



Your say
Narromine
Shire

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

November 2016

Adopted by Council 9 November 2016

Resolution No: 2016/333




Narromine
SHIRE COUNCIL

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Introduction

This Community Engagement Strategy describes how Narromine Shire Council will engage with the community in the review and update of the Narromine Shire Community Strategic Plan.

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is the key overarching vision and strategy for the Narromine Shire Council local government area, encompassing civic leadership, social, environmental and economic issues in an integrated manner.

The CSP is the basis of Council's delivery and operational programs, which detail the specific organisational actions Council will undertake in order to achieve the strategies within the CSP.

The engagement strategy aims to support achievement of a revised Community Strategic Plan that supports and enhances the quality of life of Narromine Shire residents now and in the future.

The Community Strategic Plan

Following an ordinary election of councillors, all councils must review the CSP before 30 June in the year following the election.

The council may endorse the current plan, endorse amendments to the existing plan or develop and endorse a new CSP, as appropriate to ensure the area has a CSP covering at least the next 10 years.

The CSP should be developed and delivered as a partnership between council, State agencies, community groups and individuals.

The plan should address a broad range of issues which are relevant to the whole community.

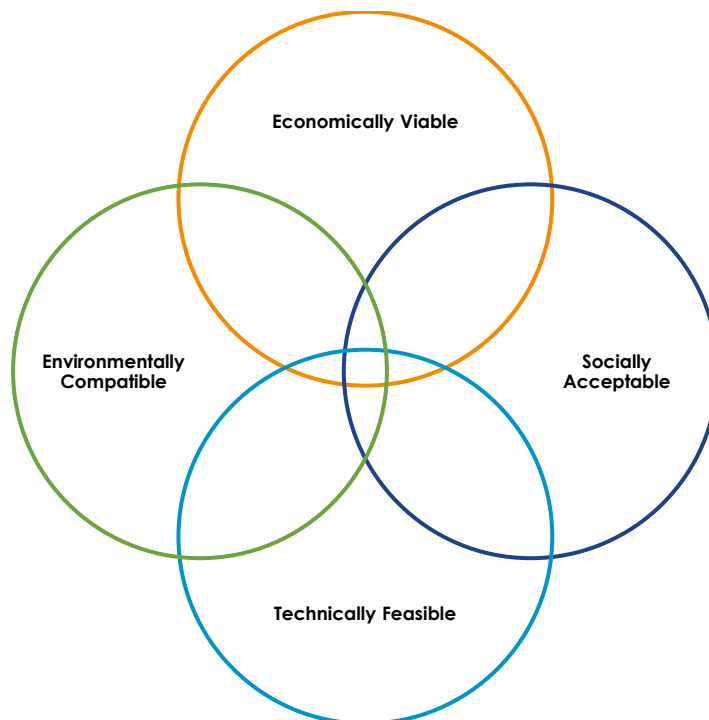
Each council's CSP must have:

- a community vision statement;
- strategic objectives for the community which address civic leadership and social, environmental and economic issues in an integrated manner;
- strategies for achieving each objective; and
- have been developed having regard to the NSW Government's State Plan and other relevant State and regional plans.

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



SUSTAINABLE DECISIONS

Engagement Best Practice

Integrated planning legislation makes it a requirement that councils prepare a Community Engagement Strategy to ensure the local community is actively involved in the review and development of all CSP documents.

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 the new CSP.

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

Council's approach to community engagement draws from the best practice principles of community engagement as promoted by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) as shown below.

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

Increasing Level of Public Participation

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public participation goal	Public participation goal	Public participation goal	Public participation goal	Public participation goal
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, 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 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.

Under the Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines (DLG, 2013) essential elements to a community engagement strategy include:

- Identification of relevant stakeholder groups within the community, including State agencies and methods of engaging each group, with social justice principles of participation, rights, access and equity being considered.
- Consideration of expected levels of service expressed by the community when preparing the CSP.

Further, under section 402(6) of the *Local Government Act 1993* a CSP or amendment of a CSP must be placed on exhibition for a period of 28 days and submissions received must be considered before the plan or amendment is endorsed by the council.

Methods of Engagement

The following are tactical methods which Council will utilise during the Community Strategic Plan consultative process:

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
- Communication 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 (Facebook and Twitter)
- Direct mail
- Business conversations

INVOLVE

- Open meetings
- Forums

COLLABORATE

- 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

Social Justice Principles

Guiding principles of this Community Engagement Strategy are the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights.

Accordingly, this strategy is constructed to ensure all members of the community have the opportunity to participate actively within this process.

This strategy has been designed to engage target groups within the community and will be delivered across the Narromine Shire local government area to maximise access and participation from all residents within our region.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

In 2014, the NSW Government introduced the NSW Disability Inclusion Act which requires all councils to produce a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) by 1 July 2017.

The purpose of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan is to set out the strategies and actions that Council will deliver in the next four years to enable people with a disability to have greater access to Council information, services and facilities.

Council's approach has to be developed around the four key outcome areas in the NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan:

1. Liveable Communities: Identifying and removing barriers to Department of Planning and Environment services and facilities for people with disability.
2. Employment: Increasing employment and inclusion in the workplace for people with disability.
3. Attitudes and Behaviours: Developing positive attitudes by increasing awareness and inclusion practices.
4. Systems and Processes: Identifying and removing barriers caused by our systems and processes.

Legislative Framework

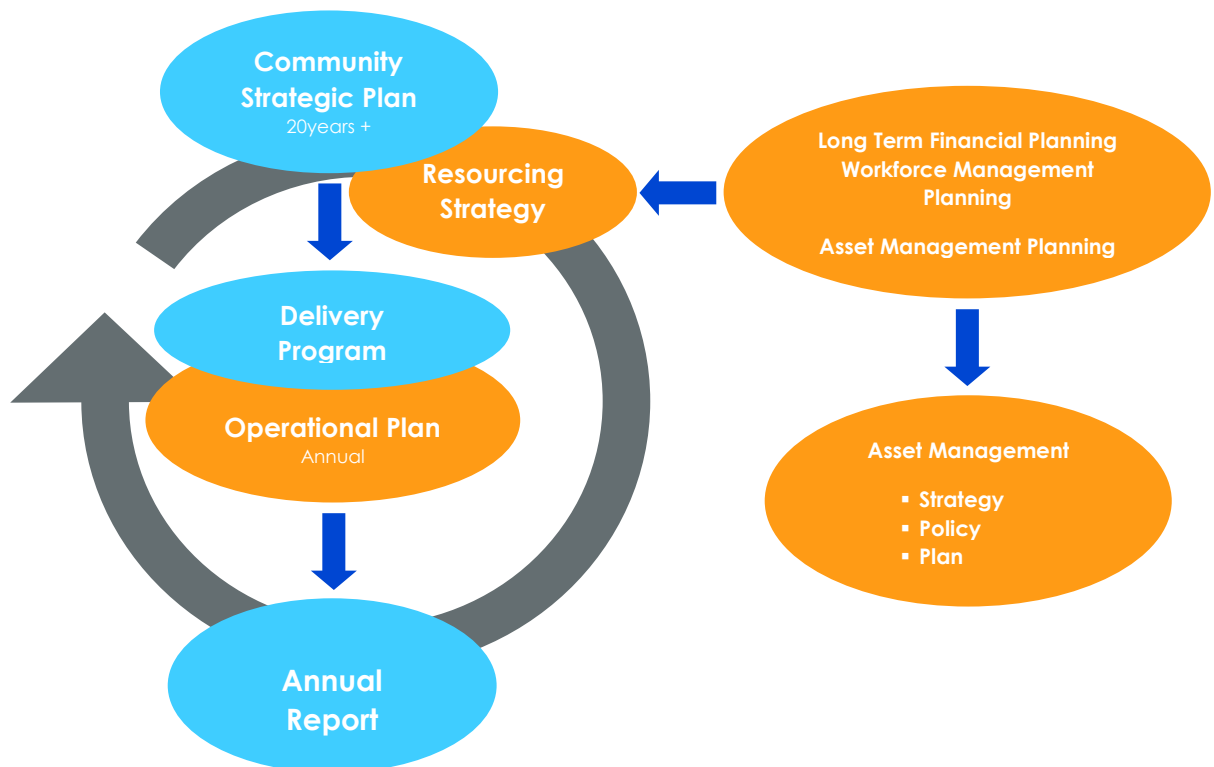
All NSW councils are required by the *Local Government Act 1993*, section 402, to develop a community strategic plan for their local government area.

