

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING
OF THE BARCALDINE REGIONAL COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
43 DRYDEN STREET, ALPHA
ON WEDNESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2015
COMMENCING AT 9.00AM**

ATTENDANCE

Councillor R Chandler (Mayor) (In the Chair), Councillor J Gray (Deputy Mayor), Councillors G Bettiens, A Cowper, G Peoples, P Mitchell and R Glindemann.

OFFICERS

D Howard (Chief Executive Officer), R Bauer (Executive Manager – Alpha), I Kuhn (Executive Manager – Aramac), B Walsh (Executive Manager – Barcaldine), A Luyt (Senior Engineer) and A Newton (Minute Secretary).

PRAYER – Cr. Gray read the prayer.

CONDOLENCES

A minute's silence was observed to mark the passing of Mrs. Lorna Wilson formerly of Aramac, Mr. Ronald Klein formerly of Barcaldine, Mr. Grant Brown of Barcaldine and Mr. Arthur Barwick of Barcaldine.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE - Nil

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The Mayor acknowledged the traditional owners of the land, past and present.

DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLORS

Material Personal Interest on any items of Business

Pursuant to Section 173 (2) of the *Local Government Act 2009*, Councillor Glindemann informed the meeting of a material personal interest in relation to Item 3.4.7 (as a business owner with an adjacent property) and left the meeting during discussions thereon.

Conflict of Interest - Nil

Personal Gifts and Benefits - Nil

BUSINESS

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

*Summary: The following minutes required confirmation by Council:-
General Meeting – 19 August 2015.*

Resolution: 2015/09/206 **Moved Cr Glindemann** **Seconded Cr Bettiens**
That the minutes of the General Meeting held by Barcaldine Regional Council on the 19 August 2015 be received.

Carried
Unanimous

Resolution: **Moved Cr Gray** **Seconded Cr Peoples**
2015/09/207 **That the minutes of the General Meeting held by Barcaldine Regional**
 Council on 19 August 2015 be confirmed.

Carried
Unanimous

2. PETITIONS - Nil

3. REPORTS

3.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

3.1.1 Councillor Information Bulletin

Summary: From the Chief Executive Officer tabling a list of items sent to Councillors in the Councillor Information Bulletin up to and including 10 September 2015.

Resolution: **Moved Cr Bettiens** **Seconded Cr Mitchell**
2015/09/208 **That the report be received.**

Carried
Unanimous

3.1.2 “Stay on Track Outback” Funding

Summary: From the Chief Executive Officer advising that correspondence has been received from Charleville Police seeking a \$5,000 donation towards signage for its successful “Stay on Track Outback” campaign.

Resolution: **Moved Cr Bettiens** **Seconded Cr Mitchell**
2015/09/209 **That Council declines to donate \$5,000 for signage to promote the “Stay on Track Outback” campaign as it is supporting the RAPAD campaign to the same amount.**

Carried
Unanimous

3.1.3 Australia Day Ambassadors

Summary: From the Chief Executive Officer advising that correspondence has been received from the Premier urging Council to be part of the Australia Day Ambassador Programme.

3.3.2 Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS)

Summary: From the Manager of Engineering Services requesting Council's approval pertaining to the redistribution and some instances increases in project budgets associated with the increase in TIDS Funding.

Resolution: **Moved Cr Cowper** **Seconded Cr Gray**
2015/09/214 **That Council adopts the proposed redistribution and notes the increases in project budgets associated with the increase in TIDS funding.**

Carried
Unanimous

3.4 EXECUTIVE MANAGER - ALPHA

3.4.1 General Information Report

Summary: The Executive Manager's – Alpha report was presented to Council for information.

Resolution: **Moved Cr Gray** **Seconded Cr Mitchell**
2015/09/215 **That the Executive Manager's – Alpha General Information Report be received.**

Carried
Unanimous

At 10.30am the meeting adjourned for morning tea and an inspection of the new Alpha War Memorial Pool. The meeting resumed at 11.20am.

3.4.2 Alpha War Memorial Pool – Quotations to Operate

Summary: From the Alpha Swimming Club Inc providing a quote to operate the pool for the 2015/16 season on the same basis they operated the centre previously.

