



Logan City Council

Community Engagement Framework

Draft – V2.01

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Introduction

Logan City Council operates at the level of government that works as closely as possible with the community and the places in which they live, work and visit. The voice of the community is important at Logan City Council. If the community has ideas and proposals, or their needs relating to the provision of Council services are not being met, we want to hear from them.

The practice and demand for genuine and open community engagement is increasing globally. Logan City Council, like many Councils around Australia, has created this Community Engagement Framework to provide a more structured and consistent approach to meet this demand.

The Framework has been developed through a review of existing strategies based on previous engagement with the Logan communities, current practice guidelines and templates and included an internal engagement process.

Through this Community Engagement Framework, our Community Engagement Policy and related Practice Guidelines, we are committed to the community’s meaningful and tangible input into Council’s decisions that affect them.

Our Vision for community engagement

Logan City Council values meaningful engagement and the role it plays in creating a progressive community and Council. Through trust and active participation, we continue to shape a stronger, confident and more connected City of Logan.

The Purpose of the Community Engagement Framework

Logan City Council's Community Engagement Framework provides the organisation and the community with a clear understanding of the steps and core principles of Council's engagement process. It also sets out how the community can contribute to Council's decisions, services and projects.

It aims to guide consistency in practice to a high standard and a coordinated approach to engagement planning and implementation. The Framework ensures that engagement activities are inclusive and accessible to the community, and that they are transparent and genuine.

The Framework also informs the community about Council's approach to engagement planning and implementation so that there is some education about Council's intent and the community know what to expect about their role in engagement programs.

The aim of the Framework is also to achieve good governance by facilitating open, fair and constructive dialogue, allowing for informed decision making. Ultimately through the Framework, Council is strengthening the capacity of Council staff and the community to engage in Council's decision making processes.

What is Community Engagement?

What do we mean by community engagement? Who are we referring to when we use the term 'community'?

Community engagement is a mostly planned process where anyone who is interested in, or affected by, a Council decision, service or project is provided the means and support by Council to provide their input. Some matters are simple like the redevelopment of a park area, or quite complex, such as what goes into a new planning scheme.

We also use the term 'community' to describe a set of individuals, or groups and organisations who may be grouped together by geography, interest, demographics or affiliation. The term 'stakeholder' is also used in community engagement practice, meaning an individual, group or organisation that has a special interest in the matter or where the matter directly impacts them.

Engagement for different contexts

Not all engagement processes are the same because not all projects or reasons for engagement are the same. Some projects can be simple and welcomed by the community, while others might be complex or create conflict with the community.

Table 1: Different contexts for engagement

Engagement that is simple and friendly	Projects that have little impact on the community and are simple to implement, e.g. updating signage in local parks.
Engagement that is routine	Areas of work that are commonly done and where the nature of engagement does not vary too much e.g. road re-surfacing on local roads.
Engagement that is prolonged	Projects that involve master planning and then implementation over many years, e.g. new regional sports park complex involving multiple sports.

Engagement that is complex	Projects that involve long term strategy development around difficult and complex issues, e.g. climate adaptation.
Engagement that involves conflict	Projects that involve adverse impacts for stakeholders, e.g. new or widening of road corridors that require acquisition or resumption of residential and commercial land.
Engagement that is legislative	Projects or processes that require engagement based on a legislative requirement, e.g. local laws or planning scheme

Whatever the context of engagement, the principle of applying the framework for planning the engagement remains the same.

Guiding principles for community engagement

Community engagement activities undertaken by Logan City Council will encompass a set of guiding principles¹:

1. Integrity – when there is openness and honesty about the scope and purpose of engagement so that the community trusts the process.
2. Inclusion – when there is an opportunity for a diverse range of values and perspectives to be freely and fairly expressed and heard.
3. Deliberation – when there is sufficient and credible information for dialogue, choice and decisions, and when there is space to weigh options, develop common understanding and to appreciate respective roles and responsibilities.
4. Influence – when people have input in designing how they participate, when policies and services reflect their involvement and when their impact is apparent and is understood.
5. Relationships – when there is respect for the relationship between council and the community so that council works to understand, develop and learn from engagement with the community.

