

TITLE:	Community Consultation Policy		
DIVISION:	Public Relations		
ADOPTED BY:	Council		
DATE OF ADOPTION:	July 2019	DATE OF REVIEW:	July 2022
MOTION NUMBER:	CP 218/19		
POLICY NUMBER:	CP04		
AUTHORISED:	Chief Executive Officer		

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO:

All employees and Elected Members of the Barkly Regional Council (Council)

SUMMARY

This Policy outlines Council's commitment to maintaining strong community consultation and engagement, particularly with the remote communities within the Barkly region and establishes the principles by which the Council will undertake community consultation. By providing a quality level of community consultation in line with Council's Remote Communication Policy and the Remote Engagement and Coordination Strategy, Council will provide a more efficient communication network and ensure that all voices within the region are heard and considered.

OBJECTIVES

This Policy aims to:

- Promote an efficient two-way communication network with the effective exchange of important information;
- Ensure Council's commitment to maintaining sound community consultation, particularly in the Barkly communities;
- Clearly establish when and how community consultation will occur;
- Accurately identify the true issues raised at each consultation; and
- Outline how the consultation process will be managed.

BACKGROUND

Council recognises the challenges associated with remote communication in the Barkly region due to the many cultural groups, languages and cultural practices within the region and acknowledges that the understanding and respect of these different ways is critical to successful work in these communities.

Engaging with the community is part of Council's undertaking to operate with high standards of communication, transparency and openness. This undertaking ensures that Council is open and accountable to the community and provides sufficient opportunity for feedback. Council recognises that the community are knowledgeable and passionate about their communities and intends to involve the relevant community in the decision making process in decisions that affect their interests.

Community consultation allows Council access to wider sources of information, points of view and potential solutions. It gives the community a better understanding of the issues behind the decision making process and the related constraints or opportunities that exist. Council acknowledges that by involving a cross section of the community in a consultative process, it can make better decisions.

POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy is based on the Remote Engagement and Coordination Strategy and the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) model as amended from time to time. This Policy aims to complement the existing 1AP2 model and in the event of an inconsistency between this Policy and the IAP2 Model, the provisions of the Model takes precedence. The link for the IAP2 is provided in the Reference section of this policy.

IAP2 SPECTRUM OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION¹

Increasing The Level Of Public Impact → → → →

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
<p><u>Public Participation Goal:</u> To provide balanced and objective information to assist understanding of topic, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.</p>	<p><u>Public Participation Goal:</u> To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.</p>	<p><u>Public Participation Goal:</u> To work with the public throughout the process to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.</p>	<p><u>Public Participation Goal:</u> To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including development of alternatives and identification of preferred solution.</p>	<p><u>Public Participation Goal:</u> To place final decision making in the hands of the public.</p>
<p><u>Promise to the Public:</u> We will keep you informed.</p>	<p><u>Promise to the Public:</u> We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how input influenced the decision.</p>	<p><u>Promise to the Public:</u> We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how input influenced the decision.</p>	<p><u>Promise to the Public:</u> We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.</p>	<p><u>Promise to the Public:</u> We will implement what you decide.</p>

POLICY

<u>Example techniques</u>	<u>Example techniques</u>	<u>Example techniques</u>	<u>Example techniques</u>	<u>Example techniques</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fact Sheets ▪ Web sites ▪ Open Days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public comment ▪ Focus Groups ▪ Surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshop ▪ Deliberate polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen Advisory Committees ▪ Consensus building ▪ Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen juries ▪ Ballots ▪ Delegated decisions

This Policy aims to reflect the IAP2 Model and in the event the IAP2 Model is changed, this Policy reflects those changes.

Throughout the process of community engagement, there is likely to be movement back and forth along the Spectrum as the plan is implemented and/or before Council makes a final decision.

BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

While many aspects of engagement and coordination are universal, some are specific to the work that takes place in remote areas. Council will consider the below when seeking community consultation:

1. Community

Each community has its own cultures and own dynamics and these must be considered when providing information to and receiving information from remote communities.

2. Project

The project and the reasons for the project's inception must be clearly communicated in a mode and method suitable to that community's needs. The community must be involved in the inception of the project idea and the design scope and must be clearly informed of the process leading up until the completion of the project.

3. Relationships

Council is committed to maintaining sound relationships with the local people of our communities. These relationships will be facilitated by the Area Managers and Team Leaders and through the Local Authorities of each community. Particular emphasis will be placed on ensuring that the projects up for discussion are made with the free informed consent of the local constituents of the location the project is proposed to be undertaken.

4. Time

Council will allow for as much time as reasonably practicable given the circumstances to ensure that the topics up for discussion are discussed in a considered and structured way. There will be no time constraints on the decision-makers to decide on a project unless a date is clearly specified and communicate to those people.

5. Communication

Communication is a critical aspect of the community consultation process. Council will ensure that once a decision has been made on a particular issue, that community will be fully informed of the actions arising and the follow up steps. Particular attention will be given to the manner in which the feedback is provided to the community.

PRINCIPLES

Council will:

- Involve and inform the relevant community in a manner and method relevant to them about key decisions that may affect them and consider all reasonable suggestions raised;
- consult with the Local Authority of a particular community prior to making a decision if a decision may affect that community;
- Ensure the best interests of the community prevail over individual or vested interests; and
- seek to balance community views and interests with other influences such as budgetary constraints.

LEGISLATION, TERMINOLOGY AND REFERENCES

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) - <http://www.iap2.org.au/spectrum.pdf>
Remote Engagement and Coordination Strategy
Remote Communication Policy

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELEGATION

The Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for implementation of the Policy.

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This Policy is to be reviewed every three (3) years or at other times at the discretion of Chief Executive Officer.