COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCEDURE

1   Scope:

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

2   Purpose:

To outline the process for developing and facilitating community engagement activities for Council projects, facilities, items of infrastructure and services.

3   Related Documents:

Primary
Community Engagement Policy

Secondary
Community Engagement Plan
Community Engagement Register
Example Community Engagement Plan

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.
Region	Area defined by the electoral boundaries of Rockhampton Regional Council.

5   Procedure:

Community engagement may be required for a Council project, facility, item of infrastructure or service. The specific type of community engagement will vary and is dependent on the potential level of impact, subject matter, those involved, potential legislative requirements and budget considerations.

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5.1 Community Engagement Examples

Community engagement may be required to be undertaken if legislation or a funding agreement requires it, the Council table resolves it, or a new or changed service, facility or event is being proposed. Refer to the Community Engagement Policy for specific requirements.

Examples of when community engagement should be undertaken include, but are not limited to:

- Changing the operating hours of the libraries;
- Closing a facility temporarily;
- Closing access to or within a street for road works;
- Developing a community policy or plan that will guide Council's actions or services;
- Discontinuing a rural waste transfer station;
- Educating the public about a requirement to keep walkways clear;
- Introducing mandatory requirements for microchipping of dogs;
- Installing a dog park in a residential area;
- Opening a recreational facility eg. playground, skate park; or
- Requiring community input into a new youth service.

5.2 Roles and Responsibilities

5.2.1 Unit/Section

The relevant unit/section will be responsible for the development and delivery of the

- Community Engagement Plan
- Community Engagement Project

5.2.2 Communications Unit

The Communications unit will be responsible for:

- Collaborating with units/sections undertaking engagement; and
- Supporting with communications of the engagement activities and outcomes.

The Community Engagement Officer will be responsible for:

- Managing the Community Engagement Register;
- Discussing potential community engagement methods with units/sections;
- Reviewing and making recommendations relating to community engagement plans;
- If deemed necessary, assisting in resourcing/coordinating selected engagements; and
- If deemed necessary, developing and supporting the community engagement.

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6   Community Engagement Process

6.1   Community Engagement Matrix

Review Appendix A - Community Engagement Matrix to determine the type of engagement that will be required.

The type of engagement will be linked to the level of impact that the service or activity could have on our Region, user groups or residents. There are mandatory levels of community engagement for each level of impact, however engagement which exceeds these mandatory requirements will be considered favourable in some circumstances.

6.1.1   Levels of Impact

Level 1: High Regional – High level of real or perceived impact across the Region

Level 2: High Local – High level of real or perceived impact or risk on a local area, small community or user group of a specific facility or service

Level 3: Low Regional – Lower, although still some real or perceived impact or risk across our Region

Level 4: Low Local – Lower level of real or perceived impact or risk on a local area, small community or user group of a specific facility or service

6.2   Community Engagement Plan

Draft a Community Engagement Plan considering the following:

- Access and equity;
- Potential cultural or linguistic barriers;
- Target audience/s;
- Locality differences/barriers;
- Historical and current issues relating to the audience/topic;
- Review the community engagement register for information/reports that may be relevant;
- Set realistic and achievable timeframes;
- What budget is available or what is needed.

Once drafted, seek review and recommendation of the Community Engagement Plan from the Community Engagement Officer.

Seek approval for the Community Engagement Plan from the relevant General Manager.

6.3   Communications Calendar

Send an electronic meeting request to invite 'Communications' to the community engagement event.

6.4   Notify Councillors

Councillors will need to be notified or briefed on the community engagement. This may include presenting a report to the Council table.

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6.5 Website

Once Councillors have been briefed the project plan and community engagement overview will be placed on the Council website.

6.6 Undertake Community Engagement

Once approved, community engagement can be undertaken in line with the Community Engagement Plan.

6.7 Post Community Engagement

Once community engagement has been completed, the unit/section will:

6.7.1 Medium to Larger Scale Projects

- Present a report to the Council table within six weeks of completion outlining the:
    - Community engagement program undertaken;
    - Level of participation;
    - Quality of input;
    - Findings from the engagement; and
    - Intended and actual outcomes achieved.
- Evaluate the engagement through a debrief process; and
- Update information on Council's website.

6.7.2 Smaller Scale Projects

- Provide an update the committee chair and divisional Councillor;
- Respond to participiants with the outcomes;
- Evaulate the engagement through a debrief process; and
- Update information on Council's website.

7 Review Timelines:

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

7.1 The related information is amended or replaced; or

7.2 Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the General Manager.

8 Responsibilities:

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

EVAN PARDON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MATRIX

Determining Level of Impact, Mandatory Engagement Required and Lead Times

The criteria that should be used to determine the level of impact of a project, issue, service or action is detailed in the table below. To determine the level of impact, you will need to determine the stakeholders that are affected by the project and the risks that may apply to Council in regards to the project/service. It may be appropriate to involve other Council staff in making these decisions.

