



Community Engagement Policy



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Document Control

Policy	Community Engagement Policy	Policy Number	TBA
Author/Reviewer	Executive Director Corporate & Community	Review Period and Date	Reviewed within 12 months of election/4 yearly - September

This policy shall be reviewed: -

- This policy shall be reviewed within 12 months of an election, and thereafter at four yearly intervals at least, to ensure it meets all statutory requirements and the needs of council. It may also be reviewed at other times as determined by council.

Document History

Date	Status	Version	Resolution	Description
24 May 2017	Draft	0.1		Presented to Council for endorsement, public exhibition 28 days
24 May 2017	Draft	0.2	17/112	Placed on public exhibition 28 days
23 June 2017	Final	1.0	17/112	Adopted



1. Introduction

Community engagement has been defined as: “Any process that involves the community in problem solving or decision making and uses community input to make better decisions.”

Community engagement is a two-way process that seeks to inform, identify issues and seek resolutions by utilising community input using a range of techniques.

Engagement does not replace the final decision making power of Councillors or the General Manager, but can provide a valuable influence in assisting the Council to make well-informed, acceptable and sustainable decision

2. Objectives

This policy is aimed at increasing the level of public understanding, awareness and participation in the Hilltops Council LGA. The policy outlines a range of measures to achieve these aims.

In seeking community engagement, Council will be looking to attain one or more of the following objectives:

- a) To increase awareness of Councils functions, activities and responsibilities.
- b) To advise stakeholders of issues that may affect them.
- c) To reach and engage with all members of the community.
- d) To increase the level of effective consultation with the community.
- e) To gain meaningful feedback on matters raised.
- f) To receive and respond to queries, complaints, suggestions and feedback from members of the community
- g) To improve how Council plans for and delivers services to the community

3. Legislation and Other References

- Local government Act 1993
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2005
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009
- International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) engagement model

4. Community Engagement Principles

Hilltops Council has adopted the following four principles to guide its community engagement process:

- **Inclusive participation** - Council believes the community has a right to be informed and involved in key decisions affecting their area, lifestyles and particular interests.
- **Open and transparent disclosure** - Council is committed to ensuring the community will have all relevant information to participate in community engagement activities in a meaningful way.
- **Commitment to communicating regularly with the community** - the Council's engagement processes will provide genuine opportunities for the community to influence decisions and strategic planning.
- **Consideration of engagement outcomes and provision for feedback** Council will consider all contributions and relevant information prior to making decisions that impact local community interests. The Council is committed to providing open and honest feedback to the community on activities and how the community contributions have influenced final decisions.

5. Planning and Implementation of Community Engagement

Council is committed to delivering on the objectives of this policy by developing and implementing a community engagement strategy which details why, when with who and how community engagement will occur. In addition, Council will develop community engagement plans for major initiatives that are likely to involve community engagement.