



Rockdale City Plan 2013 – 2025

Community Engagement Strategy

November 2012



Important

This document contains important information about Rockdale City Council. If you do not understand, please visit Council's Customer Service Centre at 2 Bryant Street Rockdale, Monday – Friday from 8.30am – 4.30pm, Saturday from 9am – 1pm. Council Staff will be happy to arrange interpreter services for you.

You may also contact Telephone Interpreter Services on 131 450 and ask them to ring Rockdale City Council on 9562 1666 on your behalf.

Arabic

هام:

تحتوي هذه الوثيقة على معلومات هامة عن بلدية روكدايل. إذا لم تكن قادراً على فهمها، يرجى زيارة مركز خدمة زبائن البلدية على العنوان التالي: 2 Bryant Street في روكدايل من الإثنين إلى الجمعة بين الساعة ٨.٣٠ صباحاً و ٤.٣٠ مساءً، والسبت بين الساعة ٩.٠٠ صباحاً و ١.٠٠ بعد الظهر حيث سيقوم موظفو البلدية بتأمين مترجم لك بكل سرور.

كما يمكنك الاتصال بخدمة الترجمة الهاتفية على الرقم 131 450 والطلب منهم الاتصال ببلدية روكدايل على الرقم 9562 1666 نيابةً عنك.

Chinese

重要消息

本文件載有關於 Rockdale 市政府的重要資訊。如果您有不明白之處，請於星期一至星期五，上午8時30分至下午4時30分，及星期六上午9時至下午1時，前來位於 2 Bryant Street，Rockdale，市政府的顧客服務中心。市政府的職員會很樂意為您安排傳譯員的服務。

您也可以聯絡電話傳譯服務處，電話 131 450，並請他們代您致電 9562 1666 給Rockdale 市政府。

Greek

Σημαντικό:

Αυτό το έγγραφο περιέχει σημαντικές πληροφορίες για τη Δημαρχία Rockdale City Council. Αν δεν τις καταλαβαίνετε, παρακαλείσθε να επισκεφτείτε το Κέντρο Εξυπηρέτησης Πελατών [Customer Service Centre] του Δήμου στο 2 Bryant Street, Rockdale, Δευτέρα - Παρασκευή από 8.30πμ - 4.30μμ και Σάββατο από 9.00πμ - 1.00μμ. Το Προσωπικό του Δήμου θα χαρεί να κανονίσει υπηρεσίες διερμηνέων για σας.

Μπορείτε επίσης να επικοινωνήσετε με τις Τηλεφωνικές Υπηρεσίες Διερμηνέων [Telephone Interpreter Services] στο 131 450 και να τους ζητήσετε να τηλεφωνήσουν στο Rockdale City Council στο 9562 1666 για λογαριασμό σας.

Italian

Importante:

Questo documento contiene importanti informazioni sul Comune di Rockdale City. Se avete difficoltà a comprenderne il contenuto, recatevi presso il Customer Service Centre del Comune a 2 Bryant Street, Rockdale dal lunedì al venerdì dalle ore 8.30 alle 16.30 e al sabato dalle 9.00 alle 13.00. Il personale del Comune sarà ben lieto di procurarvi un servizio Interpreti.

Potete anche chiamare il Servizio telefonico interpreti (TIS) al numero 131 450 chiedendo che telefoni per vostro conto al Comune di Rockdale City al numero 9562 1666.

Macedonian

Важно:

Овој документ содржи важни информации за Rockdale City Council (Градската општина на Rockdale). Ако не го разбирате, ве молиме, посетете го општинскиот Customer Service Centre (Центар за услуги на клиенти), кој се наоѓа на 2 Bryant Street, Rockdale, од понеделник до петок, од 8.30 наутро до 4.30 попладне и во сабота од 9.00 наутро до 1.00 попладне. Вработените во општината со задоволство ќе ви организираат да користите преведувач.

