

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting

Team Name:	Communication and Engagement Advisory Group		
Date:	2 August 2023	Time:	5:00pm - 6:30pm
Chairperson:	Emily Livens (ongoing Cr Leah Anderson)	Venue:	Port Stephens Council Admin Building and Zoom
Purpose of Meeting:	To provide advice and guidance on communications and engagement projects		
Minutes:	Elizabeth Akerman/Emily Livens		
File:	PSC2023-03041		

Attendance

Councillor Anderson Port Stephens Council	Councillor Wells Port Stephens Council	Cassandra Schmitzer Community representative	Paul Baxter Community representative
Lauren Whitelaw Community representative	Angela Peace Community representative	Maragrete Ritchie Community representative	Tanya Martin Community representative
Ben van der Wijngaart Community representative	Casey Freeman Community representative	Greg Brown Community representative	William (Bill) Doran Community representative
Kelly Hammond Community representative	Ros Armstrong Community representative	Elizabeth Akerman Port Stephens Council	Emily Livens Port Stephens Council

The following guests are invited to attend:

Matt Lantry Port Stephens Council	Janelle Gardner Port Stephens Council		
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Apologies

Councillor Kafer
Port Stephens Council

William (Bill) Doran
Community representative

Item	Topic	Time Required	Responsible Officer	Action	Status/Date to be Completed
1.0	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES				
1.1	Acknowledgement of country and welcome	2 mins	Chairperson	RECORD – Welcome and acknowledgement of Country undertaken. Housekeeping outlined include location of amenities and emergency briefing. General Manager Tim Crosdale welcomed the group members and outlined the groups' importance.	Nil
1.2	Introductions	15 mins	Chairperson	RECORD - Each group member provided their name, suburb they are from, groups they are connected to and their favourite hobby.	Nil
2.0	BUSINESS ITEMS				
2.1	Meeting Code of Cooperation	5 mins	Emily Livens	RECORD – The meeting code of cooperation outlined in the groups' Terms of Reference was summarised.	Nil
2.2	Communications and Engagement Advisory Group Terms of Reference	10 mins	Emily Livens	RECORD – The group was provided with a summary of the terms of reference and it was noted that members all acknowledged that they read and understood the Terms of Reference as part of their application to the group.	Nil
2.3	Group expectations	10 mins	Emily Livens	RECORD – The groups were provided with the opportunity to outlined their expectations for the participation in the group. These are recorded as Attachment 1 to these minutes.	Regularly cross check as the group moves forward

Item	Topic	Time Required	Responsible Officer	Action	Status/Date to be Completed
2.4	Communications and Engagement Strategy	5 mins	Emily Livens	RECORD – An overview was provided of the Communications and Engagement Strategy principles, strategic priority areas and key objectives. The PowerPoint presentation is included as Attachment 2 to the minutes.	Nil
2.5	IAP2 Spectrum	15 mins	Emily Livens	RECORD – An overview was provided of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) community engagement Spectrum. A video was also shown. View the video here . Examples of where projects have historically sat on the IAP2 Spectrum were provided.	Nil
2.6	Communications and Engagement Process	10 mins	Emily Livens	RECORD – An overview of the community engagement process that Council uses to plan and design community engagement programs was provided including areas the group will be able to partner and collaborate.	Nil
3.0	FEEDBACK SESSIONS				
2.7	Current frustrations experienced by the group members	15 mins	Emily Livens	RECORD – The group used post it notes to brainstorm the current frustrations they experience relating to Councils communications and community engagement. The groups' frustrations were presented back to the group. The list of frustrations are included as Attachment 3 to the minutes.	To be referred to in future communication and engagement planning and design

Item	Topic	Time Required	Responsible Officer	Action	Status/Date to be Completed
3.1	Upcoming projects	3 mins	Elizabeth Akerman	RECORD – Upcoming projects that will be brought to the group include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal Management Program public exhibition • Local Housing Strategy Review • Smart Parking • Playground replacements • DA e-subscription 	
4.0	OTHER MATTERS				
4.1	Thank you and close	2 mins	Chairperson	RECORD - Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 20 September.	

MEETING CLOSED AT: 6:55pm

NEXT MEETINGS

Date: 20 September 2023

Time: 5:00pm

Venue: Port Stephens Council Admin Building and Zoom

ATTACHMENT 1 – GROUP EXPECTATIONS

Group expectations

Create consultative processes for the community
Improve community confidence in Council
A better understanding of community expectations and needs
A better understanding of why decisions are made
More understanding of council roles
A better understanding of how Council connects with community
Increase community engagement
Leads to informed decision making
Increased community participation in engagement, surveys, drop-ins, etc.
Knowing that the community is being heard
Influence strategic outcomes
Present views of my community about the way council communicates and engages with them
Better engagement of the community in council decisions
Improved quality of community voice during engagement strategies
Ensure that Council understands the importance of effective communication
Present the interests and concerns of our community
A more diverse range of age, demographic, culture etc. engaged in communicating with Council
Engagement strategies reach a broader audience (age, socio-economic etc.)
Contribute to the planning through my own experience, expertise, and connections
Provide knowledge and experience
A higher community engagement score about Council's communication and engagement
Improved community sentiment toward engagement strategies

ATTACHMENT 2 – MEETING POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

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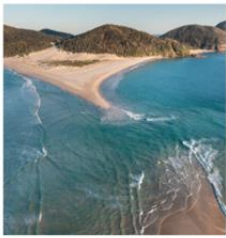

Communications & Engagement Advisory Group
2 August 2023



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Introductions



-  Name
-  Suburb you are from
-  Groups connected to
-  Favourite hobby

Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge the Worimi as the original Custodians and inhabitants of Port Stephens.

