

ATTACHMENTS UNDER SEPARATE  
COVER

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING  
25 FEBRUARY 2025



**PORT STEPHENS**  
C O U N C I L



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ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 DRAFT PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024 TO 2028.

# Draft Port Stephens Communication and Engagement Strategy 2024 to 2028



Our vision is to actively communicate and engage in a way that tells our stories, listens to our community, informs our future and improves the wellbeing of those that live, work and visit in Port Stephens.





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GUUDJI YIIGU

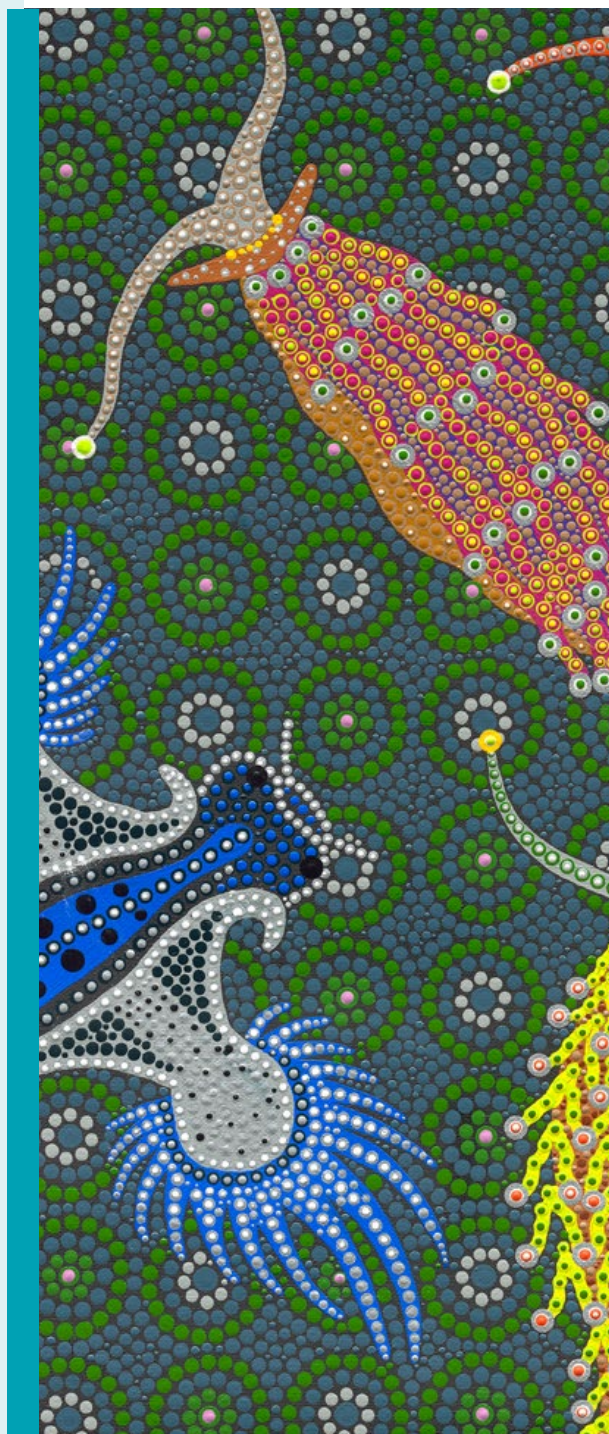
(GOO-JEE IK-KOO)

We welcome you to Port Stephens – part of the Worimi Aboriginal Nation. Port Stephens Council acknowledges the Worimi people as traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waterways on which we all live, learn, work and play.

We value and respect the Worimi people and the legacy 60,000 years of Aboriginal Nation traditions and culture brings with it. As part of Council's culture of acceptance, diversification and harmony we walk alongside the Worimi people on a journey of listening and learning.

Together we will strive to make this a better place for all peoples. As guardians of these lands, we ask that you tread lightly to help preserve the biodiversity and respect those who came before as well as those who will follow.

Artwork by Regan Lilley.



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## A message from the Mayor

Communication is key.

Clear and honest communication is the cornerstone of our commitment to our community. We strive to be an open and transparent organisation where communications and engagement is at the centre of what we do.

Our Communication and Engagement Strategy 2024 to 2028 is our commitment to keeping you informed and involved. Since its original adoption in 2022, this strategy has provided the framework for active engagement and conversations to encourage all voices of our diverse community to have their say.

The recent review of this strategy, following the 2024 election has allowed us to reflect on how far we've come in a short time, and identify areas for further improvement to build a community that is more engaged and informed.

Our Communication and Engagement Advisory Group (CEAG), established in 2023, has been instrumental in providing valuable insights and guidance. The value of the CEAG can't be overstated. By involving the community in the early stages of our planning, we'll deliver better outcomes across our community.

The 2024 to 2028 strategy continues to build on this success and create more opportunities for our community to be involved in decisions that impact their everyday. My fellow Councillors and I encourage you to connect with your Council, explore what's happening in your community and share your input into decisions to shape the future of this incredible place we call home.



*Leah Anderson*

**Leah Anderson**

Mayor of Port Stephens



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# Strategy context

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Strong communication in local government creates trust in its citizens. The hope is that this trust will inspire citizens to become involved in their communities.

Diligent



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Over the past few years, a fundamental shift has occurred in the approach to public sector communication and engagement. Our residents have increased expectation around access to information and a greater desire to engage in planning for their place.

We know that effective communication and engagement are directly linked to the liveability and wellbeing of our community. By listening to our community and providing genuine opportunities for engagement, we'll create a greater sense of community ownership and ultimately, improve the delivery of Council services that are aligned to community needs.

To achieve this, we'll deliver a genuinely integrated and inclusive approach to our engagement and communication. By bringing together our communication and engagement approach, we've already created a shift in thinking. Through this strategy, we'll continue to evolve this approach and build a culture that celebrates our stories and informs the future of Port Stephens.

**Communications is how we connect with our stakeholders. It is sharing the right message at the right time to inform our community.**

NSW Government, All-Of-Government Communications Framework

**Community engagement is a planned process with the specific purpose of working across organisations, stakeholders and communities to shape the decisions or actions of the members of the community, stakeholders or organisation in relation to a problem, opportunity or outcome.**

NSW Government, All-Of-Government Communications Framework

The Port Stephens Communication and Engagement Strategy 2024 to 2028 has been developed to provide a framework for the delivery of open and effective communication that actively shapes and influences the future of Port Stephens.

The strategy responds to the legislative requirements of:

- NSW Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework including the Community Strategic Plan
- Local Government Act (1993) and
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979)

The strategy also responds to the key priorities of the elected Councillors.

## Community Participation Plan

Attached to this strategy is our Community Participation Plan (CPP) which is an easy to use guide for the community to provide input into planning decisions when Council is the consent authority. It ensures we meet our statutory requirements for notification and exhibition.

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Who we  
are

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A diverse mix of voices  
leads to better discussions,  
decisions and outcomes  
for everyone.

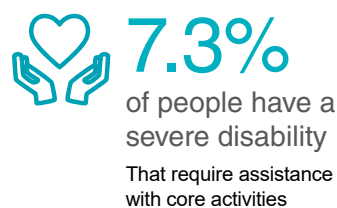
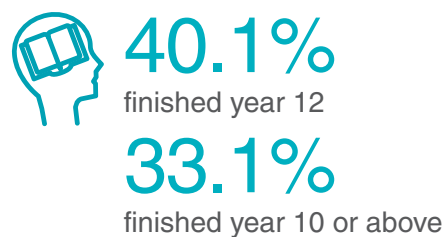
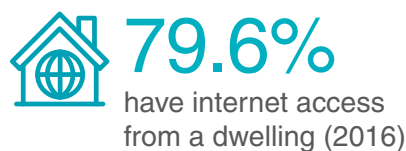
Sundar Pichai, Head of Google



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### Our community

More than 77,000 people call Port Stephens home and this is expected to grow to over 87,933 by 2040 at a compound annual growth rate of 1.2%.



Source: ABS 2021

<sup>^</sup> Estimated Residential Population 2023

\* statista.com



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# What we've heard

“

Longer periods to digest  
and respond to documents  
including Council agendas.

Community member

“

Opportunities to Have Your  
Say are numerous but there is  
little opportunity to find out the  
result of the engagement or  
what other people think.

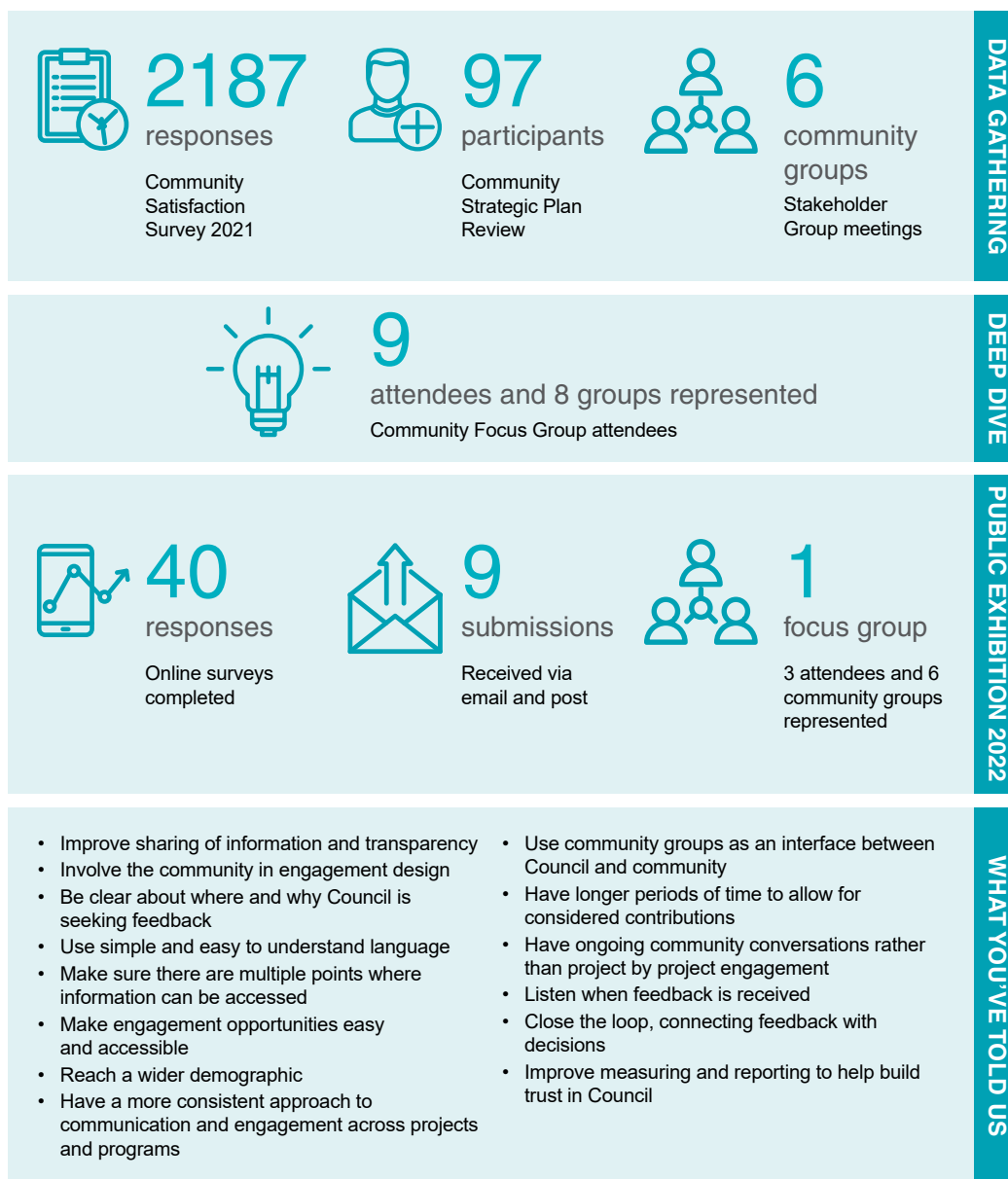
Community member



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## Our engagement

Between 2021 and October 2022, we've undertaken a phased approach to listening to the community about how we deliver communication and engagement.



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### Reviewing the 2022 to 2024 strategy

Under the Integrated Planning and Report Guidelines we're required to review our Communication and Engagement Strategy after 3 months, following the Local Government election to make sure it aligns with the 4 year term of Council.

A key action of the 2022 to 2024 strategy was to establish the Communication and Engagement Advisory Group (CEAG). Formed in August 2023 the CEAG has been instrumental in providing feedback on the way we communicate and engage with our community in 2023 and 2024. This feedback has been invaluable in informing the current review.

Key feedback from the group during this time has been:



Advocate for social justice principles by reaching a diverse demographic.



Promote more targeted communication with affected residents.



Use community social media more effectively.



Use plain English in all our communications.

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# Our strategy

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Community engagement provides individuals the chance to understand different perspectives and needs within their community. This understanding fosters greater acceptance of the final decisions or outcomes, as people recognise and appreciate viewpoints that differ from their own.

Social Pinpoint



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As the closest level of government connected to the community, we have a key role in communicating and engaging with our local residents.

With over 55 individual business units across the organisation and almost 600 staff, we deliver a large number of services to our community. We're also the link between our community and other levels of government, advocating our community's priorities.

Over the past few years, we've worked hard to engage with and inform our community. However, we know from feedback that we can do better. We've listened and are committed to working closely with our community to act on this feedback, responding to their needs and priorities.

### Our purpose and vision



#### Our purpose

To create a framework for the delivery of transparent and timely communications and meaningful community engagement that builds trust and community participation in decision making for our place.



#### Our vision

We actively communicate and engage in a way that shares our stories, listens to our community, informs our future, and improves the wellbeing of those that live, work and visit in Port Stephens.

### Our principles

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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## International Association of Public Participation

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) developed an international framework for community engagement that is considered a best practice approach worldwide.

## Levels of communication and engagement

	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.
Our role (Council's)	We'll keep you informed.	We'll keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We'll work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We'll look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We'll implement what you decide.
Your role (Community's)	Keep in touch. Follow Council on social media. Subscribe to regular newsletters and updates.	Contribute ideas and feedback. Respond to surveys. Make public submissions.	Actively participate in the workshops and engagement sessions. Share ideas concerns and aspirations.	Work together to develop solutions. Join committees.	Make decisions and work with Council to implement them.

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### Social Justice Principles

The NSW Government identifies 4 principles that establish supportive environments for everyone. These principles are the driving force to address barriers to communication and engagement experienced in our community and are therefore at the heart of our Strategy's principles and key objectives. We have a commitment to remove barriers, ensuring more equitable and inclusive communication and engagement.



#### Equity

Communication and engagement should include stakeholders including hard to reach groups who may have barriers to participation.



#### Access

All people should have fair access to communication and engagement opportunities.



#### Participation

All people should have the opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their lives.



#### Rights

Communication and engagement opportunities ensure positive participation of linguistic, cultural and religious diverse communities.

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Our stakeholders

We all have a role to play in shaping our places and there's roles for both Council and the community in initiating, leading, participating in, and delivering engagement activities. It's vital that we identify and understand our stakeholders that are impacted by, or have an interest in a decision.



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### Methods of communication and engagement

We use a range of methods to communicate and engage with our community. We typically use a combination of methods to share information to ensure the greatest reach. Below are some of our common methods used across the IAP2 spectrum.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
<b>Communications</b>					
Advertisements / public notices	✓				
Council events	✓				
E-newsletters	✓				
Emails and letters	✓				
Flyers, brochures, factsheets, posters, signs	✓				
Local Newspaper article	✓				
Media releases	✓				
On hold messages	✓				
Rates notice and inserts	✓				
Radio announcements	✓				
Social media	✓	✓			
Webinars	✓				
<b>Community Engagement</b>					
Advisory committees			✓	✓	✓
Council meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Council website	✓	✓			
Focus group and workshops		✓	✓	✓	
Information and interactions with Council staff	✓	✓			
Drop-in / pop-up sessions		✓	✓		
Meetings with Council staff	✓	✓			
Public exhibition / submission		✓	✓		
Surveys / questionnaires / polls		✓			

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Strategic  
priority 1  
Community  
engagement



We will plan and deliver meaningful community engagement that enables community participation and builds trust in Council decision making.

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Key objectives	Communication and Engagement Principles				
	1	2	3	4	5
Continue to embed the principles of the International Association Public Participation (IAP2) into the organisational culture	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Collaborate with the Communications and Engagement Advisory Group to provide timely input on how to engage with our community on major projects		✓	✓	✓	✓
Increase opportunities for the community to engage informally with Councillors and Executive		✓	✓	✓	
Design engagement opportunities that enable time for considered thought and contribution	✓		✓	✓	
Ensure engagement opportunities consider place, diversity and accessibility	✓		✓	✓	
Expand on the use of technology to increase participation and increase the diversity of voice and opinion in engagement activities			✓		✓
Build on the use of social media as a tool for engagement and feedback			✓		✓
Report internally and externally on engagement outcomes, connecting community engagement and decision making	✓	✓		✓	
Improve stakeholder information management to ensure equitable representation across the community		✓	✓		
Deliver Council's Community Participation Plan (Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979)	✓	✓		✓	



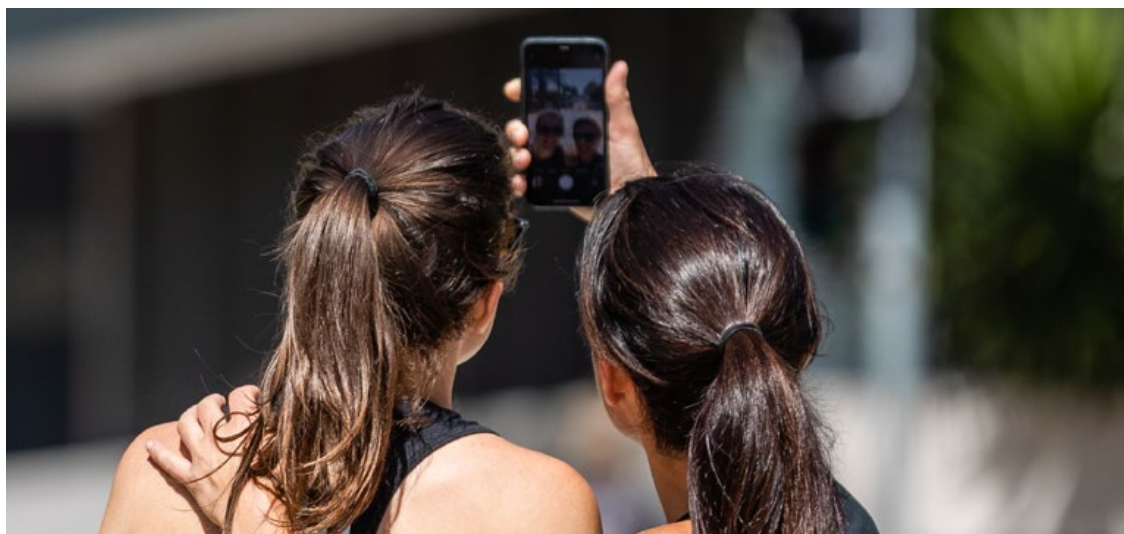
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Strategic  
priority 2  
**Community  
communication**



We will deliver  
timely, creative  
and transparent  
internal and external  
communication that  
connect our stories,  
our people and  
our place.

