

Start by asking

Communications and Engagement Strategy

Themes

- We asked our community for feedback on how we can improve the way we communicate and engage with them. From that feedback, ten key themes emerged. These are listed below (in order of importance).
- 1 **Methods** - make it easy for more people to get involved in our engagements
 - 2 **Channels** - use a variety of channels to share Council information (e.g. newspapers, websites, face-to-face)
 - 3 **Content** - provide simple, clear and timely information on Council activities, roles, responsibilities and processes.
 - 4 **Councillors** - promote opportunities to engage with Councillors
 - 5 **Transparency** - explain how feedback on consultations is used in decision-making
 - 6 **Genuine** - be clear about what the community can and can't influence in engagements
 - 7 **Reputational issues** - improve community interactions with Council across all areas, not just engagement
 - 8 **Make all feedback count** - ensure input collected during consultations is re-directed to relevant Council officer
 - 9 **Motivation (why people engage with us)** - ensure input is received from all community members during consultations
 - 10 **Timely** - ensure there are reasonable timeframes for consultations



Principles

Genuine

We're committed to genuinely communicating and engaging with our community. This means we value consultations and feedback, and keep our community up to date on project outcomes.

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Relevant

Our communications and engagement is timely and relevant. Our content is accessible, representative of the entire community and available through multiple channels.

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Together

We work together with the community to deliver good communications and engagement. We recognise our community's efforts to help drive greater engagement across the shire.

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Accessible

We're committed to accessible, open and transparent communications and engagement, as outlined in our Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

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Objectives

- Improve internal capacity to plan and deliver effective communications and engagement
 - Fewer, bigger engagements
 - Increase understanding in community of Council's roles and responsibilities
 - Improve customer service
 - Prioritise community needs (and feedback) in our routine communications
 - Improve pathways for community to speak with Council
 - Demystify Council's decision-making processes.
- Reduce barriers to participation
 - Better use of existing advertising spend across all channels
 - Increase community awareness around key messages
 - Improve relevance of communications and engagement content
 - Ensure messaging for long-running projects remain relevant.
- Build relationships and networks to broaden the reach of our communications and engagement materials
 - Increase opportunities to access Councillors and staff involved in consultations
 - Improve internal communications
 - Ensure face-to-face engagement is safe and respectful
 - Foster a culture of continuous improvement around communications and engagement.
- Partner with the community to collect a cross section of views
 - Increase delivery of face-to-face engagement
 - More inclusive language and content
 - Be timely
 - Council meetings are open and accessible to all.