Исто така, можете да телефонирате во Telephone Interpreter Services (Служба за преведување по телефон) на 131 450, и да ги замолиме во ваше име да се јават во Градската општина на Rockdale на 9562 1666.

Spanish

Importante:

Este documento contiene información importante sobre el Rockdale City Council (Municipio de Rockdale). Si no la entiende, le rogamos concurrir al Centro de Servicio al Cliente del Municipio, ubicado en 2 Bryant Street, Rockdale, atención de lunes a viernes, de 8:30 am a 4:30 pm y el sábado de 9.00 am a 1.00 pm. El personal del municipio se complacerá en obtener los servicios de un intérprete para usted.

Puede asimismo llamar al Servicio Telefónico de Intérpretes al 131 450 y pedirles que llamen de su parte al Rockdale City Council, teléfono 9562 1666.

Caring for the Environment – In the interest of protecting and preserving our environment, Rockdale City Council uses Nordset paper for all of its pre-printed paper requirements. Nordset has been awarded the Nordic Swan label for environmentally friendly pulp and paper manufacturing. It is manufactured with fibre obtained from sustainable plantation forest, it is oxygen bleached, Totally Chlorine Free (TCF), dioxin and acid free. Nordset can be recycled and is biodegradable.

Contents

1	Introduction.....	4
2	City of Rockdale.....	9
3	Community Engagement Strategy	11
4	Proposed Community Engagement Activities.....	12
5	Promotional Strategies.....	14
6	Evaluation of Community Engagement Strategy.....	15
7	Conclusion and Reporting	16

I Introduction

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) defines Community Engagement as:

“Any process that involves the community in problem-solving or decision-making and uses community input to make better decisions.”

Community engagement is a ‘process’ that can include a wide range of methods and activities to effectively engage with a wide range of community members from various demographics, and partners and stakeholders.

Council is committed to building partnerships with the community and a range of stakeholders, and seeking greater community involvement in the activities and decision making processes of Council. It believes that quality engagement with the community and various stakeholders are essential foundations of good governance.

This Community Engagement Strategy is aimed at ensuring broad community involvement in developing the Rockdale City Plan 2013 - 2025.

Legislative Requirements

The Local Government Act was amended in 1993 to include proposals for Integrated Planning and Reporting. Rockdale City Council adopted its integrated planning and reporting framework in June 2011, the Rockdale City Plan 2011 – 2025 and it consisted of the Community Strategic Plan, the Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Each local government area must have a community strategic plan that has been developed and endorsed by the council. A community strategic plan is a plan that identifies the main priorities and aspirations for the future of the local government area covering a period of at least 10 years from when the plan is endorsed.

A community strategic plan is to establish strategic objectives together with strategies for achieving those objectives.

The council must ensure that the community strategic plan:

- (a) addresses civic leadership, social, environmental and economic issues in an integrated manner,
- (b) is based on social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights,
- (c) is adequately informed by relevant information relating to civic leadership, social, environmental and economic issues,
- (d) is developed having due regard to the State government’s State Plan and other relevant State and regional plans of the State government.
- (4) the Council must establish and implement a strategy (its "community engagement strategy"), based on social justice principles, for engagement with the local community when developing the community strategic plan.
- (5) following an ordinary election of councillors, the council must review the community strategic plan before 30 June following the election. The council may endorse the existing

plan, endorse amendments to the existing plan or develop and endorse a new community strategic plan, as appropriate to ensure that the area has a community strategic plan covering at least the next 10 years.

- (6) a draft community strategic plan or amendment of a community strategic plan must be placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days and submissions received must be considered by the council before the plan or amendment is endorsed by the council.

The NSW Council Charter (Section 8 of the Local Government Act 1993), requires every council to:

- Exercise community leadership
- Engage in long term strategic planning on behalf of the community
- Facilitate the involvement of Councillors, members of the public, users of facilities and services and council staff in the development, improvement and coordination of local government, and
- To keep the local community and the state government informed about its activities.