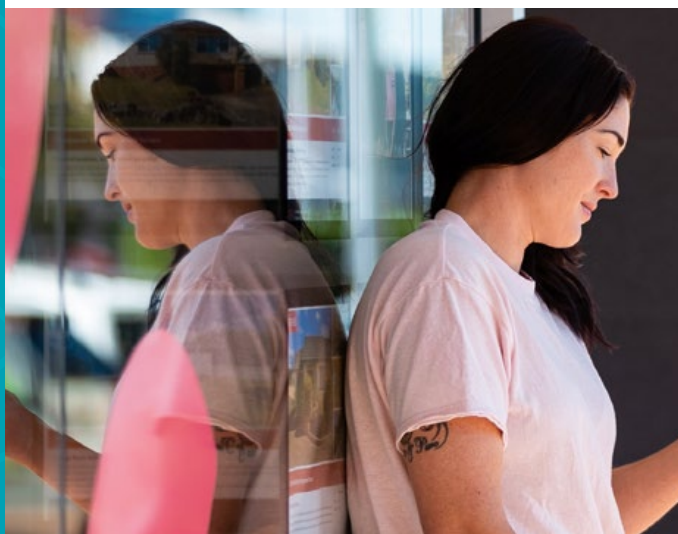
# ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 DRAFT PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024 TO 2028.



Key objectives	Communication and Engagement Principles				
	1	2	3	4	5
Design communication that's easy to understand and accessible to all	✓	✓	✓		
Continue to use our public website (portstephens.nsw.gov.au) as the core communication channel and invest in its growth and improvement	✓	✓	✓		✓
Use social media to target and engage audience profiles to encourage conversations and increase awareness of Council services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increase staff awareness and capacity, to enable effective communication, engagement and promotion of Council business	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Build Council's identity and brand through consistent visual communication	✓				
Use digital marketing to enhance awareness of Council projects and services	✓	✓	✓		✓
Create targeted, engaging and audience focused communications using data			✓	✓	✓
Regularly benchmark and review internal and external communications	✓				✓
Support elected members by keeping them informed so they can share information and increase awareness of Council activities and services through community networks	✓	✓			
Measure, evaluate and report on all communication activities on a quarterly basis	✓	✓			✓

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Strategic  
priority 3  
Media and  
public relations



We will build trust and reputation through proactive, consistent and trustworthy information that responds to issues and community priorities.

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Key objectives	Communication and Engagement Principles				
	1	2	3	4	5
Build and maintain strong relationships with media to facilitate informed reporting	✓	✓			
Promote Port Stephens with positive and proactive media	✓	✓			
Work across the organisation to identify newsworthy stories	✓		✓		✓
Respond promptly to media enquiries to meet news deadlines	✓	✓			
Develop annual Community Advocacy Priorities and implement campaigns to drive awareness of local issues and key priorities	✓		✓	✓	
Build relationships with stakeholders by celebrating key achievements together			✓	✓	
Foster opportunities for elected representatives or Executive to speak at corporate, community and networking events		✓	✓		
Coordinate Council's emergency management communications	✓	✓			
Continue to improve media record and information management	✓	✓			
Monitor, evaluate and report on all media and public relations activity	✓	✓			✓

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# Measures of success

## Measures of success

Continuous improvement is an integral part of improving our communication and engagement process. We'll monitor and report on our communication and engagement activities for effectiveness against the principles and key objectives of this Strategy.

Our communication and engagement efforts are reported and evaluated through the following processes:


- Upon completion of the communication campaigns or engagement programs
- As part of Council's quarterly, 6 monthly and annual reporting

Some key considerations in our reporting include:

- How effectively were barriers to engagement addressed?
- Did we reach people impacted by the project or people that are representative of our demographic?
- Were the intended outcomes of the engagement process achieved?
- How well did we provide feedback to participants on the results of their contribution?

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Our annual targets

-  Community Satisfaction Survey  
49%+ of our community feel they can provide input into decision making  
53%+ of our community are satisfied with their contact with Council
-  Port Stephens Liveability Score of 66+
-  1 million+ website visits
-  Increase Have Your Say members by 2.5%
-  Participation demographics accurately represent our community
-  Increase social media followers by 2.5%
-  Maintain above an average of 4.2% interaction rate on Facebook
-  Increase the engagement rate on Instagram by 14%
-  Increase e-newsletter subscribers by 2.5%
-  30% of projects have an engagement level of 'involve' or above



ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 DRAFT PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024 TO 2028.

# Attachment 1 Community Participation Plan

## Community Participation Plan

It's a statutory requirement for councils in NSW to prepare a Community Participation Plan (CPP) that is an easy to use guide for the community to provide input into planning decisions when Council is the consent authority.

### How is community participation carried out

The CPP specifies requirements for notification and public exhibition. This can include:

- Giving written notice to neighbours, individual landowners or occupiers
- Advertising on Councils website
- Making documents publicly available online

Other methods are used to on a case by case basis, in line with statutory requirements.

If the exhibition period is due to close on a weekend or public holiday, it might be extended to finish on the first available work day. In accordance with the planning legislation, the period between 20 December and 10 January (inclusive) is excluded from the calculation of a period of public exhibition.

Plans or applications can't be made or determined until after the minimum period of public exhibition.

### Making a submission

In addition to the requirements set out in the planning legislation, the submission should be:

- Received on or before the last day of the nominated timeframe for exhibition
- Made in writing (through the mail, email or hand delivered to Council)
- Contain the name and address (or email address) of the person making the submission
- Include the application number for reference (for development applications) or the name of the exhibited planning matter
- Include a statement of objection or support and reasons

## ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 DRAFT PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024 TO 2028.

### Community participation requirements

Under the EP&A Act, the following minimum community participation requirements apply to local planning functions:

Table 1

Mandatory timeframes	Minimum community participation requirement
<b>Division 1 — Schedule 1 to the EP&amp;A Act</b>	
Draft community participation plans	28 days
Draft local strategic planning statements	28 days
Planning proposals for local environmental plans subjects to a gateway determination	28 days or as specified by the Gateway Determination
Draft development control plans	28 days
Draft contributions plans	28 days
<b>Division 2 — Schedule 1 to the EP&amp;A Act</b>	
Development Application for designated development	28 days
Environmental Impact Statement obtained under Division 5.1 (An Environmental Impact Statement prepared for certain development such as state significant development.)	28 days
Re-exhibition of any amended application or matter referred to above	The period (if any) determined by the person or body responsible for publicly exhibiting the application or matter.

Exhibition timeframes are measured in calendar days and include weekends.

### Development applications

Table 2 outlines Council's minimum notification requirements for development applications. If there's an inconsistency between the notification requirements of this CPP and legislative requirements, the legislative requirements will prevail. If a use is not defined within Table 3, it is up to the discretion of council if the application will be notified.

Table 2 – Community Participation Categories (Refer to Table 3 for details)

Exhibition types	
Type	Requirements
A	<b>Not Notified Development</b> Council may at its discretion decide to notify any of this type of development that may significantly impact on the amenity of adjoining land owners.
B	<b>Notified Development</b> A 14 day notification period will apply. Written notification will be sent to all owners of land directly adjoining or opposite the development site. Additional owners and occupiers may be notified at the discretion of Council staff. Council may at its discretion decide not to notify development where impacts on adjoining land owners are considered minor in nature.
C	<b>Advertised Development</b> Written notification in accordance with 'type C' requirements and an advertisement published on Councils website. Development Application (DA) information published on DA Tracker. Additional advertisements may be placed in newspapers and/or through such other mechanisms as may be appropriate to ensure that the public is reasonably aware of the proposal. Council may also at its discretion decide not to advertise insignificant development.

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## Modification applications

The need or otherwise to notify an application to modify a development consent will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Act and Regulations or at the discretion of Council in consideration of the nature of the modifications proposed.

**Table 3 – exhibition periods**

Development category	Exhibition types		
	A	B	C
<b>Residential Accommodation</b>			
Dwelling – single storey	✓		
Secondary dwelling	✓		
Rural workers dwelling	✓		
Residential ancillary (for example sheds, pools)	✓		
Residential flat building			✓
Residential accommodation – all other types		✓	
<b>Rural</b>			
Agriculture		✓	
Farm buildings	✓		
Forestry			✓
Animal boarding or training establishment		✓	
Extractive industries/open cut mines			✓
<b>Commercial Development</b>			
Commercial premises (office, retail and business)		✓	
Home business/occupation	✓		
Entertainment facilities			✓
Function centres			✓
Sex services premises/home occupation (sex services)			✓
Restricted premises			✓
<b>Community and entertainment facilities</b>			
Places of public worship			✓
Recreation facility (major)			✓
Education establishment			✓
Health services facility		✓	
Other uses relating to community infrastructure		✓	
<b>Industrial development</b>			
General industry		✓	
Industrial retail outlets		✓	
Industrial training facilities		✓	

# ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 DRAFT PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024 TO 2028.


Development category	Exhibition types		
	A	B	C
<b>Industrial development</b>			
Light industry	✓		
Storage premises		✓	
Heavy industrial storage establishment			✓
Warehouse and distribution centres		✓	
Freight transport facilities		✓	
Heavy industry			✓
Rural industry		✓	
<b>Subdivision</b>			
Strata subdivision	✓		
10 or more Torrens or community title lots		✓	
<b>Tourist and visitor accommodation</b>			
Caravan parks and camping grounds*			✓
Tourist and visitor accommodation - all types		✓	
Eco-tourist facility		✓	
<b>Miscellaneous</b>			
Boatshed		✓	
Electricity generating works		✓	
Environmental facilities/environmental protection works		✓	
Moorings/mooring pens		✓	
Signage	✓	✓	
Air transport facility			✓
Airstrip			✓
Helipad			✓
Cemetery/crematorium/mortuaries			✓
Correction centre			✓
Marina			✓
Passenger transport facilities			✓
Port facilities			✓
Sewerage system		✓	
Waste or resource management facility			✓
Water supply system		✓	

\* The operator is required in writing to notify all potentially affected residents of their intention to lodge a development application or a planning proposal. This notice must be given at least 30 days before the operator lodges the development application or proposal. This change has come from an amendment to the Residential (Land Lease) Communities Amendment Act.

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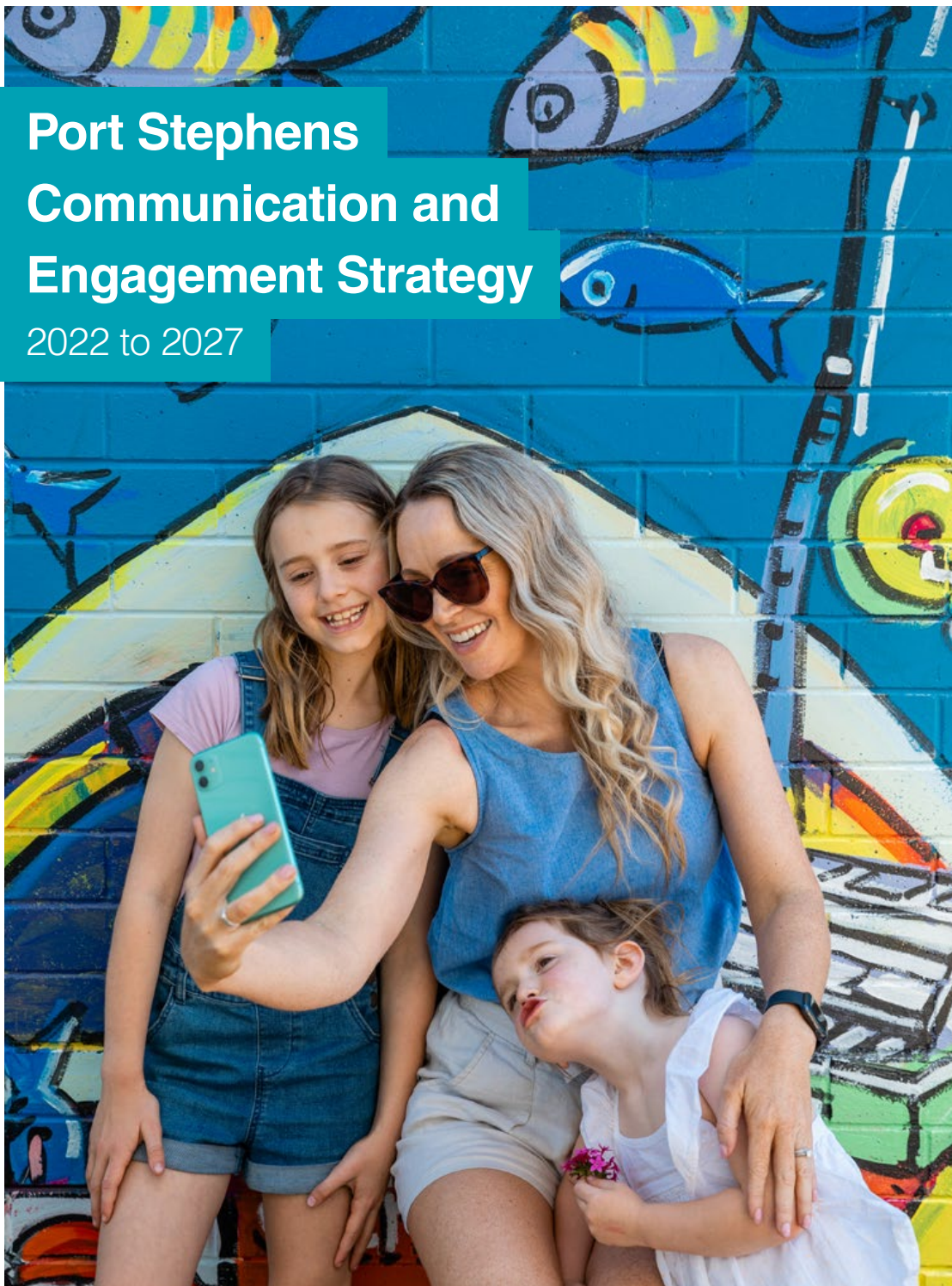


PORT STEPHENS  
COUNCIL

[council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au) | 02 4988 0255 | [portstephens.nsw.gov.au](http://portstephens.nsw.gov.au)    

ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 2 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATION AND  
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022 TO 2027.

# Port Stephens Communication and Engagement Strategy 2022 to 2027



Our vision is to actively communicate and engage in a way that tells our stories, listens to our community, informs our future and improves the wellbeing of those that live, work and visit in Port Stephens.





ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 2 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022 TO 2027.

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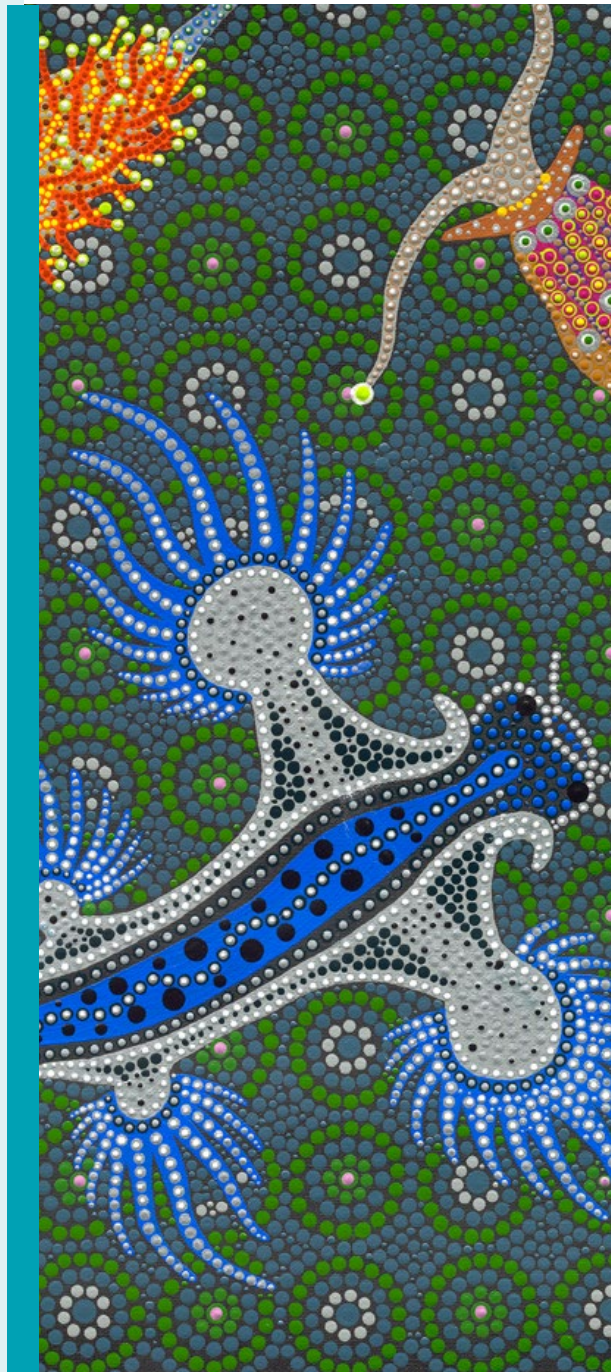
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We welcome you to Port Stephens – part of the Worimi Aboriginal Nation. Port Stephens Council acknowledges the Worimi people as traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waterways on which we all live, learn, work and play.

We value and respect the Worimi people and the legacy 60,000 years of Aboriginal Nation traditions and culture brings with it. As part of Council's culture of acceptance, diversification and harmony we walk alongside the Worimi people on a journey of listening and learning.

Together we will strive to make this a better place for all peoples. As guardians of these lands, we ask that you tread lightly to help preserve the biodiversity and respect those who came before as well as those who will follow.

Artwork by Regan Lilley.





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## A message from the Mayor

Communication is key.

Council's communication is key to successfully engaging and involving our community in influencing the future of Port Stephens.

Our Communication and Engagement Strategy is a blueprint for successful and meaningful communication and engagement, reflecting our organisations commitment to genuinely involve and engage with the community we serve.

The Strategy will help create a consultative culture, embracing conversations where information is shared and feedback encouraged, nurturing a relationship built on transparency and trust. The Strategy reflects Council's commitment to inform and improve community awareness of programs, activities and services. More importantly it is about our commitment to listen

and create open channels of communication for meaningful dialogue, idea generation and big thinking, to help shape our future direction.

Our communication and engagement needs to be clear, accessible and delivered effectively to meet the needs of a diverse society – enabling inclusiveness for all in our community.

**Ryan Palmer**  
Mayor of Port Stephens

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# Strategy context



Strong communication in local government creates trust in its citizens. The hope is that this trust will inspire citizens to become involved in their communities.

Diligent



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Over the past few years, a fundamental shift has occurred in the approach to public sector communication and engagement. Our residents have increased expectation around access to information and a greater desire to engage in planning for their place.

We know that effective communication and engagement are directly linked to the liveability and wellbeing of our community. By listening to our community and providing genuine opportunities for engagement, we'll create a greater sense of community ownership and ultimately, improve the delivery of Council services that are aligned to community needs.

To achieve this, we'll deliver a genuinely integrated and inclusive approach to our engagement and communication. By bringing together our communication and engagement approach, we've already created a shift in thinking. Through this Strategy, we'll continue to evolve this approach and build a culture that celebrates our stories and informs the future of Port Stephens.

The Port Stephens Communication and Engagement Strategy has been developed to provide a framework for the delivery of open and effective communication that actively shapes and influences the future of Port Stephens.

The Strategy responds to the legislative requirements of:

- NSW Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework including the Community Strategic Plan
- Local Government Act (1993) and
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979)

The Strategy also responds to the key priorities of the elected Councillors.

### Community Participation Plan

Attached to this Strategy is our Community Participation Plan (CPP) which is an easy to use guide for the community to provide input into planning decisions when Council is the consent authority. It ensures we meet our statutory requirements for notification and exhibition.

**Communications is how we connect with our stakeholders. It is sharing the right message at the right time to inform our community.**

NSW Government, All-Of-Government Communications Framework

**Community engagement is a planned process with the specific purpose of working across organisations, stakeholders and communities to shape the decisions or actions of the members of the community, stakeholders or organisation in relation to a problem, opportunity or outcome.**

NSW Government, All-Of-Government Communications Framework

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Who we  
are

“

A diverse mix of voices  
leads to better discussions,  
decisions and outcomes  
for everyone.

