



**SNOWY MONARO**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

# **ATTACHMENTS TO REPORTS**

**(Under Separate Cover)**

**Administrator Delegations Meeting**

**24 April 2017**



**ATTACHMENTS TO REPORTS  
FOR  
ADMINISTRATOR DELEGATIONS MEETING  
MONDAY 24 APRIL 2017**

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**SNOWY MONARO**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL  
*Stronger together Better together*

# **Community Engagement Strategy**

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## 1 Executive Summary

The purpose of this Community Engagement Strategy is to establish standard processes for community engagement. Community engagement is a planned process with the specific purpose of working with a diverse range of groups covering;

- Consultation
- Extension
- Communication
- Education
- Public participation
- Participative democracy
- Stakeholder partnerships

The linking of the term community to engagement serves to broaden the scope, shifting the focus of this exercise from the individual to the collective, with the associated implications for inclusiveness to ensure consideration is made of the diversity that exists within our community.

Effective community engagement enables a council to make informed decisions about planning for the future and determining community needs, expectations and aspirations. The Community Engagement Strategy aims to build on previous consultation and ensure that as many individuals and groups as possible throughout the local government area can be involved in the first ever region wide Community Strategic Plan (CSP). It is Council's ambition to ensure long term sustainability and viability set the tone for the newly established Council area.

Snowy Monaro Regional Council (SMRC) believes that the best way to achieve this is by doing the planning and implementation together. Effective, meaningful engagement with our community can develop a comprehensive Communication Engagement Strategy providing positive outcomes;

- New ideas will provide positive community interactions with council and collate input from a broader cross section of stakeholders
- As community involvement increases, information about resources, opportunities, operations and projects will circulate more widely through stakeholder networks
- Relationship building promotes stakeholders monitoring each other's commitment to achieve community outcomes. They are able to gather valuable information and hold each other accountable for intended progress
- Funding opportunities brought to Council attention by Community interaction
- A positive environment created by residents who are invested in shaping their community
- Providing a platform of strength from which to manage any critical point
- Attracting new business and residents to the area
- Conflict prevention due to upfront involvement of key stakeholders
- Building a positive reputation between community partners will improving customer



satisfaction levels

- Improving staff morale and job satisfaction by providing statements of vision and priorities

The specific projects being undertaken between March and September 2017 that this strategy will influence are:

- Implementation of the Stronger Community Fund, Major Projects
- Community input into the Draft Community Strategic Plan
- Understanding of the opportunities local government reform provides through identification of local benefits
- Confirming the new visual identity

### **1.1 Purpose & Objectives**

This Communications and Engagement Strategy seeks to:

- Promote councils vision by being proactive and listening to the wider audience by demonstrating willingness to acknowledge community feedback and build capacity to form relationship with key community stakeholders to enhance community growth and success in the future.
- Utilise community engagement in order to improve the strategic objectives and drive business management processes
- Take advantage of community insight to measure business success through key performance indicators relating directly back to community satisfaction
- Utilise technology to facilitate community engagement at all levels of the community spectrum including demographic, psychographic and geographic segmentations

Action and communication plans for developing this engagement strategy have been identified, with distinct actions for Council staff and the wider community. Action plans are flexible, and can be altered as objectives are achieved, changed or developed

## 2 Engagement Approach

The engagement approach aims to build trust through transparency and responsiveness to the community. The council wants to empower the community and encourage them to improve the area. Through clear expectations and openness to teach and learn as a united front, this strategy will aim to reflect regional diversity.

Increasing Impact on the Decision



	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public Participation Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, 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 your 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 in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decisions. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will 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 will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

### **3 Appreciative Inquiry as a Technique for Community Engagement**

Appreciative Inquiry is a change management approach that focuses on identifying what is working well, analysing why it is working well and then doing more of it. The basic principle of appreciative inquiry is that whatever direction we see ourselves focusing on will determine organisational growth. Appreciative Inquiry is an engagement technique recognised internationally for its effectiveness in community visioning and will be appropriately applied to all forum and survey activities.