Community Engagement Matrix			
Level of Impact	*Criteria (one or more of the following examples)*	*Mandatory Engagement*	*Timeframes*
Level 1: High Regional High level of real or perceived impact across our Region	▪ Any significant impact on attributes that are considered to be of high value to the whole of our Region such as the natural environment or heritage ▪ Any impact on the health, safety or wellbeing of our regional community ▪ Potential high degree of controversy or conflict ▪ Likely high level of interact across our Region ▪ Community and Council Plans, Budget, Regional Planning Scheme ▪ Disability Action Plan ▪ Strategy Plans e.g. Youth, Aged ▪ Removal of a facility or service catering across our Region e.g. library, swimming pool ▪ Provision of a regional facility i.e. skate park, sports centre ▪ Key changes to Region-wide service e.g. waste services	▪ Flyer or similar ▪ Letterbox drop or written correspondence ▪ Notice in local newspaper ▪ Media promotion inviting comment (incl. advertising) ▪ Public event ▪ Meeting with key users or stakeholder groups (may include one-on-ones) ▪ Website presence with FAQs, Engagement Plan, Project Outline and associated plan, graphics, progress photographs ▪ Briefing and involvement of all Councillors ▪ Signage and/or posters ▪ Potential Advisory Committee/Taskforce requirement ▪ Notice in established communication channels e.g. Message on Hold, Council generated newsletter etc	**Engagement must commence before decisions as made or plans are finalized. Stakeholders must be involved, not just informed.** Recommended lead time, including planning, is between 3-6 months

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Community Engagement Matrix			
Level of Impact	*Criteria (one or more of the following examples)*	*Mandatory Engagement*	*Timeframes*
Level 2: High Local High level of real or perceived impact or risk on a local area, small community or user group of a specific facility or service	▪ The loss of or significant change to any facility or service to a local community ▪ Potential high degree of controversy or conflict at the local level ▪ Removal or relocation of a local playground or kindergarten ▪ Change to or loss of valued activity or program e.g. local youth activity ▪ Re-development of a sportsground ▪ Increase or removal of car parking in a local shopping centre ▪ Removal of a tree from a public space, median strip or neighbourhood ▪ Road closure (could be a Level 4 impact depending upon circumstance and history)	▪ Written correspondence or letterbox drop to affected residents ▪ Advice to local user groups ▪ Media Release ▪ Councillor involvement ▪ Signage and/or posters Suggested where applicable: ▪ Individual meetings offered to affected persons ▪ Community Meeting or TaskForce ▪ Public Notice	6 weeks to 3 months Notification must be given to affected persons prior to any action, with an opportunity to provide comment or ask questions, and to receive a response.
Level 3: Low Regional Lower, although still some real or perceived impact or risk across our Region	▪ Potential for some controversy or conflict ▪ Changes to our Region wide service e.g. temporary or permanent variation to opening hours of a customer service centre ▪ Changes to customer service processes e.g. payment of rates ▪ Changes to the format of the website	▪ Media Release ▪ Notification to all Councillors ▪ Signage of Posters ▪ Notice on website ▪ Notice in established communication channels e.g. Messages on Hold, Council generated newsletter	2-6 weeks It is preferable that affected communities are informed or the decision to engage with an appropriate lead time, to enable any input and assessment of concerns to be addressed prior to implementation.

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Community Engagement Matrix			
Level of Impact	*Criteria (one or more of the following examples)*	*Mandatory Engagement*	*Timeframes*
Level 4: Low Local Lower level of real or perceived impact or risk on a local area, small community or user group of a specific facility or service	▪ Only a small change or improvement to a facility or service at the local level ▪ Low or no risk of controversy or conflict at the local level ▪ Upgrade of a local playground e.g. installation of new equipment ▪ Local streescape upgrade e.g. additional tree planting ▪ Changes to an activity such as Verybl's school holiday activities ▪ Local street road closure	▪ Advice to local Councillor and photo opportunity where requested ▪ Council website ▪ Signage or Poster ▪ Advice to customers during interactions with Council staff	1-4 weeks The appropriate level of engagement here aims to 'inform'.

Note: At any time during the Engagement Process, it may be necessary to reassess the level of impact and vary the engagement approach accordingly.

Flexibility

Council's intention is to be flexible and responsive in its approach. While there are mandatory requirements set out in the table above, these may be altered within reason. The timeframes are recommended as there may be instances when a community issue arises which needs to be addressed or responded to immediately. The most important aspect of engagement is that we inform any affected or potentially affected community in our Region, of any action, change or decision, in advance of it occurring.

Urgent Repairs

It is acknowledged that in Council's day to day operations, staff may be required to act immediately to repair an amenity or facility (eg. a burst pipeline). The intent of this Procedure is not to delay or stop these urgent matters being addressed. There are policies and procedures that will supersede these requirements.