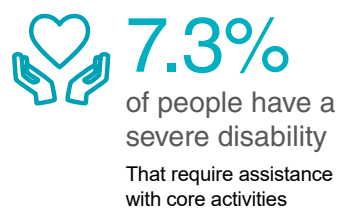
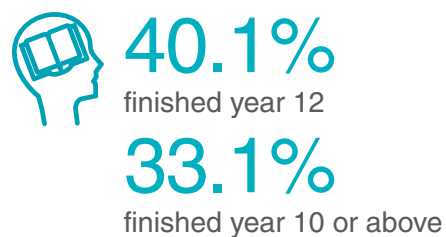
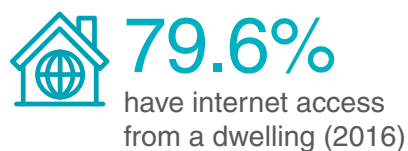
Sundar Pichai, Head of Google



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## Our community

More than 75,500 people call Port Stephens home and this is expected to grow to over 87,933 by 2040.



Source: ABS 2021  
\* statista.com



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# What we've heard

“

Longer periods to digest  
and respond to documents  
including Council agendas.

Community member

“

Opportunities to Have Your  
Say are numerous but there is  
little opportunity to find out the  
result of the engagement or  
what other people think.

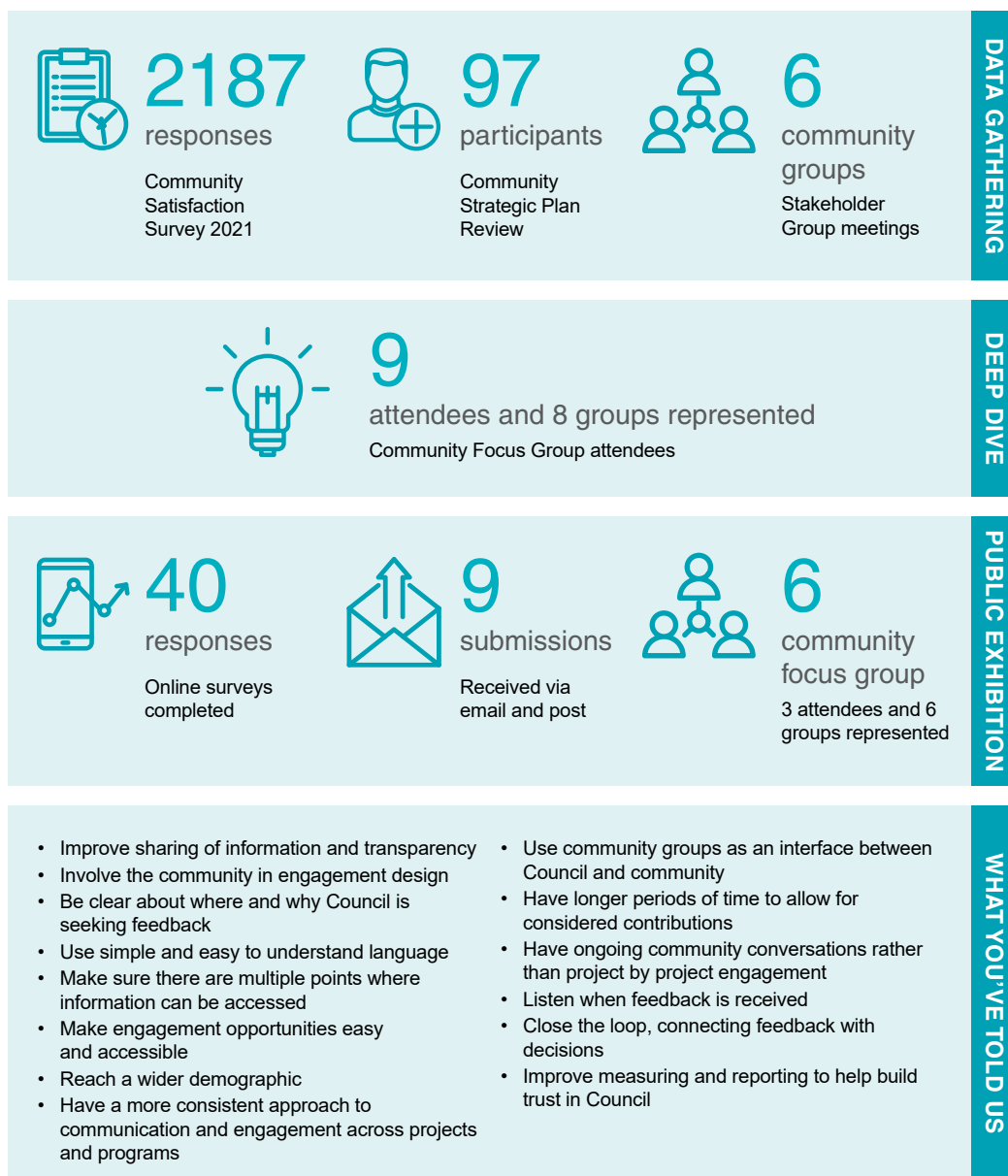
Community member



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### Our engagement

Between 2021 and October 2022, we've had a phased approach to listening to the community about how we deliver communication and engagement.



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# Our strategy

“

Stories of the importance of community engagement range from creating change in local policies and service provisions that not only enrich everyday lives and liveability of communities, but help shape and envision a community's future, bringing with it wider societal change.

Bang The Table



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As the closest level of government connected to the community, we have a key role in communicating and engaging with our local residents.

With over 55 individual business units across the organisation and almost 600 staff, we deliver a large number of services to our community. We're also the link between our community and other levels of government, advocating our community's priorities.

Over the past few years, we've worked hard to engage with and inform our community. However, we know from feedback that we can do better. We've listened and are committed to working closely with our community to act on this feedback, responding to their needs and priorities.

### Our purpose and vision



#### Our purpose

To create a framework for the delivery of transparent and timely communications and meaningful community engagement that builds trust and community participation in decision making for our place.



#### Our vision

We actively communicate and engage in a way that shares our stories, listens to our community, informs our future, and improves the wellbeing of those that live, work and visit in Port Stephens.

### Our principles

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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## International Association of Public Participation

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) developed an internal framework for community engagement is is considered a best practice approach worldwide.

## Levels of communication and engagement

	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.
Our role (Council's)	We'll keep you informed.	We'll keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We'll work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We'll look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We'll implement what you decide.
Your role (Community's)	Keep in touch. Follow Council on social media. Subscribe to regular newsletters and updates.	Contribute ideas and feedback. Respond to surveys. Make public submissions.	Actively participate in the workshops and engagement sessions. Share ideas concerns and aspirations.	Work together to develop solutions. Join committees.	Make decisions and work with Council to implement them.

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### Social Justice Principles

The NSW Government identifies 4 principles that establish supportive environments for everyone. These principles are the driving force to address barriers to communication and engagement experienced in our community and are therefore at the heart of our Strategy's principles and key objectives. We have a commitment to remove barriers, ensuring more equitable and inclusive communication and engagement.



#### Equity

Communication and engagement should include stakeholders including hard to reach groups who may have barriers to participation.



#### Access

All people should have fair access to communication and engagement opportunities.



#### Participation

All people should have the opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their lives.



#### Rights

Communication and engagement opportunities ensure positive participation of linguistic, cultural and religious diverse communities.

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## Our stakeholders

We all have a role to play in shaping our places and there's roles for both Council and the community in initiating, leading, participating in, and delivering engagement activities. It's vital that we identify and understand our stakeholders that are impacted by, or have an interest in a decision.



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### Methods of communication and engagement

We use a range of methods to communicate and engage with our community. We typically use a combination of methods to share information to ensure the greatest reach. Below are some of our common methods used across the IAP2 spectrum.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
<b>Communications</b>					
Advertisements / public notices	✓				
Council events	✓				
E-newsletters	✓				
Emails and letters	✓				
Flyers, brochures, factsheets, posters, signs	✓				
Local Newspaper article	✓				
Media releases	✓				
On hold messages	✓				
Rates notice and inserts	✓				
Radio announcements	✓				
Social media	✓	✓			
Webinars	✓				
<b>Community Engagement</b>					
Advisory committees			✓	✓	✓
Council meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Council website	✓	✓			
Focus group and workshops		✓	✓	✓	
Information and interactions with Council staff	✓	✓			
Drop-in / pop-up sessions		✓	✓		
Meetings with Council staff	✓	✓			
Public exhibition / submission		✓	✓		
Surveys / questionnaires / polls		✓			

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Strategic  
priority 1  
Community  
engagement



We will plan and deliver meaningful community engagement that enables community participation and builds trust in Council decision making.

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Key objectives	Communication and Engagement Principles				
	1	2	3	4	5
Embed the principles of the International Association Public Participation (IAP2) into the organisational culture	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Implement a Communications and Engagement Advisory Group to provide input into how we will engage with stakeholders for major projects		✓	✓	✓	
Increase opportunities for the community to engage informally with Councillors and Executive		✓	✓	✓	
Design engagement opportunities that enable time for considered thought and contribution	✓		✓	✓	
Ensure engagement opportunities consider place, diversity and accessibility	✓		✓	✓	
Use technology to increase participation and increase the diversity of voice and opinion in engagement activities			✓		✓
Build on the use of social media as a tool for engagement and feedback			✓		✓
Report internally and externally on engagement outcomes, connecting community engagement and decision making	✓	✓		✓	
Improve stakeholder information management to ensure equitable representation across the community		✓	✓		
Deliver Council's Community Participation Plan (Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979)	✓	✓		✓	



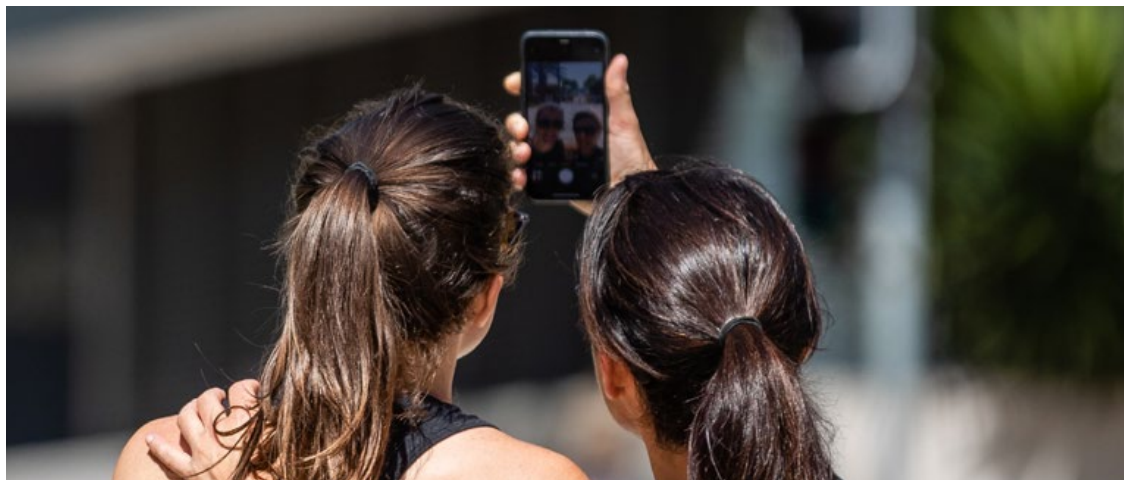
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Strategic  
priority 2  
Community  
communication



We will deliver  
timely, creative  
and transparent  
internal and external  
communication that  
connect our stories,  
our people and our  
place.

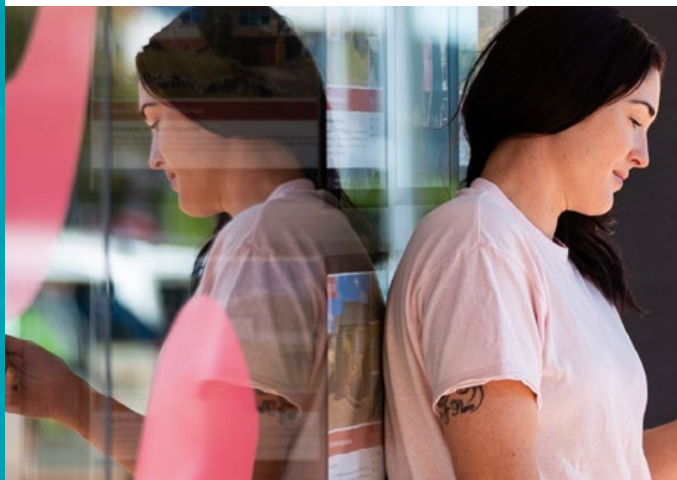
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Key objectives	Communication and Engagement Principles				
	1	2	3	4	5
Design communication that's easy to understand and accessible to all	✓	✓	✓		
Recognise our public website (portstephens.nsw.gov.au) as the core communication channel and continue to invest in its growth and improvement	✓	✓			✓
Develop a strong social media profile across a range of channels using audience profiles which encourage conversations and increase awareness of Council services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increase staff awareness and capacity to enable effective communication, engagement and promotion of council business	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Build Council's identity and brand through consistent visual communication	✓				
Maximise the use of live streaming and video across all communication channels			✓		✓
Use data to develop communication that is audience focused				✓	✓
Regularly benchmark and review internal and external communication platforms	✓				✓
Support elected members by keeping them informed so they can share information and increase awareness of council activities and services through community networks	✓	✓			
Measure, evaluate and report on all communication activities on a monthly basis	✓	✓			✓

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Strategic  
priority 3  
Media and  
public relations



We will build trust and reputation through proactive, consistent and trustworthy information that responds to issues and community priorities.

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Key objectives	Communication and Engagement Principles				
	1	2	3	4	5
Build and maintain strong relationships with media to facilitate informed reporting	✓	✓			
Promote Port Stephens with positive and proactive media	✓	✓			
Work across the organisation to identify newsworthy stories	✓		✓		✓
Respond promptly to media enquiries to meet news deadlines	✓	✓			
Develop annual Community Advocacy Priorities and implement campaigns to drive awareness of key priorities	✓		✓	✓	
Build relationships with key decision makers in state and federal government to increase understanding of local issues			✓	✓	
Seek opportunities for elected representatives or Executive to speak at corporate, community and networking events		✓	✓		
Coordinate Council's emergency management communications	✓	✓			
Improve media record and information management	✓	✓			
Monitor, evaluate and report on all media and public relations activity on a monthly basis	✓	✓			✓

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# Measures of success

## Measures of success

Continuous improvement is an integral part of improving our communication and engagement process. We'll monitor our communication and engagement activities for effectiveness against the principles and key objectives of this Strategy.

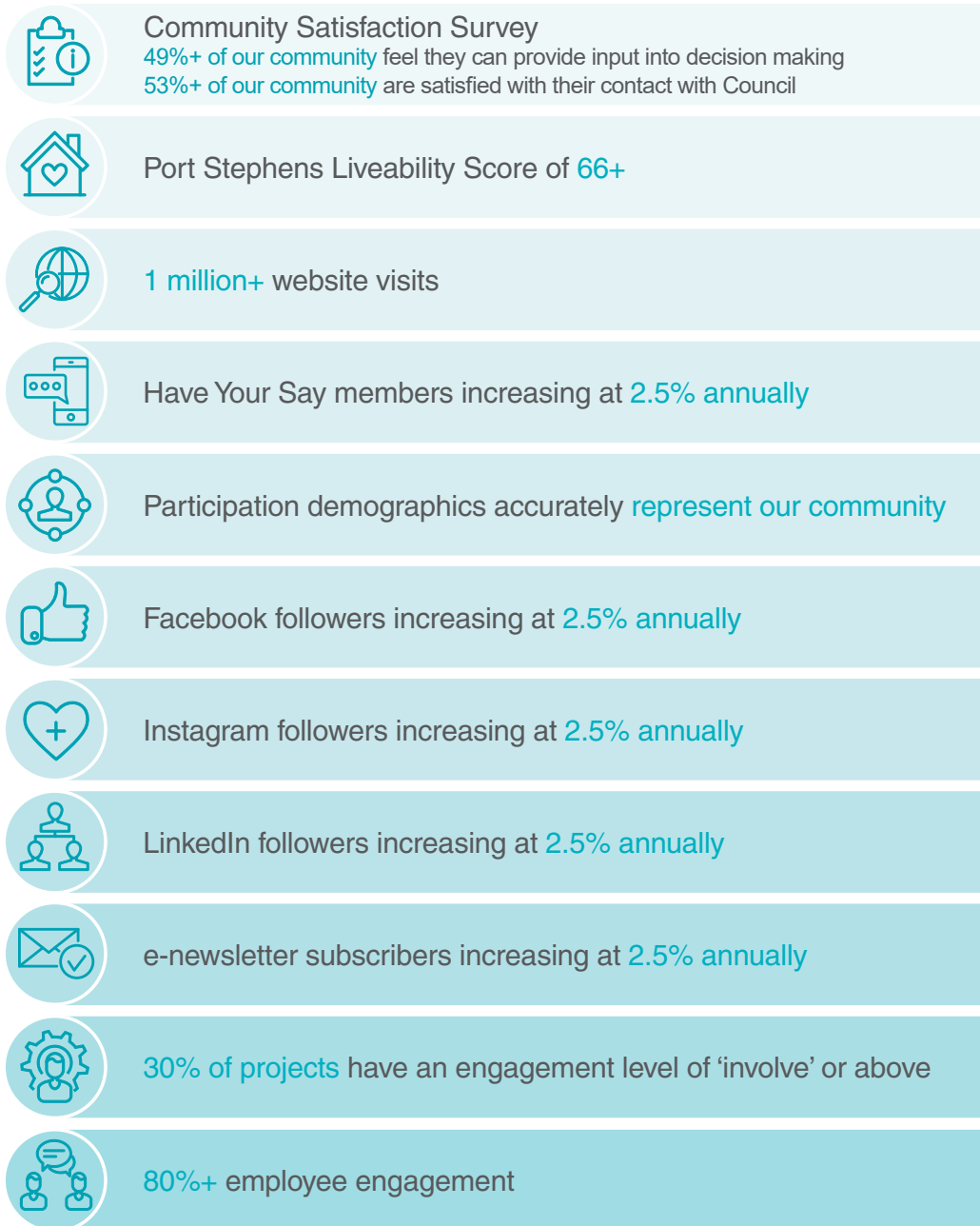
Some key considerations include:

- How effectively were barriers to engagement addressed?
- Did we reach people impacted by the project or people that are representative of our demographic?
- Were the intended outcomes of the engagement process achieved?
- How well did we provide feedback to participants on the results of their contribution?



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Our targets



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# Attachment 1

## Community Participation Plan

### Community Participation Plan

It's a statutory requirement for councils in NSW to prepare a Community Participation Plan (CPP) that is an easy to use guide for the community to provide input into planning decisions when Council is the consent authority.

#### How is community participation carried out

The CPP specifies requirements for notification and public exhibition. This can include:

- Giving written notice to neighbours, individual landowners or occupiers
- Advertising on Councils website
- Making documents publicly available online

Other methods are used to on a case by case basis, in line with statutory requirements.

If the exhibition period is due to close on a weekend or public holiday, it might be extended to finish on the first available work day. In accordance with the planning legislation, the period between 20 December and 10 January (inclusive) is excluded from the calculation of a period of public exhibition.

Plans or applications can't be made or determined until after the minimum period of public exhibition.