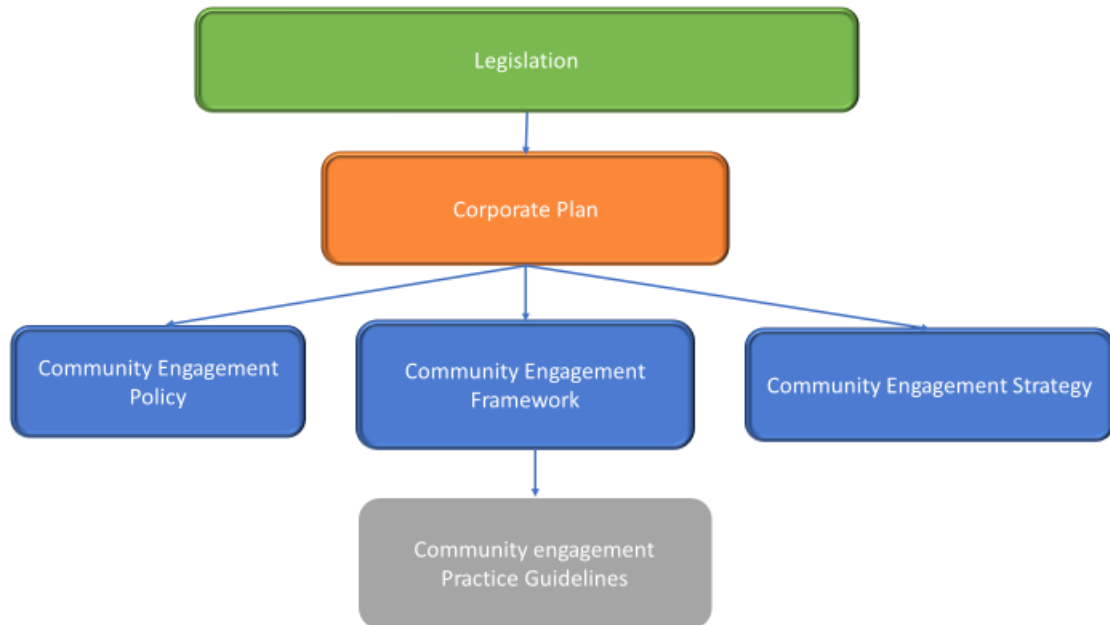
The guiding principles need to be at the centre of engagement planning and implementation, as well as forming a set of indicators from which engagement practice can be measured and evaluated.

Strategic alignment

The Community Engagement Framework is strategically aligned with other key documents in Council. This reflects the importance of community engagement as a core function underpinning all of Council's strategy and operations.

¹ Adapted from International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)'s Core Values

Figure 1: Community Engagement Fit with Corporate Plan



The framework is supported by the following documents:

1. Logan City Council Community Engagement Policy and Management Directive
2. Logan City Council Community Engagement Practice Guidelines
3. Logan City Council Customer Service Charter
4. Logan City Council Customer Experience Strategy (in development)
5. International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Quality Assurance Standard

Who is involved in community engagement?

Community can play a number of roles in relation to the engagement program depending on its context, and purpose. Some roles may include:

- Reviewing and understanding materials in order to be informed on the opportunity or project
- Providing feedback on proposals and drafts
- Providing ideas and possible solutions in response to the opportunity or project
- Partner on key initiatives, opportunities and project delivery.

Almost all positions within Council have some role to play with community engagement practice. The table below outlines the engagement responsibilities of key roles:

Position	Directorate	Responsibility
Mayor		To lead Councillors in their understanding of, and compliance with, this Framework, and active promotion of it in the community.

