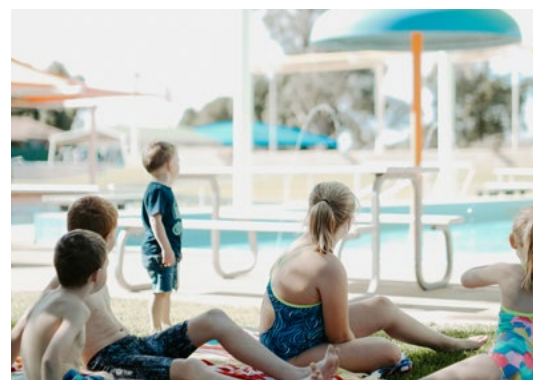
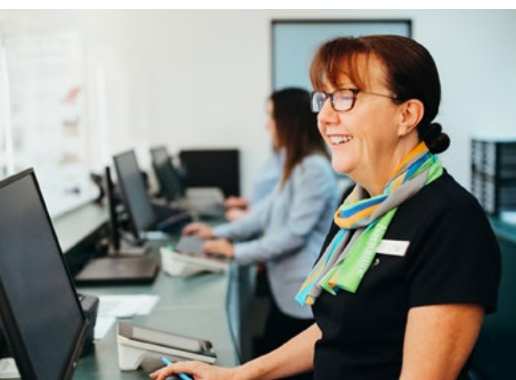


COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and pay respect to the elders, past, present and future, for they hold the memories, traditions and culture of the land.



INTRODUCTION

Narromine Shire Council acknowledge the importance of local government in building strong relationships with the community by operating in a transparent accountable way.

Section 402(A) of the Local Government Act 1993 states:

A council must establish and implement a strategy (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).

This Engagement Strategy sits within Council’s suite of engagement documents:



WHAT IS A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY?

A Community Engagement Strategy must be prepared, adopted and implemented, based on social justice principles, for engagement with the local community to support council in developing its plans and determining its key activities.

This includes the development of the Community Strategic Plan, and all other relevant council plans, policies and programs.

As a minimum, the Community Engagement Strategy must identify relevant stakeholder groups within the community and outline methods that will be used to engage each group.

The Strategy must be reviewed by **31 December in the year of the local government elections**, as part of the broader review of the Community Strategic Plan.

Where a council has community engagement requirements under other legislation or regulations, these should, wherever practical, be integrated into the Community Engagement Strategy.

PURPOSE

This strategy outlines how Council will involve the community in Council decision-making and ensure the community can have their say.

The strategy also outlines strategic actions for Council to investigate to further improve processes and instil a culture of best practice engagement.

DEFINITIONS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: A planned process for working with the community to shape the decisions or actions of Council in relation to a problem, opportunity or outcome.

ENGAGEMENT: All activities undertaken to get community feedback on Council projects, initiatives, and services for decision-making purposes.

COMMUNITY: All stakeholders, audiences, community groups, businesses.

STAKEHOLDER: Anyone with an interest in or who is impacted by a project.



INTRODUCTION (CONTINUED)



“Community engagement is at the heart of local government.

It helps communities to be active participants in shaping their own future and play a part in positive change.

Councils have a vital role to play in opening opportunities for community members to be involved in the strategic planning process”

Integrated Planning and Reporting,
Guidelines for Local Government
September 2021

WHY ENGAGE?

Community Engagement provides a valuable link between Councillors, the Council organisation and the community they serve by:

- Enabling Council to gain a better understanding of local needs
- Enabling the community to be better informed
- Reducing the level of misconception or misinformation
- Ensuring commitment and greater ownership of the final decision by the community
- Encouraging the community to put forward ideas
- To make decisions with the well-being of the whole community in mind
- Helping to identify issues which may not otherwise have been considered – others outside of Council may well be the experts
- Acknowledging the basic human need for people to be involved in decisions that impact them
- Enabling council to make sustainable decisions.



OUR COMMUNITY

The Narromine Shire is located 40 kilometres west of Dubbo, in the Orana region of New South Wales, Australia. Covering 5224 square kilometres, the area includes the major rural centre of Narromine, as well as Trangie and Tomingley.

Narromine Shire has nearly 7,000 residents, the Narromine Shire has a proud heritage, history and towns that is shared with its residents, businesses and visitors. The residents choose to live in the Narromine Shire Council area because of its location with access to a regional centre, its picturesque setting and the close community connections.

The Wiradjuri people are the original inhabitants of this area and the traditional owners of this land. Today Narromine Shire has an indigenous population of just under 1000 residents (21%).

The agricultural sector has long been the mainstay and the Narromine region is well known for its sheep, cattle and wool, cotton production as well as broadacre cereal crops. Alkane Resources Limited provide significant employment opportunities at Tomingley Gold Operations.

Narromine Shire Council provides a range of services for the community. Narromine Shire Council's assets are valued at over \$300 million and include roads, water and sewer infrastructure, footpaths, community amenities such as libraries, parks and playgrounds and sporting and recreation facilities.

It is Narromine Shire Council's intention to continue to focus on improving the community for residents, businesses and visitors to the Shire.



6,822

TOTAL
POPULATION

2016

JOBS

\$340M

GRP

52%

HOLD A
QUALIFICATION

AGRICULTURE

LARGEST
INDUSTRY



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BEST PRACTICE

The **Community Engagement Strategy** is a document which is based on social justice principles and outlines the plan for engagement with the local community in developing plans, policies and programs including Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The social justice principles are equity, access, participation and rights.

The CSP forms the basis of all Council's programs, projects and strategies for its term of office this includes the four year Delivery Program, one year Operational Plan and resourcing strategies including Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plan and Workforce Management Plan.

Strong engagement with the community will mean that Narromine Shire Council can be confident the outcomes reached not only meet the needs of the community but that Council has broad community support.

Narromine Shire Council's approach to community engagement is broadly informed by the internationally recognised **Public Participation Spectrum** developed by the International Association for Public Participation which outlines five levels of public participation.



	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOALS	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum.

FOR NOTE:

- For public exhibition, notification and advertising requirements as they apply to Council's planning instruments such as Development Applications (DAs) and Planning Proposals please refer to the Narromine Shire Council Participation Plan, available on Council's website
- The IAP2 is Narromine Shire Council's intentions for engagement. If a planned communications avenue is not available (eg: restrictions due to COVID-19) staff will endeavour to find alternate avenues to reach out to stakeholders.

METHODS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is the ongoing process of fostering purposeful relationships between Council and the community. Engagement is delivered through a range of activities informing to collaborating and providing the opportunity for the community to participate in the future direction of Narromine Shire Council

The following list are methods that provide a range of opportunities for participation by the community and stakeholders. Activities will be formulated and assessed against applied measures (but not limited to these activities).

INFORM



- Training – Councillors
- Website
- Posters/flyers
- Media releases and advertising
- Emails
- Social networking (Facebook and Twitter)
- Staff networks
- Local committees
- Pop-up shops
- Community noticeboards
- Community Connection newsletter
- Target stakeholder letters
- Direct mail
- Public submissions.

CONSULT



- Suggestion boxes
- Focus groups/workshops/public meetings
- Surveys
- Pop-up shops
- Face-to face
- Social networking
- Direct mail
- Business conversations.

INVOLVE/COLLABORATE



- Open meetings
- Forums
- Public participation
- Networks and community group co-ordination
- Partnerships
- Delegated decisions through committees and groups
- Launch event.

EMPOWER



- Involve community in final decision making
- Use the community's ideas and solutions.



METHODS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

Project type	Engagement level	Minimum commitments	How Council will do it	Timeline
New capital works New plans and strategies Plans of Management	Involve and/or consult and inform	<p>Allowing an opportunity for the community to have their say at each stage of the project.</p> <p>Keeping the community informed and updated before commencement of project, stages and finalisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webpage • Council column • Meeting/workshops • Ensure a method of receiving hard copy submissions is made available • Promote engagement opportunities via Council's communication channels incl: social media, Council Column, Community Connections newsletter, Website, LED sign, media releases • Email or alert stakeholders on final decision and results of consultation (if necessary) 	<p>A minimum of 4 weeks of each engagement period and /or as legislation requires</p> <p>14 days notification before work commences</p>
Council's key long term plans eg: Delivery plan, resourcing strategies, operational plan, revisions to existing plans, changes to fee/hire charges	Consult and inform	Provide context information and allow the community an opportunity to have their say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure hard copy is available on request • Ensure a method of receiving hard copy submissions is made available • Enable community consultation webpage • Promote engagement opportunities in Council communication channels incl: social media, Council Column, Community Connections newsletter, Website, LED sign, media releases. 	A minimum of 28 days
Feedback on Council's programs eg: Venue hire fees and charges Satisfaction reviews	Consult and inform	Create a survey on survey monkey or consult via website community consultation/ public exhibition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send email to stakeholders • Email/alert the respondents with confirmation of receipt of feedback and offer a summary of how the feedback used to inform changes 	As appropriate

METHODS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

Project type	Engagement level	Minimum commitments	How Council will do it	Timeline
Council policies	Consult and inform	Relevant information is made available and provide opportunity for submission of comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council website dedicated Public Exhibition page • Ensure hard copy information is available on request • Ensure a method of receiving hard copy information is made available • Promote engagement opportunities in Council communication incl: social media, Council Column, Community Connections newsletter, Website, LED sign, media releases 	A minimum of 28 days

TARGET AUDIENCE

While 'the local community' is Council's key audience group, it has many different dimensions and these must be considered when planning communication and engagement. There is no 'one size fits all' approach to communicating with the Narromine Shire population.

The Narromine Shire area comprises the townships of Narromine, Trangie and Tomingley, and rural area surrounding these centres. Other factors that segment the community include general interests, socio-economic groups, race and education.

Whilst the community are the most important audience for Council, there are other audiences that need to be considered for different messages. These include:

- Non-residential ratepayers – they have an interest in how Council decisions affect the value of their assets;
- Businesses – have an interest in economic development and business growth opportunities;
- Visitors – attracted to Narromine Shire for events and general tourism;
- Future staff – opportunities to promote Narromine Shire as an employer of choice;
- Government agencies / Members of Parliament – stakeholders in Council decision making and service provision;
- Suppliers – interest in any information that may affect their business with Council or offer new opportunities.

THE ROLES OF COUNCILLORS AND COUNCIL STAFF IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is about ensuring that the community have an opportunity to participate in the decisions made by Council.

A Councillor's role in community engagement is to participate as an elected member, listen to the views of the community and consider these views when making decisions at Council. Community engagement provides valuable opportunities for Councillors to hear and understand the voice of the community and ensure that this voice is properly represented when Council meet and make resolutions which impact the future of our community.

A Council staff member's role in community engagement is to organise and facilitate the discussion, record, provide feedback, evaluate the engagement and consider the community's views when making recommendations to Council.

Both Councillors and Council staff are encouraged not to dominate or direct community discussions, nor are to dismiss the community input. Instead, Councillors and Staff should allow discussions to move forward in an open, respectful and inclusive way.

KEY OBJECTIVES

Council's communications objectives are:

- Share and celebrate our cultural and social diversity through local events, programs and projects and create greater awareness of activities and projects Council is undertaking.
- Promote the benefits of living and working in our Shire while promoting a safe, active and health community.
- Enhance open and interactive communication between Council and the Community and ensure the community is well informed of Council's role and services.
- Facilitate a positive and professional image for the Narromine Shire community and Council.

- Maintain up-to-date information about the Shire on both Council and Tourism webpages and promote both websites as a key source of information for residents and visitors alike.

The effective implementation of these objectives requires a commitment to communication by both elected members and staff at all levels and across all departments. Managers and Directors in particular hold a high degree of responsibility to communicate openly and actively, and to guide their teams in developing an effective communication culture.

The above objectives can be met through utilising the methods listed in community engagement whilst always understanding the target audience and ensuring the message is distributed in a timely and appropriate manner.



THE ROLES OF COUNCILLORS AND COUNCIL STAFF IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT(CONTINUED)

ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES TO 'HAVE YOUR SAY'

Community engagement is a continuous ongoing process and it is important that Council has an ongoing dialogue with its community.

Whilst Council will provide specific engagement opportunities for specific projects, the community is always welcome to 'have your say' and provide feedback about Council services or make a suggestion:

TELEPHONING COUNCIL:

(02) 6889 9999

FAXING COUNCIL:

(02) 6889 9998

EMAILING COUNCIL:

mail@narromine.nsw.gov.au

WRITING TO COUNCIL:

The General Manager
Narromine Shire Council
PO Box 115
NARROMINE NSW 2821

VISITING COUNCIL'S WEBSITE:

www.narromine.nsw.gov.au

Submit comments by selecting "Have your say" under the Contact Us option.

EVALUATING COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The main outcome of the Community Engagement Strategy is as outlined in the Council's Delivery Program

Enhance open and interactive communication between Council and the community guided by a Community Engagement Strategy which is monitored and reviewed.

This to be achieved through:

- Continue to gather feedback regarding community engagement strategies
- Promote the positive aspects of Narromine Shire Council. Provide important information to the community.
- Prepare council columns and media releases for local media.
- Information available on Council's website.
- Prepare a Communications Strategy.

The results of these actions will be used to improve future engagement strategies and methods adopted by Narromine Shire Council.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

International Association for Public Participations
'Foundations of Public Participation'

Integrated Planning and Reporting, Guidelines for
Local Government in NSW 2021

Local Government Act 1993 – section 402(A)

Local Government Act 1993 – Chapter 3 section 8B,
section 8 C

PRIVACY DURING CONSULTATION

All written submissions to Council must contain your name and address and are subject to a request for access to information under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009. Due to the nature of the community consultation, it is likely that personal information may be collected during the course of any community engagement.

All personal information will be handled as per Council's Privacy Management Plan 2013.

www.narromine.nsw.gov.au/council/plans

Further information on the Integrated Planning and Reporting guidelines can be found at www.olg.nsw.gov.au



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Narromine
SHIRE COUNCIL