

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Intent To broadly define Council's approach to community engagement and to establish appropriate expectations for public participation in problem solving and decision making. This policy forms part of the community engagement framework that will assist Council and the community to engage on decisions and directions across a range of policy, planning, program and service issues. The framework adopted by Cairns Regional Council is the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) community engagement framework.

Scope This policy applies to Councillors, all employees and to all consultants engaged by Council.

Principles

Cairns Regional Council is committed to meaningful engagement with the community on issues affecting the city, and on local issues that significantly impact on the community.

This policy confirms councils' commitment to section 4(2) (c) of the *Local Government Act 2009* which prescribes community engagement as a legislative requirement to ensure *democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement* in government decision making.

Council recognises that better decisions and more sustainable outcomes may be achieved through community engagement.

Community engagement can be formal or informal and be undertaken at the levels of inform, consult, involve, collaborate, or empower (as per the IAP2 spectrum). Information helps stakeholders understand the problem, alternatives, and solutions; consultation seeks feedback on alternatives and decisions; and involvement means working with stakeholders throughout the process to consider their aspirations, issues and alternatives. Responsibility for the final decision rests with Council.

Council acknowledges that the community consists of diverse sub-groups, each with its own perspective, knowledge, and priorities. It also recognises that there may be occasions when a specialised method of engagement may be required.

Council will apply a wide variety of community engagement methodologies appropriate to the level of engagement, the complexity of the topic/project under discussion, and the desired outcome of any specific engagement.

IAP2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT				
INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Tools:	Example Tools:	Example Tools:	Example Tools:	Example Tools:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fact sheets • web sites • open houses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public comment • focus groups • surveys • public meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workshops • deliberate polling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • citizen advisory committees • consensus-building • participatory decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • citizen juries • ballots • delegated decisions.

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This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by Council.

Director Responsible for Review:

People and Organisational Performance

ORIGINALLY ADOPTED: 28/07/2005
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 REVOKED/SUPERSEDED:



John Andrejic
 A/Chief Executive Officer