Resolution: **Moved Cr Peoples** **Seconded Cr Glindemann**
2015/09/216 **That Council accepts the quote from the Alpha Swimming Club Inc. in the amount of \$595.00 per week for the operation of the Alpha War Memorial Pool including the watering and mowing of the grounds for the 2015/16 season.**

Carried
Unanimous

3.4.3 Alpha War Memorial Pool – Quotes for Shade Structure

Summary: From the Executive Manager submitting a report on the shade structure for the above, as referred from the last meeting.

Resolution: 2015/09/217 **Moved Cr Glindemann** **Seconded Cr Gray**
That Council endorse the decision to purchase a 14m x 7m shade sail – supply and delivery only – from Shade 'n Net in the amount of \$6,850.00 plus GST and that quotes be obtained to construct.

Carried
Unanimous

3.4.4 Alpha War Memorial Pool – Quotes to replace storage shed

Summary: Quotes have been obtained to replace the old storage shed in the south western corner of the grounds of the Alpha War Memorial Pool.

Resolution: 2015/09/218 **Moved Cr Bettiens** **Seconded Cr Peoples**
That Council does not accept any of the quotes for the supply and erection of a new shed in the south western corner of the Alpha War Memorial Pool grounds and instead renovates the existing shed.

Carried
6/1

3.4.5 Purchase of Land - Alpha

Summary: Council applied in 2012 to purchase the freehold title of lots 13-19 on SP148083 which were held by Council under a term lease. The Department of Natural Resources and Mines has now provided an offer to Council to purchase the freehold title of the above mentioned land.

Resolution: 2015/09/219 **Moved Cr Peoples** **Seconded Cr Gray**
That Council accepts the quote from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines for purchase of the freehold title to the following lots:

(a) Lot 13 on SP148083	\$ 7,283.50
(b) Lot 14 on SP148083	\$ 8,356.00
(c) Lot 15 on SP 148083	\$ 8,542.75
(d) Lot 16 on SP 148083	\$ 6,154.00
(e) Lot 17 on SP 148083	\$ 8,042.20
(f) Lot 18 on SP 148083	\$ 7,912.90
(g) Lot 19 on SP 148083	<u>\$ 25,679.50</u>
	\$ 71,970.85

Carried
Unanimous

At this stage Cr. Peoples left the meeting.

3.4.6 Purchase of Land - Alpha

Summary: Council applied in 2012 to purchase the freehold title of Lot 62 on SP123562 which was held by Council under a term lease. The Department of Natural Resources and Mines has now provided an offer to Council to purchase the freehold title of the above mentioned land.

Resolution: 2015/09/220 **Moved Cr gray** **Seconded Cr Cowper**
That Council accepts the quote from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines for purchase of the freehold title to the following lot:

Lot 62 on SP1123562 \$ 221,913.00.

Carried
Unanimous

At this stage Cr. Glindemann declared a material personal interest in the following matter and left the meeting during discussions thereon. At this stage Cr. Peoples returned to the meeting.

3.4.7 Shakespeare Street Footpath and Drainage

Summary: Council has applied for funding under the Local Government Grants and Subsidies Programme to carry out the above works and a Council resolution is required to confirm the scope of works.

Resolution: 2015/09/221 **Moved Cr Cowper** **Seconded Cr Gray**
That:-

- (a) Council uses existing budgeted funds of \$226,304 for the rejuvenation of a section of Shakespeare Street;**
- (b) any grant funds received from its applications to Government be utilised to continue the programme;**
- (c) the priority of works be the replacement of the footpath from the eastern corner of the M'lady's building to Scott Street; and**
- (d) any unused funds be utilised to improve the drainage problem in Shakespeare Street.**

Carried
Unanimous

At this stage Cr. Glindemann returned to the meeting.

3.4.8 Applications for Drought Relief Funding

Summary: Council has budgeted for various works under the above funding programme and a resolution to confirm the sites and scope of works is required.