The CSP is a vital document which informs and shapes each council's four-year delivery program and one-year operational plan.

Under section 403 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a 10-year resourcing strategy is also required to inform the extent to which priorities outlined in the plan can be resourced and undertaken.

The resourcing strategy is to include long-term financial planning, workforce management planning and asset management planning.

The entire process is seen in the model below.



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.

Who are the Community?

IAP2 considers the community to be any individual or group of individuals, organisation or political entity with an interest in the outcome of a decision - they are often referred to as stakeholders. They may be, or perceive that they may be, affected directly or indirectly by the outcome of a decision. Internal stakeholders (individuals who work for or with the decision-making organisation) are also part of the community and the community participation process should reflect their needs as well.

Council, in its engagement activities, will make every effort to ensure that all perspectives are considered, in order to:

- Attract and reach a cross section of the community by using a wide range of communication methods.
- Invite specific targeted community groups as identified in particular projects.
- Accommodate participants' cultural, language, sexuality and other minority groups or groups with special needs.

- Involve community groups and individuals who are sometimes hard to reach such as children, young people, people with disabilities, women, socially disadvantaged, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

The following target groups have been identified as part of this Strategy:

- Children
- Young people
- Older people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- People with a disability
- Families
- Villages and Rural Communities
- Community groups
- Stakeholders (business, government, private)
- Councillors
- Council staff
- Environmental groups
- Sport and recreation groups
- Non-government agencies and organisations
- People from diverse sexualities
- People without internet access
- Resident and non-resident ratepayers

Proposed Planning Process Timeline

October 2016	Draft Community Engagement Strategy prepared.	Council officers finalise the underpinning information for the Community Strategic Plan.
November 2016	Draft Community Engagement Plan presented to Council for consideration and adoption. Hold Workshop with Councillors.	Draft Community Engagement Plan presented to Councillors via reports, discussions and workshops.
December 2016	Undertake Community Consultation.	Community consultation process undertaken with identified stakeholders.
January 2017	Draft Community Strategic Plan prepared.	Priorities in Community consultation process identified and analysed.
February 2017	Draft Community Strategic Plan presented to Council. Hold workshop with Councillors. Draft Community Strategic Plan on Public Exhibition.	Draft Community Strategic Plan presented to Councillors via reports, discussions and workshops. Draft Community Strategic Plan placed on Public Exhibition for 28 days for submissions from the public.
March 2017	Submissions on CSP presented to Council for consideration. Community Strategic Plan adopted by Council.	Submissions presented to Council for discussion. Community Strategic Plan adopted by Council.
April 2017	Remaining Draft Integrated Planning & Reporting documents prepared. Hold workshop with Councillors.	Council officers finalise the underpinning information for the Integrated Planning & Reporting documents. Supporting documentation developed.
May 2017	Draft Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP & R) documents presented to Council. IP & R documents placed on public exhibition.	Draft Integrated Planning & Reporting documents presented to Councillors. Draft Integrated Planning & Reporting placed on Public Exhibition for 28 days for submissions from the public.
June 2017	Submissions on the IP & R documents presented to Council for consideration. Integrated Planning & Reporting documents adopted by Council.	Submissions presented to Council for discussion. Integrated Planning & Reporting documents adopted by Council.

Giving Everyone a Voice

Council is committed to ensuring that all groups in our community have an equal opportunity to participate and be involved in decision making through the activities which form the Community Engagement Strategy.

Ongoing Opportunities to “Have Your Say”

Community engagement is a continuous ongoing process and it is important that we have an ongoing dialogue with our community.

Whilst Council will provide specific engagement opportunities for specific projects, our community is always welcome to “have your say”, provide feedback about Council services, make a suggestion or give a compliment or complaint by:

- 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 your comments by selecting “Have your say” under the Contact Us option.

Evaluation and Review

During each stage of the development of the Community Strategic Plan evaluation and review will be undertaken to ensure:

- Engagement methods and techniques have reached all relevant stakeholders.
- Data and information gathered through the engagement process activities is of high quality and integrity and informs the development of the Community Strategic Plan.
- The views, visions, aspirations and priorities of the community are heard and accurately recorded.
- Council's Legislative requirements are met.

The overall project evaluation will be analysed and tabled as part of the final report to Council and the community.

Privacy in Consultation

All written submissions 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 the community engagement.

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

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

Notes



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