This technique uses a series of questions, applied consistently across the forums and surveys, to determine participant's ideas and opinions under themes including:

- Where are we now? (what we value about the local community and area at present)
- Where are we going? (significant local issues that we need to address)
- Where do we want to be? (long term goals that we would like to achieve for the local area)
- How do we get there (strategies to achieve our goals)
- How will we know when we've arrived (measuring progress towards our goals)

Looking forward the Council will also see the implementation of gamification. This concept applies game design techniques in order to engage and motivate people to participate in appreciative inquiry proficiencies. Gamification works by making technology and activities more engaging. It taps into common personality traits and triggers such feelings as desire, need and impulse which manifest from our feeling process.

Gamification radiates the following benefits when implemented to compliment the appreciative inquiry;

- A powerful tool for motivating better performance
- Drives business results
- Generates a competitive advantage
- Promotes customer engagement
- Productivity enhancements
- Behavioural change

## 4 Stakeholders

To enable completion of the Community Strategic Plan for Snowy Monaro Regional Council, the Council has identified the following localities and sectors of the community for targeting during the community engagement process:

- Townships and villages within the local government boundary
- The local rural population
- Residents living within the National Parks (Thredbo and Perisher)
- Absentee property owners
- Seasonal Workers
- Business owners
- Government agencies
- Non-government organisations
- Volunteer organisations
- Visitors and seasonal workers
- Employees
- Social Justice Groups



In undertaking community engagement processes for the Community Strategic Plan, Council will actively seek the involvement of stakeholders who have participated in previous consultative activities along with stakeholders who have had minimal or no previous involvement.

## **5 Outcomes of Community Engagement**

The development and completion of community engagement processes to be conducted across the Snowy Monaro Regional Council will be designed and managed to deliver the following community (external) and organisational (internal) outcomes:

### **5.1 Community Outcomes**

- Identify community priorities and expectations for the future of the region.
- Build positive relationships between Council and local communities.
- Foster a greater community understanding of the role and responsibilities of Council.
- Build community ownership of and connectedness with the Council's Community Strategic Plan.
- Provide opportunities for all community members to participate in the development of a vision for the future of the new local government area.
- Foster common understandings and productive relationships with other service delivery agencies.
- Determine community expectations regarding Council's service levels.
- Achieve the ten key priority areas of local government reform through the outcomes identified in the Snowy Monaro Regional Council stronger council's framework.

### **5.2 Organisational Outcomes**

- Develop clear strategic objectives for Council, to assist in identifying ways for Council to prioritise and manage expectations for the future of the new local government area.
- Build council staff capacities in development of engagement materials and methods and conduct engagement activities with local community groups and organisations.
- Build council understanding of the prevailing issues and priorities within the local business community.
- Development of a council-wide understanding of and familiarity with local communities.
- Create opportunities to examine how staff roles and activities relate to the broader community.
- Facilitate greater organisational understanding of and involvement in the Integrated Planning and Reporting process.
- Provide councillors with opportunities for frontline involvement in community engagement activities.

## **6 Benefits of Snowy Monaro Regional Council Engagement Process**

Snowy Monaro Regional Council aims at cementing a reputable relationship with the community by taking advantage of community insight and listening to the people of the region. It is important for the Council to continue to promote their Vision, *A trusted community partner*, by being proactive and listening to the wider audience. Through these avenues Council will demonstrate its willingness to acknowledge community feedback and more importantly act on this valuable feedback to create a prosperous community for its residents.

The community engagement activities outlined are designed to deliver the following benefits:

- Provide the community with clarity regarding council objectives and the time frames in which these objectives should be carried out.
- Local stakeholders will lead the process to determine long term priorities and goals for the local area.
- The process identifies the best attributes of the Snowy Monaro Regional Council as building blocks for the future whilst acknowledging issues and concerns that need to be addressed.
- Engagement activities are localised and accessible to all stakeholders.
- The process meaningfully engages Council staff and builds organisational capacities.
- Identify partnerships within the community who can assist with achieving objectives.

## 7 Community Engagement Methods

In order to gather the data and community feedback required to compile the Community Strategic Plan, two methods will be used as the basis for community engagement:

### Establishment of Inclusive Community Panel

This will be an active and growing panel who is invited to participate in multiple issues without limiting the ability for other community members to engage with us when they need to.

Anyone who lives, works or has an interest in the Snowy Monaro Regional Council can join the panel

- The aim is to gain broad representation of the region to ensure all viewpoints and demographics of the community are reflected. Government agencies with regional involvement and responsibilities will be invited.
- There is no limit to the number of people who can join the panel
- Panel members will be kept informed of the outcomes of each consultation via the regular *Panel Newsletter* and through Council's online community engagement register.
- Panel members can choose to participate as much or as little as they like. Any input they provide is valuable.
- Individuals who would like to become members simply fill out basic demographic information and contact details which will be used for statistical purposes only. Groups and organisations may fill out the details of their organisation and representatives can invite their members to participate.
- Once you sign up to the Panel, you can remain a member for as long as you like. Every two years, all panel members will be asked to reconfirm their membership.
- Residents who are employed by or hold elected posts at Council are not able to join the panel.

### Visioning Forums

Council visioning forums aim to develop a plan, goal, or vision for the future by creating a community dashboard where people can participate in online discussion. Council aims to involve the following residents and groups;

- Local communities throughout the Snowy Monaro Regional Council.
- Local businesses and government agencies.
- Government agencies with regional involvement and responsibilities.
- Indoor and outdoor staff of Council, across all geographical locations throughout the Council area.
- Online forum to extend the reach of face to face engagement sessions.
- Community forums have a target participation of 20 - 80 people and will be facilitated right across the Snowy Monaro region.

### **7.1 Business & Government Forums**

- A forum for government agency representatives with direct responsibilities and involvement in the council area and business owners will be held.
- Queanbeyan – a forum for government representatives with regional responsibilities taking in our LGA will be held once the emerging actions from the visioning forums, survey and targeted forums have been identified
- Major Employers Forum - a facilitated forum will be held with major employers both private and public within the region.

### **7.2 Staff Forums**

Staff forum is a forum which gives employees an opportunity to raise their employment related issues and a right to request the employer to consult, inform and communicate to them employment related issues, new practices and policies.

A staff forum contributes to most organisations enabling two way communications between the employer and the employees. A staff forum of an organisation has representatives from every region and function of the organisation.

Advantages of having a staff forum

- Improved company performance.
- Improved Employee Performance.
- A Trusted relationship is established.
- Employees are more satisfied and motivated.
- Engagement content fine-tuned before presenting to the community.



### **7.3 Design Workshops**

Design workshops are an effective means for addressing complex issues. The Design workshop provides stakeholders with opportunities to include information and advice when participating in collaborative problem solving. In co-design those impacted by the proposed design are actively involved as partners in the design process. Co-design approaches are increasingly being applied within government, community and health sectors to extend traditional consultation methods and increase program impact. Council would like to recognise the potential for co-design to offer new ways to engage both internal stakeholders and customers, as well as identify new service opportunities and improve existing ones.

Co-design techniques include;

- Visual
- Designerly tools
- Activities (collage, scenarios, mapping, sketching and prototyping)
- 'Fishbowls'

### **7.4 Citizen Juries**

Snowy Monaro Regional Council aim to create a new balance between experts and the public and giving elected representative's confidence that public judgment contributes to better decision-making.

This is a ground-breaking approach designed to improve the way governments make decisions; it presents our elected leaders with an uncontrolled result, reached by a group of community representatives whose composition ensures that they are able to represent the region. While lobbyists, activists and community groups are welcome to present their points-of-view to the jury, the structured and supported process ensures that final recommendations are developed independently. Juries will provide the region with opportunity to have a voice when it comes to complex community issues and decision making.

### **7.5 Policy Action Teams**

Policy Action Teams implement policy and strategic design and will be drawn together by Council to address policy development around a particular issue. It is proposed that teams are composed of a diverse cross-section of government departments, affected stakeholders, industry and education sectors.

The teams combine people 'on the ground' with public officials who have a working knowledge of the relevant issues, it is important however to maintain that all recommendations are supported by factual evidence. Policy teams organised by the Council will be best suited for addressing issues which are complex and broad in their impact on the community. The approach is very effective in soliciting new and innovative perspectives or solutions to problems. Hopefully with this particular methodology the end result will provide something of value and great honesty.

## 8 Survey – Customer Satisfaction

JWS Facilitated a Customer Satisfaction Survey to determine the independent delivery objective insights and results regarding Council's Service Units. This research has been captured as a tool to gain valuable insights into the motivations and thinking of key stakeholders, the general public, voters and consumers. JWS provides the thinking and advice for clients to take these insights and fully leverage them to meet the objectives and future opportunities for their business. By capturing regular public opinion and consumer research the Council can stay across the latest insights into public opinion and importantly, know how and why issue landscapes are changing and the ways in which those changes are being influenced.

The Customer Satisfaction Survey has informed both the engagement process and the IPR frameworks reporting process. Issues and current community concerns highlighted by the survey data have provided management with an opportunity to inform planning processes and development based on a Service Prioritisation Matrix.

Additional targeted consultation will occur with those groups who may have not been engaged through the survey or forum methods. This will ensure those members in the community who are identified in the social justice principles for Local Government are encouraged and provided with opportunity to participate. These particular groups are;

- Women - Council will host a morning tea for various play groups.
- Families and Children - A competition will be held with the theme of "Mayor for a Day" through the schools.
- Young People - Forums to be held at high schools with school leadership group facilitating.
- Older People - Surveys will be completed during a number of functions for older people such as Autumn Leaves and Community Transport luncheons.
- People with a Disability - Details of consultation to be considered.
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse - Details of consultation to be considered.
- Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders - Phone interviews will be held with Traditional Owners, Land Councils and other ATSI locals.
- Sexually Diverse - Details of consultation to be considered.
- Rural - Once emerging actions have been identified it is proposed to host a breakfast for the rural community to discuss themes, verify issues and identify possible strategies for the CSP.
- Seasonal Workers - targeted consultation will take place with seasonal workers during the 2017 winter season as part of the ongoing development of the CSP.

The process will comprise of the following main activities:

- i. Targeted outreach to local communities via organisations such as:
  - Progress Associations
  - Sporting clubs / groups
  - Primary and secondary schools throughout the regional council area
  - Childcare/preschools

- Playgroups
  - Seniors groups
  - School P&Cs
  - Landcare Groups
  - Rural Fire Services throughout the region
  - Local Indigenous groups
  - Local businesses / chambers of commerce
  - s355 committees
- ii. An intercept survey approach targeting interested people at venues including:
- Libraries
  - Mobile Library Van
  - Local Markets
  - Customer Service Desks
  - Village Post Offices
  - Village Pubs
  - Village Landfill and Transfer Stations
  - Local shopping Centre's / Village general stores
  - Local community events such as fetes and open days
  - Local festivals and events

## **9 Publicity & Community Information**

To enable the community strategic planning process to develop a high profile within the local community, it is important to give it a distinct identity that maintains strong links with Council. This identity will be developed through the creation of a specific name and logo specifically for the Community Strategic Plan development. This will then be promoted through a range of publicity and community information activities that will include:

- Communications Plan
- Email distribution groups
- Website
- Social media
- Council's Newsletter
- Local radio interviews – Administrator
- Local newspapers – articles / press releases / Council Page
- Town / village newsletters
- A3 posters and DL flyers to give the community strategic planning and community engagement processes a distinct profile.
- Radio Advertising

## **10 Review and Evaluation of Engagement Processes**

Community engagement activities will be reviewed and evaluated during and after each process using the following criteria:

- Number of people in attendance at each forum.
- The makeup of each forum group with reference to age, gender, urban or rural residential status and other relevant criteria.
- Return/response rate to surveys.
- The makeup of survey responses with reference to age, gender, urban or rural residential status and other relevant criteria.
- Number of participants in the inclusive community panel.

Targeted engagement activities including forums and surveys will be reviewed for their attendance, response rate and overall effectiveness in involving the intended target groups.

Evaluation process will be used to assess the reach and effectiveness of all community engagement activities. Evaluation processes will adopt the following approaches:

- Self-assessment – an assessment of the effectiveness and reach of engagement processes and outcomes by Council's Communications Team.
- End-data analysis – a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the data obtained from engagement processes by Council's Communications Officer.

These evaluation and review processes will assist council in determining the success of its community engagement approach and the need to conduct further activities to capture the input of stakeholders who may not have been previously involved.

## **11 Communication Plan – Staff (Review)**

Uncertainty and misinformation can occur in the absence of regular communication. It is important for Council to maintain clear and open communication with internal stakeholders, including positive messages about opportunities created by the new council.

### **11.1 Key Stakeholder Identification and Analysis**

The key internal stakeholders have been identified as follows:

- Administrator / Mayor
- Councillors
- Local Representative Committees
- Executive Team
- Merger Working Groups
- Managers
- All Council Staff

## **12 Communication Plan - Community**

The communication and engagement plan includes clear and ongoing messages about the council's commitment to service continuity. It also identifies the requirement to provide updates to the community and Council partners on progress in implementing the new council. A focus will be on celebrating the achievement of key milestones and successes.

### **12.1 Key Stakeholder Identification and Analysis**

The key external stakeholders for community engagement processes have been identified as follows:

- Residents
- Ratepayers
- Absentee landholders
- Inclusive Community Panel
- Community groups
- Local business and industry
- Other government and non-government agencies
- State MPs
- Federal MPs
- Media
- CBRJO member Councils
- Visitors / Tourists
- Seasonal workers

**12.2 Appendix A: Communication Plans 2017 – Community Engagement Strategy**

Action plans for each objective have been developed, with distinct actions for Council staff and the wider community. Action plans are flexible, and can be altered as objectives are achieved, changed or developed.

*Principles of Good Communication*

<b>Visibility</b>	High visibility is critical to commencing and maintaining a dialogue with your stakeholders. Visibility leads to recognition and acceptance; it helps the community to see the breadth and value of your work.
<b>Repetition</b>	Wherever possible, messages should be repeated to ensure they receive community consideration. The more a message is repeated the wider its audience will become.
<b>Simplicity</b>	Communication must be simple and straight forward to ensure messages are received and clearly understood.
<b>Value</b>	Ensuring a message has a reasonable level of value for the recipient is paramount to gain their attention and interest. Council operations hold little value to the community but how those operations affect the community hold a high level of value. Therefore, messages should be structured with community impact as their foundation.
<b>Variety</b>	To ensure a message is received by the community at large, it needs to be placed in diverse, targeted communication vehicles. The more vehicles (website, newspapers, direct mail, on-hold phone messages, website, social media, etc.) utilised, the wider coverage will be.
<b>Listening</b>	Good (and effective) communication is about dialogue. If you send a message you must expect to receive a response. It is important that feedback on all issues is encouraged and processed. Nothing will dampen the community's enthusiasm quicker than believing they are not being listened to.
<b>Consistency</b>	To build credibility and a positive reputation, messages need to be consistent. If your messages are always simple, have value for the recipient, encourage feedback, and are placed in a variety of different places, they will generate and earn respect at an increasing level each time they are placed.
<b>Evaluation</b>	To determine if messages are communicated effectively, set measurable goals and ensure evaluation processes are planned and executed.



