

**REPORT
CM/7.5/20.10**

Subject: Draft Community Engagement Policy and Strategy and Community Participation Plan - Exhibition

TRIM No: A20/0140

Author: Julie Peters, Manager, Communications and Engagement
Libby Mackenzie, Community Engagement Co-ordinator

Director: John Clark, Director, Customer Service and Organisation Improvement

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Publicly exhibits the draft Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Strategy attached to the report for a minimum of 42 days.
2. Notes the amendments to the Community Participation Plan set out in the report.
3. Publicly exhibits the draft Community Participation Plan attached to the report for a minimum of 42 days alongside the Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Strategy.

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval to place the draft Community Engagement Policy (CEP) and Strategy (CES) on community consultation for feedback.

As part of the development of these documents, the Community Participation Plan (CPP) has had minor amendments to ensure Council's engagement documents are aligned. As such, this report also seeks endorsement to exhibit the amended CPP with the CEP and CES.

2. Introduction/Background

Council has a long history of engaging with the community in decision-making processes. Council acknowledges the importance of local government in building strong and trusting relationships with the community by operating in a transparent and accountable way.

For the purposes of these engagement documents, community engagement is defined as a planned process with the specific aim of working with the community to shape the decisions or actions of Council in relation to a problem, opportunity or outcome.

Council has a responsibility to work with our community to determine services and service levels, infrastructure, programs and improvements. By working together, we can help ensure we have agreed Council priorities that balance competing interests within Council's budgetary and other constraints.

These documents were developed in accordance with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework.



Figure 1. Integrated Planning and Reporting framework.



Figure 2. Hierarchy of Council's community engagement documents.

The CEP sits underneath the Waverley Community Strategic Plan and sets the guiding framework for Council to deliver on Goal 10.1 of the *Waverley Community Strategic Plan 2018–2019*, to 'engage the local community in shaping the future of Waverley.' It provides clarity on what Council defines as engagement, outlines how we will conduct engagement, and our related roles and responsibilities.

The CES and CPP sit underneath the Policy. The CES provides more in-depth information about when and how the community will be informed and can be involved in projects. The CPP has a similar purpose, specific to local planning matters.


Under these strategic documents sits the Community Engagement Guidelines, an internal document which functions as a worksheet to assist staff in developing appropriate communications and engagement plans for projects.

Council's work is informed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum when determining appropriate community engagement that is aligned with best practice, as outlined below.

IAP2'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM



The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public's role in any public participation process. The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities 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	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	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 work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

© IAP2 International Federation 2014. All rights reserved.

Figure 3. IAP2's public participation spectrum.

3. Relevant Council Resolutions

Meeting and date	Minute No.	Decision
Operations and Community Services Committee 7 November 2017	OC/5.1/17.11	<p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Council adopts the Waverley Council Community Engagement Strategy attached to this report (Attachment 1). Council adopts the Waverley Community Plan: Community Engagement Strategy for implementation attached to this report (Attachment 2). Council names the plan the Waverley Community Strategic Plan. Council adopts the draft themes for community consultation, as set out in this report, subject to:

		<p>(a) Consideration being given to renaming the themes 'Community Assets' and 'Transport Modes and Parking'.</p> <p>(b) The addition of the theme 'Knowledge and Innovation'.</p> <p>5. Council appoints four councillors, comprising the Mayor, Cr Masselos, Cr Wy Kanak and Cr Betts, to form a Waverley Community Strategic Plan Councillor Reference Group to advise Council during the implementation phase of community engagement for the Waverley Community Strategic Plan, in accordance with Attachment 3 to this report.</p> <p>6. The Reference Group considers engagement activities with hard-to-reach groups, children and youth</p>
Finance, Ethics and Strategic Planning Committee 4 October 2005	F-0510.8	<p>That:</p> <p>1. Council adopt the revised Consultation Policy, the Short Guide to Consultation and the Consultation Template.</p> <p>2. Where appropriate, insert reference to consultation with the Bondi and Districts Chamber of Commerce.</p>

4. Discussion

Previous versions

The previously adopted Consultation Policy (2005) and Waverley Council Community Engagement Strategy (2017) as outlined above, will be superseded by the CEP and CES.

Consultation to date

The preparation of the draft CEP and CES involved several engagement techniques, as well as reviewing relevant community feedback received for several projects, such as the Waverley Community Strategic Plan. This is summarised below:

Waverley Community Strategic Plan 2018-2029

Over 2017 and 2018, extensive community consultation was undertaken to inform the review of the Community Strategic Plan 2018—2029. One of the outcomes of this consultations was that the community told us they want more opportunities to engage with Council and to be able to access the information they need to contribute meaningfully. As a result, the Strategic Plan details several commitments across 11 thematic areas that the community identified Council should focus on, including: *Corporate leadership and engagement*: By 2029 Waverley will be an engaged community, confident of the integrity of Council decision making. *Goal 10.1*: Engage the local community in shaping the future of Waverley.

Council has also committed to improving community satisfaction with opportunities to participate in Council decision making from 73% (2018) to 80%, and satisfaction with Council decision making from 77% (2018) to 80% by 2029.

Talk to Us campaign and Phase 1 community consultation

In 2019, the first phase of community consultation was undertaken. This was promoted to the community in a campaign called 'Talk to Us' where we encouraged people to register to the Have Your Say Waverley website to receive the engagement e-news, and to fill in an online survey. Precinct workshop and intercept surveys were conducted as well as a community summit and youth workshops.