The Integrated Planning and Reporting legislation also added to the role of Councillor - 'to provide a civic leadership role in guiding the development of the community strategic plan for the area and to be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the council's delivery program.'

From 2012, each newly elected council must review the Community Strategic Plan within nine months of the local government elections and roll the planning period forward by at least 4 years (so that it is always a 10 year minimum plan).

The review must include the following:

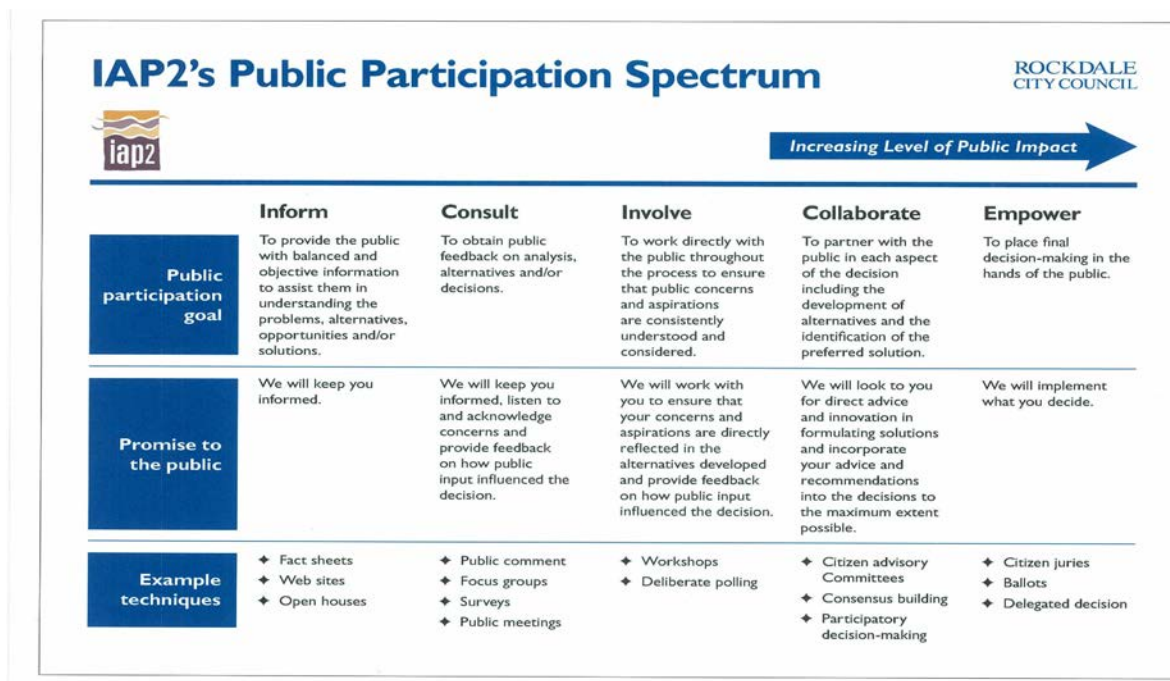
- A **report from the outgoing council** on the implementation and effectiveness of the Community Strategic Plan in achieving its objectives.
- A **review of the information that informed** the original Community Strategic Plan.
- A **community engagement strategy** prepared and implemented by Council which, at least, must identify relevant stakeholder groups within the community and outline methods that will be used to engage each group.

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework



Council's Commitment and Level of Engagement

Council has developed this strategy based on the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum -inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower



To engage with the community effectively, Council is committed to the 'involvement' level, shown in the above table.

Involvement means that Council will work directly with communities throughout the process to ensure that community aspirations, concerns and issues are consistently understood and considered.

Council's promise to communities at the involvement level is that it will work directly with communities to ensure that their aspirations, concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed, and provide feedback on how their input influenced the decisions in the review of the Rockdale City Plan 2011 - 2025, and in the development of the new Rockdale City Plan 2013 - 2025.

