

POLICY NAME

Community Engagement Policy

DATE ADOPTED

12 December 2022

REVIEW DATE

12 December 2025

COUNCIL MINUTE NUMBER

PRC 381

POLICY TYPE

Council

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

Business Transformation

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Including but not limited to: Penrith 2036+ Community Strategic Plan, Penrith City Council Community Engagement Strategy and Community Participation Plan 2022–26, Penrith City Council Delivery Program 2022–26

Purpose

This policy formalises Council’s commitment to better decision making through meaningful engagement. It prescribes a set of organisational rules, a methodology and principles to ensure that Council engagement is consistent and follows best practice.

Scope

This policy applies to all forms of engagement undertaken on behalf of Council by employees and other representatives including contractors and consultants. This policy applies to engagement in person or in any other form and as such may extend beyond the workplace and beyond normal work hours.

Policy

Council recognises that community engagement plays an important role in local democracy as the basis for influencing and understanding decisions, sharing perspectives, improving outcomes and building trust between Council, the community and other partners.

Council ensures that community needs and expectations are understood and reflected in the decisions and actions of Council.

Council values the community’s input, and only undertakes community engagement on decisions where the community can impact the outcome.

Council identifies community profiles and stakeholder matrices to ensure a range of views are heard, from those who have an interest in or are impacted by a decision.

Council is guided in its planning and delivery of engagement activities by the *IAP2 Spectrum of Participation*, as recommended by the Office of Local Government and adopted by Council.

Council builds an organisational culture of engagement and supports and trains employees to facilitate community engagement in line with this policy.

Council takes steps to evaluate and review engagement activities, and applies learnings to future engagement plans, striving for continuous improvement.

Council is committed to the following engagement principles based on the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights.

<u>Principle</u>	<u>Our commitment</u>
Tailored and inclusive	We remove barriers to participation to ensure we hear from as many people as possible, with particular efforts made to identify and hear from underrepresented community groups.
Clear and timely communication	We provide clear, accessible and prompt information about how you can have your say to give you time to provide informed feedback.
Meaningful and genuine	We facilitate genuine opportunities to listen to and understand your aspirations, ideas, needs and concerns so you can inform the outcomes.
Work in partnership	We work in respectful partnerships, with the understanding that community and government are responsible for shaping Penrith.

Compliance

There are a number of State and National legislation and guidelines which specify when and how Council must initiate community engagement including but not limited to:

Local Government Act 1993, Section 8A and Section 402A

Local Government Act (Governance and Planning) 2016

The Children's Guardian Amendment (Child Safe Scheme) Bill 2021

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the EP&A Act)

Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines for Local Government in NSW 2021

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998

Document Control

Policy History	Date
Community Participation Policy	2003