“We value and acknowledge our past, and will empower future generations by respecting our Elders, our Noongar people and other cultures.”

Cultural Advice Policy

South West Aboriginal Land & Sea Council
The Regional Corporations established under the South West Settlement must empower the Noongar community to provide advice to the Corporations on corporate cultural decisions.

The Cultural Advice Policy aims to renew and preserve Aboriginal culture, values, land and custom and, at a grass-roots level, provide an avenue for Noongar culture to inform and contribute to the traditional, historical and contemporary cultural and political debate.

The Regional Corporation Principles and Rule Book require each Regional Corporation to develop, implement and manage a Cultural Advice Policy as part of its business. The Corporations must support a cultural governance and decision-making model guided by Noongar Elders who are not only Traditional Owners, but are also custodians with historical connections to the area, to the land, the lore and local custom. It is up to each community and Corporation to decide how this can best be achieved. Unlike other policies, the Cultural Advice Policy must be endorsed by the Corporation members in a General Meeting.

The Noongar community will be better served if the Corporation can enable a thorough consultation process with and within the community in relation to matters outside those related to ‘corporate cultural decisions’. This may be by facilitating groups of Elders, youth, men, women, or local groups to progress matters of cultural interest including:

- Community programs
- Language, song, dance and ceremony
- Bush tucker and medicine
- Conservation and rehabilitation of land and waters

as well as other matters related to the cultural identity and interests of the Noongar community but which are not strictly ‘corporate cultural decisions’. 
Up to October 2018, many Elders and Noongars aged over 50 have participated in 32 workshops to develop the Cultural Advice Policy, guided by the aspirations of a gathering of 120 Noongar people at the Noongar Dialogue back in February 2010. During the Dialogue, the group identified the following key elements of strong Noongar governance:

- accountability to Noongar people
- fulfilling duty of care obligations
- open and inclusive ways of doing business
- decisions and actions based on research and the best available evidence
- measurable objectives and timeframes
- structures and processes that allow the voice of every major Noongar family and opportunity to be heard
- opportunities to negotiate regional funding priorities and service delivery arrangements alongside Government
- negotiation of new and flexible pooled funding arrangements
- nurturing and support for the next generation of emerging leaders
- decision-making processes seen to be fair and equitable
- processes that promote unity by regularly bringing people together
- structures and processes that engage youth
- building the informed decision-making capacity of Noongar people

The Cultural Advice Policy workshops involved specific target groups, families and individuals, and covered the following topics:

- Background – SWALSC and Rule Books
- Establishment of the six Regional Corporations
- Cultural Advice Policy
- Elders – definition, understanding, culturally, historically
- Elders in contemporary society
- Cultural governance, authority and decision-making
- Communication
- Administration and support
- General discussion including terms of reference, respect, community healing and Elder led reconciliation initiatives
- Feedback and Summary

Key themes that arose from the workshops were:

- the need for Government and Noongar organisations to improve governance standards and service delivery outcomes
- Governance capacity and leadership are seen as inseparable
- the need to better recognise, support and nurture community leaders and
- it is important to learn from other indigenous nations and communities, both locally and overseas

The target audience is Noongar Elders with tradition, custom, culture and heritage, lore, history, respect, knowledge, leadership and wisdom. The community consultation and discussion will include Elders from towns and other areas within the respective Agreement Groups.

The next step is to complete a further series of workshops to develop the procedures to support the Cultural Advice Policy. We seek your help to do this in a way that best serves the aspirations of the Noongar community.
Many Elders and Noongars aged over 50 have participated in 32 community workshops to develop the Cultural Advice Policy. SWALSC is running a further series of workshops to develop procedures to support the Cultural Advice Policy.

Do you have something to say?
We want your ideas to guide the development of our Noongar community’s future governance framework!

**PLEASE COMPLETE AND POST TO** SWALSC **PO BOX 585 CANNINGTON WA 6987**

Confidentiality is key, information provided in this form will be collated and compiled into data format protecting personal information.

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<tr>
<th>Name _______________________________</th>
<th>Are you a member of SWALSC  Yes / No</th>
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What is a Noongar Elder? In answering this question consider the following.
What personal qualities of integrity, knowledge, values and cultural knowledge do Elders display

What would be some of the roles and responsibilities of Elders (though the Cultural Advice Policy)?
E.g. Cultural decisions, land matters, Cultural sharing/information

What sort of governance model or structure should we (Elder’s) consider?

If only a few Elders How should people be selected on Elders groups?

How long should a person be Elder in a role of representing community if it was shared between Elders?

How would or should our Elders be represented for the Agreement areas?

What are your thoughts on having Elders at the “decision-making table” regarding the Cultural Advice Policy?

Is there an opportunity to include a healing process and/or time to reconcile within our community?

Please list people you recommend with significant knowledge of culture?

Please list people you recommend with significant insight into traditional uses of Noongar land areas?