

Community Governance Workshop – Adelaide - 021014

Questions for Discussion

Q1 - What should community Governance mean for our communities?

Community governance means different things to different communities; there is no firm definition. City of Holdfast for example have lots of communities of interest and are very passionate. What can we do and what works before jumping in?

Our Council not ready to engage with the community. Bringing together key people as there is no centralised area for this. Would be helpful to engage community members to help engage community.

Onkaparinga Council has community engagement framework developed. Engagement strategy is how we engage and who we are going to engage.

One participant noted that her local council does not engage effectively with the community. Doesn't ask community for feedback and engagement on a whole range of levels, let alone working on how they can empower the community to be involved. Doesn't think it's right that a person that's elected never talks to the community. What is the role of a local councillor? They should have an obligation to consult with their community, something should be brought into legislation to ensure this happens.

Noted that New Zealand is much more sophisticated around community governance than what south Australia is. Reasons maybe is it's very early on and there should be an education process to make community engagement more comfortable and removing the fear that's attached to it.

Building relationships and trust win local councils and communities. The current structure doesn't lead us to that.

Deep misunderstanding of the IAP2 spectrum.

Major barrier goes down to something more fundamental until cultural mentality changes and arrogance (we know better than them?) this needs to change so we can learn to engage better.

Councils think they are constrained however the constraints in place are not barriers. Budget and time is a barrier, need to be shown efficiencies and better resources.

Need to invest to get good outcomes. Practical things we need to do.

A soon as there is a process we are worried about hurdles and failing and who's watching. Can be scary.

Need to see it as a non-failure but another step along the way.

Is there a step before jumping into governance??

Q2 - Who's responsible for the health of Community Governance?

Noted that State Government has started a shift towards doing things differently.

Communities need to see it as a viable option to have a say and they will speak up if they are being listened to.

The Bendigo Adelaide Bank West Beach branch ran a forum with different clubs, the RSL and couple of councillors. The main point that came out was that they wanted to do a business plan together to have one central club instead of each having a small club each. Noted that Councils could provide assistance to develop the business plan for these clubs as they don't have the necessary capability and capacity.

Need to start getting really creative about money as there is never going to be money made available for this activity.

Need to start thinking strategically about doing more for less and those that do are not being listened to at a higher level.

To make a good community you have to use the resources and priorities need to change.

Local footy club hosted dinner with large attendance, community wanted someone from council to attend to acknowledge the evening and what the community had done to put the event together council needs to provide leadership.

Q3 - What are the different approaches being utilised by your organisations?

Employee of Community Centre peak organisation advised community engagement can be done quite simply. Ask what people want? They're not stupid. What can you do with or without money. Amazing what you can achieve without money. Conversation cafe with community? No agenda. No notes. Just listening. Mayor was on board.

Minus 18 in Victoria. Set up by under 25s crowd sourcing funds online for a meeting facility and have already raised \$14k and need \$25k. Run completely by community. Strict guidelines about being in loved, not dating site etc. great hub for young people with a large following and involvement.

Q4 - What are the next steps?

Developing a community engagement framework.

Enjoyed hearing about the Bendigo Adelaide Bank model and approach.

Opportunity for local government to meet in forums like the workshop and coming together to discuss community governance approaches and share information and stories.
engagement?