Position	Directorate	Responsibility
Chief Executive Officer	Executive	To lead staff (either directly or through delegated authority) in their understanding of, and compliance with, this Framework. To approve resources to develop, implement and review this Framework.
Directors	All Branches	To communicate, promote, educate, implement and comply with this Framework.
Director Community Services	Community Services	To ensure (directly or through delegation) the distribution and communication of the Framework to specified persons. To ensure (directly or through delegation) the approved Framework is available in hard copy and electronically on Council's website.
Manager	Customer Experience & Community Engagement	To ensure the Framework and related practice guidelines are widely understood and to provide guidance on its interpretation and implementation.
Council Managers	All Branches	To implement this Framework and related practice guidelines. To lead staff in their understanding of and compliance with this Framework.
All Council employees	Council	To comply with this Framework and related practice guidelines.
Contractors	All Branches	To comply with this Framework and related practice guidelines.

Our Community Engagement Team

Council has a dedicated team of staff to provide a solid foundation of best practice advice, and to empower branches to engage meaningfully with stakeholders internally and externally.

The Community Engagement Team assists branches with their engagement planning by providing templates, tools and other resources for application.

The Community Engagement Framework for practice

Why we engage

Logan City Council recognises the right of the community to be informed and have input into decisions which affect their lives.

The Council values effective engagement that builds trust and develops a positive relationship with its community. Such engagement enables open dialogue that will lead to better decision-making.

Who we engage

The Logan City region has a diverse and growing population with many diverse communities and cultures. Our community includes individuals such as ratepayers, residents, students, visitors, workers and business owners, as well as stakeholders such as community interest groups, not-for-profit organisations and other levels of government.

When engaging with our communities, Council will ensure that opportunities exist for everyone to have their say on decisions that may affect them, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, cultural background, education, ability and other diverse aspects of personal and community identity.

Council will use a variety of engagement methods to suit different audiences and opportunities and to overcome barriers and challenges that may exist for some audiences. Council will continuously explore new ways to talk to our communities and provide different options for them to be engaged.

Our engagement process

Logan City Council operates within the legal frameworks provided by the *Local Government Act (Qld) 2009*, and the *Planning Act (Qld) 2016* and other legislation. Council acknowledges that each opportunity or project is unique, and the level of engagement will vary depending on the nature and/or complexity of the project and the needs of the stakeholders involved.

Council will consider a number of variables such as the community's interests, the resources available and any political sensitivities when determining the level of engagement that is suitable to the matter at hand. To ensure the best outcomes possible, Council will be transparent about the objectives and scope of the work, identify who needs to be involved and to articulate the role that the community will have in the final outcome. To ensure best practice and a consistent approach in how we engage, we use the IAP2 Core Values², design and methods for community engagement planning.

Council's approach to community engagement is based on the IAP2 Australasia's Design, Plan, and Manage model³. The following illustration (Figure 2) sets out the key steps to consider, plan in detail and then implement an engagement program.

² International Association for Public Participation

³ Adapted from John Bryson.

Figure 2: IAP2's Design, Plan and Manage model



Refer to the Practice Guidelines for further details of each step in the planning process.

Related tools, resources and guidelines

Council uses a number of Practice Guidelines and templates that assist us with working through each of these steps in the Design, Plan and Manage model. The following table lists these resources that can be accessed on Council’s intranet.

Table 2: Templates and Practice Guidelines

Templates
Community Engagement Plan template
Design, Plan, and Manage templates
Stakeholder Assessment template
Project Life Cycle Analysis
Risk, Safety and Outrage Assessment template
Evaluation of Community Engagement template
Engagement Report template

Practice Guidelines
IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum
Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Guideline
Engaging Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Peoples Guideline (draft)
Listen 2 Connect – Guideline for engaging children, youth and young adults
Planning Community Engagement – Guideline (draft)
Evaluating Community Engagement - Guideline

Glossary of terms

The following explanations are given to terms used throughout this document:

Community engagement	The term 'community engagement' refers to a mostly planned process where anyone who is interested in, or affected by, a Council decision, service or project is provided the means and support by Council to provide their input.
Community	The term 'community' describes a set of individuals, or groups and organisations who may be grouped together by geography, interest, demographics or affiliation.
Stakeholder	The term 'stakeholder' is used to refer to an individual, group or organisation that has a special interest in the matter or where the matter directly impacts them.
Council	The term 'Council' is referring to Logan City Council.
IAP2	The acronym stands for International Association for Public Participation.