



Community & Stakeholder Engagement Policy

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1. Scope

This Policy applies the (yet to commence) amendment made to the NSW Local Government Act by the *Local Government Amendment (Governance and Planning) Act 2016* which will insert a new provision, section 402A which will require the following:

*A council must establish and implement a strategy (called its **community engagement strategy**) for engagement with the local community when developing its plans, policies and programs and for the purpose of determining its activities (other than routine administrative matters).*

The Local Government Amendment (Governance and Planning) Act 2016 (“the amending act”) was assented to on 30 August 2016. The new provision (402A) of the amending act will commence on a day to be appointed by proclamation.

This Policy does not replace any obligation in *the Local Government Act Amendments 2016* or in any other relevant Act for Council to communicate, consult or engage with the community. In the event that the *Local Government Act Amendment (Governance and Planning) 2016* or any other relevant Act is amended so as to make this Policy inconsistent with the Act, this Policy will be altered to make it consistent with the Act.

This Policy prescribes Councils commitment to engagement with the local community when developing its plans, policies and programs and for the purpose of determining its activities (other than routine administrative matters).

Community and Stakeholder Engagement Policy		
Owner: Research & Consultation	Area: MCI	POL No: 355
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This Policy is relevant across all activities of Council where community consultation or engagement is undertaken. This includes but is not limited to strategy planning, policy and action plan development, City infrastructure projects, key planning instruments, maintenance and capital works & services planning.

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

This Policy replaces and supersedes the Resident's Panel Policy [Policy 189] adopted by Council in September 2006 and the Stakeholder Engagement Policy [Policy 355] adopted by Council in 2014.

2. Definitions

- **Consultation:** to seek advice or information from stakeholders
- **Council:** refers to the City of Parramatta Council
- **IAP2:** International Association for Public Participation
- **IAP2 Spectrum of Participation:** an internationally recognised platform used to provide guidance to the public service, not for profit sector, private industry and communities for preparation of Community Engagement Strategies
- **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.

3. Purpose

This Policy represents Council's organisation-wide commitment to undertake consistent and best practice stakeholder engagement. For Council, the outcome of effective stakeholder engagement is 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 the platform for embedding a consistent and best practice approach throughout the organisation.

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4. Policy

- Council will engage with the local community when developing its plans, policies and programs and for the purpose of determining its activities (other than routine administrative matters).
- Councils approach to community and stakeholder engagement is based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Participation.
- Councils Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Planning Toolkit will be used to guide the planning and delivery of all community and stakeholder engagement activities.
- The nine (9) principles that guide and shape Councils approach to all stakeholder engagement activities are:
 - i. **Building relationships**
we act in an honest, open and respectful way at all times to build strong relationships, partnerships and trust with our stakeholders
 - ii. **Right to be involved**
we believe that our stakeholders have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them
 - iii. **Clarity of purpose**
we are clear about why and how we are engaging with our stakeholders
 - iv. **Accessible and inclusive**
we provide a range of engagement activities to ensure that the broadest possible range of stakeholders have the opportunity to participate
 - v. **Timely**
we engage early on and provide sufficient time for stakeholders to provide input
 - vi. **Tailored**
we use a range of engagement and communication methods that suit the purpose of engagement and the range of stakeholders involved
 - vii. **Coordinated**
we work and collaborate across Council to ensure our engagement activities are coordinated
 - viii. **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
 - ix. **Learning from practice**
we evaluate our engagement activities and learn from the feedback that has been provided to us.

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5. Associated documents

This Policy is one of three documents which are linked as a suite consisting of:

- Community Engagement Strategy
- Community and Stakeholder Engagement Policy
- Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Planning Toolkit

The Community Engagement Strategy reflects the ambitions of the City to create a shared vision across engagement. It aims to provide a roadmap for creating and maintaining good relationships and effective engagement with our community and stakeholders. It will act as a guide for consultation, research and engagement across the organisation in order to ensure best practice engagement with our communities now and into the future.

The Stakeholder *Engagement and Communications Planning Toolkit* outlines the processes that must be adhered to by staff and is to be used as the best-practice basis for Council's approach. The supporting *Toolkit* is based on International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) and provides clarity on when it is appropriate to engage, at what level and offers guidance on the tools and techniques that should be used.

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 *Department of Local Government* for preparation of Community Engagement Strategies associated with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Council has a number of other policies and guidelines that are associated with the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Policy. This list includes, but is not limited to:

- City of Parramatta Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Toolkit [V3]
- City of Parramatta Community Engagement Strategy [v1]
- Access & Equity Policy / POLICY 60 [V2]
- Code of Conduct / POLICY218 [V7]
- Customer Service / POLICY281
- Customers Compliments and Complaints Policy / POLICY216 [v3]
- Equal Employment Opportunity EEO Policy / POLICY038 [v4]
- Recruitment and Selection Policy / POLICY002 [v3]
- Leasing / Licensing Council Facilities / Community Access / POLICY128
- Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011
- Parramatta Development Control Plan 2011
- Public Domain Guidelines and Urban Design 2011
- Guidelines for Public Consultation: Access Issues to Consider
- Privacy Management Plan

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- Portfolio, Program and Project Management Framework (P3M Framework) [V2.0 August 2016]
- Parramatta 2038 – Community Strategic Plan
- Vision and Priorities Document 2016
- Parramatta Operational Plan 2017/18

Further, there are a number of State and National legislation and guidelines which specify when and how but is not limited to the below when Council must initiate community consultation:

- Local Government Act Amendment (Governance and Planning) 2016
- Local Government Act Amendment (Planning & Reporting) Act 2009
- Local Government Act 1993
- Crown Lands Act 1989
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000
- Integrated Planning & Reporting Guidelines for Local Government in NSW 2013
- Roads Act 1993
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998

REFERENCES	
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