



Stakeholder Engagement Policy

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1. Scope

This Policy applies to all employees of Parramatta City Council (PCC or 'Council'), contractors, consultants, steering groups and advisory committees, and any other person who undertakes stakeholder engagement activities on behalf of the Council.

This Policy does not replace any obligation in the *Local Government Act 1993*, *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, *Roads Act 1993* or in any other relevant Act for Council to communicate, consult or engage with the community, nor does it replace the final decision-making of the Councillors or Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The Policy applies where there are no legislative requirements to undertake community consultation or engagement, but Council staff, Councillors or the community has identified a need to undertake engagement regarding a program, project or decision. This includes strategy planning, policy development, City infrastructure projects & services planning.

A supporting *Stakeholder Engagement & Communications Toolkit* will be used as the basis for our approach. The supporting *Toolkit* is based on best practice approach developed by the International Association for Public Participation (iap2) and provides clarity to staff and Project Managers on when it is appropriate to engage, at what level and offers guidance on the tools and techniques that should be used.

This Policy replaces and supersedes Council's Resident's Panel Policy [Policy 189] adopted by Council in September 2006.

Stakeholder Engagement Policy		
Owner: Research & Consultation	Area: CRC	POL No: 335
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2. Purpose

This Policy represents Parramatta City Council's organisation-wide commitment to undertake consistent and best practice stakeholder engagement. For Council, the outcome of effective stakeholder engagement is about having well informed, satisfied and engaged stakeholders who contribute to Council's decision-making processes.

Undertaking effective stakeholder engagement has a number of benefits for Council including increasing community understanding and support for the organisation's goals, improving transparency and accountability, as well as building trust within the community and others.

This Policy also represents Council's formal adoption of the *iap2 Spectrum of Participation* as our platform for embedding a consistent and best practice approach throughout the organisation. Supporting this Policy is a Stakeholder *Engagement & Communications Planning Toolkit* which can be used by Council staff and Project Managers on minor projects or in conjunction with Council's Project Management Parramatta (PMP) methodology for major projects.

3. Definitions

- **Consultation:** to seek advice or information from stakeholders
- **Council:** refers to the City of Parramatta
- **IAP2:** International Association for Public Participation
- **Policy:** refers to this Stakeholder Engagement Policy
- **Stakeholder:** describes members of a local community or the general public including residents, business owners, workers, visitors, community groups and organisations. It may also be used to describe employees, contractors, consultants, professional associations, other levels of government and government agencies.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** is the process by which a stakeholder makes or can influence decisions.

4. Council's engagement charter

Council has developed a set of nine (9) principles that will guide and shape our approach to all our stakeholder engagement activities. We hold ourselves accountable for these principles:

- **Building relationships**
we act in an honest, open and respectful way at all times to build strong relationships, partnerships and trust with our stakeholders
- **Right to be involved**
we believe that our stakeholders have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them
- **Clarity of purpose**
we are clear about why and how we are engaging with our stakeholders

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- **Accessible and inclusive**
we provide a range of engagement activities to ensure that the broadest possible range of stakeholders have the opportunity to participate
- **Timely**
we engage early on and provide sufficient time for stakeholders to provide input
- **Tailored**
we use a range of engagement and communication methods that suit the purpose of engagement and the range of stakeholders involved
- **Coordinated**
we work and collaborate across Council to ensure our engagement activities are coordinated
- **Transparent**
we make our decisions in an open and transparent way and provide feedback to our stakeholders in order to explain our decisions and let them know how their input has influenced the outcome
- **Learning from practice**
we evaluate our engagement activities and learn from the feedback that has been provided to us.

5. When will Council engage?

Council must comply with the following state and national legislation and guidelines which specify when and how we must initiate community consultation:

- Crown Lands Act 1989
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2000
- Integrates Planning & Reporting Guidelines for local government in NSW 2013
- Local Government Act 1993
- Local Government Amendment (Planning & Reporting) Act 2009
- Roads Act 1993
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998

This Policy does not replace Council's obligations to communicate, consult or engage with the community. In the event that the *Local Government Act 1993*, *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* or *Roads Act 1993* is amended so as to make this Policy inconsistent with either Act, this Policy will be altered to make it consistent with these Acts.

Council's requirements to notify the community of development applications are specified within the Parramatta Development Control Plans (2005 and 2011). The Group Manager Outcomes and Development is responsible for ensuring that Council meets its obligations to communicate or consult with the community in relation to development applications, zoning and traffic.

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Where there are no legislative requirements to undertake community consultation or engagement, but Council has identified a need to undertake engagement activities regarding a program, project or decision, this Policy and supporting *Toolkit* will be used as the basis for our approach. Areas where Council will engage the community on include, but are not limited to:

- **Strategy planning**
This refers to the development of strategic plans and projects that informs the Community Strategic Plan, Corporate Plan and other relevant plans.
- **Policy development and/or implementation**
This includes any policy development that has a direct impact on the community.
- **Site specific projects**
This refers to any changes to a site that may have impact on the community such as City infrastructure upgrades.
- **Services planning**
This includes the development and /or improvement of a service.

6. Adopting the iap2 spectrum

The *iap2 Spectrum for Public Participation* is an internationally recognised platform used to provide guidance to the public service, not for profit sector, private industry and communities. The spectrum is a model recommended by the *Division of Local Government* for preparation of Community Engagement Strategies associated with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. Council’s approach to stakeholder engagement is built upon the spectrum.

The spectrum identifies that there are different levels of engagement from “Informing” through to “Empowering”. No single approach to engagement will serve every project. The spectrum requires that the level of engagement must be determined by considering the issue, problem or opportunity requiring engagement, the objectives to be achieved by engaging and the extent that stakeholders can assist Council to make decisions. Definitions for the terms on the spectrum can be found in Council’s supporting *Stakeholder Engagement & Communications Toolkit*.

7. Procedure

All Council officers undertaking or commissioning major programs or projects are required to adhere to this Policy and refer to the *Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit* early in the planning process. Council’s executive and senior staff is responsible to ensure the implementation of this Policy and use of the *Toolkit*.

The *Toolkit* provides clarity on when it is appropriate for Council staff to engage, at what level, the identification of appropriate tools and techniques, as well as monitoring and evaluation of our activities. The level of stakeholder engagement will vary depending on the nature and complexity of the project or decision being made. Consideration will need to be given by staff to stakeholder interest, time, monetary constraints and legislative requirements. The level of engagement should be determined in consultation with the Customer Relations and

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Communications Unit (CRC). Resources required for each individual project will be the responsibility of the service unit undertaking the project. For some Citywide programs and projects, a detailed engagement and communications plan may need to be prepared and submitted to Council for endorsement. Examples include major City infrastructure upgrades and Citywide planning documents (City Plan and Corporate Plan).

The following stakeholder impact matrix has been taken from the supporting *Toolkit* and will be used as a guide by staff to determine the level of impact the program or project will likely have upon stakeholders. Generally speaking, the higher the level of impact, the greater the level of stakeholder engagement that is required.

Stakeholder impacts/Risk	Level of impact/risk	Examples	Level of engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for a high level of controversy and /or conflict across PCC/ local areas High level of interest across PCC/ local areas 	High Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of City/Community Plan or Strategy e.g. Parramatta 2038 City infrastructure e.g. Parramatta Square LEP review/ DCPs Corporate Plan Naming of new community facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empower/ Collaborate Involve Consult Inform
Stakeholder impacts/Risk	Level of impact/risk	Examples	Level of engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for some of controversy and /or conflict across PCC/ local areas High level of interest across PCC/ local areas 	Medium Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redevelopment of sporting facilities or playground Changes to major event e.g. Australia Day Changes to existing service e.g. Loop Bus Service Major changes to an existing community service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve Consult Inform
Stakeholder impacts/Risk	Level of impact/risk	Examples	Level of engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low to no level of risk of creating controversy and /or conflict across PCC/local areas Council Low level of community interest across PCC or local areas 	Low Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to local event e.g. Family Fun Days Upgrades to neighbourhood parks and playgrounds Local Street Upgrade Local minor traffic proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult Inform

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8. Performance measures and review

Community satisfaction with Council's engagement processes will be measured annually via a Community Satisfaction Survey.

This Policy shall be reviewed in the first year of every new council term.

The responsible officer for this Policy is Coordinator Research and Consultation. The responsible officer can be contacted for advice on the content or application of the Policy.

9. Associated documents

Council has a number of other policies and guidelines in place already that link to the Stakeholder Engagement Policy.

- Access & Equity Policy / POLICY 60 [V2]
- Code of Conduct / POLICY218 [V4]
- Customer Service / POLICY281
- Customers Compliments and Complaints Policy / POLICY216 [v3]
- Customer Service / POLICY281
- Education And Public Programs / POLICY080
- Equal Employment Opportunity EEO Policy / POLICY038 [v3]
- Guidelines for Public Consultation: Access Issues to Consider
- Leasing / Licensing Council Facilities / Community Access / POLICY128
- Parramatta City Council Stakeholder Engagement & Communications Toolkit [V1]
- Parramatta 2038 – Community Strategic Plan
- Parramatta Corporate Plan 2013/14 – 2016/17
- Parramatta Development Control Plan 2005
- Parramatta Development Control Plan 2011
- Project Management Parramatta 2010 [V2]
- Public Domain Guidelines and Urban Design 2011
- Recruitment and Selection Policy / POLICY002 [v3]
- Stakeholder Engagement & Communications Planning Toolkit
- Sustainable Events Guidelines
- White Paper – A new planning system for NSW 2013

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