

POLICY



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Policy title: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Directorate: PEOPLE AND ENGAGEMENT
Branch: CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS
Policy objective: To provide direction to Council when undertaking community engagement and assist in decision making, policy changes and planning activities.

Policy scope:

This policy:

1. Provides a set of guidelines that must be followed when conducting community engagement activities, to align with Council's required standards and the expectations of the community.
2. Describes how the Council must engage with the community about preparing and amending its community plan.

Definitions:

Not applicable.

Policy statement:

1. To encourage practices within Council that can result in:
 - (a) Residents in Logan City knowing when and how Council will consult them and when Council needs to make decisions on their behalf.
 - (b) The Logan community being well-informed about issues, strategies or plans that may directly or indirectly affect them.
 - (c) Councillors, Council staff and consultants engaged by Council consulting effectively and appropriately within the community when making decisions or forming policies and plans.
 - (d) Community engagement being coordinated and integrated in a consistent manner across all areas of Council.
2. Community engagement does not replace but rather informs the decision-making functions of Council.
3. Community engagement is defined as 'a way to improve communities by identifying and addressing local ideas, concerns and opportunities by involving the public in certain processes that affect them and their community'.

4. Logan City Council aims to be recognised as a Council which is open and honest with the community it represents and has a willingness to listen to and value what residents have to say about an issue. On a daily basis, Council makes decisions which affect the lives of its residents. One of the mechanisms Council uses from time to time to interact with its community is community consultation.
5. While it is not possible to consult with the community on every issue, Council would like to ensure that the community is as well informed as it can be on major issues, plans and projects, and has opportunities through community consultation to enhance Council's decision-making.
6. Community engagement activities undertaken by Logan City Council will follow these guiding principles from International Association for Public Participation (IAP2):
 - (a) Integrity – when there is openness and honesty about the scope and purpose of engagement.
 - (b) Inclusion – when there is an opportunity for a diverse range of values and perspectives to be freely and fairly expressed and heard.
 - (c) Deliberation – when there is sufficient and credible information for dialogue, choice and decisions, and when there is space to weigh options, develop common understanding and to appreciate respective roles and responsibilities.
 - (d) Influence – when people have input in designing how they participate, when policies and services reflect their involvement and when their impact is apparent.
7. Council is also committed to the international model for guiding consultation practices, as provided by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as follows:

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Commitment is valuable at all levels – from politicians, managers and public officials.2. Citizens have rights to information.3. Clarity in making decisions.4. Time must be available for consultation and participation to be effective.5. Objectivity. Information provided should be objective, complete and accessible.6. Resources. Adequate financial, human and technical resources are needed.7. Co-ordination of initiatives to inform, request feedback from and consult citizens.8. Accountability for the use of citizens' inputs received through consultation.9. Evaluation of performance in providing information, conducting consultation.10. Active citizenship. Take concrete actions to facilitate access to information.
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8. As a minimum, community engagement activities undertaken by Council will comply with the *Local Government Act 2009* and, where applicable, the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* and other relevant local government legislation.

9. Staff undertaking community engagement activities will refer to the following documents for guidance on objectives and proper procedures to adhere to:
- (a) community engagement strategy
 - (b) the corporate plan
 - (c) long term asset management plan
 - (d) financial plan
 - (e) Code of Conduct for Staff.

Policy administration procedure:

The following procedure is to be undertaken for this policy:

1. The policy and strategy are managed by the Corporate Communications branch.
2. The planning, implementation and reporting of community engagement activities must be conducted by staff in accordance with Council's community engagement policy and procedures.
3. The principles and values outlined in the policy and strategy should be diligently applied to community engagement processes.
4. All Council community engagement activities, including all internal and external surveys plus activities conducted by external consultants on Council's behalf, must be coordinated through Council's Corporate Communications branch.

Related policies/legislation/other documents:

DOC ID	DOCUMENT TYPE	DOCUMENT NAME
6040861v1	Strategy	Community Engagement Strategy
http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/Acts_SLs/Acts_SL.htm	Legislation	<i>Local Government Act 2009</i>
http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/Acts_SLs/Acts_SL.htm	Legislation	<i>Sustainable Planning Act 2009</i>