May we walk the road to tomorrow with mutual respect and admiration as we care for the beautiful land and waterways together.

Meeting Code of Cooperation


To use as a guideline for us all while conducting and participating in group meetings.

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Meeting Code of Cooperation



MEETING CODE OF COOPERATION	
We start on time and finish on time.	Respect for diversity of group and views.
No inappropriate language.	Chair has to maintain control.
Decisions will be ratified at the next meeting.	We will not threaten or intimidate each other.
Agenda is put out before meeting and followed.	Everyone has a voice.
Agreement by majority consensus.	Lateral thinking is encouraged.
No hidden agendas.	Do not speak over others.
Minutes distributed in 14 days by email.	Secret ballots can be called.
Share knowledge.	Publicly support the decisions of the Panel.
Actions will be completed on time.	Maintain our focus on the agenda item.
We will leave our personal conflicts at the door.	Stay within the boundary of our Purpose Statement.
Commit to attendance as a delegate.	Deputies will be briefed.
Meetings will be scheduled.	Minutes will have an 'Action' sheet.
Meeting will not proceed with less than half representation.	Respect the decision of the Chair.
	Practice good listening – PLISS we will have fun.



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Group expectations

What do you expect to get out of participating in this group?

Terms of Reference

- The group will support the delivery of transparent communication and meaningful engagement.
- Provide information, advice and guidance on the development and delivery of Council communications and engagement programs.
- Will align to the term of Council.
- Includes 5 Council members – 3 Councillors and 2 staff.
- Quorum shall be half the elected members plus one.
- Media liaison associated with the group's activities shall be undertaken in accordance with Port Stephens Council Policy and with the approval of the CEAG.
- Everyone acknowledges they read and understood it as part of their application.

Communication & Engagement Strategy

- 1 We deliver relevant, timely and easy to understand information
- 2 We're honest and transparent
- 3 We're inclusive and encourage a diversity of voices to be heard
- 4 We listen, value and respect community input and feedback
- 5 We embrace innovation and encourage new ideas



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Communication & Engagement Strategy

Strategic Priority 1: Community Engagement

Plan and deliver meaningful community engagement that enables community participation and builds trust in Council decision making

Strategic Priority 2: Community Communications

Deliver timely, creative and transparent internal and external communications that connects our stories, our people and our place.

Strategic Priority 3: Media and Public Relations

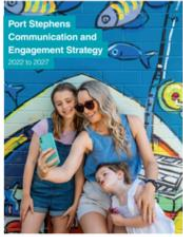
Build trust and reputation through proactive, consistent and trustworthy information that reasons to issues and community priorities

Strategic Priority

2. Community Communications

Examples:

- Design communication that's easy to understand and accessible
- Website as the core communication and continue to invest in its growth and improvement
- Maximise live streaming and video in our communications
- Use demographic data to develop communications that are audience focused
- Supporting elected members to share information and increase awareness of activities and services



Strategic Priority

1. Community Engagement

Examples:

- Communication and Engagement Advisory Group.
- Engagement opportunities that enable more time for considered thought and contribution.
- Engagement opportunities consider place, diversity and accessibility.
- Reporting back to the community connecting feedback and decision making.
- Use technology to increase participation and a diversity of voices.
- Build on the use of social media as a tool for feedback.



IAP2 Spectrum

	Inform (least impact on decision)	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower (most impact on decision)
Our goal (Council's)	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 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 and/or developed budgets in the hands of the public.

Let's watch a quick video


IAP2 Spectrum

Inform (least impact on decision)	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower (most impact on decision)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nelson Bay High Pedestrian Activity Area Road closures, night works etc. Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public exhibitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playground renewal Place Plans Coastal Management Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committees of Council Advisory Groups Anna Bay 7 day makeover Madison 7 day makeover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is rare

Difference projects can use different parts of the Spectrum for different phases.

Current frustrations

What are your current frustrations with Councils communications and community engagement?



Communications and Engagement process

- Understand the project
- Identify what we need to engage on (what's negotiable and non-negotiable)
- Understand the stakeholders
- Identify the purpose of engagement
- Identify level of influence (IAP2 Spectrum)
- Determine communication and engagement methods
- Determine schedule and budget
- Deliver and monitor engagement
- Report on engagement findings
- Evaluate engagement

Communications and Engagement Plan
Communications and Engagement Report

Projects to come

- Coastal Management Program public exhibition
- Local Housing Strategy Review
- Smart Parking
- Playground replacements
- DA e-subscription

Next meeting...



ATTACHMENT 3 – CURRENT FRUSTRATIONS EXPERIENCED

Current frustrations

First line of communication is the front desk – at times unhelpful and frustrating
When council staff come to community meetings they must know the topic and be able to talk to it
Dislike post notes
Lack of access to feedback after decisions
Closing the loop on engagement strategies
Not knowing until the wheels are already in motion
Report it back to councillors and the community
Given assurance that someone will get back to you and they don't
Often missed out in regards to community consultation e.g. only found out about Karuah Place once it won an award
Selective/partial dissemination of information
Accessing established community groups during engagement sports clubs, residents, OOSH, businesses
Feel disengaged in Fern Bay, we can be forgotten
Vulnerable and marginalised groups not consistently engaged
Lack of transparency
Lack of transparency in all areas - erodes community trust
Take more time to obtain feedback after communicating/engaging
People affected by the decision are not always engaged
The perception that the loudest voice has swayed Council
Discussions with key stakeholders
Closed-question surveys - are not conducive to open discussion
The rate rises community session – was a tick the box session
Lack of big picture future casting consultation e.g. how do we want our community in 20 years time
Spend more time out in the community – listening and communicating
Sufficient time to put input into complex plans and projects
Pre cooked solutions – communities fight solutions rather than participate in their creation