
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

APPROVALS

POLICY NUMBER	STAT-POL-058	DOC.ID	359629
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CATEGORY	Statutory Policy
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POLICY OWNER	Planning, Environment and Community Services
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APPROVAL DATE	23 April 2019	RESOLUTION NUMBER	5982
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OBJECTIVE

This Policy recognises that community engagement and participation processes are a vital part of local democracy. The Local Government Act, Queensland, 2009 requires local government to uphold the principles of “**transparent and effective processes and decision-making in the public interest**” and “**democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement**”. In the past it was best practice for councils to engage with communities but there is now a legislative requirement to ensure it happens across all local government areas.

SCOPE

This policy applies to

- All facets of Council's operations including elected members, employees and contractors or consultants working on behalf of IRC.
- There are no limitations on application of the Policy

DEFINITIONS

TERM / ACRONYM

MEANING

Community Engagement	any process that involves the community in problem-solving or decision-making and uses community input to make better decisions and refers to a broad range of practices characterized by two-way communication between council and the community affected by the issue” international association of public participation (IAP2)
Level of Impact	the degree to which a community is affected by a decision
Participation	the degree to which a community is involved in decision making
Communication	generally refers to the exchange of information from council to the community but can also include the exchange or views from the community to council
Community/Stakeholders	includes all the people who live, work, own property, conduct private or government business, visit or use the services, facilities and public spaces and places of the Isaac region. the community can be referred to as stakeholders or comprise of stakeholders.

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy confirms the commitment of Isaac Regional Council in ensuring community engagement forms an integral part of decision-making through the use of appropriate and inclusive practices

Guiding principles

Council principles for directing the engagement process:

Commitment – Community engagement will be conducted in a way that demonstrates a genuine commitment and a desire to hear community views

Timely - Council commits to engaging the community at the earliest stages possible and keep them informed throughout the process

Respectful – our approach treats all participants in the engagement process with dignity and respect. Opportunities for the diverse communities of the Isaac region to participate need to be created with special consideration given to those communities that traditionally may be more difficult to engage.

Open and accountable - Council will adopt open and accountable processes and practices that draw on the wisdom of citizens in order to add value to decision making processes. It should however be emphasized that the ultimate responsibility for decision making rests with Council.

Privacy and Confidentiality – participants in any engagement process will have their privacy respected at all times during and after the engagement activities have taken place

Council's approach to community engagement is based on the Spectrum of Engagement activities as advocated by the International Association for Public Participation IAP2

Actions required to ensure compliance

Quarterly reporting to council.

Roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and consequences related to delivery of the policy

The Community Engagement Policy will be implemented and monitored by Manager Community Engagement, Programs and Events

IRC will use the following criteria to assess the need for community engagement activities

- Issues or projects which are likely to generate strong interest or concern from the community.
- Planning or proposals are anticipated to have significant impact on the lifestyle, environment or economy of the region and / or residents.
- The future use of a significant area of land is being decided.
- Planning or proposals may require a significant redirection of ratepayer revenue.
- Information is needed by Council staff or Councillors regarding community priorities, needs and concerns to ensure planning is appropriate and responsive
- Where Council is required to undertake statutory engagement activities.
- Where Council believes there is a genuine need.

Community Engagement Plans are to be developed in accordance with the Community Engagement Framework.

LEGISLATIONS AND RELATED GUIDELINES

- *Local Government Act 2009*

REFERENCES

TYPE	DOCUMENT ID/NAME
PROCEDURE	Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit