



# COMMUNITY CONSULTATION POLICY

Approval Date: 25 May 2017

Review Date: 25 May 2019

Responsible Officer: Director Community Services

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## 1. Definition

Community consultation is the two way relationship where Council and the community exchange information and feedback on a project, policy, issue, service, proposal or plan. It is an active process that facilitates communication between the Council, the Coonamble Shire community and the directly affected stakeholders.

## 2. Our Community

Members of our community include residents, ratepayers, local business, people working in the Shire, visitors to the Shire, users of Council services, business associations, service providers, government agencies and statutory bodies, local and regional associations and community organisations.

## 3. Scope

This policy relates and applies to all forms of consultation conducted by Officers and consultants / agencies acting on behalf of Coonamble Shire Council. Community consultation may take place:

- where community input can improve a project or enhance the decision making process
- to help identify specific community needs
- in response to expressions of community interest
- when Council resolves to consult the community
- when required by law or by agreement with a government agency or statutory body

Council will not be in a position to consult in situations where:

- A decision needs to be made quickly – for example relating to an issue of public safety or health.
- A legal, commercial or legislative restriction makes consultation impossible.
- The decisions involved concern routine operational matters.

## 4. Policy Statement

Coonamble Shire Council considers consultation as a central principle in sound planning and decision making. The Council actively consults with its community in a consistent and professional manner within a social justice framework and in accordance with the principles of community consultation.

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## 5. Social Justice Principles

Social justice is based on four interrelated principles of equity, rights, access and participation, to ensure that:

- There is **equity** in the distribution of resources
- **Rights** are recognised and promoted
- People have fair **access** to resources and services
- People have better opportunities for genuine **participation** and consultation about decisions affecting their lives.

## 6. Principles of Community Consultation

The purpose of these principles is to assist the Council to make better decisions which reflect the interests and concerns of potentially affected people and stakeholders. Coonamble Shire Council considers that community consultation and participation:

- Is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process;
- Includes the promise that the public's contribution will be considered and contribute to the decision;
- Promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers;
- Seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision
- Seeks input from participants in designing how they participate
- Provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way; and
- Communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

\* Principles adapted from the International Association of Public participation (IAP2) Core Values for Public Participation.

### Policy Review History

Date	Changes Made	Approved By
September 2013	Policy developed	General Manager
November 2013	Draft policy submitted to Council 13/11/13	
To 20 December 2013	On Public Exhibition (No submissions)	
12 February 2014	Policy Approved	Council 12/02/2014 Min #0712
25 May 2017	Review – no changes	General Manager