The End of Term Report to the outgoing Council that forms part of the review of City Plan 2011 - 2025 included the following recommendations to be taken into consideration in this process:

- 1) Review of City Plan undertaken by the incoming Council ensures that partners are identified and involved in the development, implementation, and measurement of the revised Plan.
- 2) Undertake a substantial review of City Plan with the community, going back to first principles and setting clear directions.
- 3) Ensure better integration between the Community Strategic Plan, the Delivery Program and the Resourcing Strategy comprising the Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Strategy, and Workforce Plan.

- 4) The incoming Council should review the condition of Council's assets and service levels provided to engage the community through the City Plan Engagement Strategy in considering service levels of both assets and services.
- 5) Ensuring effective internal and external stakeholder and community engagement through adhering to Council's practice and standards for engagement.

Council leads community engagement to identify long-term objectives of the community and develop strategies with the community, partners and stakeholders to achieve these various objectives.

Council will take this approach to review and develop long-term plans that will significantly affect all members of the community. The framework is built on the principle that all members of the community have a right, and a responsibility, to contribute to their community's future.

These plans will span at least 10 years - well beyond the Council term of office – so it is expected that people in the community will take some ownership of them and contribute to their delivery in some way.

The Community Strategic Plan is the community's plan and requires a concerted effort by Council and many partners to deliver it. One of the requirements of the legislation is that the Community Strategic Plan is reviewed and developed having due regard to the State government's State Plan and other relevant State and regional plans of the State government.

As part of the engagement process Council will provide information on:

- an explanation of Council's regulatory functions and legislative responsibilities
- an outline of key sources of income
- an outline of key expenditure such as capital works, major works and planning
- an explanation of how the Rockdale City Planning process works
- future projections of income and expenditure.

The community should have a chance to revisit the Community Strategic Plan after its new council is elected.

- It may wish to change the priorities or objectives of the Community Strategic Plan if something significant has happened during that period, or revise the strategies if a particular course of action hasn't proved effective.
- The review process will also roll the Community Strategic Plan forward by another four years, so that it is always a 10 year+ plan.
- The community may wish to add new long-term objectives, or change the time frames originally planned for some projects.

Engagement objectives

The following objectives will be observed when planning and implementing community engagement activities:

- Ensure Council Officers understand and effectively implement the Community Engagement Strategy at the level of involvement.
- Provide community with opportunities to participate in discussions about service levels and funding priorities to plan in partnership for a sustainable future.

- Ensure participants and stakeholders represent a cross section of the community
- Ensure that the proposal for a rate increase through a Special Rate Variation is discussed with the aim of achieving community support for the proposal by:
 - Identifying community needs and demands for projects or service levels that Council has a lack of capacity to pay for within current resources.
 - Demonstrating the need for and extent of a rate rise and canvassing alternatives to a rate rise.
 - Demonstrating the impact of any rises on the community, and assessing whether it is reasonable for the existing ratepayer base and the proposed purpose of the variation.
 - Establishing that the proposed rate is affordable in respect of the local community's capacity to pay.
- Incorporate a range of community engagement methods that:
 - Facilitate community awareness of the engagement topic
 - Gives the community opportunities to provide feedback
 - Proactively and regularly inform the community about the outcomes from the community engagement activities
 - Provide Council with a range of ideas, suggestions and general comments gathered from the engagement activities by providing information about the condition of Council's assets and service levels.
 - Ensure that Council, in exercising its power of decision making, is informed of and able to respond to the community needs and interest.

Engagement Strategies

- To validate what the community told us in 2011 in the development of the Rockdale City Plan 2011 - 2025
- To test and choose the community outcomes for Rockdale City Plan 2013 -2025
- To collect any additional information from the community - their needs, aspirations and expected levels of service
- To seek community acceptance and support for rate increase.

