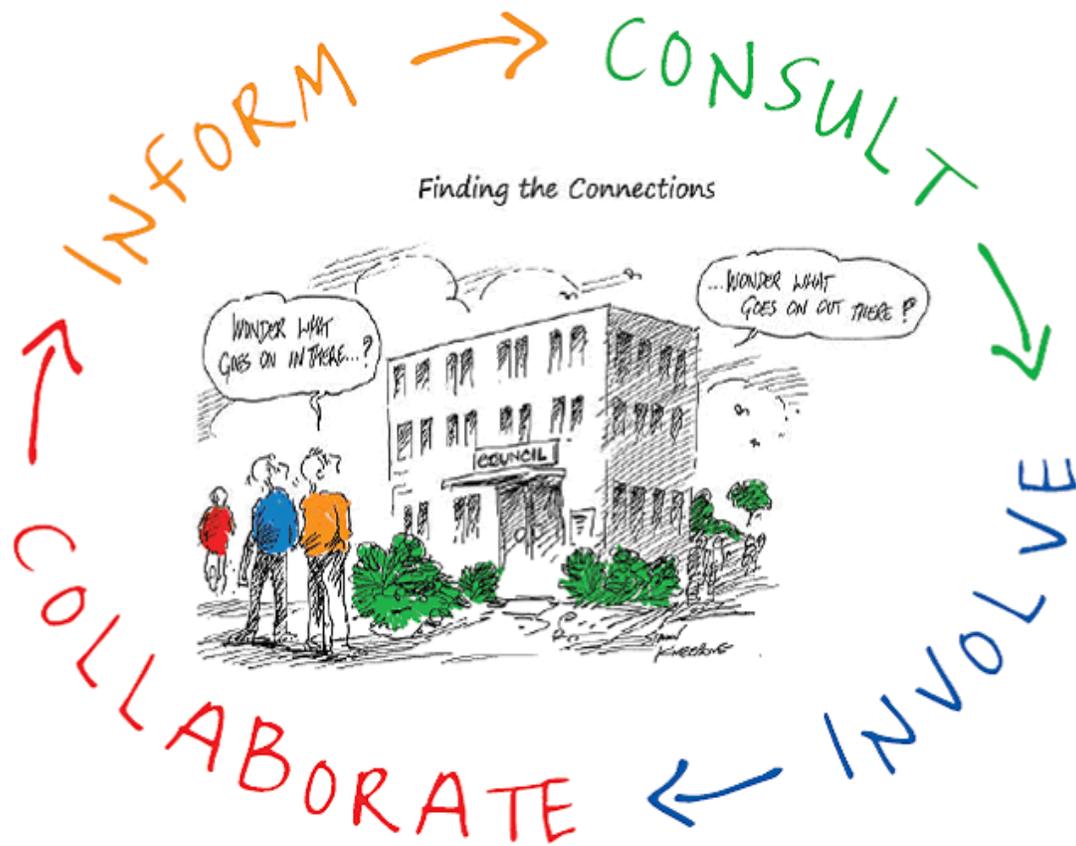


SIRA Community Engagement Communications Sub-Committee (CECS)

Community Discussion

Sunday 4th May 2014



(Community Engagement Handbook, Government of SA: March 2008)

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Welcome everyone,

The terms 'Community Engagement' and 'Public Participation' are commonly interchanged and not everyone is clear what they mean. Put simply they describe 'any process that involves the community in problem-solving or decision-making and uses the community input to make better decisions' (Pittwater Council Amended Community Engagement Policy No. 170: 6.11. 2013).

Ref: www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au Click on Policies and Policy Register

Community Engagement is best summed up in an old Chinese proverb:

Tell me and I forget.
Show me and I remember.
Involve me and I understand.

So why engage? What's in it for everyone?

For you, the community, engagement offers:

- a chance to have a say in the decisions that affect you
- increased transparency
- increased trust in SIRA processes

For the SIRA Committee it offers:

- a chance to learn about what's important to the community we represent
- an opportunity to build trust with our community

For everyone it offers:

- an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between us
- better outcomes because everyone has been involved in the process

At what level can we expect to engage?

Most Community Engagement activities between SIRA and our community will be at the **Inform**, **Consult** and **Engage** level (please refer to the IAP2 Spectrum), although there may also be some opportunities for **Collaboration**.

What about the actual decision-making?

As a community you are affected by a variety of issues in your everyday lives and your input can shape and influence decisions. Ultimately though, a final decision needs to be made and this responsibility rests with the SIRA Committee who you have elected to manage the affairs of the Association according to the Constitution.

What are our responsibilities as SIRA Committee-members?

To listen to our community and offer a Community Engagement process which is supported by the following principles:

- Commitment
- Inclusiveness
- Clarity
- Openness
- Transparency
- Ethics
- Respect

What are your responsibilities as the community?

As long as our Community Engagement processes are carried out in a committed, inclusive, clear, open, transparent, ethical, and respectful way, with the appropriate feedback provided, your responsibility is to accept the final decision respectfully. Things don't always go the way we want them to, but if the process has been fair and reasonable, sometimes we have to accept the umpire's decision.

What about feedback and evaluation?

Whether the decision goes your way or not, you deserve to know the results of the engagement process within a reasonable period of time, how your input was considered, and how it may have affected the final decision. Our Sub-Committees offer another opportunity for you to be involved and for your input to be considered.

Our Community Engagement processes will also need to be regularly evaluated to reflect changes in our community and their needs.

Thanks and we hope you enjoy our Community Discussion.