Resolution: Moved Cr Bettiens Seconded Cr Mitchell
2015/09/222 That Council endorses applications for funding from the Drought Relief Funds for the project locations and scope of works listed below:-

(a) Kerb and channelling only in Jericho (\$100,000)

- (1) Tyndall Street from Faraday to Bessemer Street – Northern side – Approx 210m**
- (2) Pasteur Street from Faraday to Edison Street – Southern side (join with existing K&C) – approx 157m**
- (3) Tyndall Street Edison to Playfair Street – Southern side (Partly) – Approx 125m;**

(b) Concrete footpaths (1.2m width) in Jericho (\$50,000)

- (1) Pasteur Street from Faraday to Bessemer Street – Southern side – Approx 210m**
- (2) Faraday Street from Darwin to Pasteur Street – Western side – Approx 130m;**

(c) Watering System in Jericho Park (\$50,000)

- (1) From the Railway Crossing at the eastern entrance to Jericho to the Post Office; and**
- (2) From the Railway Crossing at the western entrance to Jericho to the Post Office;**

(d) Drainage in Dryden St Alpha (\$150,000); and

(e) Drainage from Mackellar to Burns Street in Alpha (Part of funding \$50,000 – balance is RTR of \$100,000).

Carried
Unanimous

3.4.9 Quotations for the Supply & Delivery of Plant

Summary: Quotes have been sought through Local Buy for the supply and delivery of plant to Council as per its 2015/16 budget including the trade of used plant.

Resolution: Moved Cr Mitchell Seconded Cr Bettiens
2015/09/223 That Council accepts the following quotations for the supply and delivery of plant and trade of the used plant:-

- (a) Hastings Deering in the change over amount of \$430,000 for two (2) only new Caterpillar Graders – Model 12M including the trade on the used Graders;**
- (b) Hastings Deering in the change over amount of \$315,000 for one (1) only new Caterpillar Loader – Model 938K IT including the trade on the used Loader;**
- (c) In the change over amount of \$137,000 for one (1) only new Multi Tyre Roller – Caterpillar Model CW34 including the trade on the used Loader; and**

- (d) In the change over amount of \$265,284.04 for two (2) only new Trucks – Prime Movers – Hino Model FS2848 including the trade on the used Trucks.

Carried
Unanimous

3.5 EXECUTIVE MANAGER – ARAMAC

3.5.1 General Information Report

Summary: The Executive Manager’s – Aramac report was submitted to Council for information.

Resolution: 2015/09/224 **Moved Cr Peoples** **Seconded Cr Cowper**
That the Executive Manager’s – Aramac General Information Report be received.

Carried
Unanimous

3.6 EXECUTIVE MANAGER – BARCALDINE

3.6.1 General Information Report

Summary: The Executive Manager’s – Barcaldine report was submitted to Council for information.

Resolution: 2015/09/225 **Moved Cr Bettiens** **Seconded Cr Gray**
That the Executive Manager’s – Barcaldine General Information Report be received.

Carried
Unanimous

At 12.30pm the meeting adjourned for lunch and resumed at 1.30pm. At this stage Cr. Glindemann left the meeting.

3.6.2 Environmental Management Policy

Summary: A draft Environmental Management Policy is presented for Council consideration.

Resolution: 2015/09/226 **Moved Cr Peoples** **Seconded Cr Gray**
That Council adopts the Barcaldine Regional Council Environmental Management Policy (as per attachment A).

Carried
Unanimous

3.6.3 Additional Heavy Vehicle Routes

Summary: A proposal to extend the heavy vehicle routes in Barcaldine for Council consideration.

Resolution: 2015/09/227 **Moved Cr Mitchell** **Seconded Cr Cowper**
That Council designates Ironwood Drive, Needlewood Drive, Melaleuca Road, Peltophorum Drive and Poinciana Street as Multi-Combination Routes for Type 2 Road Trains.

Carried
Unanimous

3.6.4 Quality Management Policy

Summary: A draft Quality Management Policy is presented for Council consideration.

Resolution: 2015/09/228 **Moved Cr Peoples** **Seconded Cr Gray**
That Council adopts the Barcaldine Regional Council Quality Management Policy (as per Attachment B).