Our Community, Stakeholders and Partners

- Residents
- Community Groups
- Local Community Organisations
- Local Businesses
- NSW and Government Agencies
- Visitors

Timing

- **Stage 1 – Community Strategic Plan and proposal for a rate increase – 8 November to 14 December 2012**

- **Stage 2** – Feedback on the draft Community Strategic Plan and further comment – February to April 2013
- **Stage 3** – Feedback and further comment sought through the exhibition of the whole City Plan – May 2013

2 City of Rockdale

About Rockdale

The City of Rockdale covers an area of 29.8 square kilometres in Sydney's southern suburbs, approximately 12 km from the Sydney city centre. The Municipality is bounded by Botany Bay to the east, Cooks River to the north, the Georges River to the South and principally the City of Canterbury to the West.

The City of Rockdale is a highly urbanised area located within the St George Region. The City is served by a number of transport connections provided by the East Hills and Illawarra railway lines, multiple bus routes and major roads including the M5 East, Princes Highway and General Holmes Drive. The City is also bordered by Sydney Airport with the International Airport being within the City boundaries. The majority of land within the City is used for residential purposes, although there are a large number of important industrial and commercial precincts and areas of open space.



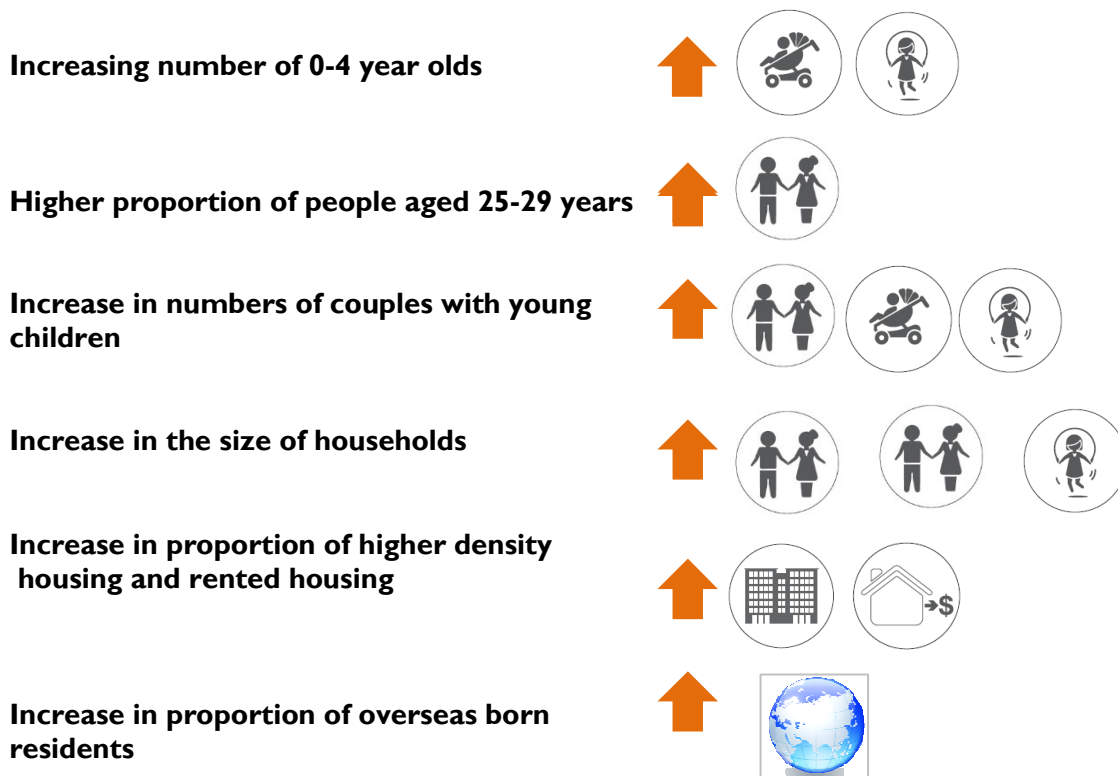
Our Community

The City of Rockdale's population was estimated to be 97,340 in 2011, which is an increase from 92,621, in 2006. Further growth of 24% is expected in the next 19 years. This growth reflects the urban renewal being experienced in parts of the City, particularly Wolli Creek and Rockdale Town Centre. There is also a growing recognition that the City offers lifestyle benefits such as proximity to the Sydney CBD, access to transport and employment opportunities within Sydney, proximity to Botany Bay and a variety of recreation opportunities, a quality natural environment and a range of housing to suit different needs.