#### Making a submission

In addition to the requirements set out in the planning legislation, the submission should be:

- Received on or before the last day of the nominated timeframe for exhibition
- Made in writing (through the mail, email or hand delivered to Council)
- Contain the name and address (or email address) of the person making the submission
- Include the application number for reference (for development applications) or the name of the exhibited planning matter
- Include a statement of objection or support and reasons

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### Community participation requirements

Under the EP&A Act, the following minimum community participation requirements apply to local planning functions:

Table 1

Mandatory timeframes	Minimum community participation requirement
<b>Division 1 — Schedule 1 to the EP&amp;A Act</b>	
Draft community participation plans	28 days
Draft local strategic planning statements	28 days
Planning proposals for local environmental plans subjects to a gateway determination	28 days or as specified by the Gateway Determination
Draft development control plans	28 days
Draft contributions plans	28 days
<b>Division 2 — Schedule 1 to the EP&amp;A Act</b>	
Development Application for designated development	28 days
Environmental Impact Statement obtained under Division 5.1 (An Environmental Impact Statement prepared for certain development such as state significant development.)	28 days
Re-exhibition of any amended application or matter referred to above	The period (if any) determined by the person or body responsible for publicly exhibiting the application or matter.

Exhibition timeframes are measured in calendar days and include weekends.

### Development applications

Table 2 outlines Council's minimum notification requirements for development applications. If there's an inconsistency between the notification requirements of this CPP and legislative requirements, the legislative requirements will prevail.

Table 2 – Community Participation Categories (Refer to Table 3 for details)

Exhibition types	
Type	Requirements
A	Not Notified Development Council may at its discretion decide to notify any of this type of development that may significantly impact on the amenity of adjoining land owners.
B	Advertised Development Written notification in accordance with 'type B' requirements and an advertisement published on Councils website. Development Application (DA) information published on DA Tracker. Additional advertisements may be placed in newspapers and/or through such other mechanisms as may be appropriate to ensure that the public is reasonably aware of the proposal. Council may also at its discretion decide not to advertise insignificant development.
Not included in Table 3	Notified Development A 14 day notification period will apply for development types not included in Appendix A. Written notification will be sent to all owners of land directly adjoining or opposite the development site. Additional owners and occupiers may be notified at the discretion of Council staff. Council may at its discretion decide not to notify development where impacts on adjoining land owners are considered minor in nature.

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## Modification applications

The need or otherwise to notify an application to modify a development consent will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Act and Regulations or at the discretion of Council in consideration of the nature of the modifications proposed.

**Table 3 – exhibition periods**

Development category	Exhibition types	
	A	B
<b>Rural development</b>		
Agriculture	✓	
Farm buildings	✓	
Forestry		✓
<b>Residential accommodation</b>		
Dwelling — single storey	✓	
Residential ancillary (for example sheds, pools)	✓	
Rural worker's dwellings	✓	
Secondary dwellings	✓	
<b>Commercial development</b>		
Home business / occupation	✓	
Entertainment facilities		✓
Function centres		✓
Sex services premises / home occupation (sex services)		✓
Restricted premises		✓
<b>Community and entertainment facilities</b>		
Places of public worship		✓
Recreation facility (major)		✓
<b>Industrial development</b>		
General industry	✓	
Industrial retail outlets	✓	
Industrial training facilities	✓	
Light industry	✓	
Storage premises	✓	
Warehouse or distribution centres	✓	
Freight transport facilities		✓
<b>Subdivision (all types of subdivision)</b>		
Strata subdivision	✓	
More than 10 Torrens or Community title lots		✓
<b>Tourist and visitor accommodation</b>		
Caravan parks and camping grounds		✓
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Boatshed	✓	✓
Electricity generating works	✓	✓
Environmental facilities / environmental protection works	✓	✓
Moorings / mooring pens	✓	✓
Signage — other than advertising structures	✓	✓
Extractive industries / open cut mines		✓
Air transport facility		✓
Airstrip		✓
Cemetery / crematorium / mortuaries		✓
Correction centre		✓
Helipad		✓
Marinas		✓
Passenger transport facilities		✓
Port facilities		✓

\* Reasonable attempts must be made to notify a caravan parks or manufactured home estates Residents Committee, or equivalent where it is the subject of a new Development Application or S.4.55 modification application.

**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 2      PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATION AND  
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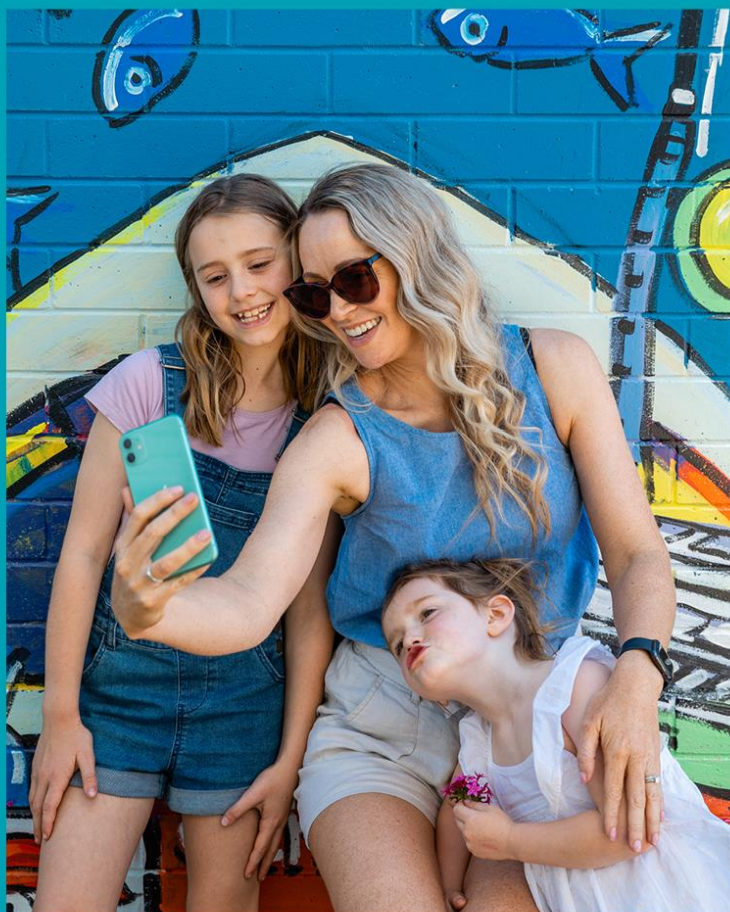
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COUNCIL

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ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND  
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

# Port Stephens Communications and Engagement Strategy

## Engagement Report



ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3      PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND  
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

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**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3      PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND  
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.**

## Introduction

Council's current Community Engagement Strategy was adopted on 29 November 2019. Under the Integration Planning & Reporting (IP&R) requirements, Council is required to review its current Community Engagement Strategy by December 2022 post the recent local government elections and in line with the IP&R cycle.

Over the past two years, a fundamental shift has occurred in the approach to public sector communications and engagement. Social media has increased the expectations around communications as a conversation and, more recently, the impacts of COVID -19 have heightened the community's awareness of what's important to them and created a greater desire to engage in the planning for their place.

To align with the shifts in the sector and Council's focus on liveability and wellbeing, Council needs to deliver a genuinely integrated and inclusive approach to engagement and communications. A combined Communication & Engagement Strategy will strive to meet legislative, business and community requirements.

The document can also include Council's Community Participation Plan which is an attachment to the strategy and will ensure compliance with the Environment and Planning Assessment Act 1979 – Division 2.6.

This Communication and Engagement Strategy will create a blueprint for successful and meaningful communications and engagement, reflecting our commitment to genuinely involve and engage with the community we serve.

## ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

### Communication and Engagement Methodology

The Communications and Engagement Strategy engagement program consisted of three (3) phases:

- Phase 1: Communications and engagement data gathering
- Phase 2: Communication and engagement deep dive
- Phase 3: Public exhibition

The engagement and communication program was designed based on the demographic analysis or audience profile for the Port Stephens community.

#### Phase 1 – Communications and engagement data gathering (2021)

Phase 1 engagement for the Communications and Engagement Strategy was undertaken as part of the Council Integrated Engagement Program. The Integrated Engagement Program aimed to seek community feedback on a number of key strategic documents through the same engagement opportunities, streamlining the way we engage and move away from single use engagement, building broader meaningful participation. This included drawing from community feedback from the 2021 Community Satisfaction Survey, a series of 'Place and Vision' community workshops and the Community Strategic Plan check in through an online survey.

Given the lockdown in late 2021 and the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, the 'Place and Vision' workshops were held online to maximise community participation and safety.

Table 1: Phase 1 Communication and engagement methods

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPATION
<b>Community Satisfaction Survey 2021</b>	Communication and engagement based questions included as part of the Community Satisfaction Survey seeking feedback on the methods and satisfaction with participation in communication and engagement previously.	2187 overall responses
<b>Direct stakeholder meeting Oct 2021</b>	Direct correspondence received from key stakeholder groups as well as a stakeholder meeting held in response to the correspondence between the Group Manager Development Services, the engagement team representative and the stakeholder groups.	2 x correspondence 1 x stakeholder meetings in response
<b>Place and Vision Workshops Nov-Dec 2021</b>	4 x online workshops via zoom for the following communities: West ward Raymond Terrace and surrounds	3 attendees; 11 EOIs



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ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPATION
	2 x East ward Nelson Bay, Salamander Bay and surrounds	23 attendees; 57 EOIs
	Central ward Tilligerry, Salt Ash and surrounds	13 attendees; 29 EOIs
<b>Community Strategic Plan online check in survey Mar 2022</b>	Online survey to understand the community's level of support for each of the community focus area and strategies including 'Our Council' focus area that includes communications and engagement.	59

### Phase 2 – Communications and engagement deep dive

In Phase 2 we took on a deep dive into the data received in Phase 1 by setting up a community focus group convened via invitation. This focus group met over two sessions in a hybrid model both face to face and online to hear about the background for the Strategy, the feedback Council has received to date and work on the strategic direction for communication and engagement.

Table 2: Phase 2 Engagement methods

DATE	METHOD	PARTICIPATION
<b>Community Focus Group</b>	<p>A community focus group was established with individual and key community organisations representatives from across the LGA. Groups invited to represent included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoal Bay Community Association</li> <li>• Tomaree Residents and Ratepayers Association</li> <li>• Econetwork</li> <li>• Soldiers Point Community Group</li> <li>• Mambo Wanada Wetlands Landcare Group</li> <li>• Anna Bay Community Hall</li> <li>• Voices of Wallalong and Woodville</li> <li>• Lemon Tree Parks and Gardens</li> <li>• Medowie Progress Association</li> </ul> <p>Individuals who had expressed interest in previous engagement opportunities were also invited to represent areas not covered by a community group including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raymond Terrace</li> <li>• Medowie</li> <li>• Tilligerry</li> <li>• Seaham</li> <li>• Karuah</li> </ul>	9 attendees (13 invites issued)

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### Phase 3 – Public exhibition (17 June to 15 July 2022)

The draft Communications and Engagement Strategy was placed on public exhibition for 28 days from 17 June 2022 to 15 July 2022 following Council resolution to exhibit on 14 June 2022.

Table 3: Phase 3 Communication methods

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	REACH
<b>Webpage</b>	Public Exhibition page	119 page visits
<b>Print or online media</b>	<p><b>Media release</b></p> <p>16 June 2022, New blueprint for Council's communications and engagement  <a href="https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/news/2022/new-blueprint-for-councils-communications-and-engagement">https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/news/2022/new-blueprint-for-councils-communications-and-engagement</a></p> <p><b>Media related via Media Monitors</b></p> <p>23 June 2022, Have your say on council strategy, Port Stephens Examiner, print edition  <a href="https://digital-print-edition.austcommunitymedia.com.au/PSE/2022/06/23/3dissue/index.html">https://digital-print-edition.austcommunitymedia.com.au/PSE/2022/06/23/3dissue/index.html</a></p> <p>27 June 2022, 'Port Stephens Council strategies go on public exhibition', Port Stephens Examiner, online edition  <a href="https://www.portstephensexaminer.com.au/story/7784689/port-stephens-council-strategies-go-on-public-exhibition/">https://www.portstephensexaminer.com.au/story/7784689/port-stephens-council-strategies-go-on-public-exhibition/</a></p> <p>20 June 2022, 'New blueprint for Council's communications and engagement', National Tribune  <a href="https://www.nationaltribune.com.au/new-blueprint-for-council-s-communications-and-engagement/">https://www.nationaltribune.com.au/new-blueprint-for-council-s-communications-and-engagement/</a></p>	25,000 distribution
<b>Social media</b>	Paid and unpaid social media post on 17 June 2022	16,541 reached; 93 likes, comments shares, 897 post clicks
<b>Direct email</b>	Group email sent to community focus group participants	9 emails

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ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	REACH
<b>Bulk e-newsletters</b>	22 June 2022, Your Port e-edition	2421

Table 4: Phase 3 Engagement methods

DATE	METHOD	PARTICIPATION
<b>Online Survey</b> Open 17 June – 15 July 2022	Survey via Survey Monkey – ‘Draft Communications and Engagement Strategy Check in’ – designed to check if our proposed direction is heading in the expected direction	40 surveys completed
<b>Individual discussion</b>	Individual follow up phone calls with previous focus group participants – detailed one on one discussions	3
<b>Submissions</b>	Submissions received	9 submissions

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## Key findings

The total participation across all 3 phases in the development of the new Communications and Engagement Strategy, is over 2400 feedback interactions. This figure includes:

- Community Satisfaction Survey responses (2187 responses)
- Meetings with key groups/stakeholders (9 attendees)
- Place and Vision workshops (96 EOIs)
- Community Strategic Plan 'check in' survey (59 responses)
- Draft Communications and Engagement Public Exhibition 'check in' survey (40 responses)
- Draft Communications and Engagement Public Exhibition submissions (9 submissions)

### **Phase 1 – Communications and engagement data gathering (2021)**

#### **Community Satisfaction Survey**

The annual Community Satisfaction Survey from 2021 has regularly included 4 questions which particularly relate to communications and engagement. These questions are:

- a) In the past 12 months have you contacted Council staff for any reason (in person, writing or email, by telephone, text message or social media)? If yes, how satisfied are you with our response including time, manner and answering your enquiry? Please keep in mind we do not mean the actual outcome but rather the customer service that was received.
- b) 'How do you prefer to receive information about Council and what is happening in Port Stephens? (Select all that apply)
- c) 'In the past 12 months, do you feel you have had an opportunity to provide input in Council projects and decision making?'; and
- d) 'What methods did you use to provide input in Council decision making? (Select all that apply)

Questions a) and c) are of particular interest in terms of determining performance trends and also future target/goal setting, while questions b) and d) provide useful data for future communications and engagement activities. Figures 1 and 2 show current performance trends over the past 4 years for questions a) and c). The results of the annual Community Satisfaction Survey for 2022 were not available at the time of writing this report.

Both figures show a decreasing trend over the last three years with a minor decrease in satisfaction with contact with Council and a significant decrease for satisfaction with input into decision making.

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Figure 1 – Satisfaction with contact with Council

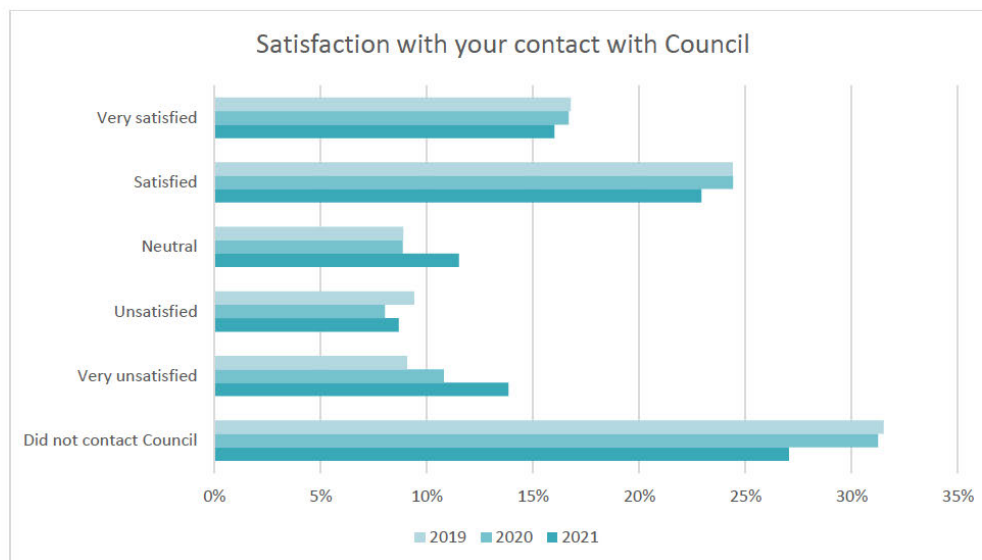
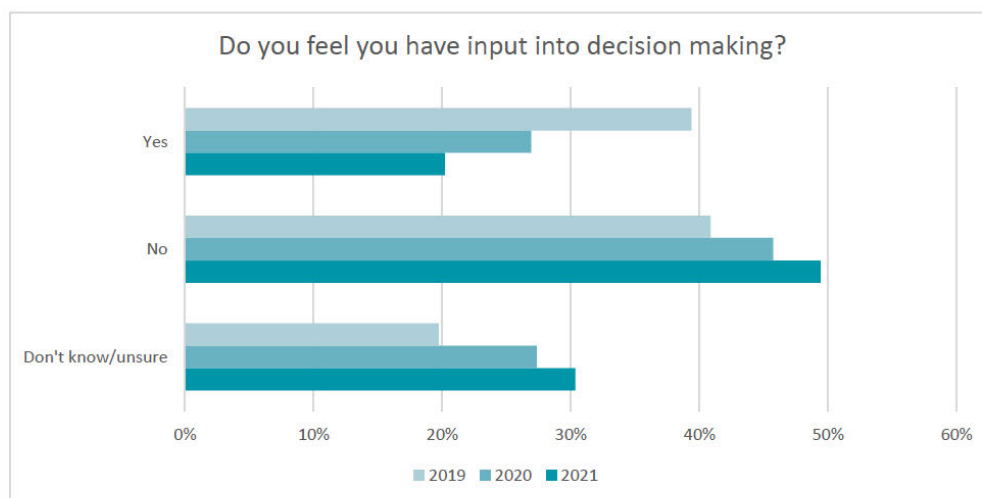


Figure 2 – Input into decision making





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In October 2021 a direct stakeholder meeting was held with representatives from a range of community groups after correspondence from Econetwork dated 25 August 2021 and phone calls were provided to Council outlining concerns with Councils communications and engagement. The meeting discussed concerns and improvements the attendees would like to see in the future. Correspondence from Econetwork dated 4 November 2021 includes the listing of attendees and community group representation and summarised the meeting. The issues raised at the meeting helped to highlight the need for a review of the communications and engagement strategy and to improve associated processes.

Tomaree Ratepayers and Residents Association (TRRA) also raised a number of issues with council processes in their letter dated 14 July 2022 primarily regarding planning matters but also mentioned the communications and community engagement strategy.

See Appendix A for copies of letters from Eco Network and TRRA.

**‘Place and Vision’ Workshops**

Four (4) ‘Place and Vision’ online workshops were held across the LGA as part of the review of the Community Strategic Plan. As part of these workshops a number of ‘hot topics’ were investigated including ‘Improving community engagement’. These sessions examined what was the current situation, what success looks like for community engagement and actions participants would like Council or the community to undertake to help us reach a state of success.

Some of the similar comments around the current situation across all workshops were:

- Lack of notice for community engagement opportunities,
- Council wasn’t actually listening to the feedback they gave
- Information was lacking in how their feedback was used in decision making
- Engagement approach was inconsistent
- Lack of clarity around areas of influence
- Council relied too much on digital and online forms of engagement.

Some of the similar comments around ‘What success would look like’ were:

- Broader engagement methods using both online and traditional methods,
- Clear guidance on what can be influenced
- Councillors to be more involved in observing engagement to hear first hand feedback.

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- More time allocated for considered feedback
- Community involvement at a strategic stage to understand and assist in the problem solving phase
- More diverse representation of participants

A number of ideas to move Council towards a state of success were suggested including collating feedback opportunities where possible, using community groups to assist in promoting Council information and using SMS to inform of engagement opportunities. All comments from the Place and Vision workshops and are included in Appendix B.

