

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

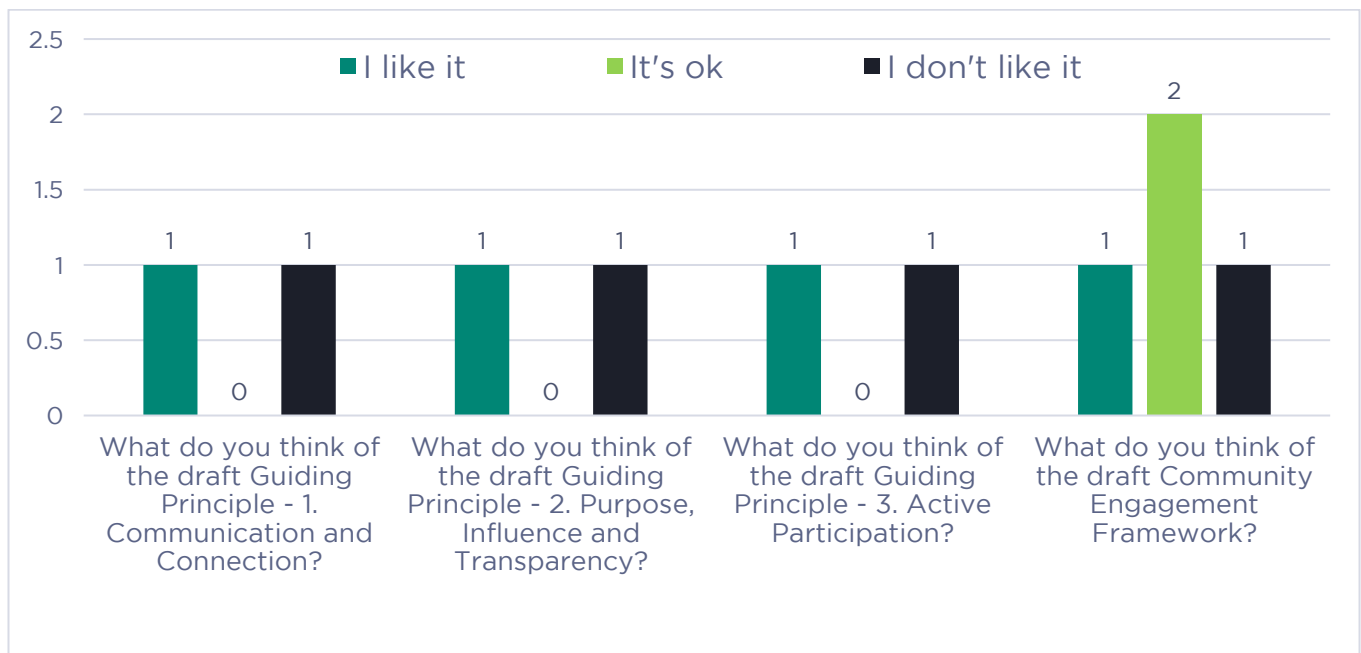
Online and hardcopy feedback form

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	“Overall, a simple, short and easy to read document that provides a level of clarity and reassurance to the community” “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.” “Introduction is good and clear.” “As an overarching framework I think it reflects the Council’s approach and is an easy to read, well written document.” “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.”
What changes? How will community input effect council decision-making? What will change through the implementation of the framework?	“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”. “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.” “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.”
Decision making steps Questions or recommended improvements to steps within the Democracy and Decision-Making and model.	Step 1: “How in Step 1 does one get an idea onto the loop?” Step 3: “prudent to have a co-design element in this step”. Step 5: “The approval/endorsement process for how the engagement plan got from Step 3 to Step 5 seems unclear”.

Continuous engagement How will the continuous loop of engagement work? How will council close the loop?	“How will the ‘continuous loop of engagement’ actually work, when and how does one get on the merry go round?” 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”.
Levels of engagement Clear explanation and examples for different engagement levels.	“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.” “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.”
Too long / document purpose The document purpose seems to be unclear with parts framework, policy and procedure.	“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.” “The Framework is wordy and dry.” “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.”
Practical examples Practical examples of how council will put the Framework and principles into action.	“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.” “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”
Measuring success How will council measure the success / implementation of the framework?	“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)”
Staff training	“You reference culture and approach, which is excellent. You could strengthen this by:

How will staff be supported to improve / grow engagement practices.	• 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."
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.	"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." "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."

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?	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. 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. The Framework gives us flexibility to plan for individual projects and initiatives and to grow our engagement practices as we go.
Decision making steps	Step 1: explains that this idea or issue may be identified as part of Council strategic planning and budgeting

Questions or recommended improvements to steps within the Decision-making and Democracy Model.	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. 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. 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. 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).
Continuous engagement How will the continuous loop of engagement work? How will we close the loop?	We have added additional text to this point 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.
Levels of engagement Clear explanation and examples for different engagement levels.	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.
Too long / too wordy / Document purpose The document purpose seems to be unclear with parts framework, policy and procedure.	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. These elements were added following feedback we received during the first and second phases of engagement.
Practical examples Practical examples of how council will put the Framework and principles into action.	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. Each engagement process is unique and needs a tailored approach based on the idea or issue being discussed, project location, involved or affected community and stakeholders, existing knowledge and any previous projects or decisions.

	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.

Appendix A – Information Provided and Feedback Form

Your Say, Your Way

Share your feedback on our draft Community Engagement Framework and Policy.

+ Follow



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 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	
☐ Under 14 years	☐ 55 to 64 years
☐ 15 to 24 years	☐ 65 to 74 years
☐ 25 to 34 years	☐ 75 to 84 years
☐ 35 to 44 years	☐ 85 years and above
☐ 45 to 54 years	

Your gender

Select one answer only			
☐ Male	☐ Female	☐ Non-binary	☐ Prefer not to say
☐ Prefer to select-describe			

I would like to provide feedback on:

Select all that apply
☐ The draft guiding principles and overall framework
☐ 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			
☐ I like it	☐ It's ok	☐ I don't like it	☐ 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			
☐ I like it	☐ It's ok	☐ I don't like it	☐ 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			
☐ I like it	☐ It's ok	☐ I don't like it	☐ 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

☐

I like it

☐

It's ok

☐

I don't like it

☐

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.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to provide feedback.



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.



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 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.



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

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.



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.

Letter / email 1	Hi Melissa Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Engagement Framework. As an overarching framework I think it reflects the Council's approach and is an easy to read, well written document. 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. 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. In this summary the authors note, "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." 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. Kind regards
Email 2	Good Morning Melissa, Further to [REDACTED]'s comments below I wish to add some broad and specific commentary. 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.

	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 😊 Kind regards	31
Email 3	Hi Melissa, Happy Easter! 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. 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. Regards,	
Email 4	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.	

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

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Adelaide Hills Council

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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/ushn50YysxA>

Your Say, Your Way

Draft Community Engagement Framework and Policy feedback



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