



**Community
Engagement
Plan
2012**

Endorsed by Council 21 November 2012

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Introduction

This Community Engagement Plan is being developed as identified in the Shire of Chittering Community Strategic Plan 2012 – 2022 (*Hardcastle, 2012*).

Community is made up of the people who live, work, visit or invest in the Shire of Chittering Local Government Area. Community Engagement is the process through which the Community are informed about and/or invited to contribute to proposals relating to Shire events, issues, plans, projects and services.

Purpose

A Community Engagement Plan will:

- Establish a standard process for community engagement;
- Ensure that the process is implemented by Shire staff and external consultants;
- Ensure that inclusive and efficient consultation is undertaken at all times;
- Ensure that the Community is kept informed of decisions.

A Community Engagement Plan will ensure that:

- Community members are given the opportunity to contribute to processes.
- Council has the opportunity to consider Community input before making decisions;

Following the principles of the *International Association for Public Participation Australasia (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum* the Plan contains four key strategies:

1. Inform
2. Consult
3. Involve
4. Collaborate

Each strategy has a specific goal, a commitment to the Community and a set of methodologies.

Scope

This Community Engagement Plan relates to many activities undertaken by the Shire with the exception of notifications in relation to statutory notifications. Where legislative requirements exist which address specific information / consultation processes, the legislative requirements take precedence.

Benefits

There are a number of benefits from having a Community Engagement Plan, including:

- Commits the Shire and Council to being open and accountable;
- Assists the Shire and Council to plan services that continue to meet Community needs;
- Enables the Shire and Council to prioritise services and make better use of resources;
- Allows the broadest range of views to be expressed;
- Ensures the maximum amount of information is gathered prior to making decisions;
- Sees the Shire, Council and Community working together to achieve balanced decisions;
- Offers opportunities for the Community to contribute to and influence outcomes which directly affect their lives;
- Ensures an open and familiar process which becomes easier for Community members to participate in.

Please note: *The Community is consulted about a wide variety of issues by a range of people in many ways. The Shire recognises this and so as not to over consult (we hear you – “we have already told you what we want, why are you asking us again?”) existing timely research and findings of other consultations that the Shire or other agencies have recently conducted, may be utilised.*

Community Engagement Strategy 1: Inform

Information dissemination is the primary form of community engagement. In order to be able to actively engage in the Shire's decision making processes, the Community requires information in a variety of ways.

Goal

To provide the Community with appropriate information regarding Shire events, issues, plans, projects and services to ensure that they understand the problems, alternatives, opportunities and / or solutions.

Commitment to the Community

"We will keep you informed, ensuring that information is accessible, relevant and easy to understand"

Methodology: How

By ensuring that up-to-date information is available on the Shire's processes, meeting agendas / minutes, services, projects and on how residents may feed back any issues, concerns and suggestions for service improvements. All information must be in a form that is accessible to all groups in the Community ie. people with disabilities, people with computer literacy difficulties, young people, the aged and, people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The three main channels of communication for the Shire of Chittering will be;

- **Advertising – Chatter @ Chittering** – Shire newsletter, available monthly in the Northern Valleys News, on the Shire website, via email (upon subscription) and at Shire facilities.
- **Email Notification** - to Shire lists, including but not limited to; the Chamber of Commerce, Community Groups, identified Stakeholders and subscribed Community members (through the Shire newsletter).
- **Website** - www.chittering.wa.gov.au, an up-to-date source of information on Shire events, issues, plans, projects and services, including the Shire newsletter.

Additional methods could include;

- **Advertising - Newspapers** – where statutory requirements exist advertisements will be placed in relevant newspapers.
- **Fact Sheets** – for more complex issues, flyers, posters, brochures and reports will be available from Shire facilities, notice boards, the web site or via mail upon request.
- **Media Releases / Interviews** – as major events, issues, plans, projects and service initiatives arise.

For emergency information dissemination only;

- **SMS** - subscribed list.

Future consideration will be given to;

- **Social Networking** – Facebook and / or online blog.