Carried
Unanimous

3.6.5 Community Engagement Policy

Summary: A draft Community Engagement Policy is presented for Council consideration.

Resolution: 2015/09/229 **Moved Cr Mitchell** **Seconded Cr Bettiens**
That Council adopts the Barcaldine Regional Council Community Engagement Policy (as per Attachment C).

Carried
Unanimous

3.6.6 Drought Communities Programme - Barcaldine

Summary: A breakdown of projects to be funded by the Drought Communities Program for Council consideration.

Resolution: 2015/09/230 **Moved Cr Gray** **Seconded Cr Peoples**
That Council approves Drought Communities Program expenditure on the following projects:

	Total Cost	DCP Funds	Council Cost
Community Pathways			
Ash Street – Maple to Pine St (north)	50,000	50,000	0
Yew Street – Willow to Beech St (south)	20,000	20,000	0
Cedar Street – Gidyca to Yew St (west)	15,000	15,000	0

Lagoon Creek Recreational Area including safety activity track, creek rehabilitation and gardens	90,000	80,000	10,000
Watering Systems – Bryan Park and Showground	40,000	35,000	5,000

Carried
Unanimous

At this stage Cr. Glindemann returned to the meeting.

3.6.7 Development Approval – Capricorn Highway, Barcaldine

Summary: A recommendation from Council’s Town Planner for Development Approval for a solar farm at Capricorn Highway Barcaldine for Council consideration.

Resolution: 2015/09/231 **Moved Cr Bettiens** **Seconded Cr Mitchell**
That Council ratifies the action of the Chief Executive Officer to:-

- (a) issue a Development Permit for Material Change of Use for “Community Oriented Activity – Public Utility” on Lot 33 R5726, Lot 34 R5726 and Lot 35 RP902908 Barcaldine in accordance with the recommendation of Council’s Town Planners; and**
- (b) issue an Adopted Infrastructure Charge Notice for \$7,000.00 for the above development.**

Carried
Unanimous

3.6.8 Get Playing Plus Applications

Summary: Applications for the Get Playing Plus programme are now open.

Resolution: 2015/09/232 **Moved Cr Bettiens** **Seconded Cr Gray**
That Council applies for funding from the Get Playing Plus programme for the Jericho Pool ablution block, shade shelters, optional heating and fencing and that Council agrees to contribute one third of the cost of the project.

Carried
Unanimous

3.7 RURAL SERVICES MATTERS - Nil

3.8 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS - Nil

3.9 NOTIFIED MOTIONS - Nil

As there was no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 2.20pm.

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD

MAYOR: _____

DATED: 14 October 2015

Attachment A

SYSTEM:	Environment and Heritage Protection
POLICY TITLE:	Environmental Management Policy
POLICY NUMBER:	EHP001
ADOPTED:	16 September 2015
PURPOSE:	To preserve and enhance the environmental values of the Barcaldine Regional Council area.

1. Outline

This Policy confirms Barcaldine Regional Council's commitment to environmental management and ecologically sustainable development, and describes Council's intentions and direction in relation to environmental performance, and provides a framework for the setting of objectives and targets.

2. Background

This Policy complies with:

AS/NZS ISO 14001:2004 *Environmental Management Systems*
Barcaldine Regional Council Corporate Plan 2015-19

3. Scope

The Environmental Management Policy applies to all operations of Barcaldine Regional Council including:

1. Waste collection and disposal and waste infrastructure operations and maintenance
2. Sewerage Treatment Plants and other sewerage infrastructure operations and maintenance
3. Water Treatment Plants and other water infrastructure operations and maintenance
4. Road construction and maintenance activities on State controlled roads, Federal controlled roads, Council controlled roads and private road projects
5. Pest and weed eradication
6. Plant and equipment operations and maintenance
7. Maintenance of parks and gardens
8. Planning assessments and approvals

Council activities may have an impact on different aspects of the environment including:

1. Air contamination
2. Ground contamination
3. Noise emissions
4. Discharges to waterways
5. Harm to flora and fauna
6. Harm to Cultural heritage
7. Wastage of resources

4. Policy Statement

Barcaldine Regional Council will conduct its operations and provide services with respect and care for the environment. To achieve this, Council is committed to:

- complying with applicable legal and other requirements;
- continuously improving its environmental performance through an effective environmental management system;
- reviewing the environmental effects of its activities and setting appropriate environmental improvement objectives;
- integrating environmental considerations into planning and day to day activities;
- minimising the environmental impact of operations and services by preventing pollution and conserving natural resources;
- providing employees and contractors with the information and skills to help achieve Council's environmental responsibilities; and
- communicating openly about its policies, planning and performance.

