate (co-design and co-assessment)
- Q4: Empower (exploring deliberative co-decision approaches)

Different workstreams may move along this spectrum depending on legislative constraints and technical feasibility.

The above is also occurring in the context of a national housing affordability crisis, compounded by climate change factors, increasing global instability, reduction in community confidence in representative government, and the rising cost of living. The proposed approach seeks to engage residents where they are, to understand the realities of their lived experience and to meaningfully build an approach in collaboration with Council which steers the municipality, long-term, in a direction which respects and responds to the wants and needs of residents, while balancing the need to grow sensitively and sustainably.

Noting the above confluence of crises, a consequence of rising inequality and insecurity is increased social polarity, division and isolation. This adds additional complexity and sensitivity to the engagement context, which the project team is seeking to address both directly and indirectly through the targeted engagement process.

STAKEHOLDER MAPPING – Who are we engaging?

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS:

- **AHC Mayor and Councillors**
- **AHC CEO and ELT**
- **AHC Staff**
 - Communication and Engagement Team (signage, engagement, website and project interface with Council)
 - Open Space (maintenance, design, access, tree and vegetation management)
 - Assets/Property Team (asset register and infrastructure)
 - Civil/Projects Team (infrastructure and services)
 - Sport and Recreation Team (community services and assets)
 - Waste (infrastructure and services)
 - Community Development (community connections, events, resources, relationships)

- Customer Relations (communication, project interface with Council)
- Statutory Planning Team (validation of feasible development scenarios)

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS:

Underrepresented Adelaide Hills Council residents (primary engagement focus)

- **First Nations communities**
 - Adelaide Hills Reconciliation Reference Group
 - Members of the Kurna community
 - Members of the Peramangk community
 - First Nations people living in the Adelaide Hills LGA
 - Existing Adelaide Hills Council First Nations Stakeholders
 - Internal RAP Working Group
 - Adelaide Hills Reconciliation Working Group
 - Fabrik First Nations Advisory Group
 - Peramangk Aboriginal Corporation
 - Kurna Yerta Aboriginal Corporation
 - Kurna Warra Karpanthi
 - Cultural Service Providers
 - Imbala
 - Third Camp
 - Flaxley Woven
 - The Circle First Nations Entrepreneurs Hub
 - Many Rivers
 - Ku Arts
- **People living with disability**
 - Sensory differences
 - Mobility differences
 - Mental and neurological differences
 - Temporarily acquired disabilities
 - Customers of disability housing providers
- **Youth and students**
 - Middle and high school students
 - People aged 18-25 years old
 - Local schools and staff
- **Renters/housing-insecure persons**
 - Customers of RentRight SA living in the Hills
 - Customers of SA Housing Trust (public, community and social housing properties) living in the Hills
- **Women +50**
- **LGBTQI+**
- **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities**

Broader Adelaide Hills Council residents (secondary engagement focus)

- **Community influencers/thought leaders**
- **Civic special interest and Local community groups and associations**
 - Township groups

- Love Woodside
- Imagine Uraidla
- Activating Bridgewater
- Historical societies
 - Onkaparinga Historical Society
 - Gumeracha Historical Society
 - Mount Torrens Historical Society
- Community Associations
 - Discover Mount Torrens / Mount Torrens and District Community Association
 - Lobethal Community Association
 - Greenhill Community Association
 - Gumeracha Community Association
 - Lenswood and Forest Range Community Association
- Local community groups
 - Mylor Citizen Friendship Club
 - Longwood Bradbury Progress Association
 - Scott Creek Progress Association Inc
 - Montacute Progress Association
- Community Hall and asset groups
 - Upper Sturt Soldiers Memorial Hall
- RSL, Rotary and Lions Clubs
 - RSL Aldgate Sub Branch
 - Lobethal RSL
 - RSL Stirling Sub Branch
 - Gumeracha RSL Sub-Branch
 - Rotary Club of Magill Sunrise
 - Stirling Rotary Club
 - Lions Club of East Torrens
 - Battunga Country Lions Club
 - Lions Club of Torrens Valley
 - Lions Club of Onkaparinga & District
- **Residents' associations**
 - Morialta Residents Association
 - Stirling District Residents Association
 - Teringie Residents Association
 - Woodforde Residents Association
 - Cherryville Residents Association
 - Kersbrook Residents Association Inc

Organisations, Agencies and Authorities (to be engaged peripherally, as a courtesy and for relevant contextual input)

- **Federal/State Government departments**
 - Department of Defence (Federal)
 - Department of Finance (Federal)
 - Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD)
 - Department of Infrastructure and Transport (DIT)
 - Department of the Environment and Water (DEW)

- Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (DAAR)
- **State Government agencies**
 - SA Housing Trust
 - SA Water
 - SA Power Networks (SAPN)
 - Telecommunications providers (Telstra, ElectraNet)
 - Country Fire Service (CFS)
- **Local Governments**
 - Mount Barker District Council
 - City of Onkaparinga Council
 - City of Mitcham Council
 - City of Burnside Council
 - The Barossa Council
- **Education providers**
 - Aldgate Kindergarten
 - Ashton Kindergarten
 - Bridgewater Kindergarten
 - Houghton Child Parent Centre
 - Lobethal Community Kindergarten
 - Oakbank Kindergarten
 - Stirling District Kindergarten
 - Stirling East Kindergarten
 - Woodside Pre-school
 - Uraidla and Community Hill Kindergarten
 - Aldgate Primary School
 - Basket Range Primary School
 - Birdwood Primary School
 - Bridgewater Primary School
 - Crafers Primary School
 - Gumeracha Primary School
 - Heathfield Primary School
 - The Hills Montessori School
 - Kersbrook Primary School
 - Lenswood Primary School
 - Lobethal Primary School
 - Lobethal Lutheran School
 - Mylor Primary School
 - Norton Summit Primary School
 - Paracombe Primary School
 - Scott Creek Primary School
 - St Catherines Primary School
 - Upper Sturt Primary School
 - Woodside Primary School
 - Birdwood High School
 - Heathfield High School
 - Oakbank Area School
 - Rostrevor College
 - Mount Torrens Christian School

- Verdun Hills Christian Community school
- **Industry Organisations, Associations and Peak Bodies**
 - Primary industries
 - Viticulture
 - Horticulture
 - Livestock
 - Health and Allied Health
 - Primary healthcare services (hospitals, GPs)
 - Regional and local healthcare networks
 - Secondary and allied healthcare service providers (Positive Aging team, in-home care)
 - Disability Services
 - Mission Australia
 - AHC Access and Inclusion Network
 - Community Bridging Services
 - Homelessness Services
 - Towards Home Alliance
 - The Hut Community Centre
 - Aldgate Village Well
 - Business Organisations
 - Stirling Business Association
 - Woodside Commerce Association

ENGAGEMENT STAGING

Proposed Engagement Activities, Decision Gateways and Artefact Staging					Housing Strategy Output
	Activities	Decision Gateway	Artefacts	Internal/External resource role	How the Phase directly translates into the Housing Strategy, Township and Precinct Framework
Phase (P) 1 – Co-research (Lived Experience)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nations yarning circles (protocol-led) • Targeted lived-experience sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End P1 - Joint endorsement by participants and staff • Evidence Pack to Steering Committee and working groups • Presentation to ELT • Report to Council on findings and <i>outline of approach for P2</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lived Experience Brief (co-authored) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Groups engaged - Barriers & needs - Design criteria - Stories (anonymised) - Implications for BFE Objectives • Housing and Township Design Criteria • “What We Heard / What We Changed — Phase 1” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Engagement Lead (Contractor) • Community Engagement Coordinator • Strategic and Policy Planner • Community Development 	<p>This Phase surfaces lived housing, township and community experiences, values, constraints, and priorities across cohorts, and translates these into community-endorsed design criteria that will inform subsequent scenario development.</p>
Phase 2 – Co-design (Place shaping)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed community co-design labs (supported by Co-Design Specialist) • Precinct walks and place audits • Participatory trade-off ranking exercises • Early feasibility, “red flags” and validation check-ins • Potential: 3x targeted ‘Our 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End P2 - Short-listed scenarios validated by community working groups • Evidence Pack to Steering Committee and working groups • Presentation to ELT • Report to Council on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual cohort Community Place Briefs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Precinct identity, character & heritage - Housing opportunities - Public realm & facility gaps - Activation ideas - Infrastructure dependencies - Priority ranking & trade-offs • Three Development Scenarios (community-authored) • What We Heard / What We Changed — Phase 2” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-Design Specialist • Community Engagement Coordinator • Strategic and Policy Planner 	<p>This Phase transforms lived experience and design criteria into realistic housing and township futures, expressed through three community-designed development scenarios with trade-offs ranking.</p>

	House' mini-builds with mixed cohort representative groups	findings and <i>outline of approach for P3</i>			
Phase 3 – Co-assessment (Feasibility) <i>Dates TBC</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain-language feasibility workshops • Industry and infrastructure “explain & respond” sessions (Council staff with State Gov/Agency, Industry reps, where available) • Mini-public assessment panels (comprised of representative members of each priority cohort) • Installation of 3x targeted ‘Our House’ mini-builds in key public locales, inviting broader community involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings tabled unfiltered • Evidence Pack to Steering Committee and working groups • Presentation to ELT • Report to Council on findings and outline of approach for P4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery Feasibility Notes (plain language) • Mini-Public Assessment Findings • Identified delivery pathways, risks and sequencing • Gateway C Evidence Pack • “What We Heard / What We Changed — Phase 3” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement Coordinator • Strategic and Policy Planner • Infrastructure and Environment 	This Phase jointly tests the community-designed development scenarios against planning, infrastructure, financial and delivery realities without reopening values or re-authoring scenarios.
Phase 4 – Co-decision (Deliberation) <i>Feb – Mar ‘27</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent deliberation facilitated by external specialist • Endorsement session with Council • Final community validation check • Installation of 3x targeted ‘Our House’ mini-builds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence Pack to Steering Committee and working groups • Presentation to ELT • Council adoption with full Evidence Pack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Statement of Intent • Preferred Development Scenario. • Critical inputs into draft Housing Strategy, Township and Precinct Planning Framework and Placemaking Framework. • Gateway D Council decision • “What We Heard / What We Changed — Phase 4” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberative Facilitator • Community Engagement Coordinator • Strategic and Policy Planner 	This Phase moves from assessment to community endorsement of a preferred development scenario to inform the draft strategies and frameworks, producing a package of work Council can confidently adopt and apply over the next 10–15 years.

	in key Council operated community centres				
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Minutes of Committees

**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
CEO PERFORMANCE REVIEW PANEL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY 27 May 2026
63 MT BARKER RD STIRLING**

In Attendance

Presiding Member: Cr Chris Grant

Members:

Cr Nathan Daniell	
Cr Richard Gladigau	
Cr Kirsty Parkin	
Cr Lisa Clare Woolcock	

In Attendance:

Greg Georgopoulos	Chief Executive Officer
Rebekah Lyons	Minute Secretary
Collette Ordish	Principal HR Consultant, Perks People Solutions

1. COMMENCEMENT

The meeting commenced at 6.05pm.

OPENING STATEMENT

- 1.1 Council acknowledges that we meet on the traditional Country of the Peramangk and Kaurna people. We pay our respects to Ancestors and Elders past and present as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land.
- 1.2 Together we will care for this place for the generations to come and in this context the decisions we make should be guided by the principle that nothing we do should decrease our children's ability to live on this land.

2. APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

2.1 Apology

Nil

2.2 Leave of Absence

Nil

2.3 Absent

Nil

**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
CEO PERFORMANCE REVIEW PANEL COMMITTEE
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3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 CEO Performance Review Panel Meeting – 22 April 2026

Moved Cr Nathan Daniell
S/- Cr Richard Gladigau

PRP6/26

That the minutes of the CEO Performance Review Panel meeting held on 22 April 2026 as distributed, be confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Carried Unanimously

4. PRESIDING MEMBER'S OPENING COMMENTS

The Presiding Member noted that the Great Place to Work® presentation requested at the previous CEO PRP meeting would be postponed to a future meeting.

5. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

The CEO Performance Review Panel operates in accordance with the relevant sections of the *Local Government Act 1999*, and its Terms of Reference.

6. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

6.1 Nil

7. OFFICER REPORTS – DECISION ITEMS

7.1 Development of Draft 2026/27 CEO Key Performance Indicators

6:14pm Mayor Nathan Daniell left the meeting room.

6:15pm Mayor Nathan Daniell returned to the meeting room.

The Presiding Member with the approval of at least two thirds of the meeting suspended formal meeting proceedings for the purposes of a discussion about the CEO KPIs.

6:18pm The Presiding Member suspended formal meeting proceedings.

7:22pm Cr Lisa Clare Woolcock left the meeting room.

7:23pm Cr Clare Woolcock returned to the meeting room.

7:32pm Cr Kirsty Parkin left the meeting room.

7:34pm Cr Kirsty Parkin returned to the meeting room.

7:37pm Cr Chris Grant left the meeting room.

7:38pm Cr Chris Grant returned to the meeting room.

**ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL
CEO PERFORMANCE REVIEW PANEL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY 27 May 2026
63 MT BARKER RD STIRLING**

7:40pm Cr Richard Gladigau left the meeting room.

7:42pm Cr Richard Gladigau returned to the meeting room.

8.19 pm The Presiding Member resumed formal meeting proceedings.

Moved Cr Lisa Clare Woolcock

S/- Cr Kirsty Parkin

PRP7/26

- 1. That the report be received and noted.**
- 2. That the draft CEO Key Performance Indicators return to the Panel at the Special Meeting on 29 June 2026 for further consideration.**
- 3. That the CEO invite a consultant from Great Place to Work® to address the Panel at the Special Meeting on 29 June 2026.**

Carried Unanimously

8. MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Nil.

9. QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Cr Lisa Clare Woolcock asked a clarifying question regarding the next steps.

10. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Nil.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next special meeting of the CEO Performance Review Panel will be held on Monday 29 June 2026 from 6.00pm at 63 Mt Barker Road Stirling.

12. CLOSE MEETING

The meeting closed at 8:24pm.