The City of Rockdale is also becoming more diverse with an increase in the proportion of people who speak a language other than English at home (54.3% from 51% in 2006). The community is becoming wealthier with large increases in the medium highest and highest income groups.

There have been significant increases in the proportion of people born in China and Nepal with small decreases of people born in Greece, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Lebanon.

(Demographic information is based on the 2011 census)



3 Community Engagement Strategy

As a minimum, the Community Engagement Strategy prepared and implemented by Council in its review of the Community Strategic Plan following a local government election must identify relevant stakeholder groups within the community and outline methods that will be used to engage each group.

Identified Stakeholders and Methods of Engagement Summary Table

		Methods of Engagement	Online Engagement	Post Card/Survey	Competition	Summit	Forums	Community Events or Festivals	Council Events	Council Buildings eg Libraries, Bexley Pool	Information Booths at various locations across the City – Shopping Mall, Streets etc.	Interagency Meetings	Youth Council	Artwork Activities	Special Meeting with Elders	Special Meetings	Senior Citizen Centre's
Stakeholders																	
Community	Older People																
	Young People																
	People with Disabilities																
	People from Culturally and Linguistic Background																
	Families																
	Children																
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders																
	Community (as a whole)																
Local Stakeholders	Local Community Organisations																
	Local Business																
	Local Chamber of Commerce																
Government Departments	State/Federal Government																
	TAFE																
	Local Schools																

4 Proposed Community Engagement Activities

Proposed Engagement Activities for Stage 1 of the engagement process 8 November to 14 December 2012:

1) Community Events

Council staff will attend a number of community events and festivals to talk to people about their future vision of Rockdale. The events being covered include:

- Food 'n' Groove , Saturday 27 October
- St George Migrant Information Day , Wednesday 31 October
- Spring into Summer – Bexley North, Saturday 24 November 2012

Stages 2 and 3 of the community engagement process with feedback to the community and seeking further comments may involve attendance at Community Events in February to June 2013.

2) Involving young people

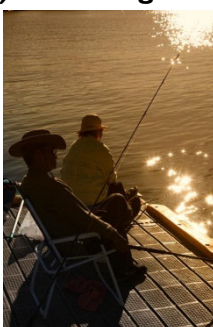
It is important to ensure Council involves young people as current users of services and as future residents of the area that need to be planned for. Council will be working with



local youth service providers as well as Rockdale Youth Council members to develop an online young people's hub. The hub has been named 'Speak Up' and is an opportunity for young people to express their thoughts, ideas and concepts for the City of Rockdale in 2025.

The hub will also be used during later stages of the community engagement process.

3) Involving our seniors



Council will discuss and identify the needs and aspirations of our seniors as well as discussing the proposed rate increase.

Specific engagement methods will be:

- Visit to senior Citizen Centre's
- Linking with Council's Meals on Wheels Services
- Linking with Council's Home Library Services

These methods will also be used in later stages of the process.

4) Involving Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities

To involve Rockdale's CALD communities specific engagement methods will be used including attending Multicultural events; involving Multicultural reference groups and businesses and providing Information Booths and Community Forums in locations to attract CALD communities.

5) Have Your Say Website



As more and more people are using the internet to communicate and find out what is happening, Council will enable participation through the Have Your Say website where the community will be able to undertake a survey and lodge comments for discussion.

Have Your Say – Your City Your Plan 2013 - 2025.

