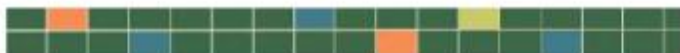


Richmond Valley Community Strategic Plan Community Engagement Strategy



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Introduction

This Community Strategic Plan Engagement Strategy describes how Richmond Valley Council will engage with the community in the review of the preparation of Richmond Valley Council's Community Strategic Plan 2025 (CSP).

The Richmond Valley CSP 2025 builds on the prior plan of 2011-2024 and is an organisation-wide document which identifies the main priorities and aspirations for the future of the local government area covering a period of at least 10 years.

The CSP is the basis of Council's delivery and operational programs, which detail the specific organisational actions Council will undertake in order to achieve the strategies within the CSP.

Richmond Valley Council's CSP is a 12-year (2013-2025), whole-of-community plan for the local government area.

The community strategic plan

Following an ordinary election of councillors, all councils must review the CSP before 30 June in the year following the election.

The council may endorse the current plan, endorse amendments to the existing plan or develop and endorse a new CSP, as appropriate to ensure the area has a CSP covering at least the next 10 years.

The CSP should be developed and delivered as a partnership between council, State agencies, community groups and individuals.

The plan should address a broad range of issues which are relevant to the whole community.

Each council's CSP must have:

- a community vision statement;
- strategic objectives for the community which address civic leadership and social, environmental and economic issues in an integrated manner;
- strategies for achieving each objective; and
- been developed having regard to the NSW Government's State Plan and other relevant State and regional plans.

Engagement best practice

Integrated planning legislation makes it a requirement that councils prepare a Community Engagement Strategy to ensure the local community is actively involved in the review and development of all CSP documents.

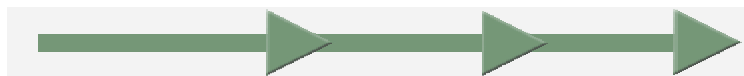
The Community Engagement Strategy is a document which is based on social justice principles and outlines the plan for engagement with the local community in developing the new CSP.

Strong engagement with the community will mean Richmond Valley Council can be confident the outcomes reached not only meet the needs of the community, but that Council has broad community support.

Council's approach to community engagement draws from the best practice principles of community engagement as promoted by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) (see below), which are also outlined in Council's Community Engagement Policy 1.1.16.

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

Increasing Level of Public Impact



INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public participation goal:	Public participation goal:	Public participation goal:	Public participation goal:	Public participation goal:
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 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 in the hands of the public.

Under the Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines (DLG, 2013) essential elements to a community engagement strategy include:

- Identification of relevant stakeholder groups within the community, including State agencies and methods of engaging each group, with social justice principles of participation, rights, access and equity being considered.
- Consideration of expected levels of service expressed by the community when preparing the CSP.

Further, under section 402(6) of the *Local Government Act 1993* a draft CSP or amendment of a CSP must be placed on exhibition for a period of 28 days and submissions received must be considered before the plan or amendment is endorsed by the council.

Social justice principles

Guiding principles of this Engagement Strategy are the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights.

Accordingly, this strategy is constructed to ensure all members of the community have the opportunity to participate actively within this process.

This strategy has been designed to engage target groups within the community and will be delivered across the Richmond Valley local government area to maximise access and participation from all residents within our region.

Further engagement strategies may be implemented if community/people groups have insufficient representation initially.

Legislative requirements

All NSW councils are required by the Local Government Act 1993, section 402, to develop a community strategic plan for their local government area.

The CSP is a vital document which informs and shapes each council's four-year delivery program and one-year operational plan.

Under section 403 of the Local Government Act 1993, a 10-year resourcing strategy is also required to inform the extent to which priorities outlined in the plan can be resourced and undertaken.

The resourcing strategy is to include long-term financial planning, workforce management planning and asset management planning.

The entire process is seen in the model below.



Council's community engagement program

The table below outlines how the community will be consulted and how relevant discussions will take place concerning Richmond Valley Council's intended engagement outcomes.

Implementation schedule:

TARGET GROUP	METHOD OF ENGAGEMENT	LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT	TIMEFRAME
PHASE ONE			
Randomly selected cross section of the community	Two independently conducted community surveys	Inform and consult	February-March 2013
PHASE TWO			
Councillors	Workshop	Inform, consult, involve and collaborate	31 January 2013
Council staff	Surveying; seeking input via emails, letters, website	Inform and consult	April 2013
Whole of community	Media releases, on-hold telephone message and voicemail option, social media information releases, advertisements in local newspapers, posters and flyers in targeted locations including noticeboards and customer service points	Inform and consult	April-June 2013
	CSP information on display during Casino's annual Beef Week	Inform and consult	May 2013
	Council website including information, Q&A, web-based survey and free form response link	Inform and consult	April-June 2013
	Surveying; seeking input via emails, letters, website	Inform and consult	
	Public exhibition of revised Community Strategic Plan	Inform, consult and involve	21 May-18 June 2013

	Public meetings to be held at Casino & Evans Head	Inform, consult and involve	May - Dates and times to be published on Council Notices, webpage & posters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business sector stakeholders 	Business information luncheon inviting written feedback; surveying; seeking input via emails, letters, website; stakeholder forum meeting	Inform, consult, involve and collaborate	February-May 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and Families • Young people • Seniors 	Surveying; seeking input via emails, letters, website; stakeholder forum meeting	Inform, consult, involve and collaborate	April-May 2013
Other people groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATSI stakeholders • CALD community stakeholders 	Surveying; seeking input via emails, letters, website; stakeholder forum meeting	Inform, consult, involve and collaborate	April-May 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State & Federal agencies & neighbouring Council's 	Surveying; telephone contact with agency representatives	Inform, consult and involve	April-May 2013
Community stakeholders including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability sector stakeholders • NGO stakeholders • Transport stakeholders 	Surveying; seeking input via emails, letters, website; stakeholder forum meeting	Inform, consult, involve and collaborate	April-May 2013

* Forum meetings will be held across the local government area within Casino, Coraki, Woodburn and Evans Head.

The evaluation process

To assess success of the engagement process, an online evaluation tool has been developed to allow participants at any time to evaluate and respond to the engagement process.

Further, the following will also be measured and analysed:

- number of events, focus groups;
- attendance numbers and evaluation feedback by community at focus groups;
- quantity and quality of contributions made by the community with respect to the various response forums;
- number of Richmond Valley Council website hits during the consultation phase;
- quantity of survey questionnaires returned to Council;
- survey responses in relation to Council's community engagement performance;
- quantity of formal submissions made to Council;
- media coverage; and
- engagement valuations and feedback submitted online.

The evaluation will be conducted by members of the internal CSP team and a final report will be tabled to Council and the community including outcomes and recommendations for future community engagement.

Privacy in consultation

Due to the nature of community consultation, it is likely that personal information may be collected during the course of community engagement.

All personal information will be handled as per Council's Privacy Management Plan.

Background information

Information used to prepare the engagement process for revision of the CSP included:

- Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)
- The NSW State Plan, NSW 2021
- The Far North Coast Regional Strategy
- 2011 Census Data
- Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines for local government in NSW, 2013
- Options for a Local Government Framework for measuring liveability, January 2012
- Richmond Valley Council's End of Term report 2008-2012
- Richmond Valley Council's Community Strategic Plan 2011-2024 and related information
- Richmond Valley Council's Community Engagement Policy – adopted by Council 15 December 2009
- Richmond Valley Council's Community Engagement Policy – adopted by Council 20 September 2011
- Richmond Valley Council's Community Engagement Strategy – adopted 20 September 2011