

COUNCIL POLICY - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PURPOSE / OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this Policy are to:

1. Outline Council's commitment to engaging the community;
2. Ensure Council decisions benefit from community input;
3. Continually improve and seek feedback on community engagement practices; and
4. Comply with the principles of local government as set out in the *Local Government Act 2009*.

Corporate Plan 2021-2026	
Area of Focus	<i>Open and Responsive Government</i> Strengthened community engagement and partnerships that improve shared expectation and commitment.
Action	Develop ways of interacting with the community that facilitate two-way communication and strengthen relationships.
Area of Focus	<i>Healthy, Engaged and Resourceful Communities</i> Enduring social connectedness that drives positive community participation and contribution.
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify, deliver and support activities that connect residents of the Scenic Rim. 2. Lead or partner in the delivery of initiatives that drive social change, cultural diversity and connectedness.
Area of Focus	<i>Open and Responsive Government</i> <i>Ongoing integrity of Council's practice and processes</i>
Action	<i>Maintain an embedded culture and practice of transparency and ethical conduct, while adhering to confidentiality and privacy requirements.</i>

POLICY STATEMENT

Scenic Rim Regional Council is committed to engaging the community and values community input.

In engaging with the community on issues of importance, Council will also be guided by the priorities and strategies captured in the *Scenic Rim Community Plan 2011-2026*. Developed in partnership with the community, the Community Plan is Council's principal accountability document and outlines a shared vision for the future of the region. These objectives also form the basis of the *Scenic Rim Regional Council Corporate Plan 2021-2026*. Effective community engagement will ensure Council partners with our community to enhance our lifestyles by delivering quality services, well managed

growth, sound environmental outcomes, responsible business management and committed leadership.

Council is committed to:

1. Undertaking appropriate community engagement processes;
2. Encouraging community participation in such activities and the broader decision making process;
3. Ensure Council employees have the skills and tools needed to effectively engage the community;
4. Document relevant engagement/consultation activities through its reporting framework;
5. Review its engagement practices periodically and seek community feedback; and
6. Welcome and value community input and feedback.

All Council community engagement activities, including all internal and external surveys plus activities conducted by external consultants on Council's behalf, must be coordinated through Council's Communications and Marketing Team.

This Policy applies to all Council operations. It defines principles to guide Council's engagement activities. This Policy applies to Council, Councillors, employees, contractors and volunteers when making decisions on matters in the public interest.

CONSIDERATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER *HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 2019*

In acknowledgement of the fundamental human rights recognised in International covenants this Council Policy has been developed and acknowledges a commitment to recognise the importance and protection of human rights in creating policies that serve to develop overarching frameworks, standards, behaviours or actions that affect the way in which Council serves the community of the Scenic Rim region.

An assessment of this Policy against the human rights determined that no human rights are limited or affected by this Policy.

COMPLIANCE, MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Principal Specialist Communications and Marketing is responsible for ensuring the Policy:

- Aligns with relevant legislation;
- Aligns with Council strategies and values;
- Is implemented and monitored; and
- Is reviewed to evaluate its continuing effectiveness.

Section 4 (2) of the *Local Government Act 2009* requires Councils to undertake "meaningful community engagement" as a principle of local government.

Section 104 (5) also requires Councils to prepare a five-year Corporate Plan incorporating community engagement.

DEFINITIONS

Community means individuals and organisations who have a stake or interest in the Scenic Rim local government area. Council recognises that all community members have the right to access and participate in community engagement activities regardless of their abilities, age, gender, cultural and linguistic diversity, and geographic location.

Community Engagement means Council can engage with the community in different ways. Mostly community engagement is about providing information to the community, seeking information from the community, listening and enabling the community to participate in decisions. Community engagement is also built on mutual respect. Effective community engagement does not necessarily mean that there will be agreement, or that every aspect of Council's activities is open to comment or control. Council is ultimately responsible for making decisions that are in accordance with legislative requirements and which it believes best represent the current and future interests of residents.

RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

1. *Local Government Act 2009*;
2. Council Policy - Media;
3. Council Policy - Meeting and Other Forums;
4. Council Policy - Social Media;
5. Scenic Rim Community Plan 2011-2026; and
6. Scenic Rim Regional Council Corporate Plan 2021-2026.

This Policy supports the Scenic Rim Regional Council Corporate Plan 2021-2026, in particular Theme - Open and Responsive Government.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Council
Administrator	Principal Specialist Communications and Marketing
Next Review Date	07/12/2024

Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	23 November 2010
Amendment Authority and Date	29/04/2014; 07/12/2021;
Notes	

Approved By:

SCENIC RIM REGIONAL COUNCIL

Adopted: 7 December 2021

Version Information

Version No.	Date	Key Changes
1	23/11/2010	New Policy Corporate and Community Services Committee Item 3.1
2	29/04/2014	Review of Policy; no major changes; no longer legislative required Policy.
3	07/12/2021	Policy review and update to new framework.