This website will be used to keep the community informed and undertake later stages of the engagement process.

6) Survey - Online and Paper-based

Surveys can be an effective tool to reach a broad range of people across the area. It is proposed that the paper based survey be placed in all Council Libraries and Customer Service Centre, and handed out at Information Booths.

7) Competitions

Snap, Explore and Express Competition - targeting Young People
Bright Minds, Brighter Future Competition - targeting Local Schools
Children's Postcard Art Competition - targeting Children aged 5 to 11 years

All competitions conclude by the end of Stage 1 of the engagement period of Friday 14 December 2012.

8) Information Booths

Council will hold Information Booths in Stage 1 at the following locations:



- Brighton-Le-Sands at Trafalgar Street on Tuesday 20 November 2012, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm.
- Bexley North at Nairn Gardens on Wednesday 21 November, 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm.
- Arncliffe at the Town Centre on Thursday 22 November, 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm.
- Carlton at Tindale Reserve on Friday 23 November, 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm.
- Ramsgate at Tonbridge Street Reserve on Sunday 24 November, 10:00am to 1:00 pm.

Participants will be invited to Community Forums and asked to complete paper based surveys. They will be invited to take part in later stages of engagement.

9) Community Forums



These forums are a tool that enables a more detailed conversation on what the community would like Rockdale to be like in the future, and the proposed rate increase. There will be facilitated small group discussion on aspirations, needs, improvements and Council's role and financial implications to the community. The forums will aim to involve a cross-section of representatives from across the local government area including young people, seniors, people from cultural and diverse

backgrounds, local businesses and service providers.

Council will hold three community forums in Stage 1:

- Thursday 29 November 2012, 10am to 12pm at Bexley RSL, 24 Stoney Creek Road, Bexley
- Friday 30 November 2012, 6pm to 8pm at Brighton-Le Sands RSL, 351 Bay Street, Brighton-Le-Sands
- Sunday 2 December 2012, 1pm to 3pm at Coronation Hall, Arncliffe.

Council will consider whether to hold further community forums or Focus Groups for later stages of the community engagement process.

10) Rockdale Partners' Summit



A Partners' Summit comprising representatives from community organisations and the local business community, as well as NSW and Commonwealth Government agencies, will be held on Friday 7 December 2012, 9 am to 12 pm at the Rockdale City Council Administration Building to seek commitment from partners to the development and delivery of Rockdale City Plan 2013 – 2025, including localising the State Plan.

5 Promotional Strategies

- **Advertisement**

A wide range of promotional materials will be developed and distributed. Advertisements will be published in local newspapers and on Council's website.

- **Media Briefing Session**

A media briefing session is proposed for Monday 19 November. Journalists from ethnic and local newspapers will be invited. This may lead to articles in various newspapers including ethnic newspapers. Written briefings and relevant pictures will be provided for their publications.

- **Give-Aways**

A wide range of give-aways with specific Rockdale City Plan branding is planned. These will be distributed at various engagement activities such as information booths, meetings with specific groups, forums, etc.

- **Displays**

Posters will be displayed at Council's Customer Service Centre and Libraries.

6 Evaluation of Community Engagement

Upon completion of a community engagement activity, an evaluation will be conducted to assess:

- Degree of community participation.
- Whether community participation has achieved representativeness across the community and the area.
- Suitability of the various types of communication, publicity methods and venues
- Methods utilised for engaging the community
- Timing i.e. promotion time and time of the actual activity

The results of the assessment will be used to improve future engagement plans and processes.

7 Conclusion and Reporting

Engagement for Stage 1 will conclude on 14 December 2012 and then continue through later stages up to the adoption of City Plan in June 2013. All information will be collated for consideration in the development of the Rockdale City Plan 2013 - 2025.

The implementation of City Plan 2013 – 2025 will commence on 1 July 2013, and following that there will be six monthly reports to the community on progress on delivery of the Delivery Program and four yearly reports on progress towards the achievement of the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan.