

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY (COMMUNITY POLICY)

1 Scope:

This policy applies to Rockhampton Regional Council Councillors, employees and external consultants undertaking Council projects and services that require community engagement.

2 Purpose:

To provide direction on developing and facilitating community engagement activities for Council projects, facilities, items of infrastructure and services.

3 Related Documents:

Primary

Nil

Secondary

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012

Sustainable Planning Act 2009 (QLD)

Digital Transformation Office

Community Engagement Plan

Community Engagement Procedure

Corporate Plan

IAP2 Quality Assurance Standard for Community and Stakeholder Engagement

4 Definitions:

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

Council	Rockhampton Regional Council.
Council Table	The body of elected Councillors of Rockhampton Regional Council
Community	Residents, ratepayers, businesses, organisations and groups who have a stake or interest in the area served by the Rockhampton Regional Council.
Community Engagement	A planned process with the specific purpose of working with identified groups of people, whether they are connected by geographic location, special interest, affiliation or identity to help in the development of policies, planning, service provision that impacts on the community's wellbeing.

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Adopted/Approved: Adopted, 12 December 2012

Version: 2

Reviewed Date: 9 August 2016

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5 Policy Statement:

Council recognises the value of an informed and engaged community being able to contribute to the decision making process. As such, Council will provide opportunities for community engagement to enhance its processes and planning and decision-making.

Council will undertake community engagement to:

- Provide the community and key stakeholders with objective information on decisions, policies, plans and strategies; and
- Provide opportunities for appropriate community engagement participation.

The level of participation will depend on the potential level of impact on the community and the decision that needs to be made.

Responsibility for the decision-making rests with Council, but may, in some circumstances, be shared with the community and key stakeholders. It is critical that the final decision maker is predetermined and agreed in the planning process and identified in the Community Engagement Plan.

5.1 Types of Community Engagement

According to IAP2 there are five levels of engagement available:

- Inform: To provide the community and key stakeholders with balanced and objective information to assist them with understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
- Consult: To provide the community and key stakeholders feedback on analysis and alternatives to inform a decision.
- Involve: To work directly with the community and key stakeholders to ensure their concerns/issues and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
- Collaborate: To partner with the community and key stakeholders regarding each aspect of the decision process - including the development of alternatives and identification of preferred solutions.
- Empower: To place a final decision in the hands of the community.

The specific type of community engagement activity will vary and is dependent on the potential level of impact, subject matter, those involved, potential legislative requirements and budget considerations. In some instances informing exercises will only be required, where in other circumstances integrated engagement activities will be required for engagements that have a higher level of impact.

5.2 Required Community Engagement

Community engagement will be undertaken when:

- Legislation requires it: There are a number of legislative requirements and standards that apply to Council and its decision making;
- A funding agreement requires it: Engagement may be an obligation attached to the receipt of government funding;
- The Council table resolves to recommend the need for community engagement; or
- A service, plan, community facility, item of infrastructure community focused policy or event that is being:
 - Introduced;
 - Discontinued;

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- Built;
- Changed;
- Developed;
- Replaced;
- Disrupted;
- Repaired; or
- Hosted.

5.3 Taskforces and Advisory Panels

A taskforce or advisory panel may be established at the discretion of the CEO, by Council resolution, for community engagement activities. The taskforce or advisory panel will:

- Have a terms of reference;
- Explore a major regional issue and potentially assist with implementation of actions;
- Have a defined timeframe;
- Report to the Council table at least once every six months;
- Be chaired by either a suitably qualified external person, employee or Councillor (with no Councillor chairing more than two taskforces or panels);
- Identify staff resources to act as project officer and secretary to the taskforce or panel; and
- Record minutes and membership of the taskforce or panel, ensuring that the minutes will be made available on Council's website.

5.4 Councillor Involvement

Council will take a flexible and appropriate approach on how it engages with the community on local issues or business issues with the divisional Councillor and chair of the relevant committee playing a pivotal role.

Councillor involvement may involve providing important information relating to the engagement or participating in appropriate engagement activities, such as taskforces or advisory panels, divisional forums, face to face interviews or community meetings.

It is important that any community engagement considers Council's requirements for objective information relating to a decision that may need to be made.

5.5 Disaster or Crisis Communications

Any engagement that forms part of a disaster or crisis response will be excluded from this procedure and handled through the Local Disaster Management Group.

6 Review Timelines:

This policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

- 6.1 The related information is amended or replaced; or
- 6.2 Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the Council.

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7 Responsibilities:

Sponsor	Chief Executive Officer
Business Owner	Chief Executive Officer
Policy Owner	Chief Executive Officer
Policy Quality Control	Corporate Improvement and Strategy

**EVAN PARDON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

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