Disaster or Crisis Communications

Any engagement that forms part of a disaster or crisis response will be handled separate to this Procedure through the Local Disaster Management Group.
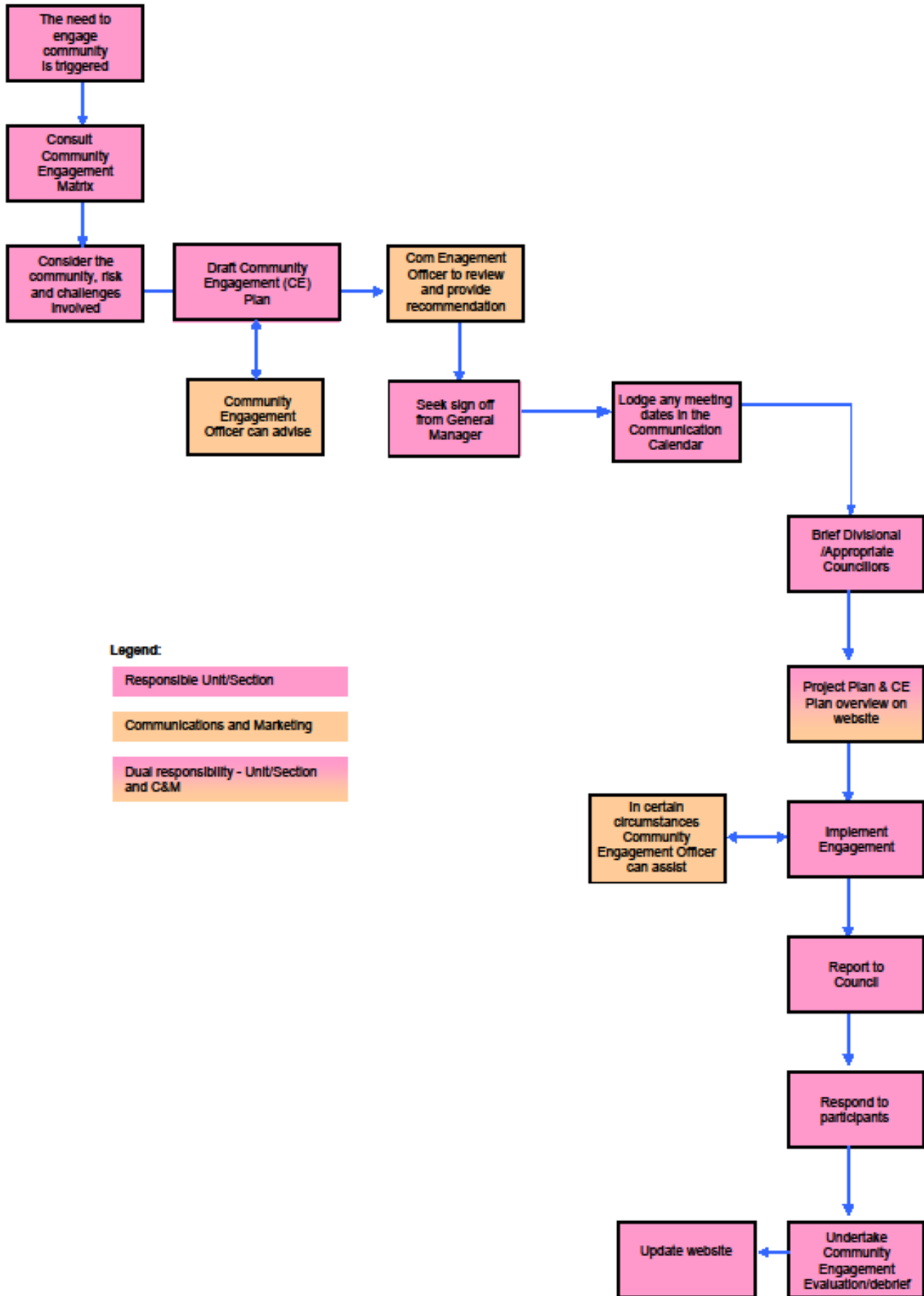
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APPENDIX B

PROCESS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The need to engage community is triggered

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Consult Community Engagement Matrix

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Consider the community, risk and challenges involved → **Draft Community Engagement (CE) Plan** → **Com Enagement Officer to review and provide recommendation**

↓ (from Draft Community Engagement Plan)

Community Engagement Officer can advise

↓ (from Com Enagement Officer to review)

Seek sign off from General Manager → **Lodge any meeting dates in the Communication Calendar**

↓

Brief Divisional /Appropriate Councilors

↓

Project Plan & CE Plan overview on website

↓

In certain circumstances Community Engagement Officer can assist ↔ **Implement Engagement**

↓

Report to Council

↓

Respond to participants

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Update website ← **Undertake Community Engagement Evaluation/debrief**

Legend:

Responsible Unit/Section

Communications and Marketing

Dual responsibility – Unit/Section and C&M

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