



Name	COR02 Community Engagement
Policy Type	Council
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Approval Date	16/11/2021
Review Date	15/11/2025

1. Purpose

This Policy outlines the principles and minimum standards of community engagement at Litchfield Council. It demonstrates Council’s commitment to providing genuine and effective community engagement processes.

2. Scope

This policy applies to Councillors, staff, consultants and contractors responsible for undertaking community engagement for or on behalf of Litchfield Council.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

‘IAP2’	International Association of Public Participation
Executive Leadership Team	General Manager Infrastructure and Operations and Business Excellence
Senior Leadership Team	Managers and Advisors

4. Policy Statement

4.1. This policy provides the framework for Litchfield Council’s community engagement.

- 4.1.1. Litchfield Council is committed to effective community engagement, embracing ongoing communications with our community.
- 4.1.2. Council recognises that effective community engagement is vital to good governance and enables good decision making. Council is dedicated to working with our community to ensure the essence and beauty of Litchfield is retained whilst allowing provision for growth.
- 4.1.3. Community engagement can be both proactive and responsive. Proactive community engagement can include but is not limited to; how Litchfield Council seeks and uses community input when making a decision, regulatory processes and major projects.

Responsive community engagement can occur with Council undertaking services and activities to build and maintain relationships with community members and stakeholders.

- 4.1.4. Community engagement allows community members to provide feedback and in turn have influence in Council decisions, and see their influence on, the decisions and actions that impact their lives and our community's future.

4.2. Community engagement process

- 4.2.1. Litchfield Council will consider undertaking community engagement in the following situations:

- To enhance a decision or action using the community's input
- To assist with the identification of community needs and aspirations
- Where the community could be impacted by a project, initiative, service or decision
- When required by resolution or legislation

- 4.2.2. Community engagement processes undertaken by Litchfield Council are guided by the standards developed by the IAP2.

- 4.2.3. Council staff responsible for planning and delivering community engagement will determine the most appropriate level of community participation required, depending on the nature, sensitivity and complexity of the project/initiative being delivered. Community engagement is also dependent on the level of community impact or interest and additional external requirements. Flexibility is required when making decisions regarding the level of community engagement to provide for individual and unique activities.

- 4.2.4. Community engagement processes initiated by Litchfield Council will be accessible, inclusive, transparent, accountable and appropriate for the scope of the project. The selection of community engagement tools will be guided by the IAP2 best practice standards and specific advice from staff who are qualified in community engagement.

- 4.2.5. All community engagement activities will be available on Council's website. Other communication channels will be considered and will be selected according to the unique requirements of each project.

- 4.2.6. The feedback from community engagement will be provided to the decision makers in a fair, balanced and appropriate way in accordance with privacy and record management requirements.

- 4.2.7. In the interest of the whole community, Council has the responsibility to consider, where necessary, other sources of information in conjunction with community input, such as legislative requirements, specialist or expert reports and local or national research studies, in the decision-making process.

4.3. Roles and responsibilities

- 4.3.1. Councillors will; advocate the interests of the local community to governments, act as a responsible partner in government by considering the needs of the community and fostering community cohesion and encouraging active community participation in the community engagement activities.
- 4.3.2. The Chief Executive Officer will; lead the organisation to further embed a culture that strives for and supports community engagement processes and outcomes, encourage a positive, proactive attitude towards community engagement and ensure Council is providing adequate ability to implement the Community Engagement Policy.
- 4.3.3. Executive Leadership Team and Senior Leadership Team together will; lead each division to create a strong community engagement culture that supports success, foster a positive attitude towards community engagement and appropriately resource community engagement projects.
- 4.3.4. Senior Leadership Team will; assess projects for community engagement requirements and opportunities in the planning stage, liaise with staff qualified in community engagement as early as possible, provide information to the Manager Communications and Engagement about the purpose and objective of any community engagement activity and the opportunity for the community to influence the outcome and ensure feedback is captured, recorded and considered appropriately.
- 4.3.5. Staff qualified in community engagement will; build capacity within Council to further embed community engagement practices, provide advice and guidance regarding good practice in community engagement, work with teams to plan, develop and evaluate engagement programs and champion, develop and implement engagement tools and platforms that are diverse and inclusive across a variety of demographics.

4.4. Risk implementations

- 4.4.1. Failure to undertake community engagement poses a risk to Council's reputation and may cause a level of mistrust amongst members of the community which could result in unsuccessful activities or project outcomes.
- 4.4.2. Decisions that are not made with the appropriate community input could result in the perception of Council not being transparent and having made a decision regardless of the community's thoughts.

5. Associated Documents

Community Engagement Strategy

Community Engagement Action Plan

6. References and Legislation

IAP2 Framework

7. Review History

Date Reviewed	Description of changes
22/11/2017	New Policy
16/11/2021	Policy reviewed, minor amendments made.