**12.3 Appendix B Communication and Engagement Action Plan - Internal**

A Communication Action Plan has been developed for internal communication of this strategy.

<i><b>Audience/ Stakeholder</b></i>	<i><b>Role</b></i>	<i><b>Communication Need</b></i>	<i><b>Mode of Communication</b></i>
Administrator	Approve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft CES</li> <li>▪ Draft CSP</li> <li>▪ Draft local benefits statement</li> </ul>	Report to council Email Briefing
General Manager	Approve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft CES</li> <li>▪ Project plan and methodology supporting recommendations</li> </ul>	Report to ET Face-to-Face
Employees	For Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project plan and methodology supporting recommendations</li> <li>▪ Time allocations and expectations</li> </ul>	Workshop
Local Representative Committees (LRC)	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project plan and methodology supporting recommendations</li> <li>▪ Time allocations and expectations</li> </ul>	Workshop
Audit Risk and Improvement Committee	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft CES</li> <li>▪ Project plan and methodology supporting recommendations</li> </ul>	Report to ARIC Email Briefing
Executive Team	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft CES</li> <li>▪ Project plan and methodology supporting recommendations</li> </ul>	Workshop

**12.4 Appendix C Communication and Engagement Action Plan – External**

A Communication Action Plan has been developed for external communication of this strategy.

<i><b>Audience/ Stakeholder</b></i>	<i><b>Role</b></i>	<i><b>Communication Need</b></i>		<i><b>Mode of Communication</b></i>
External Consultants	For Information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft CES</li> </ul>	Email
355 Committees	For Information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft CES</li> <li>▪ How to contribute and participate in CES activities</li> </ul>	Available for view online, Community engagement projects throughout the community
Community Groups	For Information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft CES</li> <li>▪ How to contribute and participate in CES activities</li> </ul>	Available for view online, Community engagement projects throughout the community
General Public	For Information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft CES</li> <li>▪ How to contribute and participate in CES activities</li> </ul>	Available for view online, Community engagement projects throughout the community
Business community	For Information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft CES</li> <li>▪ How to contribute and participate in CES activities</li> </ul>	Available for view online, Community engagement projects throughout the community
State Government Agencies	For Information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft CES</li> <li>▪ How to contribute and participate in CES activities</li> </ul>	Email through networks
Federal Government Agencies	For Information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft CES</li> <li>▪ How to contribute and participate in CES activities</li> </ul>	Email through networks

**12.5 Appendix D List of Abbreviations**

<b><i>Abbreviation</i></b>	<b><i>Meaning</i></b>
ATSI	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders
CBRJO Councils	Canberra Region Joint Organisation of Councils
CSP	Community Strategic Plan, a plan which identifies the main priorities and aspirations for the future of the Snowy Monaro Regional Council over the next 20 years.
DL Flyers	Dimension Lengthwise, a common size for envelopes and promotional materials such as brochures and flyers
DP	Delivery Plan, details the principles activities to be undertaken by the council to implement strategies established by the CSP over a period of 4 years.
IPR	Integrated Planning and Reporting
JWS	JWS Research is an independent, privately owned market research firm
LGA	Local Government Area
MP	Member of Parliament
OP	Operational Plan, details the activities to be engaged in by council during the period of one (1) year, and annual budget. This is the annual sub-plan of the DP.
s355 Committee	A Section 355 Committee (s355 Committee) is a committee of the council, established under s.355 of the Local Government Act 1993.
SMRC	Snowy Monaro Regional Council
Social Justice	The right of all people in our community to be considered in a fair and equitable manner. While equal opportunity applies to everyone in the community, social justice principles are directed especially at groups of people who are marginalised and disadvantaged.