## Community Strategic Plan Check in survey

As part of the Community Strategic Plan review a short check in survey was undertaken from 28 February to 14 March 2022. The survey was designed as a milestone point to check in with the community about whether Council were on the right track with the proposed changes to the Community Strategic Plan. The proposed changes relating specifically to communications and community engagement is under the Our Council part of the Community Strategic Plan and this change was articulated in Figure 3 below. Of the 59 responses received 84.8% were supportive or very supportive of the proposed changes.

Figure 3 – Our Council check in question



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Comments from this survey specifically relating to communications and community engagement included:

- Little opportunity to find out the result of engagement or what other people thinking and closing the loop needs to be given higher priority
- Ensure the community has access to all the information to make an informed decision
- Use diverse approaches to ensure all voices are heard
- Ensure council decision on issues of community concern support the community's wishes
- Make engagement and outcomes more transparent

**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3      PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND  
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.****Phase 2 – Communications and engagement deep dive  
Community Focus Group**

The Community Focus Group was set up to delve deeper into previously received feedback. Thirteen (13) representatives were invited to participate with 9 representatives attending. The group met over two sessions in a hybrid model both face to face and online to hear about the background for the Strategy, the feedback Council has received to date and to help work on the strategic direction for communication and engagement. This group discussed what Council's approach to a) planning communications and engagement when seeking community input and b) when providing information to the community.

a) Planning communications and engagement

When planning and seeking community feedback, participants identified that Council needs to be:

- clear about where and why they are seeking input
- undertake engagement earlier to ensure improved participation
- create ongoing community conversations rather than project by project engagement
- provide easy and accessible engagement for all people to participate in
- broaden the demographic of who participates
- actually listen when feedback is received

b) Providing information to the community

When providing information to the community, participants suggested Council consider:

- clear messaging
- multiple access points for information
- simple and easy to understand language free from technical jargon
- more lead in time to organised events, programs and engagement opportunities

The group devised a number of actions across themed areas of digital, web and external communications; community engagement; visual communications and media and public relations. These actions have been listed in Appendix C with the aim to improve the way Council engages and communicates with the community.

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### Phase 3 – Public exhibition (from 17 June to 15 July 2022)

There were three main engagement activities associated with Phase 3 – public exhibition. This included an online survey, call for submissions through the public exhibition process as well as follow up contact with the focus group participants from Phase 2.

#### Online Survey

The online survey was designed to gather information about people's thoughts about the draft strategy to check if Council had reflected the feedback received to date.

There were 40 survey responses received. Some key results include:

- 79.4% of respondents supportive of the Strategy's principles and vision
- 81.6% of respondents supportive of the key objectives for Strategic Priority 1 – Community Engagement
- 80.6% of respondents were supportive of the key objectives for Strategic Priority 2 – Community Communication
- 22.1% of respondents were supportive of the key objectives for Strategic Priority 3 - Media and Public Relations
- High level of interest expressed by survey respondents in being part of the Community Reference Panel with 42.4% indicating they wanted to be involved and 42.4% interested but would like more information.
- The most popular age bracket for respondees was between 60-69.

Some of the most frequent themes from the comments and suggestions in the survey and the number of times mentioned are summarised in Table 5. For full results see Appendix D.

**Table 5: Online survey comment themes**

Theme	Number of comments
Improve wording, choice of language, formatting and keep to plain English	29
Improve measuring and reporting to help build trust in Council	39
Improve the method of communication and engagement	33
Ensure inclusion and consider demographics of area	12
Miscellaneous comments (includes non response answers like N/A)	11



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### Formal submissions

Formal submission for the Strategy were received via email and letter. Nine (9) submissions were received.

From these submissions there was general support for the draft document and Council's approach to date.

The details of the formal submissions have been summarised and included in Table 6. The feedback received expressed similar themes to the online survey responses. All submission and Councils responses are included in Appendix E.

**Table 6: Submission comment themes**

Theme	Number of comments
Improve wording, choice of language, formatting and keep to plain English	10
Improve measuring and reporting to help build trust in Council	28
Improve the method of communication and engagement	24
Ensure inclusion and consider demographics of area	7

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## Recommendations

Based on the community feedback received throughout all phases of the engagement it is recommended the following changes be made to the draft Communications and Engagement Strategy.

- Reduce and simplify wording and improve formatting
- Remove numbering of key objectives to reduce confusion around priority
- Update statistics page reflective of new Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data
- Better explain purpose of the document and include a definition for engagement and communications
- Demonstrate a clearer link between the Strategy principles and key objectives.
- Inclusion of information relating to stakeholder groups and barriers to engagement
- Make clearer the key objective about the Community Reference Group and rename to align more with Councils other advisory groups
- Incorporate a key objective to develop a communication engagement process including evaluation process
- Incorporate a summary of the methods used to engage and communicate
- Expand measures of success to to enable reporting against Councils Community Strategic Plan and the Strategy's principles and framework
- Minor changes to the Community Participation Plan

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### Appendix A: Key correspondence



**econetwork**  
port stephens

PO Box 97,  
Nelson Bay NSW 2315

25 August 2021

To: Mayor and General Manager

At a Workshop of more than 30 EcoNetwork affiliate groups and other members on 19 June 2021, one of the common problems raised was lack of transparency and inadequate public consultation by Port Stephens Council, particularly in relation to planning matters and public works.

Proper community consultation is hard. We know it is frustrating for Council when community groups raise concerns late in the planning process, often when it is too late to make changes, but this often reflects a failure of earlier communication. We accept that groups will often not get the result they want – Council rightly has to take into account a range of inputs.

But there is widespread feeling, based on experience, that Council is not genuine in its declared commitment to community engagement. Community organisations regularly experience unhelpful secrecy, frustration in obtaining information, and flawed Council consultation processes. Too often, Council expends significant resources on just telling the community what it has already decided to do rather than genuinely explaining options, gathering input and listening to community viewpoints.

Amongst the improvements we would all like to see are:

- Direct email notification to established community groups of matters affecting their locality
- Restoration of advertising of significant DAs and other matters in local papers
- Longer periods to digest and respond to documents – including Council agendas
- Documents left on the DA Tracker indefinitely – as many Councils do
- Less unnecessary redaction of plans and business contact details
- Better facilities for inspection of documents in the Council Chambers and at Libraries
- Better discretionary consultation on Council public works

Other planning related changes required are:

- Proper sequence of local master planning before approval of individual DAs and Council works that pre-empt such plans
- Tougher criteria for accepting significant applications of the LEP variation clause 4.6 in respect of building heights and other standards
- Insistence on ecological surveys and other reports being up to date
- Greater weight given to maintaining the character and ambience of localities
- More pro-active monitoring of compliance and strong enforcement of conditions

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On behalf of our members and affiliated groups, we request a meeting with you and senior Council officers as soon as practicable to discuss these issues.

We look forward to hearing from you.



President, EcoNetwork Port Stephens

Please reply to:  
president@econetworkps.org  
phone 0434 411 354

EcoNetwork Affiliates: (Those present at June 2021 meeting in bold)

**Businesses:** Destination Port Stephens • Imagine Cruises • Irukandji Shark & Ray Encounters • Salamander Recycling • **Community groups:** Boomerang Park Preservation Group • Climate Action Port Stephens • Friends of Tomaree National Park • Hunter Valley Botanic Gardens • Mambo Wanda Wetlands Reserves & Landcare Committee • Mambo-Wanda Wetlands Conservation Group • Myall Koala & Environmental Support Group Inc. • National Parks Association (Hunter) • North Arm Cove Residents Assoc. Inc. • Ocean and Coasts Community Initiative (O.C.C.I.) • Pindimar Bundabah Community Association • Plastic Free Port Stephens • Port Stephens Marine Parks Association • Port Stephens Native Flora Gardens • Shoal Bay Community Association Inc. • Soldiers Point Community Group • Soldiers Point-Salamander Bay Tidy Towns Inc • South Tomaree Community Association Inc • Tilligerry Habitat Association Inc. • Tomaree Birdwatchers • Tomaree Community Garden • Tomaree Museum Association • Tomaree Ratepayers & Residents Association Inc • Voice of Wallalong, Woodville & surrounds, (VOWW)

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**econetwork**  
port stephens

PO Box 97,  
Nelson Bay NSW 2315

04 November 2021

**Council Community Engagement**

This letter follows a useful initial meeting, by Zoom, on 26 October, and includes our summary of that meeting together with a promised agenda for a second meeting

Summary of first meeting, 26 October 2021, by Zoom

**Council:** Steve Peart (SP), Group Manager, Development Services; Elizabeth Ackerman, Team Leader, Communications & Customer Experience

**Iain Watt, EcoNetwork & Marine Parks Association (MPA), Andrew Steel, EcoNetwork and Soldiers Point Community Group (SPCG), Margaret Ritchie, Voices of Wallalong and Woodford (VOWW), Ben van de Wijngaart, Tomaree Ratepayers and Residents Association (TRRA), Geoff Washington, TRRA and Tomaree Headland Heritage Group (THHG), Kathy Brown (EcoNetwork and Mambo groups), Nigel Waters (TRRA & EcoNetwork)**

**Our position**

We welcomed Council's interim reply 2 September and the online meeting which made some good progress including on some specific issues (see below). Council agreed to a further meeting to continue working through the remaining issues.

We reminded Council of the combined membership of our groups (see above) and our reach' via email lists, websites and social media – e.g. Tomaree Voice FB reach typically in hundreds and max of 8,000+ for a recent post on a Nelson Bay DA, and a recent EcoNetwork post reaching 3,900.

We explained our starting point: '.... widespread feeling, based on experience, that Council is not genuine in its declared commitment to community engagement. Community organisations regularly experience unhelpful secrecy, frustration in obtaining information, and flawed Council consultation processes. Too often, Council expends significant resources on just telling the community what it has already decided to do rather than genuinely explaining options, gathering input and listening to community viewpoints.'

Also significant professional and other expertise in the community which we feel Council is not respecting or taking advantage of.

We noted the recent findings of Council's annual Community satisfaction survey: Overall satisfaction down significantly (12%) in latest survey inc. only 69% satisfied with contact with

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Council (only 53% if exclude 'neutral'). Perception of opportunity for input to Council also well down – almost halved since 2019 to 20%

We noted some good examples of consultation observed – inc. Waste Management and Coastal Management (good), NB Smart Parking and Place Planning (mixed - some good aspects but still problems overall)

We recognise that some matters will need decisions by the new Council, but consider it important to get all issues on the table, and make as much progress as possible on those matters within the discretion of Council staff.

### Council's position

SP acknowledged some past and present difficulties and explained Council is committed to improvements. Organisational structure has been modified, Council is working to meet various community engagement standards, and has some practical changes in hand e.g. website re-design.

In important context discussion on overall population/housing targets (carrying capacity), SP explained that Council seeks a balance between different visions, and strategic objectives are ultimately set by elected Council. Current Council has favoured growth and development.

SP made the point that Council will not always be able to satisfy community – we all accepted that – overall issue is whether we feel we are listened to and heard, and that Council responds fairly.

### Specific issues and suggested improvements – agenda for further meetings

- Direct email notification to established community groups of matters affecting their locality **(26/10 reference to Camden Council practice)**
- Restoration of advertising of significant DAs and other matters in local papers **(Some discussion 26/10)**
- Longer periods to digest and respond to documents – including Council agendas (goes to issue of meeting cycle – for next Council to review)
- Documents left on the DA Tracker indefinitely – as many Councils do (Council seeking advice). (In light of discussion of resource constraints, could consider criteria for leaving documents online e.g. 'significant' DAs)
- Less unnecessary redaction of plans and business contact details (Council seeking advice)
- Better facilities for inspection of documents in the Council Chambers (inc. free-standing terminals for self-help) and at Libraries (and staff training to assist but only when requested)
- More user-friendly website **(Discussion on 26/10 - problems acknowledged and re-design in hand – will engage in user testing. – check out Eurobodalla Shire site)**
- Better discretionary consultation on Council public works (e.g. amenities, tree removal)
- Format of consultation meetings – town-hall style vs 'drop-in' with one on one

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- Note taking at consultation meetings – need records + better feedback on reasons for decisions following consultation.
- User friendly versions of documents – more and more Council reports/strategies etc are very 'glossy' - image heavy, large files, expensive to print etc.
- Recording of all Council votes (matter for review by new Council)
- Webcast to include 'Public Access' (**Some discussion on 26/10**)
- Maintain ability for questions in Public Access (**Some discussion 26/10 - Council reviewing**)

Other planning related changes required are:

- Proper sequence of local master planning before approval of individual DAs and Council works that pre-empt such plans
- Better timing of infrastructure (e.g. road & path improvements etc. ahead of development)
- Tougher criteria for accepting significant applications of the LEP variation clause 4.6 in respect of building heights and other standards (+ clear public notice where a DA includes a variation request) (**Some discussion on 26/10**)
- Easier 'call-up' path + more referrals at discretion of Council staff, for clearly significant or controversial DAs
- Insistence on ecological surveys and other reports being up to date (e.g. traffic reports)
- Greater weight given to maintaining the character and ambience of localities (action not words)
- Requiring applicants with significant DAs to do better visual impact reports, inc. photomontages from a wider range of perspectives/views
- Council use of 3D modelling for both strategic planning and development assessment (what became of the Nelson Bay Centre imaging on trial in 2018?)
- More pro-active monitoring of compliance and strong enforcement of conditions (**Some discussion on 26/10 – SP admitted this is challenging for Council**)
- Failure to address specific compliance issues raised with Council (or delays) (**Some discussion on 26/10**)
- More community education on how the planning process works – flowcharts, and possible workshop

We note that TRRA and EcoNetwork sent a joint letter to Council dated 22 September about tree management issues, requesting separate consultation. This included three case studies of tree removal on public land. Another major case study has recently been drawn to Council's attention. TRRA and EcoNetwork look forward to a reply to that letter.



President EcoNetwork Port Stephens

Ph 0434 411 354

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14 July 2022

The General Manager  
Port Stephens Council

[council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au)

**PSC Planning Matters to be reported to Council Policy**

File number PSC2013-00406

**Proposed changes**

We welcome the minor changes proposed to the 2020 version of the Policy, as set out in the staff report (p118 of the 14 June Council agenda papers) and shown highlighted in yellow in the Attachment (pp 121-128). The changes now also include amendments to the 'call-up' provisions resulting from a separate Council resolution on 28 June. We do however have several proposed additional changes, and editing and formatting suggestions to clarify the Policy – as set out below.

**Wider context – transparency and accountability of planning matters**

This Policy addresses a very specific and narrow aspect of transparency – reporting to Councillors.

We note that this **Planning matters to be reported to Council Policy**, as well as the recently revised **Rezoning Request Policy**, relates directly to the **Community Participation Plan (CPP)** required under the EPA Act and currently on public exhibition as an Attachment to the **Draft Port Stephens Communication and Engagement Strategy**. The CPP deals with how DAs and Planning Proposals are made public, but this cannot and should not be separated from the communication of DAs and Planning Proposals to Councillors which is addressed in this Policy.

It is clearly in the public interest for transparency and accountability (to which Council is committed) for the relevant provisions in all three documents to be consistent and as closely aligned as possible.

For example, we can see no good reason why the reports to Councillors on DAs and Planning Proposals included in the PS Newsletter (clauses 5.1(b) and 5.2(a)) cannot be made public. While DAs and Planning Proposals can be found by the public and Councillors on Councils' DA Tracker and the State Government Planning Portal, it is



A: Po Box 290, Nelson Bay 2315 T: 0407 230 342

E: [planning@trra.com.au](mailto:planning@trra.com.au)

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not easy to locate items in Port Stephens of interest. If the reports are a useful shortcut' for Councillors, why the community should also get the benefit – there would be no additional cost or effort. **We submit that reports to Councillors on DAs and Planning Proposals included in the PS Newsletter also be made public.**

This wider issue has also been raised in the context of advertising of DAs and other matters in local newspapers – most recently in a Notice of Motion at the 22 February 2022 Council meeting. We note that the Information Paper on Council Resolutions for the 14 June Council meeting flags a report to Council on this matter in August.

There are also two outstanding Council Resolutions from the 13 July 2021 meeting relating to Publication of DA information and submissions. The same Information Paper for the 14 June 2022 meeting notes that a discussion with Councillors on these matters is scheduled for 19 July 2022.

Because these closely related matters are outstanding, **we submit that Council should revisit the all the relevant policies and documents as a 'package' later in 2022.** It may be that a simplified overall policy relating to transparency and accountability of planning matters could be developed to replace and consolidate the various overlapping provisions, which are confusing to all interested parties.

We will be suggesting in our submission on the **Draft Port Stephens Communication and Engagement Strategy** that the CPP references the other two Council Policies, including this one. **We submit that, similarly, this Policy should reference the CPP.**

#### **'Call-up' of planning matters**

We note that the provisions in this Policy relating to 'call-up' of a matter to Council (= withdrawal of delegated authority) overlaps with provisions in the **Port Stephens Council Code of Meeting Practice**. Amendments made to the Code of Meeting Practice at the 28 June Council meeting changed the number of Councillors required for a 'call-up' from 3 to 2. The amended draft Code is on exhibition until 15 August. We note that this change has been carried over into this Policy since the version with the 3 councillors was approved for exhibition on 14 June (Clauses 3.3, 3.4, 5.1(c) and 5.2(b)). The change to the Code from 3 to 2 Councillors was supported by several Community Groups including TRRA, and Councillors unanimously approved the change on 28 June – consistent with this **we support the change to this Policy as well.**

We submit that there needs to be a related change. If one Councillor withdraws their support (as envisaged by Cluse 3.4 and as has happened) there appears to be no mechanism for interested parties (or even the other Councillor?) to be informed so that a replacement 'sponsor' can be found. **We submit that this Policy include a requirement for at least all Councillors sponsoring a 'call-up' to be informed of any withdrawal of support.**



A: Po Box 290, Nelson Bay 2315 T: 0407 230 342

E: [planning@trra.com.au](mailto:planning@trra.com.au)

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We also submit that a field should be included in Council's DA Tracker to inform the public of the status of a DA with respect to delegated authority, with similar transparency for the status of Planning Proposals. Where Council staff have used their discretion to bring a matter to Council, or where Councillors have 'called up' a matter, this needs to be obvious to the public. This would avoid unnecessary lobbying by interested parties to have a matter 'called up' when it will already be coming to Council for Determination.

### Variations – exceptions to development standards

The intention of Clause 5.1(h) is to require DAs which seek to vary a development standard by greater than 10% to be reported to Council for determination. We submit that this should be the criterion in the clause rather than it including the preamble that the DA includes a 'Request to vary...'. While DAs that seek to vary should (and usually do) include a specific request, the 'trigger' for reporting should apply whether or not the applicant has expressly requested a variation. Whether a variation is or is not greater than 10% is sometimes contentious, and the applicant may assert that it is less and therefore not submit a Request under Clause 4.6 of the LEP. Council staff must be required to independently assess whether a DA includes a variation to one or more development standards and if so whether it crosses the 10% threshold. **We submit that the criterion for reporting under clause 5.1(h) be changed to 'DAs which seek to vary a development standard by more than 10%'**

We note that this issue is not clearly dealt with in Council's *Exceptions to Development Standards Policy* – Clause 5.4.4 of that Policy appears to leave the judgement in the hands of the applicant. This should be corrected.