When

Ongoing, as Shire events, issues, plans, projects and services arise or are scheduled.

Who

Entire Community, noting that Community members need to be aware of the methods used.

Evaluation and Accountability

Through the Shire of Chittering Community Engagement Checklist (page 10). The use of this Checklist (and/or statutory / departmental checklists / templates) will be monitored on an ongoing basis by an allocated member of staff.

Community Engagement Strategy 2: Consult

Consultation takes place when feedback is required in relation to:

- The development of new strategies and plans;
- The review and evaluation of existing strategies and plans;
- The planning and development of new services and infrastructure;
- The review and evaluation of existing services and infrastructure;
- Issues which impact on or are of concern to the Community, including:
 - Broad community issues ie. Community Safety;
 - Specific community issues ie. Seniors and Youth; and
 - Area issues ie. traffic management and land use changes.

Goal

To capture Community input on strategic plans, directions, issues, priorities and projects.

Commitment to the Community

“We will listen to you, consider your ideas and keep you informed about the input received, the consideration of this input and the final decision/s reached”

Methodology: How

Community consultation techniques will vary depending on who is being consulted and the nature / complexity of the issue. Available resources will also determine the type of techniques that can be utilised ie. the timeframe, funds and staff available.

In addition to the information techniques one of the following consultation techniques could be utilised;

- **Information Stalls:** staffed displays at local ‘hubs’, markets and/or festival days. The Community can drop in at their convenience to peruse information and have their questions answered by, and/or provide feedback to, Shire staff.
- **Public Meetings / Forums** - at various locations / localities, as appropriate.
- **Surveys / Questionnaires:** a series of relevant questions with the collated replies available for consideration and distribution. These may be conducted via mail, email / web or in person, for example venues could include but are not limited to homes / schools / businesses / community meetings to ensure the inclusion of Community members who may not normally be able to participate in community engagement.

When

The Shire and Council will ensure that the Community is consulted on issues which impact on or are of concern to the Community in a timely manner to allow adequate comment to occur and be analysed in order to inform decision making processes.

Who

All Community members who are identified as being directly impacted will be consulted, with the whole community being informed. Stakeholders will vary according to the issue, but could include residents, ratepayers, businesses, volunteers, those who visit or work in the municipality, other service providers/agencies, community groups, other levels of government, peak bodies, etc. It could also include particular groups within the Community, ie. older people, families, children, youth, different ethnic groups, business people, people with a disability, etc.

Evaluation and Accountability

Through the Shire of Chittering Community Engagement Checklist (page 10). The use of this Checklist (and/or statutory / departmental checklists / templates) will be monitored on an ongoing basis by an allocated member of staff.

Community Engagement Strategy 3: Involve

Involvement enables the Community to provide ongoing and in-depth input into community planning and into the development of solutions that are best able to meet Community needs. It enables the Community to have substantial input into the development of services.

Goal

To work on an ongoing basis with the Community to ensure that ideas, concerns and aspirations are listened to and understood and that Community knowledge is harnessed for the benefit of all.

Commitment to the Community

“We will work with you on an ongoing basis to ensure that your ideas, concerns and aspirations are considered, we will provide feedback on Shire decisions”

Methodology: How

Community involvement techniques will vary depending on who is being involved and the nature / complexity of the issue. Available resources will also determine the type of techniques that can be utilised ie. the timeframe, funds and staff available.

In addition to the information and consultation techniques one of the following involvement techniques could be utilised;

- **Focus Groups:** open by invitation to specific groups with relevant experience of the issue.
- **Referendum / Community Ballots:** a single question is posed, with the option to vote “YES” or “NO”, with a clear explanation of the outcomes pertaining to each selection.
- **Workshops:** open to the Community with the aim of briefing interested Community members and receiving their feedback.

When

The Shire will ensure that the Community is involved on issues which impact on and / or are of concern to the Community or to any group within the Community in a timely manner to allow adequate involvement to occur and be analysed in order to inform decision making processes.

