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| <b>TITLE:</b>            | Community Consultation Policy |                        |           |
| <b>DIVISION:</b>         | Public Relations              |                        |           |
| <b>ADOPTED BY:</b>       | Council                       |                        |           |
| <b>DATE OF ADOPTION:</b> | June 2020                     | <b>DATE OF REVIEW:</b> | June 2023 |
| <b>MOTION NUMBER:</b>    | OC236/20                      |                        |           |
| <b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>    | CP04                          |                        |           |
| <b>AUTHORISED:</b>       | 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 Community Consultation Plan, 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:

- Inform stakeholders and the community about new projects, including the projects purpose, benefits;
- Communicate the timeline and strategy for all community consultation;
- Create an inclusive consultation period that encourages the community and residents to engage with Council staff in a constructive manner;
- Set out key messages and consultation materials to provide clarity to the public; and
- Define consultation efforts and strategies for three different types of consultation; infrastructure, program delivery and external support.

**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 Community Consultation Plan and the Principals and Core Values outlined in this plan. 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.

## **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

As per the most up to date Community Consultation Plan each project should follow the recommended timeframe guidelines. This timeline can be adjusted according to the nature of the consultation, but should not deviate exponentially from the timeline in the Community Consultation Plan. In the instance the consultation requires a second review the timeline will restart at week one of the Community Consultation Plan timeline and adhere to the recommended framework.

### 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

| Principles   |
|--|
| 1. Integrity and transparency – Engagement involves trust and transparency. The levels of community influence will be clearly communicated throughout this process. Council will carefully consider and accurately portray the community's role in decision making and will ensure the community is aware of the scope of their influence on the decisions made. |
| 2. Inclusive – Council will use a range of opportunities and techniques to encourage the participation and awareness of all people who may be affected by, or interested in the outcome of this process.   |
| 3. Informative – Effective engagement will ensure all parties understand the relevant benefits and risks with this project and the process being undertaken.   |
| 4. Meaningful – The community will have appropriate opportunities to participate in community engagement processes that are clearly articulated in relation to project constraints, the scope of community influence, and Council's decision making process.   |
| 5. Closing the loop – Providing feedback on engagement is important in maintaining an open and transparent process. Council needs to ensure that the community understands how their input was considered and the reasons for the final decision.  |

## LEGISLATION, TERMINOLOGY AND REFERENCES

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) - <http://www.iap2.org.au/spectrum.pdf>  
Community Consultation Plan

## 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.