The *Planning matters to be reported to Council Policy* should also make it clear whether 'Development Standard' for the purposes of Clause 5.1(h) includes both *Local Environmental Plan (LEP)* standards such as height limits and floor space ratios and *Development Control Plan (DCP)* standards such as setbacks or site coverage. According to the definition of 'Development Standard' in the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EPA Act)*, this will hinge on whether Council's DCP is an 'environmental planning instrument'. This needs to be made clear, and even if it is not officially an EPI, **we submit that Council should ensure that both Policies do apply to DCP standards.**

If the *Exceptions ... Policy* can ensure that it applies to DCP standards such as setbacks, then we submit that this *Planning matters... Policy* should address the increasingly common situation where a DA 'pushes the boundaries' (sometimes literally) with requests for multiple variations – e.g. of height and setbacks. While no one variation may exceed 10%, the overall effect may be to significantly increase the scale, bulk and impact of a building. **We submit that there should be an additional criterion for reporting a DA to Council, along the lines of: 'where either the planners or objectors raise legitimate concerns about the cumulative impact of multiple variations, even where they are individually less than 10%'**



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### Reporting of DAs and modifications on public land

We submit that 5.1(d) should apply to crown land managed by Council as well as to Council owned land, and that the \$250,000 dollar threshold is too high – works costing much less than this on public land could be of great public interest. We submit that a threshold of \$100,000 would be more appropriate.

In 5.1(e) we cannot see any justification for the exclusion of *'...amenity buildings and structures such as; toilet facilities, playgrounds, small refreshment kiosks and the like.'* These amenities are almost always of great public interest – as evidenced by recent controversies over the design of replacement amenities buildings in several locations in the Tomaree peninsula. We submit that the exception be removed so that all such DAs and s.4.55 modifications on 'Community land' are reported to Council for determination.

The net effect of the changes we propose to 5.1(d) and (e) is that a single clause would suffice. **We submit that clauses 5.1(d) and (e) be replaced by a single clause, requiring reporting to Council for all DAs and s.4.55 modifications with a cost of works of more than \$100,000 on Council owned or managed land, whether classified as Community or Operational.**

### Reporting of modification applications

Clauses 5.1 (f) and (g) appear to overlap and their relationship should be clarified. We are aware that sub-clause (g) has been changed pursuant to a Notice of Motion at the 22 February 2022 Council meeting but we submit that sub-clause (g) may not be necessary. Surely any 'condition moved on the floor of Council and approved by the Council' would have been in the context of an 'original DA ... determined by Council'. If so, then sub-clause (g) would seem to be redundant – sub-clause (f) would ensure that any such application would be 'reported to the Council for determination' (the intended outcome of both sub-clauses)?

**We submit that the easiest way to clarify this is to modify 5.1(f) to read 'Section 4.55 (1A) & (2) ...' and to delete (g).**

We have no objection to this submission being published, in full and unredacted.

Nigel Waters

Convenor, TRRA Planning Committee

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## **Appendix B: Place and Vision workshop**

### **Place and Vision workshop topic: Improving Community Engagement**

Verbatim comments recorded

#### **What's the situation?**

- Unsure of whether things are being taken notice such as development issues and building height
- Staff are open to having discussions – individual led
- Why have decisions been made is not clear
- Don't always know about opportunities
- Don't share the wins together
- Find out through Councils website – have to go looking for opportunities
- Wide spread feeling that we aren't listening with some exceptions
- Tell what we are going to do dressed up as consultation
- Website is difficult to navigate
- Noted responses aren't good enough and direction to policy
- Where can influence and not influence isn't clear
- Communicate what we are doing and why and what we have done when a project is finished – closing the loop
- Context isn't necessarily there as to why an amount of work or a decision is required
- Ongoing conversation rather than a dip in and out
- No response to correspondence
- Left hand and right hand don't know what is happening
- Sports Council
- Not consistent in approach
- Not talking to the right people
- Lack of transparency
- More opportunity in the last few years to engage and more opportunities to provide feedback
- Digital opportunities mainly and could be more non digital opportunities – return to face to face
- Used to have community forums and need to get back to this
- Contact with council via switch board and this is useful
- Councillors not running up for meetings with Committees of Council – also fewer Councillors per ward
- More people need to contact Council and may not know about this
- Online opportunities, PS Today
- More personal and face to face methods need to be included
- Consideration of methods for older persons
- Digital DAs are inaccessible
- Feel as though decision is already decide/ predetermined before community engagement – feel like it's a tick box at times
- Sporadic – might hear about something already gone – a regular thing and method, broadened methods

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- Timing for engagement isn't always appropriate -
- Numbers don't seem to be high
- Hear about engagement opportunities afterwards
- Don't close the loop with participants and how things are decided
- Run evening public meetings in halls

**What does success look like?**

- Rationale as to why things are happening or a decision was made – education of the context
- Not only online methods or social media – look at non digital methods also
- More community invited to the table at the strategic stage to understand the why and at the problem solving stage
- Understanding what is negotiable and not negotiable
- Diversity at the table
- Not necessarily the outcome that we always want but we need to feel that we have been listened to
- Responses provided to correspondence for ideas etc.
- Consider a sports council model for other areas
- A consistent approach for all engagement across Council
- Talking to the right people - shopkeepers example
- Broader methods used for engagement that are both not online and online for all engagements
- More opportunities for engagement e.g. twice a year to comment on Council businesses
- Be clear about what can influence and why
- Councillors to be more involved in observing engagement
- Variety of times for engagement
- Variety of method used for engagement
- Close the loop with participants/engagement
- Not a reliance on technology – post office windows, examiner notices, newsagent, Kooindah Centre, Letter box drop or similar for larger projects, regular town meeting every 3 months to discuss key projects and issues.
- Have time to think about information and form opinions rather than on the spot feedback

**Some community ideas**

- Ideas box section on the website – could be a forum for discussion also
- Continuation of these types of forum
- Consultations on site where the project is located
- Linking in with existing committees for promotion of opportunities
- Key community champions
- Electronic newsletter and combining feedback opportunities through this
- Engagement reports and numbers for and against provided openly to the community – transparency
- Easy where to find DAs
- Need to refer back to DAs and things fall off the DA Tracker – works often happen later/late years
- Improved access for DA exhibition – especially important ones
- Able to review DAs without a council member standing over shoulder

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- Community to promote Council information and projects for the area on local FB pages if Council is able to build a relationship with the key stakeholders
- Reinstate the DA Notices in the Examiner (supporting local business)
  - Divided on the funds
- Adding more comment options for surveys to enable more voice to be provided
- Regular Town Meeting every 3 months
- Coordinate Council and State Government surveys where possible
- Create more ongoing consultations/communication/ updates rather than dip in and out consultation
- More letter box drops for larger projects
- SMS service provider to notify of engagement opportunity
- Visuals for projects needs to be more descriptive
- Information about engagement opportunities in local coffee shops
- VMO boards at aquatic centres for information on screens – key messages/electronic noticeboard
- Participants details collected to inform engagement outcomes via SMS

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## **Appendix C: Focus group comments**

### **Communications & Engagement Strategy - Community Focus Group workshop**

Verbatim comments recorded

#### **Digital Communications (social media)**

- Mixed blessing - very easy to get it wrong
- Lots of people backing out of social media – negative perception
- Red flags on social media in areas – maybe yoga classes instead
- Reactionary response to the red flags – need wellbeing response (all over the LGA)

#### **Website Communications**

- Engagement hub n website for DA's Public exhibitions, open engagements
- Easier to find things on the website
- Planning hub on website for all planning information and Das
- Centralised, accessible Information
- DA subscription service for direct email of new DAs
- Links to legislation (for example) that may impact the outcome
- Ideas box on the website for community ideas and suggestions
- Search function not working well enough
- Info/tutorial on key words to use to activate search
- Website has interactive map with information and plans for individual parks and public spaces

#### **External communications (newsletter, emails, poster, letter, signage, etc)**

- Create more ongoing communication to tell the story and connect the dots
- SMS service provider to notify about engagement or council information
- Quarterly newsletter to letterboxes - more specific information
- Council facilitated community noticeboards, particularly villages
- Use action groups as an interface between Council and the community
- Use advertisement in local paper mire - All info
- Have your say email incorporated into newspaper adverts
- Be clear and specific in details of projects, especially the location eg "drainage at Marine Drive" not "improving drainage on Tilligerry foreshore"

#### **Community Engagement**

- Mix of online and non digital methods
- Able to view DAs at Council without staff member looking over shoulder
- Go to the local community groups and connections for engagement
- More community invited at the table at strategic stage



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- More Councillor involvement in observing engagement
- Social pinpoint – like or dislike – don't like it (turns people off)
- Diversity of demographics at the table
- Regular town meetings every 3 months – face to face
- Newcastle Radio station advertising (e.g. Triple M, 2NURFM), ABC Newcastle
- Key community champions
- Coordinate Council and State Government surveys
- Going to sports club/fitness classes – go to where the people are not just the usual suspects
- Engagement hub on new website – DA's, Public Exec; open engagements; fun engagements such as photo or art competitions
- Variety of times for engagement
- Option for calling for telephone survey
- Make it clear if a project is a realistic one. State if it's already funded or an unfunded but planned project
- Close the loop and report back to community
- Getting information out earlier
- Distributing engagement questions/agenda in advance so community members can prepare
- More publication of issues in front of Council
- Timetable of surveys listed on website
- Presenting the community with feedback gained from consultation
- More visibility of Councillors – appointment time?? Confidential and polite.
- What's on for community engagement
- Koala sightings and DA Planning notifications – email not from Council
- Outlining what communities were engaged in closing the loop
- Community days, less structured
- Locality staff champion ie., engineer
- Overkill with key stakeholders not wider community – not a true representation
- Find other ways to connect with people
- Avoid any surprises in Council meeting agendas that are different to community expectations after engagement and feedback

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### Appendix D: Social media data

Posted on 17 June 2022

#### Have your say on our draft Communications and Engagement Strategy!

Port Stephens Council's newly developed draft Communication and Engagement Strategy is on public exhibition for community feedback following this week's Council meeting.

The Strategy reflects Council's commitment to inform and improve community awareness of programs, activities and services. More importantly, it shows Council's commitment to listen to the community and use their ideas to help shape the future direction of Port Stephens.

#### Highlights of the Communication & Engagement Strategy 2022-2027 include:

- Ensuring diverse engagement opportunities enabling time for considered thought and contribution.
- Community input into design of engagement planning.
- Continued investment in the growth and improvement of Council's website.
- Building on the use of social media.
- Maximising use of livestreaming and video.

Council want to check in with the community to make sure feedback has been understood and the proposed direction aligns with community expectations.

The documents are currently on exhibition through to 5pm on 15 July 2022. We encourage you to share your thoughts on the draft Communication & Engagement Strategy and complete the online survey: [pscouncil.info/public-exhibitions](https://pscouncil.info/public-exhibitions)



#### Performance for your post

16541 People reached

93 Likes, comments and shares

897 Post clicks

0	391	506
Photo views	Link clicks	Other Clicks

#### Distribution summary

-3.4x lower than your other posts within 21+ days of being published.

↓ 3.4x less	↑ 3.5x more	↑ 1.0x more
Post impressions	Post clicks	Reactions

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#### NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts	0 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

93 Likes, comments and shares

#### BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

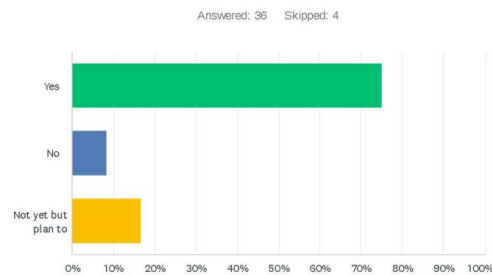
16541	2193	15238
Total reach	Organic reach	Paid reach
92433	2365	90068
Total impressions	Organic impressions	Paid impressions

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### Appendix E: Survey results

#### Draft Communications and Engagement Strategy Check in survey

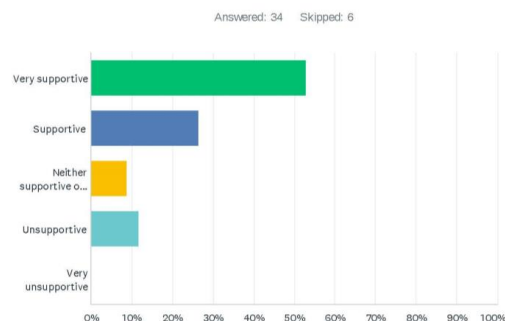
Q1 Have you read the draft Communications and Engagement strategy?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	75.00% 27
No	8.33% 3
Not yet but plan to	16.67% 6
Total Respondents: 36	

Q2 What is your level of support for the overarching Communications and Engagement Principles listed in the draft 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



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very supportive	52.94% 18
Supportive	26.47% 9
Neither supportive or unsupportive/neutral	8.82% 3
Unsupportive	11.76% 4
Very unsupportive	0.00% 0
TOTAL	34

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Q3 Do you think there is anything is missing from the overarching principles?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 19

Comment	Comment code
PSC speak the words but do not activate what they say	2
Big on aspiration but very light on measureables. A strategy is only as sound as the way and degree to which its outcomes are measured. It reads more like a Mayor/ Councillor re-election document. Nothing to really disagree with, but as always, who will hold Council to account??	2
A guarantee that concerns will be heard and action taken for issues that have been consistently neglected by council leading to increasing reduced access, participation and opportunities for many in the community. E.g. public transport continues to be abysmal despite years of discussion and empty promises.	2
Your use of language in this survey is poor. By 'level of support' do you mean 'do I believe that you deliver on these principals?'. I support the spirit of the principals however I do not believe that you deliver.	1, 2
Transparency on the council's capacity and capability to deliver on these principles. Sharing clear simply written information of: Why are these principles valued, the purpose What facts do we know of achievement / progress of living these principles Who is going to uphold these principles How will this happen (the process) & when? It appears there is a lot missing from this report lots of language without a cut through of "clear is kind" it appears as well written marketing, rather than a Clear is Kind "down to earth" approach which resonates with the Truth. It's too fluffy and too wordy. Needs a simple frame work with real stores to bring this to life. Excessive amount of action items. Did council achieve all the previous periods objectives? If yes A let's celebrate that, if not yet, let's find out why and reduce the items to the vital few & communicate those with bold simplicity.	1, 2
Its a little hard to disagree with the survey questions.	1
Accessibility for those with disability	4
I don't think you aim to communicate with the communities enough. The place planning workshops may do this but we are not part of the process and I am wondering if this process will even reach us. The greatest role of council is to get the community on the same page with clear shared expectations of their future.	3
No. Feels like the principles cover everything that's needed. Would like to see them have their own page at the beginning of the document. Then the detail in the rest of the Strategy organised to show a clear link to each principle.	5
Only the drive to ensure the 5 statements are honoured.	2

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<b>Comment</b>	<b>Comment code</b>
Not just respecting but evaluating community input for relevance and guidance in developing strategies	3
There is nothing to say you actually have to work with that feedback... Just that you have to listen to it and then do what you want.	2
They are just words really that lots but not real ability to be held accountable too or guide decision making	2
1. We deliver relevant, timely ... information which is publicly available and easily accessible to all 4. We listen, value, respect and act upon ... 5. We embrace innovation, encourage new ideas and implement them to better serve our community	4
We will highlight incidences where community feedback has been incorporated in a way that can be easily seen. Vision statements and websites extolling the virtues of the plan are not enough. Words are cheap.	2
Acknowledging it's an older population and many aren't online. Would be good for community displays in council buildings eg. Libraries, community centres and other facilities.	3

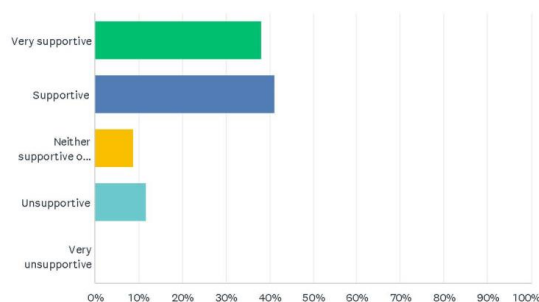
<b>Key themes from Question 3*</b>				
<b>Code 1 + 5</b>	<b>Code 2</b>	<b>Code 3</b>	<b>Code 4</b>	<b>Code 6</b>
Improve wording, choice of language, formatting and keep to plain English	Improve measuring and reporting to help build trust in Council	Improve the method of communication and engagement	Ensure inclusion and consider demographics of area	Miscellaneous comments (includes non response answers like N/A)
10	4	6	3	1

\* comments can include more than 1 theme

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Q4 Our vision for communications and community engagement is "We actively communicate and engage in a way that tells our stories, listens to our community, informs our future, and improves the wellbeing of those that live, work and holiday in Port Stephens". How supportive are you of this statement?

Answered: 34 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very supportive	38.24%	13
Supportive	41.18%	14
Neither supportive or unsupportive/neutral	8.82%	3
Unsupportive	11.76%	4
Very unsupportive	0.00%	0
TOTAL		34

Q5 Do you think anything is missing from the visioning statement?

Answered: 23 Skipped: 17

Comment	Comment code
Again the words are good but will the actions follow through	2
How are you proposing to implement these Motherhood statements?	2
I hope to see more evidence of this: "Close the loop, connecting feedback with decisions".	2
No	6
As above. A guarantee issues affecting all levels of community will be actioned, not just those favouring local business and economy and those who are privileged.	2
On point! Four key themes here, they could be the framework for all comms.	1
no	6
Perhaps "and improves quality of life and wellbeing...." Maybe "shares our stories" rather than "tells our stories".	1



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<b>Comment</b>	<b>Comment code</b>
I am always hoping to see residents needs prioritised and separated from the needs of tourists.	4
the last phrase is not needed in a communications & engagement statement. This maybe is included in the Vision statement for the Council in general. Communications & engagement are about just that not about wellbeing. don't overwork the vision statement - keep it simple and then it will COMMUNICATE it's intent and not get lost	1
It says nothing about working with the communities. I find I occasionally strike clarity by catching the right staff person at the right time and sometimes this leads somewhere but the rest of time I am clutching at straws. It is very hard to get info,	3
"Holiday" could be better expressed as "visit" to cover more reasons for people to be in Port Stephens	1
No	6
listening and communicating	6
Actual implementation by Council officers.	2
The fundamentals of the vision is to have a comms strategy that aligns with the most effective ways community will contribute to inclusive engagement	4
We don't need to be a UN 'smart city' gulag slave community. Carbon is not a pollutant, lithium and cobalt are, so are dead wind mills and solar panels.	6
Nothing about growth. Nothing about maintenance. Nothing about listening to all of the region (not just Nelson Bay)	4
Young people under the age of 40	4
Far too long winded for a vision statement and too complex	1
Frequently engage through multiple easily accessible channels	3
One can write as many statements as one wishes, it's in the implementation and evidence that we gain confidence.	2
I think it's a very encompassing statement	1

<b>Key themes from Question 5*</b>				
<b>Code 1 + 5</b>	<b>Code 2</b>	<b>Code 3</b>	<b>Code 4</b>	<b>Code 6</b>
Improve wording, choice of language, formatting and keep to plain English	Improve measuring and reporting to help build trust in Council	Improve the method of communication and engagement	Ensure inclusion and consider demographics of area	Miscellaneous comments (includes non response answers like N/A)
6	6	2	4	5

\* comments can include more than 1 theme

## ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

### Strategic Priority 1 – Community Engagement

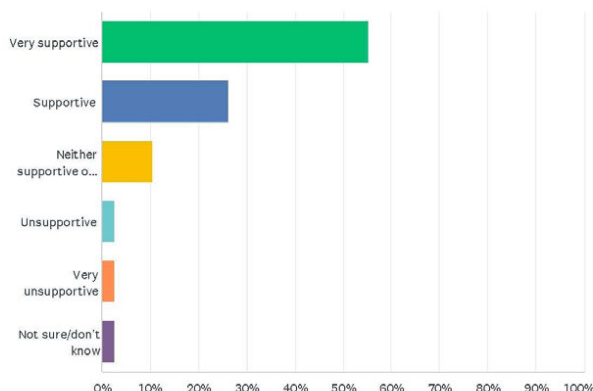
Council is aiming to plan and deliver meaningful engagement that enables community participation and builds trust in Council decision making.