Who

Community members who are impacted will be invited to be involved. Stakeholders will vary according to the issue, but could include residents, ratepayers, businesses, volunteers, those who visit or work in the area, other service providers/agencies, community groups, other levels of government, peak bodies, etc. It could also include particular groups within the Community, ie. older people, families, children, youth, different ethnic groups, business people, people with a disability, etc.

Evaluation and Accountability

Through the Shire of Chittering Community Engagement Checklist (page 10). The use of this Checklist (and/or statutory / departmental checklists / templates) will be monitored on an ongoing basis by an allocated member of staff.

Community Engagement Strategy 4: Collaborate

Collaboration enables Council to partner with the Community to ensure that the each aspect of the decision making process is worked on together.

Goal

To work as partners to gain higher quality and more specialist input into the Shire's planning and decision making processes.

Commitment to the Community

"We will partner with you to receive your advice and innovation, we will consider then incorporate your recommendations into the decisions made wherever feasible"

Methodology: How

Community collaboration techniques will vary depending on who is being collaborated with and the nature / complexity of the issue. Available resources will also determine the type of techniques that can be utilised ie. the timeframe, funds and staff available.

In addition to the information, consultation and involvement techniques one of the following collaboration techniques could be utilised;

- **Council Committees:** established by Council through invitation and expressions of interest (advertised). Composition as per legislative requirements, refer to the Committee Booklet (file reference number 04/06/0001, document reference number N11821). Currently established Shire of Chittering Committees include;
 - Audit Committee
 - Australia Day Advisory Committee
 - Chittering Bush Fire Advisory Committee
 - Chittering Community Planning Advisory Committee
 - Chittering Community Support Funding Committee
 - Chittering Education Scholarship Committee
 - Chittering Health Advisory Committee
 - Chittering Mining Advisory Committee
- **Working Groups:** established by the Shire with a particular focus. The composition of a Working Group would be determined by the Shire together with specific terms of reference and reporting mechanisms. The Group would cease to function once their work was complete.

When

The Shire will collaborate with the Community whenever an event, issue, plan, project or service which will impact on the Community arises that is suitable to be collaborated upon in a timely manner.

Who

All community members are encouraged to become involved.

Evaluation and Accountability

Through the Shire of Chittering Community Engagement Checklist (page 10). The use of this Checklist (and/or statutory / departmental checklists / templates) will be monitored on an ongoing basis by an allocated member of staff.

Levels of Engagement

The level of engagement undertaken will relate to the extent of community impact or interest associated with the proposed Shire events, issues, plans, projects and services.

Level 0 – No Engagement: no specific action is required when:

- No impact on the Community or locality is likely; or
- Consultation is precluded under relevant legislation; or
- Consultation has previously occurred.

Level 1 – Inform: this level of engagement will be utilised where:

- Community members are not likely to be detrimentally impacted by the proposed event, issue, plan, project or service; or
- Statutory requirements for notification exist; or
- Consultation has previously occurred and minor modifications to address previous concerns raised are proposed.

This level of engagement will raise awareness about the proposed event, issue, plan, project or service, establish communication links with the Community, encourage active participation and build trust and confidence between the Council, the Shire and the Community.

Level 2 – Consult: this level of engagement will be utilised where:

- Community members are likely to be impacted by the proposed event, issue, plan, project or service; or
- Statutory requirements for consultation exist.

In addition to Level 1 this level of engagement will collect views, opinions and ideas and foster community pride.

Level 3 – Involve: this level of engagement will be utilised where:

- Community members are likely to be majorly / detrimentally impacted by the proposed event, issue, plan, project or service; or
- Statutory requirements for involvement exist.

In addition to Levels 1 and 2 this level of engagement will encourage active participation and foster community support.

Level 4 – Collaborate: this level of engagement will be utilised where:

- There is the opportunity for collaboration.

In addition to Levels 1, 2,3 and 4 this level of engagement will make the Community partners and foster community ownership.

Acknowledgement of Feedback

General feedback will be summarised as part of the evaluation process.

Where written submissions are called for the submitter will receive acknowledgement of their submission and advice as to when all submissions will be considered. All submissions received will be summarised and when a decision has been made the submission summary will be made available directly to all submitters and via the previously detailed communication channels to the Community.

Guideline to Proposed Levels of Engagement

COMMUNITY SERVICES		
Burning Restrictions and Harvest Bans	1	*~
Council Meetings – Ordinary	1	*
Council Meetings – Committee’s of Council	1	*
Council Meetings – Special Meetings	1	*
Events – to attend	1	
Events – to participate in / with	4	
Firebreak Notification	1	
Grant Opportunities	1	
Shire Newsletter	1	
Shire service provision changes (<i>ie library opening times</i>)	1	
CORPORATE SERVICES		
Annual Electors Meeting	2	
Asset Management Planning	2	
Community Strategic Plan	3	
Corporate Business Plan (<i>from Community Strategic Plan</i>)	1	
Local Law Development	1	*
Long Term Financial Planning	1	
Rates - new structure or format	2	*
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES		
Building Applications (<i>engagement is during planning process</i>)	1	*
Development Plans and Structure Plans		*
Food Business Education and Training		*^
Local Planning Scheme Review		*
Planning Application (including demolition of a building)		*^
Planning Application (including demolition) <i>building is on the Municipal Inventory</i>		*#
Planning Application (including demolition) <i>building is on the State Heritage List</i>		*#
Planning Application for a Building Envelope Variation		*
Planning Application for a Setback Variation		*
Planning Application for Development - A uses, not in zoning table		*
Planning Application for Development - D uses		*
Planning Application for Development - P or X uses		*
Scheme Amendment		*
Subdivision Referrals		*
Swimming Pool Inspections - 4 year, statutory		*^
TECHNICAL SERVICES		
Footpath - Construction	1	*^
Forward Infrastructure Management Programs		*
Road – Maintenance / Upgrading		*^
Road Closure – Festivals and Events		*^
Road Closure – Permanent		*
Road Closure – Temporary		*
Street Tree - Removal / Planting		*^

* Consultation Procedures are already set out by Local Law, existing legislation (Local Government Act 1995, Land Administration Act, Town Planning Scheme, Residential Planning Codes, Road Traffic Code, etc).

Includes consultation with a Heritage Advisor or the State Heritage Council

^ Mailed letter to affected resident/s, ratepayer/s, business/es and / or group/s

~ Subscribed emergency list

Community Engagement Plan



Project Name

Purpose:			
Timeline:	Start Date:		Outcomes By:
Stakeholders to be considered. <i>Please highlight those to be targeted during engagement.</i>	Aged	Ratepayers (all / targeted)	
	Businesses	Residents (all / targeted)	
	Children (<i>School / Playgroup</i>)	Service Providers	
	Community Groups	Unemployed	
	Disabled People	Visitors	
	Environmental	Volunteers	
	Families	Workers	
	Govt. Bodies	Youth	
	Indigenous	Other	
Neighbouring Shires	Other		
Staff to be notified:	CEO / ESO	Councillors	
	Corporate Services	Consultant/s	
	Development Services	Other	
	Technical Services	Other	
Community Engagement Plan			
Methods	Responsible	Date Due	Complete / Attached
1.1 Chatter@Chittering			
1.2 Email Notification ~			
1.3 Website			
1.4 Advert - Newspaper			
1.5 Fact Sheet			
1.6 Media Rel./Interview			
2.1 Information Stalls			
2.2 Public Meeting/Forum			
2.3 Survey/Questionnaire			
3.1 Focus Group			
3.2 Referendum/Ballot			
3.3 Workshop			
4.1 Council Committee			
4.2 Working Group			
* Statutory Consultation			
# Heritage Consultation			
^ Mailout (note: timeliness)			
Other:			
Evaluation			
Summary of...		Date Due	Complete / Attached
Feedback / Results / Outcomes / Recommendations			
Outcomes Shared			
Methods	Responsible	Date Due	Complete / Attached
Chatter@Chittering			
Email Notification			
Website			
Other			