

Name:	Community Engagement		
Type:	Council Policy		
Owner:	Chief Executive Officer		
Responsible Officer:	Deputy Chief Executive Officer		
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1 PURPOSE

City of Palmerston is committed to open, accessible, and accountable decision-making informed by consultation with the Palmerston community.

This policy provides the governance for meaningful and engaging community engagement practices in Council's planning and decision-making process.

Council must be closely connected to its community, working in partnership to deliver what is needed to support people's lives. In doing so, Council is actively pursuing its communities' trust, through being open, accessible, and accountable.

It is essential that Council has a consistent approach to community engagement in place, and this policy sets out the framework to ensure we achieve this. The processes identified in this Policy complement prescribed statutory requirements.

2 PRINCIPLES

- Inclusive
 - Plan for all-inclusive engagement practices with a diverse audience regardless of age, race, gender, culture or accessibility.
 - Provide a variety of appropriate and accessible opportunities for everyone to offer feedback, including 24/7 online engagement options.
- Transparent
 - Provide appropriate minimum community engagement periods and schedule engagement activities around any conflicting priorities that may affect engagement outcomes.
 - Actively listen to community views and use feedback to inform Council decisions
- Innovative
 - Incorporate, where possible, innovative ways for the community to engage with council that are fit for the purpose of each community engagement
- Adaptable
 - Improve Council's understanding and management of community needs in all community engagement projects through the development of tailored community engagement plans, marketing and communication plans and reports.
- Accountable
 - Evaluate and review the community engagement and provide timely feedback to participants and the broader community explaining how community input has been considered and what final outcomes have been determined by Council.

- Sustainable
 - Practices that aim to meet long term strategic goals for the benefit of the community will be implemented. This will include social equity, and capacity building as well as improved environmental approaches.

3 DEFINITIONS

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

Term	Definition
Consultation	The process of formal and informal consultation or discussion on Council issues.
Engagement	The concept of two-way collaboration with the community to achieve meaningful solutions and build trust.
Stakeholders	Stakeholders are recognised as individuals and groups who have an interest in Council's decision-making and who are affected by Council's decisions.
Statutory	Required, permitted, or enacted by statute
Two-way collaboration	Participating in a conversation in an organic way that allows for reciprocal dialogue and free flowing idea exchange
IAP2	The International Association for Public Participation is an international organisation advancing the practice of public participation. IAP2 supports people who implement or participate in public decision-making processes.

4 POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Community Engagement for projects and initiatives

- 4.1.1 This Policy applies to employees, contractors, volunteers, consultants and any other person(s) undertaking public engagement on behalf of City of Palmerston.
- 4.1.2 Community Engagement methodology will be guided by internal procedural strategies in line with the IAP2 spectrum of Public Participation and include: Consult; Involve; Collaborate; Empower.
- 4.1.3 All community engagement periods will reflect minimum statutory requirements where applicable.
- 4.1.4 Where there is no statutory requirement, selection of the appropriate timeframe and actions will be at the discretion of Council.
- 4.1.5 The Marketing and Communications Team provides advice and assistance for engaging with internal and external stakeholders and keeping this Policy up to date, visible and readily accessible.

4.2 Ongoing community engagement

Council's commitment to engage with the community includes the following ongoing community engagement activities:

- 4.2.1 Open Council meetings including a 30-minute public forum prior to meetings
- 4.2.2 Continued community participation in Advisory Groups and Committees.
- 4.2.3 Open communication channels including phone, email, social media, web and face to face conversations.
- 4.2.3 Regular engagement opportunities with Elected Members.

5 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- 5.1 IAP2 spectrum of public participation
- 5.2 Communications strategy)
- 5.3 Community Plan

6 REFERENCES AND RELATED LEGISLATION

- 6.1 *Local Government Act NT*