5. Policy Principles

Environmental Management at Council is based on six fundamental principles:

- 1. Environmental Commitment** – Council and its employees and contractors actively endorse and demonstrate support for the Environmental Management Policy and foster the development and preservation of an environmentally responsible culture within the organisation.
- 2. Environmental Responsibility** - Environmental Management is accepted as the responsibility of all employees, contractors, volunteers, work experience students and trainees of Council.
- 3. Environmental Management Employees and Resources** - Employees are trained, supported and resourced appropriately in order to perform their duties in a manner consistent with Council's Environmental Management System.
- 4. Environmental Management Data and Information** - Processes are in place to ensure the consistent collection, analysis and retention of environmental management data and information.
- 5. Environmental Management Practices** - Consistent and effective practices will be identified and communicated throughout the organisation through Plans, Policies, Procedures, Templates and Forms.
- 6. Environmental Management Improvement** - Critical, honest and timely self review and evaluation of practices and processes will be conducted to ensure ongoing suitability and adequacy.

6. Policy Objectives

1. Effective Process & Control

- Implement and maintain effective processes to ensure our operations and associated activities are planned and undertaken in a way that assures the identification and control of any potential environmental issues.

[This is not an official copy of Council's Minutes]

2. Ensuring Compliance

- Implement and maintain an environmental management system consistent with legislation and other requirements including the internationally recognised AS/NZS ISO 14001 standard.

3. Consistent Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- Continually monitor, review and improve the Environmental Management System to maintain its integrity and to ensure it keeps pace with the evolution of Council, ratepayers, customers and other industry requirements.

4. Effective Reporting & Investigation

- Establish effective reporting and investigation processes to identify and resolve environmental nonconformities and take relevant action to prevent recurrence.

7. Policy Strategies

Barcaldine Regional Council is committed to achieving its environmental principles by adopting the following strategies:

- Implement an Environmental Management System
- Promote waste reduction and recycling within Council and the general community
- Set measurable environmental targets
- Actively reduce resource consumption in all activities of Council
- Ensure environmental outcomes are included in all planning decisions
- Promote the environmental values of the region to the general community
- Educate all employees and contractors to ensure all Council activities are conducted in an environmentally responsible manner
- Implement a system of continuous improvement for environmental management

Attachment B

SYSTEM:	Infrastructure
POLICY TITLE:	Quality Management Policy
POLICY NUMBER:	I0010
ADOPTED:	16 September 2015
PURPOSE:	To provide products and services which meet the quality expectations of Council's customers and which represent value for money.

1. Outline

This Policy confirms Barcaldine Regional Council's commitment to quality management and describes the Council's approach to quality assurance, quality control and continuous quality improvement.

2. Background

This Policy is prepared in accordance with:

AS/NZS ISO 9001-2008 *Quality Management Systems*
Barcaldine Regional Council Corporate Plan 2015-19
Barcaldine Regional Council Quality Manual

3. Scope

The Quality Management Policy applies to all operations of Barcaldine Regional Council including:

1. Construction and maintenance of Council, State and Federal controlled roads
2. Operation and maintenance of water and sewerage infrastructure
3. Operation and maintenance of parks and gardens
4. Operation and maintenance of swimming pools
5. Operation and maintenance of waste collection and disposal
6. Operation and maintenance of cemeteries
7. Operation and maintenance of airports
8. Operation of administration centres and libraries
9. Operation of auspiced services

4. Policy Statement

Barcaldine Regional Council is committed to quality management in its service to ratepayers and customers by meeting their needs and expectations while conducting council operations and supplying reliable local government services through the application of appropriate technology, process control and management techniques.