There are 10 key objectives to assist in achieving this:

1. Embed the principles of the International Association Public Participation into the organisational culture
2. Implement a community reference group to provide input into the design of engagement strategies for major projects
3. Increase opportunities for the community to engage informally with Councillors and Executive
4. Design engagement opportunities that enable time for considered thought and contribution
5. Ensure engagement opportunities consider place, diversity and accessibility
6. Use technology to increase participation and increase the diversity of voice and opinion in engagement activities
7. Build on the use of social media as a tool for engagement and feedback
8. Report internally and externally on engagement outcomes, connecting community consultation and decision making
9. Improve stakeholder information management to ensure equitable representation across the community
10. Deliver Councils Community Participation Plan (Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979)

#### Q6 How supportive are you of these ten objectives?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very supportive	55.26%	21
Supportive	26.32%	10
Neither supportive or unsupportive/neutral	10.53%	4
Unsupportive	2.63%	1
Very unsupportive	2.63%	1
Not sure/don't know	2.63%	1
TOTAL		38

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Q7 Do you have any other suggestions?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 18

Comment	Comment code
Most people find the Council language hard to grasp it is designed to confuse residents. Reports need to be simple and easy to follow	1
How will their implementation be measured??	2
This survey should reference page numbers in your document for ease of reference during survey completion. (What's IAPP? should you speak of the cultural change priorities instead?) I want more evidence of this from p7 in Council decision-making: "We'll implement what you decide. "	1, 2
Yes, make more use of The Examiner ...	3
I am 100% for it if it's actually implemented and not more tokenism.	2
Again, the alignment of these elements to the initiatives is overly complex. We could be reading these from a document written last week or 10 years ago. There is a lack of accountability, stating exactly why, what, who, who which leads to dis-trust that the whole document and strategy is simply fluffy words. There is also no priority for what is most important. Which seems glaringly obvious that what is vital is "increase in communication & community engagement" what is being done differently because 2.5% increase is not enough when engagement at 50%.	2, 3
No.	6
Simplify documents, use easy to understand language. Make website easier to navigate. All public exhibitions need to be on the front page in a box with a link to the documents.	1, 3
Include a summary statement in PLAIN English of what what each dot point actually means eg Dot point 3 - consider ways to get councillors out an into the community to speak with people	1, 5
Depends what you mean by a community reference group.. getting 10 kids together to decide the skate park design does not cut much ice if there isn't a bit of a story about it. It seems the place planning process has some action attached. Why wouldn't council do the consultation with all communities? We have 6? communities on the starting block and Fingal doing another version of the process and everyone else wondering.	3
Include a statement regarding youth and children as the objectives for engagement need to be different compared to adults.	4
No	6
A complaints procedure for use where the Principals are not met	2
An objective would be to have a process to monitor the community diversity. Then an ongoing process to map this for preferred engagement processes, content and feedback.	3, 4

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<b>Comment</b>	<b>Comment code</b>
Direct public enquiries to the best method of public information; not all generations will respond to being told 'look on the website'. Target audiences with different methods for sharing information.	3
Reduce cost to rate payers in any way possible.	6
Nothing about utilising feedback to improve delivery of services to the community. You can listen all you want but don't actually have to do anything with the community input	2
Young people under the age of 45	4
Instead of making grand strategy documents, take engagement back to basics. Keep it simple and meaningful and most of all transparent and genuine. Community engagement is purely a tick box exercise for council.	1, 2

<b>Key themes from Question 7*</b>				
<b>Code 1 + 5</b>	<b>Code 2</b>	<b>Code 3</b>	<b>Code 4</b>	<b>Code 6</b>
Improve wording, choice of language, formatting and keep to plain English	Improve measuring and reporting to help build trust in Council	Improve the method of communication and engagement	Ensure inclusion and consider demographics of area	Miscellaneous comments (includes non response answers like N/A)
5	7	6	3	3

\* comments can include more than 1 theme

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### Strategic Priority 2 – Community Communications

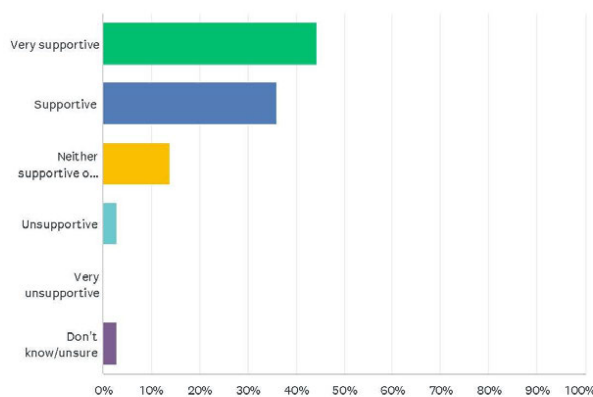
Council is aiming to deliver timely, creative and transparent internal and external communications that connect our stories, our people and our place.

There are 10 key objectives to assist in achieving this.

1. Design communications that are easy to understand and accessible to all
2. Recognise [portstephens.nsw.gov.au](http://portstephens.nsw.gov.au) as the core communications channel and continue to invest in its growth and improvement
3. Develop a strong social media profile across a range of channels using audience profiles which encourage conversations and increase awareness of council services
4. Increase staff awareness and capacity to enable effective communication, engagement and promotion of council business
5. Build Councils identity and brand through consistent visual communications
6. Maximise the use of live streaming and video across all communication channels
7. Use data to develop communications that are audience focused
8. Regularly benchmark and review internal and external communications platforms
9. Support elected members by keeping them informed so they can share information and increase awareness of council activities and services through community networks
10. Measure, evaluate and report on all communications activities on a monthly basis

#### Q8 How supportive are you of these draft 10 objectives?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very supportive	44.44%	16
Supportive	36.11%	13
Neither supportive or unsupportive/neutral	13.89%	5
Unsupportive	2.78%	1
Very unsupportive	0.00%	0
Don't know/unsure	2.78%	1
TOTAL		36

# ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Q9 Do you have any other suggestions?

Answered: 20 Skipped: 20

Comment	Comment code
Why is the aim to build trust in Council decision making? Isn't the point of engagement to bring beneficial outcomes to the community? By making decisions based on this community input? Council is meant to represent and serve the community's interests and yet there is only one objective (#8) which connects community consultation to decisions. This is why people don't trust this council. The engagement is a box tick exercise and then the Council makes decisions but not based on the engagement. The objectives need to be clearer that the Council will transparently report upon the engagement and make decisions accordingly (whether or not they personally agree with the results of the consultation)	2
Utilise council buildings to communicate information such as community centres and other facilities.	3
When designing communications that are easy to understand and accessible to all it is important that this doesn't just turn into bite sized pieces of superficial information. Detailed and comprehensive information also needs to be available to those who want it.	1,3
All submissions need to be provided to councillors and made available to residents on a link for each strategy feedback where residents can read other submissions. This was done for the SRV and should be applied to PSC. Residents can be given a choice when giving feedback if they wish to remain anonymous.	3
as with the other - plain English summary	1
If you are seeking feedback on the policy the website needs to be more usable. I should be able to search communication and engagement and it should pop up. I had to go back to the Examiner article and use the exact words from that to find this survey.	1,3
Add communication objectives that also encourage a range of non digital types of communication eg use of local newspapers, letter box drops, pop up stalls to distribute written information at shops, community centres, markets etc	3
no	6
See previous [A complaints procedure..].	3
Think the monthly monitoring should be quarterly to enable an effective feedback period. Also a form of evaluating and reporting on what has been done with the feedback, such as was the feedback included in policy and decision making	2,3
Realtime engagement with council for urgent needs Lighting on sport grounds Garbage not collected Potholes	3
Young people under the age of 45	4



**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Comment code</b>
Website needs significant work. It's quite clunky and by design difficult to find information. For example as a new resident trying to find out when bin day is on a mobile phone was horrendous. If you are going to put a pdf up, it needs to be suitable for zooming and viewing on a phone screen.	3
I didn't know the website was the core communication channel! I think community members get their communication more from the Examiner and social media.	3
As previously stated [many statements as one wishes ...]	2
Be present in the community through active participation of community events	3

<b>Key themes from Question 9*</b>				
<b>Code 1 + 5</b>	<b>Code 2</b>	<b>Code 3</b>	<b>Code 4</b>	<b>Code 6</b>
Improve wording, choice of language, formatting and keep to plain English	Improve measuring and reporting to help build trust in Council	Improve the method of communication and engagement	Ensure inclusion and consider demographics of area	Miscellaneous comments (includes non response answers like N/A)
3	3	11	1	1

\* comments can include more than 1 theme

## ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

### Strategic Priority 3 – Media and Public Relations

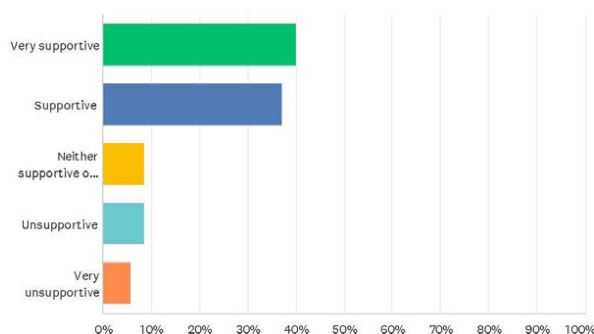
Council is wanting to build trust and reputation through proactive, consistent and trustworthy information that responds to issues and community priorities.

There are 10 key objectives to assist in achieving this.

1. Build and maintain strong relationships with media to facilitate informed reporting
2. Promote Port Stephens with positive and proactive media
3. Work across the organisation to identify newsworthy stories
4. Respond promptly to media enquiries to meet news deadlines
5. Develop annual Community Advocacy Priorities and implement campaigns to drive awareness of key priorities
6. Build relationships with key decision makers in state and federal government to increase understanding of local issues
7. Seek opportunities for elected members or executive to speak at corporate, community and networking events
8. Coordinate Councils emergency management communications
9. Improve media information management
10. Monitor, evaluate and report on all media and public relations activity on a monthly basis

#### Q10 How supportive are you of these 10 objectives?

Answered: 35 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very supportive	40.00%	14
Supportive	37.14%	13
Neither supportive or unsupportive/neutral	8.57%	3
Unsupportive	8.57%	3
Very unsupportive	5.71%	2
TOTAL		35

**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.**

Q11 Do you have any other suggestions?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 21

Comment	Comment code
Councilors need to report on their community engagements and representations as in East ward we pay 3 but only 1 is engaging with the community	3
How???	2
Once again the list is seriously out of order eg media relations higher priority than relations with key decision makers? Not so in my opinion.	5
Same comment as previous responses. Don't just listen; act. Fix the issues that contribute to holding us back and that add to community concerns. E.g. high rate of unemployment, low level of access to training due to transport issues. It also contributes to mental health and youth crime.	2
Re Point 6. Transparency and accountability of elected members and executive staff is imperative. As we have seen in the past and continue to suffer the consequences, there is a risk that unscrupulous elected members and council executives with access to privileged information, may seek to build relationships and facilitate opportunities for their personal benefit rather than for their community.	2
What is the return on this investment? How are these objectives improving the lives of the people of Port Stephens ? What's the reach? What's the impact?	2
These seem to be focused around building trust with media, key decision makers and organisations what about including something around building trust with the community?	2
Monthly updates from council departments on progress of capital works, this once again needs to be easy to find on the front of the council website with links to easy to understand outcomes.	3
see other suggestions [plain English]	1
Get back to print advertising of DAs additional to the current misleading digital policy.	3
Go back to advertising DAS in paper	3
Reinstate information page in local newspapers with DAs and relevant information for the current week. Take out notices that were repeated every week eg notices to treat infestations of weeds.	3
NO	6
All that is needed is honesty. The rest is waffle.	1
What is trustworthy information I'd use clear, concise and consistentl	1
Young people under the age of 40	4
Council should not be seeking opportunities for elected members to increase their own	3

# ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Comment	Comment code
No, but it is annoying that so much work has gone into paperwork which is not currently obvious in the real issues. I do hope a focus is placed on what is real, not just box ticking.	3

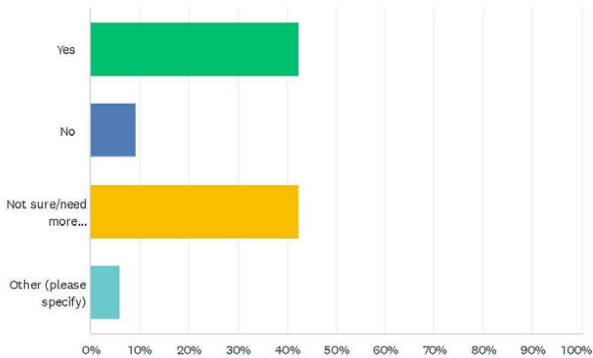
Key themes from Question 11*				
Code 1 + 5	Code 2	Code 3	Code 4	Code 6
Improve wording, choice of language, formatting and keep to plain English	Improve measuring and reporting to help build trust in Council	Improve the method of communication and engagement	Ensure inclusion and consider demographics of area	Miscellaneous comments (includes non response answers like N/A)
3	5	7	1	2

\* comments can include more than 1 theme

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Q12 If this strategy is endorsed and a community reference panel is implemented - would you be interested in being part of this panel?

Answered: 33    Skipped: 7

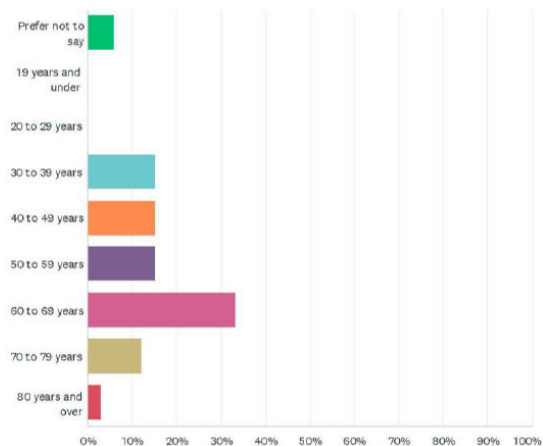


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	42.42%	14
No	9.09%	3
Not sure/need more information	42.42%	14
Other (please specify)	6.06%	2
TOTAL		33

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Q13 Please indicate your age.

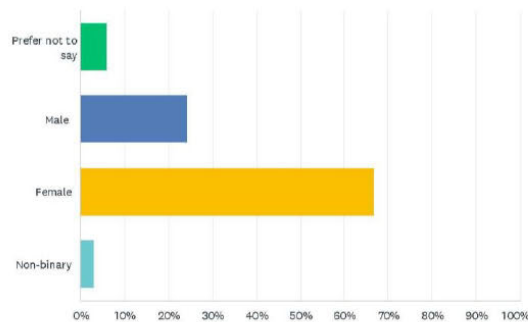
Answered: 33 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Prefer not to say	6.06%	2
19 years and under	0.00%	0
20 to 29 years	0.00%	0
30 to 39 years	15.15%	5
40 to 49 years	15.15%	5
50 to 59 years	15.15%	5
60 to 69 years	33.33%	11
70 to 79 years	12.12%	4
80 years and over	3.03%	1
TOTAL		33

Q14 Please indicate your gender.

Answered: 33 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Prefer not to say	6.06%	2
Male	24.24%	8
Female	66.67%	22
Non-binary	3.03%	1
TOTAL		33



**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.**

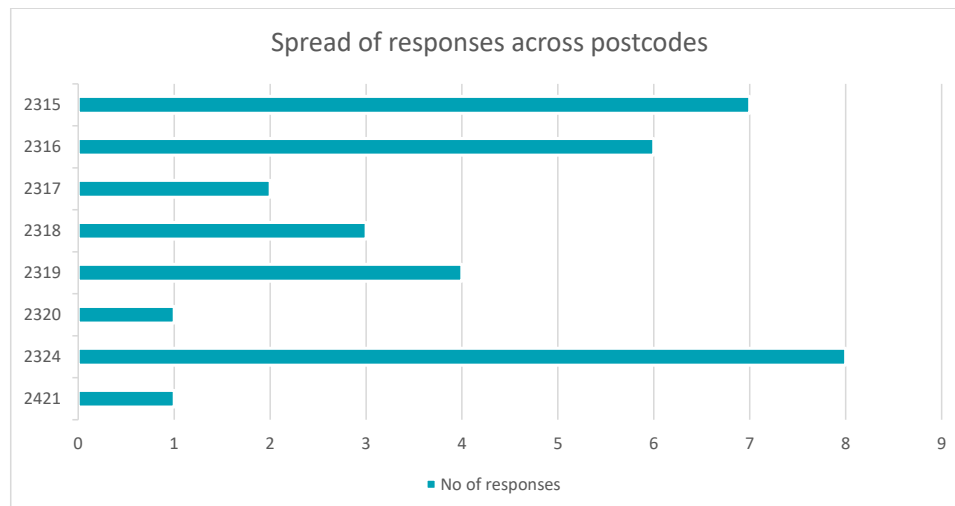
Q15 Please indicate your suburb

Answered: 33 Skipped: 7

	Verbatim survey response	Postcode only [column added for data consistency]
1	2320	2320
2	SALAMANDER BAY	2317
3	Salamander Bay	2317
4	Medowie	2318
5	Anna Bay	2316
6	Brandy Hill	2324
7	Heatherbrae	2324
8	2315	2315
9	2319	2319
10	Corlette	2315
11	2319	2319
12	Nelson Bay	2315
13	2316	2316
14	CORLETTE	2315
15	Tanilba Bay	2319
16	Lemon Tree Passage	2319
17	Port Stephens	?
18	2315	2315
19	Taylors Beach	2316
20	2316	2316
21	anna bay	2316
22	2324	2324
23	Paterson	2421
24	Seaham	2324
25	Raymond Terrace	2324
26	Terrace	2324
27	Raymond Terrace	2324
28	RT	2324
29	Nelson Bay	2315
30	ANNA BAY	2316
31	Salt ash	2318
32	Fingal bay	2315
33	Medowie	2318

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ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Using the above information the following chart has been developed to help show the spread of responses across postcode areas.



For additional reference:

- 2315 (Nelson Bay, Corlette, Shoal Bay, Fingal Bay)
- 2316 (Anna Bay, Boat Harbour, Bobs Farm, Fishermans Bay, One Mile, Taylors Beach)
- 2317 (Salamander Bay, Soldiers Point)
- 2318 (Campvale, Ferodale, Fullerton Cove, Medowie, Oyster Cove, Salt Ash, Williamtown)
- 2319 (Lemon Tree Passage, Mallabula, Tanilba Bay, Tilligerry Creek)
- 2320 (Wallalong)
- 2324 (Raymond Terrace, Seaham, Brandy Hill etc)
- 2421 (Paterson)

**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.**

Q16 Do you have any other suggestions?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 21

Comment	Comment code
Lots of motherhood statements of what you'd like to achieve, but I didn't see and measurable performance goals. Figure of current status are not compared with any benchmarks.	2
Too many pictures and Council language and references should be made easy so every ratepayer understands what Council is doing	1, 5
The best way to engender trust is to build transparency.	2,2,1
The information in pp. 24-27 is terribly confusing. My community work is related to keeping track of DAs that might affect the environment, which is extremely difficult through the PSC website due to different classifications of developments. More DAs need to be advertised in the local paper. People want to know what's going on in their local area. Rumours abound when they are not guided to the information easily and reliably by Council publication. What is considered by council to have no significance may not be an acceptable judgement to the neighbours/community. Table 3 refers to Table 1 which isn't there - or is it Appendix A? Community groups need more time to respond to large DAs where professionals working for the developer have had months/years to prepare hundreds/thousands of pages of reports. Re-exhibitions of amended applications should have more certainty of display period.	1,3,5
I am hopeful that Council will stand behind this initiative and really aim to strengthen partnership with all community factions.	2
Significantly reducing the word count of the document. Develop a framework to assist with holistic alignment of all the objectives, a model to visually tell the story and include facts and lived stories to showcase the desired outcomes. Create the vision. There is so much wonderful content and effort that has likely gone into this piece of work and the work to follow. Yet I feel it's fallen short of great. It's good. Yet could be better. Please note, I am new to NSW from Vic. So I have found myself interested in learning about the community in which I now live. There are many people who are thriving and many who are just surviving, the polarities seem greater to me than my lives experience in Melbourne ( Casey council location) I believe the council can play a significant role in community development growth and prosperity. I look forward to learning more about what council is investing in. Thanks Sally.	1
This strategy appears to be a vague mission statement, no explanation of how you're going to do things differently.	1,2

# ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Comment	Comment code
the one thing I cannot see throughout the draft is a SIMPLE statement of WHY you are creating this strategy. Most people have a need to know for what purpose are you doing this and how will it benefit me? you've done a lot of WHAT it is not a lot of HOW (in simple plain English) but no explicit WHY. Maybe you should create a plain English version? If you want buy in the why is crucial and having people feel it is being done with them not to them	1
I support public participation on the webcast if contributor agrees.	3
Work with the community as widely as possible, Develop some consensus in each community.	3
Making the document easier to read by using shorter, simpler sentences, reducing the number of blocks of written information. Take out the page with statistics as they are skewed in their choice of focus (eg no stat on number of families with children), difficult to interpret and quickly become outdated. I feel Measures of Success are not directly related to the Principles and objectives. The measures rely on digital communication too much.	1,2,5
Need to action community suggestions asap	2
Council doesn't meet its current policies. Why would I expect compliance with these objectives.	2
Not without reading the document thoroughly	1
More live videos on social media sharing Council updates on projects, spending, developments being considered etc.	3
Younger people under the age of 40	4
Keep your engagement and communication transparent, easy and genuine. Governments at all levels but particularly port stephens council have some way to go to rebuild trust with their community.	1,2
N/A	6
Please ensure council consults with community, shares openly the results of consultation and acts upon/implements initiatives based on consultation (rather than their own opinions or financial interests). The council is meant to represent and serve all the people not just those they consider to be 'on their side' of politics. We need to all work together towards solutions that benefit the community (not the Councillors or mayor personally).	2



# ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

## Appendix E: Submissions

No	Author	Summarised key point	Council response	Comment code
1	Resident	The submission states that priority needs to be given to the cumbersome website. All strategies on public exhibition need to be on the front page of the website and have a link to all the strategy and feedback forms.	Priority is given to the website in draft strategy (see key objective 2.2). Suggestion around public exhibition on front page of website is an operational action rather than a strategy key objective and will be considered in operational work plans.	3
		The submission asks that the strategies need to be simplified into easy to understand language and less pages.	Content will be reviewed and simplified where possible. Less pages is not possible with other additions suggested across the feedback.	1
		The submission states that the all reporting and requests of residents need to be prioritised and separated from visitors.	Visitors will remain a stakeholder for Council and their feedback will be considered for appropriate projects or issues.	4
		The submission states that when a submission is requested, PSC residents are given choice to remain anonymous, these must be published on their website to allow councillors and others to read and gain insight into how all responding residents feel.	There is a high risk of privacy breaches if full submissions are published which is why submissions are redacted. Also, submissions can be made word of mouth, via video recording etc which are not easily publicised without compromising privacy.	3
		The submission states that for important issues such as contentious DA's and changes to plans affecting PC residents that letterbox mail outs are done to ensure everyone is reached along with emails for those who have	Letterbox mail outs would be a major expense and is unfeasible in many instances. However, targeting those signed up for email communications is a possible and will be considered as part of the Strategy's implementation.	2, 3

# ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

No	Author	Summarised key point	Council reponse	Comment code
		registered for email communication		
		The submission notes that it has been unacceptable to think that putting public exhibitions in libraries are meeting the needs of the community. It states that mail outs, publishing them in local papers and on the front page of the PSC website as well as having them available on town notice boards, in bowling, RSL and golf clubs and shopping centres.	Provision of hard copies in multiple locations can be a large expense unless justified. The establishment of the Communication and Engagement Advisory Panel will collaborate with Council to determine the most appropriate ways of communicating information and seeking feedback on key projects and initiatives. The suggestion of public exhibitions on the website front page is an operational action rather than a strategy key objective and will be considered in operational work plans.	2, 3
		The submission notes the increase practise of confidential meetings has been questionable.	There has been only 5 confidential reports tabled at Council this term. This comment is considered unsubstantiated.	6
		The submission states that a Capital works progress can be published in monthly or bi-monthly reports on the progress of capital works expenditure to inform residents of outcomes of completed works and timeline of prioritised works.	This information is already available on Council's website here <a href="https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/services/projects">https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/services/projects</a>	3
2	Resident	The submission states that the document had too many pages, was too wordy, provides too much detail and takes too long to read. It was also noted that it is "too good to be true" and is not genuine or believable.	Content will be reviewed and simplified where possible. Less pages is not possible with other additions suggested across the feedback.	1, 2



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No	Author	Summarised key point	Council reponse	Comment code
		The submission states that a monthly website summary in plain english of road maintenance including road closures and completion dates.	This is already available on our website and is updated weekly <a href="https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/services/roads.-parking-and-pathways/road-closures-and-disruptions">https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/services/roads.-parking-and-pathways/road-closures-and-disruptions</a>	3
		The submission states that all DA's and their status be listed on the website.	Council currently provide a list of weekly DA determinations here <a href="https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/public-exhibitions/development-applications-on-exhibitions">https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/public-exhibitions/development-applications-on-exhibitions</a> and for DA's in process these are in DA Tracker <a href="http://datracker.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/Home/Disclaimer">http://datracker.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/Home/Disclaimer</a>	3
		The submission states that a quarterly summarised report of the councils financial status and projections be available on the website.	This is already available as the quarterly budget review goes to Council as per legislation so it is displayed in the Council business papers. It also show the end of year projection. The 10 year project is in the Long Term Financial Plan which is published on the website here <a href="https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/plans-and-reporting/integrated-plans">https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/plans-and-reporting/integrated-plans</a>	3
		The submission asks that a monthly website progress report be available on current and upcoming capital works.	This is already available on our website and is updated weekly <a href="https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/services/projects">https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/services/projects</a>	3
		The submission states that a website listing of current public tenders be available	This is already on our website <a href="https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/business/tenders-and-expression-of-interests">https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/business/tenders-and-expression-of-interests</a>	3
		The submission states that a website listing of	This is already on our website	3

## ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

No	Author	Summarised key point	Council reponse	Comment code
		current positions vacant be available	<a href="https://portstephens.csod.com/ux/ats/careersite/1/home?c=portstephens">https://portstephens.csod.com/ux/ats/careersite/1/home?c=portstephens</a>	
3	Resident	The submission states that Port Stephens needs a special centre where the arts and cultural expression could be provided and accomodated. The Tomaree Headland is recommended as the location.	This particular submission is focused on art and culture rather than the topic of this strategy.	6
4	Resident	The submission states that a principle should be included on "involving those affected by a decision in the decision making process". The submission notes that this may or may not result in a modification to Appendix A table.	4.1 This consideration is part of the IAP2 framework, the foundation of this Strategy and is part of our 5 principles particularly Principle 2, 3, 4 and 5.	3, 4
		The submission states that links to resources on how, when and who to engage should be included in the strategy	4.2 When Council engages correlate with the IAP2 Framework used as the foundation to this Strategy. Stakeholder groups of who Council will engage and methodws of how they will be engaged will now also been included.	3
		The submission asks that rewording should be considered in Communications and Engagement principals number 3 on page 5 to reflect a more active approach than "encourage".	4.3 Council will consider a stronger wording approach than 'encourage'.	1, 4
		The submission notes that following the draft strategy the expectations are on council to maximise community	4.4 Existing IPA2 Framework, the foundation to the strategy, provides this.	3, 4

## ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

No	Author	Summarised key point	Council reponse	Comment code
		value, be more inclusive, focus more on accessibility and that the strategy spells out aligned community and council expectations		
		The submission asks that comprehensive community engagement plans and their outcomes be developed and documented	4.5 This is an operational task and not included in detail as the Strategy is a higher level document that needs to be as streamlined as possible. This will be an operational action of existing key objectives.	3, 4
		The submission states that monitoring, reporting and evaluation on the overall program should be incorporated into the strategy.	4.6 Monitoring, reporting and evaluation are key. Key objectives relate specifically to this to ensure these remain a priority in the engagement and communication process. Measures of success will be expanded to include improved connection to the Strategy principles.	2
		The submission asks that through the use of partnerships (such as LGA, Hunter Joint organisation of Councils) analyse public participation data and promulgate better practice case studies , guidance and training for all council staff.	4.7 Strategy includes a key objective relating specifically to building staff capacity. This will be an operational action as part of this objective.	3
5	Voices of Wallalong and Woodville (VOWW)	The submission states that on Principal 1 on page 5 needs more work is required for the document to be truly "easy to understand". Suggest developing specific guidelines for making documents community-friendly.	5.1 Content will be reviewed and simplified where possible.	1



## ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

No	Author	Summarised key point	Council reponse	Comment code
		<p>The submission states that in regards to Principal 4 on page 5 that more specific guidelines must be developed. Examples provided on these include -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A time guideline for councillors and staff to respond to the community/residents e.g All correspondence will be acknowledged within X business days, and a full response should be provided within X weeks.</li> <li>2. A set of guidelines for councillors/staff for times they are interacting with community members that will ensure that they come with a listening and collaborative approach.</li> <li>3. A training program for councillors/staff to help them put the above points into practice.</li> </ol>	<p>5.2 These comments relate more specifically to our Customer First Charter than this Strategy.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This is already in place see Customer First charter on website under policies here: <a href="https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/policies-and-guidelines/policies">https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/policies-and-guidelines/policies</a></li> <li>2. This is already in place through our code of conduct and business excellence framework <a href="https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/policies-and-guidelines/policies">https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/policies-and-guidelines/policies</a></li> <li>3. Key objective already relating specifically to building staff capacity and this will include capacity building for Councillors.</li> </ol>	3, 6
		<p>The submission asks that in the 'Inform - Community's role' communications methods listed are social media, newsletters and updates, these are not the preferred method of communication for many in the community and website and newspaper must be included.</p>	<p>5.3 This is incorrect reading of the table – we are talking about the community's role not Council's.</p> <p>Additional information considered to improve the explanation.</p>	3, 6
		<p>The submission asks that the Public Access section of the council meeting be webcast.</p>	<p>5.4 This is now allowed if public access speakers provide consent. See Code of Meeting Practice <a href="https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/policies-and-guidelines/policies#C">https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/policies-and-guidelines/policies#C</a></p>	3

## ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

No	Author	Summarised key point	Council reponse	Comment code
		The submission notes that there are several open ended statements that need to be more fully resolved including - "We will implement what you decide", "To place final decision-making and/or developed budgets in the hands of the public" and "Make decisions and work with Council to implement them".	5.5 This wording is directly from the sectors best practice organisation IAP2. It is related to the 'Empower' part of the spectrum. See <a href="https://iap2.org.au/resources/spectrum/">https://iap2.org.au/resources/spectrum/</a> .	1
		The submission expressed concerns about the survey results not being communicated to residents.	5.6 Survey results should be, and generally are, included in engagement reports as part of Council reports. Key objectives are existing to make this a priority and close the loop on community feedback.	2
		The submission asks for more concrete steps to be undertaken to improve the deficiencies listed in the Key Stakeholder commentary from the 6 community groups.	5.7 Commentary from the community groups have informed the development of the Strategy.	2
		The submission states that in regards to key objective 3 on page 15, councillors would benefit from being briefed by community groups to help them fully understand what the community considers relevant.	5.8 This is an operational action that will be considered in the implementation of Strategy.	3
		The submission asked that in regards to key objective 7 "building on the use of social media" on page 15 that alternative and other effective methods of communication such as	5.9 Social media is only one method outlined in the Strategy. A list of communication and engagement methods will be included to outline the diverse methods used.	3

## ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

No	Author	Summarised key point	Council reponse	Comment code
		messages via community groups or print media.		
		The submission suggests that in regards to key objective 9 "Support elected members by keeping them informed..." that regular informal meetings with councillors are scheduled so they get a better understanding of the needs and wishes of their communities	5.10 This objective refers to Councillors sharing information rather than receiving information. Existing key objective "Increase opportunities for the community to engage informally with Councillor and Executive" addresses this.	3
6		The submission asks that more process and oversight be put into the notification of residents of DAs. There needs to be more definition of the "affected residents" and were Council staff are able to "use their discretion" should be kept to a minimum.	6.1 The CPP is a highly structured document and is used heavily by our development planners as a guiding document. Affected residents are generally adjoining neighbours and 'use their discretion' is generally kept to a minimum.	3
7	Tomaree Ratepayers and Residents Association (TRRA)	The submission states that the introductory pages ('Message from the Mayor', 'About the strategy' and 'Strategy content') are somewhat repetitive and could be more concise. A suggestion was made to remove the IAPP methodology and that adding a footnote that the table on Pg 6 is based on IAP2 would be sufficient.	7.1 Content will be reviewed and simplified where possible. Less pages overall is not possible with other additions suggested across the feedback. The reference to IAP2 methodology should remain as it is a foundation resource on which the strategy is built in line with best practice.	1
		The submission mentions that all 3 Strategic Priorities would benefit from clear references to other directly related Council documents including the <i>Code of</i>	7.2 Related documents are not reference in staregy documents. Related documents can be considered on the webpage where the Strategy will be	1



# ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

No	Author	Summarised key point	Council reponse	Comment code
		<i>Meeting Practice, Receipt of Petitions Policy</i> and the wider Council policy on handling of submissions.	located with direct links included.	
		The submission states all Strategic Priorities would benefit from more detail on how the objectives will be met.	7.3 Measures of success will be expanded to include improve connections to the Strategy principles.	2
		The submission asks that it be explained if the proposed community reference group in Key Objective 2 will be a standing group and if so how constituted. And if their function is to be restricted to major projects, there needs to be clear criteria for how and by whom major projects are defined.	7.4 Better explanation of the Community Reference Group to be provided. Details of the community reference group will be considered as the action is implemented operationally once the Strategy is endorsed.	1
		The submission asks that an acknowledgement of the needs of a large number of Port Stephens residents be included for both objective 6 and 7 as they are not comfortable using technology, websites or social media. It asks for the use of more traditional channels, such as newspapers and hard copy publications	7.5 The point of highlighting social media as a communication channel in objectives 6 and 7 is that these channels have advantages over traditional channels and provide data about reach and readership that traditional channels simply do not. A list of communication and engagement methods will be included to outline the diverse methods to be used.	3, 4
		The submission asks that objective 8 expressly confirms that 'external' reporting means 'public'	7.6 External reporting does mean reporting to the public.	1
		The submission states that in Strategy Priority 2 - Communications, that objective 2 & 3 need to be qualified so not to	7.7 A list of communication and engagement methods will be included to outline the diverse methods to be used.	3

## ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

No	Author	Summarised key point	Council reponse	Comment code
		exclude the residents not comfortable with the Council website and social media		
		The submissions asks that objective 9 be strengthened by setting performance standard for Councillors' community engagement activity	7.8 This is covered under the Councillors code of conduct.	1
		The submission asks that objective 10 confirms 'public' reporting	7.9 This is monthly internal reporting which is reported to the public through the Annual Report.	2
		The submission asks that objective 5 should demonstrate the synergy between the 3 strategic priorities by committing to public consultation on the <i>Community Advocacy Priorities</i> document.	7.10 Future development of the Community Advocacy Priorities would be discussed with the proposed Communication and Engagement Advisory Group to identify methods of communications and community engagement.	3
		The submission states that objective 7 should encourage outreach activity by staff at all levels, not just executive.	7.11 This objective relates to public relations speaking events not general community engagement.	2
		The submission asks that objective 10 confirms 'public' reporting	7.12 This is monthly internal reporting which is reported to the public through the Annual Report.	2
		The submission states that there should be reference to Council's separate <i>Media Liaison Policy</i> .	7.13 Related documents are not reference in strategy documents. Related documents can be considered on the webpage where the Strategy will be located with	1
		The submission states that it should be clearer that the figures provided are targets not results	7.14 Amendment made	1

# ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3 PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

No	Author	Summarised key point	Council reponse	Comment code
		The submission states that the plan should commit to always extending exhibition periods when they would otherwise end on a weekend or public holiday and asks that the wording be changed to 'will' not 'may'	7.15 Existing wording to remain to assist administration.	1
		The submission states that an option for neutral comments or observations should added to bullet point 5	7.16 Existing wording to remain to assist administration.	1
		The submission asks that the note under table 2 about including weekends should make it clear if they also include public holidays	7.17 Existing wording to remain to assist administration	1
		The submission states that Council policies 'Rezoning Requests' and 'Planning Matters to be Reported to Council' should be referenced in Table 2 as they directly relate to table entry 'Planning proposals for local environmental plans subjects to a gateway determination'	7.18 Existing wording to remain to assist in administration	1
		The submission notes an error in table 3 and asked that with the wording be changed from "Not included in table 1" to "Not included in Appendix A" or Appendix A on page 26 should be renamed Table 1. It was also noted that the correct wording appears next to the title - <i>Table 3 Community Participation Categories</i>	7.19 Minor wording amendments to be made.	1

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<i>(Refer to Appendix a for details)</i>				
8	Tilligerry Community Association	The submission states that this document is a low point with 'pretty' picture added to add heart and failing.	8.1 Content will be reviewed and simplified where possible.	1
		The submission notes that Council staff having the discretion of what DA get advertised is stunning. It asks that DA's go back into The Examiner or wider and that there is much more accessible exposure for DAs	8.2 How DA's are advertised is an operational action rather than a strategy key objective and will be considered in operational work plans.	3
		The submission notes that there was no mention of Place Plans in the strategy and that these plans are the best communication and engagement that has been done	8.3 This is a strategy about communications and engagement as a whole and not about specific projects.	6
		The submission expressed their hopes that the strategy would focus on the wider area and their disappointment that it didn't. They had hoped that the plan would be strategic on things like town and transport links, the main road and development areas etc.	8.4 This is a strategy about communications and engagement not specific town infrastructure.	6
		The submission states that the community groups within the Tilligerry area were not contacted or consulted when it came to the engagement process for Liveability Index and that they can only assume that the same people are	8.5 The Liveability Index was widely advertised and reached a broad demographic which is considered statistically valid.	6



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		contributing to this each time and that other key groups are not		
		The submission notes that staff that attended the town square consultation in Lemon Tree Passage had not been briefed on how to answer questions relating to the path and the boat ramp. And that they did not get a response via phone as advised. This project was then approved without consultation. They believe that this again was a superficial tick and flick.	8.6 This particular project is still in the detailed design phase and feedback from the session is being incorporated into the design.	6
9	Staff	The submission suggests the addition of a comment inviting the community to give the assessing officer a call regarding planning proposals and development applications to chat about their concerns/ideas. It notes that when a DA is on exhibition the contact details of the Assessing Officer are always provided and the team want to community to know they are approachable and would like to have a conversation before they prepare a submission.	8.7 Council staff in all departments are approachable and willing to engage on a variety of issues.	3
		The submission noted that the note at the bottom of this appendix relating to caravan parks/ camping grounds had	8.8 Amendment made	1



**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3      PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND  
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No	Author	Summarised key point	Council reponse	Comment code
		been removed. They wanted to flag this as a potential omission.		

**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 3      PORT STEPHENS COMMUNICATIONS AND  
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**PORT STEPHENS**  
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