Feedback received on the Statement of Commitment was highly positive, with 81% of respondents indicating that it met their expectations of Council.

In June 2020, Council officers ran a dedicated two-week staff engagement period with staff who undertake engagement as part of their roles. The feedback received during this period has also been incorporated into the draft CEP and CES.

On 25 August 2020, a Councillor workshop was undertaken. Feedback from that workshop was also incorporated into the draft CEP and CES.

Key aspects of the documents

The following are key to the CEP, CES and CPP.

The statement of commitment is our vision for engagement, the values and principles then provide more detail, and cover the ways in which we will endeavour to fulfill this statement of commitment.

- Statement of commitment to community engagement:

Council will engage with the community in an inclusive, transparent and accountable way, to make fair and equitable decisions that reflect the needs of the community.

- Community engagement values and principles:

The following values underpin Council's commitment to community engagement:

Values	
1.	We are committed to ensuring those who are impacted by, or have an interest in, a decision or initiative of Council will have fair and equitable access to participating in the decision-making process.
2.	We will carefully consider the needs and interests of all stakeholders, including Council.
3.	We will make every effort to notify and enable the involvement of all stakeholders affected by or interested in a decision.
4.	The level of influence of stakeholders will be appropriate for the nature, complexity and level of impact of the decision being made.
5.	We will provide all relevant information to ensure the community can participate in engagement activities in a meaningful way.
6.	We will report back to participants on how their input affected the final decision or outcome being considered.

The following principles guide and shape our approach to community engagement activities:

Principle	Commitment
1. Build relationships	We will engage in an honest, open and respectful way to build strong relationships and trust within our community.

2. Right to be involved	We believe that our community members have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them.
3. Build capacity	We will work to build the capacity and opportunity for each stakeholder to genuinely participate in decisions that affect them.
4. Clarity of purpose	We will engage with our community with clarity around what the project/initiative/decision is and what the purpose of the engagement process is.
5. Accessible and inclusive	Information and engagement activities will be offered in a range of accessible formats to enable fair and equal access to participation.
6. Timely	We will engage early enough for participation to be meaningful. We will provide enough time for the community to provide input. Engagement timelines will be considered from inception of the project and built into the project timeline and project plan.
7. Tailored	We will use a range of engagement and communication methods that suit the purpose of the project and reach the key stakeholders.
8. Strategic	We will collaborate across Council to ensure our engagement activities are approached in a strategic way to avoid duplication and inefficiencies. We will be conscious of the time of year and other consultation projects when planning our engagement.
9. Transparent and accountable	We will be open with information the community needs to be able to participate meaningfully and communicate how community input influenced the outcome.
10. Representative	We will aim to reach out to all relevant stakeholder groups, including those who face barriers to participation, to ensure a representative sample of the community being impacted by a decision or initiative are able to participate.

Linkages with CPP

The adopted CPP used a version of the principles outlined above. Since the CPP's adoption, these have been updated and thus the CPP has also been amended to include the Statement of Commitment, values and updated principles to ensure alignment between the documents.

5. Financial impact statement/Time frame/Consultation

Financial impact statement

The financial impact of undertaking this consultation will be limited to the staff resources involved in facilitating the consultation, and printing and distribution of materials as already allocated in the Communications and Engagement budget.

Resourcing of the CES is intended to be predominantly resourced from existing staff and budget. During the process of scoping feasibility of each action, additional resourcing may be highlighted as necessary, for which a business case will be drafted and submitted to the internal Executive Leadership Team for consideration.

Time frame

Consultation on the draft documents is planned to take place over a minimum of six weeks to ensure the community is given adequate opportunity to engage in the process. This would commence as soon as practicable following a decision of Council to proceed.

After community consultation has concluded, feedback will be analysed and the final documents presented to Council for consideration and adoption.

Consultation

The engagement plan for the exhibition of the CEP and CES will uphold the values and principles as outlined above, and follow the commitments as set out in the CES, as follows:

- Create a dedicated Have Your Say Waverley project page and enable online submissions.
- Send direct email and/or hard copy mail or flyer to identified stakeholders.
- Hold meetings and workshops with identified stakeholders, including Precincts (1 x minimum)
- Ensure hard copy information is available on request and/or to view, at minimum one of the following customer touchpoints: Customer Service Centre, Library and Mill Hill.
- Ensure a method of receiving hard copy submissions is made available.
- Translate information as relevant.
- Provide a summary of information in Fact Sheets for an accessible approach to the documents.
- Promote engagement opportunities in general Council communication channels including social media, e-news, website, Council page in local media.
- Run at least 1 x external and 1x internal Have Your Say information stall or equivalent online method for Q&A opportunities.
- Email/alert stakeholders on final decision and results of the consultation.

6. Conclusion

In order to progress the consideration of the draft Community Engagement Policy and Strategy, it is recommended that Council undertake the exhibition and consultation program outlined in this report, including the amendments to the Community Participation Plan.

It is proposed a minimum of six weeks consultation period is undertaken, with the feedback analysed and final versions of the documents to return to Council for adoption at a later date.

7. Attachments

1. Draft Community Engagement Policy [↓](#)
2. Draft Community Engagement Strategy [↓](#)
3. Draft Community Participation Plan (Amendment 2) [↓](#)