Council is committed to continual improvement of its processes and services to achieve increased ratepayer and customer satisfaction. A framework has been developed as part of Council's Quality Management System for establishing, implementing, achieving and reviewing our quality objectives.

Council will endeavour to make quality the focus of all of its activities by regularly reviewing its quality policies and providing leadership for continual improvement of its quality management system. Such reviews and improvements will be based on the changing needs and requirements of the ratepayers and customers of the Region.

5. Policy Principles

Quality Management at Council is based on six fundamental principles:

- 1. Quality Commitment** – Council and its employees and contractors actively endorse and demonstrate support for the Quality Management Policy and foster the development and preservation of a quality focused culture within the organisation.
- 2. Quality Responsibility** - Quality Management is the responsibility of all employees, contractors, volunteers, work experience students and trainees of Council.
- 3. Quality Management Employees and Resources** - Employees are trained, supported and resourced appropriately in order to perform their duties in a manner consistent with Council's Quality Management System.
- 4. Quality Management Data and Information** - Processes are in place to ensure the consistent collection, analysis and retention of quality management data and information.
- 5. Quality Management Practices** - Consistent and effective practices will be identified and communicated throughout the organisation through Plans, Policies, Procedures, Templates and Forms.
- 6. Quality Management Improvement** - Critical, honest and timely self review and evaluation of practices and processes will be conducted to ensure ongoing suitability and adequacy.

6. Policy Objectives

1. Effective Process & Control

Implement and maintain effective processes to ensure Council operations and activities are planned and undertaken in a way that assures a conforming product for all clients – both internal and external.

2. Ensuring Compliance

Implement and maintain a quality management system consistent with legislation and other requirements including the internationally recognised AS/NZS ISO 9001:2008 standard.

3. Consistent Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

Create a quality environment and culture that continues to monitor, review and improve the Quality Management System to maintain its integrity and to ensure it keeps pace with the evolution of Council, our ratepayers, customers and other industry requirements.

4. Effective Reporting & Investigation

Establish effective reporting and investigation processes to identify and resolve quality nonconformities and take relevant action to prevent recurrence.

Attachment C

SYSTEM:	Professional Governance
POLICY TITLE:	Community Engagement Policy
POLICY NUMBER:	
ADOPTED:	16 September 2015
PURPOSE:	To enhance the relationship between the Council and community through quality community engagement.

1. Outline

Community engagement is an important principle in the planning, policy development and decision making process of Council. Council believes that quality community engagement is essential to the foundation of good governance and to enhance the relationship between the community and Council.

2. Background

This Policy affirms Barcaldine Regional Council's commitment to community engagement as reflected in its mission statement-

To provide excellence in local government through extraordinary service to our citizens

It provides a set of principles to guide community engagement practice drawn from internationally accepted community engagement principles - the International Association for Public Participation (iap2) framework.

Meaningful community engagement is a process that:

- is planned, resourced and effectively promoted to those likely to be interested or affected;
- takes into consideration the diversity of the community;
- clearly articulates the level of influence the community has on the decision making process;
- provides a range of accessible opportunities for community participation; and
- provides timely feedback to participants and the broader community showing how community input has been considered and what final outcomes have been determined by Council.

The *Queensland Local Government Act 2009* outlines the in-principle need for local government to engage with the community and to encourage and assist participation, in particular, Section 4 (c) "democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement".

3. Scope

This policy applies to all facets of Council's operations including:

- Corporate governance
- Economic Development
- Provision of Infrastructure

- Community services
- Environment and Heritage Protection

This policy defines the principles underpinning Council's engagement activities, the role of Councillors and employees in engaging with the community, and the mechanisms which Council will use to engage the community.

4. Policy Statement

Barcaldine Regional Council recognises that community engagement and participation processes are a vital part of democracy. Effective engagement is good business practice and critical to good government. For this reason Council is committed to engaging with all of its communities and residents.

The benefits of effective engagement include:

- Council and community working together to address local issues and together achieve better outcomes;
- an effective level of community ownership and acceptance of decisions affecting the Council;
- an effective level of community awareness of Council's services, planning and program delivery;
- an effective level of awareness across Council of community views and the issues that should be considered as part of decision making;
- an effective level of awareness of the needs, priorities and diversity of the local community, which in turn ensures that Council's service provision and planning functions are aligned appropriately;
- the added value of tapping into and drawing upon community expertise, knowledge and experience to optimise Council decision-making;
- the potential for time, resource and cost savings as a result of better alignment of community needs to services; and
- a positive community perception of Council's decision-making processes

5. Policy Principles

Effective community engagement is built on trust, respect and goodwill. Council has a commitment to community engagement that is governed by a set of principles that underpin good engagement processes. The principles are described below:

Integrity and transparency - Engagement involves trust and transparency. The levels of community influence will be clearly communicated. Consultation and higher forms of engagement must be genuinely purposeful and not tokenistic. Council will carefully consider, and accurately portray, the community's role in the decision making process and reflect back how the community has influenced decisions.

Open and inclusive – Council encourages involvement from a wide cross section of the community using engagement processes that are accessible and inclusive;

Mutual respect - Council's goal is to ensure that all voices matter, all opinions are valued and considered. It recognises that both the community and Council are responsible for outcomes.

Timeliness - Council will engage with its community in ways that are timely, open to all, easily understood and not overly bureaucratic or resource intensive.

Well Planned – Engagement requires informed judgement and planning in its approach and implementation in order to be effective, practical and suitably resourced. Consideration will

be given to ensuring that sufficient timeframes and adequate resources are allocated to engagement processes;

Foresight - Council engages with its community not only to learn about and respond to present needs, but also to gain a better understanding of our communities' perspective on emerging issues that may affect our preferred future.

Accountability - Council will seek community engagement to enhance its decision-making. However Council is ultimately responsible and accountable and it will accept its responsibility to make the final decision.

6. Policy Strategies

Engagement around Strategic Issues

By their very nature, these engagements will concern strategic and/or region wide issues. On these issues, Council could involve the community through the establishment of advisory panels and taskforces or through special one-off conferences or other appropriate engagement activities designed to generate dialogue and ideas. Councillors will be consulted to determine the nature and type of their involvement in the strategic issue.

Engagement concerning Local Issues

Council will take a flexible approach on how it engages with the community on local issues. Engagement activities will provide an opportunity to give and receive information and may include the establishment of working or project groups, forums or community meetings. Such activities will be action-focussed and will always involve Council employees.

Engagement Linked to day to day Council Business

Council staff in consultation with Councillors will identify and manage community engagement activities associated with Council's core business and projects approved in Council's budget.

Engagement Activities

Council recognises the full spectrum of engagement activities as contained within the iap2 Spectrum of Public Participation, ranging from informing, consulting, involving, collaborating and empowering.

Council will use different community engagement techniques and communication mechanisms depending on the issue or project, its particular circumstance and the audience it needs to target.

The need for and type of community engagement to be undertaken will be determined at the project planning stage following an analysis of the desired project outcomes. The project plan will also identify the most appropriate communication tool to ensure that the particular target group(s) is well informed of both the issue and related engagement opportunities.

At the planning stage, the project team will also consider whether or not it can obtain the community information it requires from another source, or previous engagement activity, in order to maximise the use of limited resources and minimise the potential for consultation fatigue developing within the community.

Roles and Responsibilities

Councillors and staff play important roles in engaging with the community.

Council will decide the high level strategic issues on which it will engage the community. These issues will be linked to an identified corporate plan priority or a significant emerging issue and will be recorded in a register of community consultations.

Councillors have the responsibility for engaging with local communities; and Council employees have responsibility for engaging the community in their day to day business activities and on agreed projects and place-making activities.

Community Advisory Boards

From time to time Council may establish community advisory boards that will:

- be established by Council resolution;
- have specific terms of reference;
- have a defined time frame;
- report back to Council after each meeting;
- be chaired by a suitable qualified external individual or Councillor or employee;
- identify staff resources to act as project officer and secretary to the taskforce or panel.