

	Function: CORPORATE SERVICES (GOVERNANCE)	Adopted: 21 st January 2009 Resolution No.: C11:09
	Policy Number: GOV002	Last Review: 2 nd September 2026 Resolution No.: C204:0926
	Version Number: 3	Next Review: August 2030
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY		

1. POLICY OBJECTIVES

This policy:

- Sets out Council's commitment to open, appropriate, accountable and responsive decision making, which is informed by effective communication and engagement with the Community;
- Aims to ensure that Council meets its legislative obligations for public consultation (Consultation) by:
 - Using appropriate and cost effective community engagement methods, relevant to the specific circumstances of each decision/activity/process;
 - Providing for appropriate Community participation;
 - Using feedback to enhance decision making;
 - Providing information on the reasons for decision/actions, where reasonable and appropriate;

in accordance with the [Local Government Act 1999](#) (Act) and the [Community Engagement Charter established by the Minister for Local Government under Section 50 of the Act](#) (Charter).

2. SCOPE

This policy:

- Applies to decisions, activities and processes undertaken by:
 - Council;
 - A Council delegate;
 - Workers;
 that require Consultation in accordance with the [Act](#), the [Charter](#), or this policy.
- Does not apply where there are specific consultation requirements under other legislation.

3. DEFINITIONS

Definitions are provided in Attachment 1.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy is a statement of Council's general community engagement position and has been developed in consideration of the [Charter](#) Principles.

Council:

- Will undertake Consultation in accordance with the [Act](#), the [Charter](#) and this policy;
- May, **where Consultation is required by the Act and/or the Charter**, at its absolute discretion undertake one or more Consultation/community engagement activities in addition to those set out in this policy, but is not required to:

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- give prior consideration to; and/or
- determine whether or not to:
undertake any such additional activities;
- Will determine the specific Consultation/community engagement activities to be undertaken on a case by case basis.

A well-intentioned Consultation that does not generate the anticipated level of community engagement is not a breach of this policy.

4.1 Public Consultation Categories

The [Charter](#) sets out minimum, mandatory community engagement activities, where Consultation is required by the [Act](#), and establishes the following different categories of Consultation (Consultation Categories):

- **Significant – Annual business plan and rating policy**
Decisions related to a council's adoption of its annual business plan or proposed changes to the basis of its council rates.
- **Significant**
Decisions that a council makes that have a significant impact on most or all ratepayers and residents, or the wider community or area.
- **Standard**
Decisions that a council makes that benefit from community input across the council area.
- **Local**
Decisions that impact an identifiable smaller group of residents/ratepayers or a local area.
- **Inform**
Matters where councils provide information to a community impacted by a decision.

Council's legislative obligations to undertake Consultation under the [Act](#), are set out in order of the Consultation Categories in Attachment 2. The table provided in Attachment 3 sets out the community engagement activities Council will undertake to ensure compliance.

4.2 Other decisions, activities and processes

Council may, at its absolute discretion, undertake Consultation/community engagement activities in relation to other Council decisions/activities/processes **not specified in the [Act](#) and/or the [Charter](#)**, but is not required to:

- Give prior consideration to; and/or
- Determine whether or not to:
undertake any such additional activities.

5. COMPLAINTS

Complaints relating to this policy must be made in writing to Council and lodged in accordance with Council's Complaints Policy GOV012, available via Council's [Website](#).

6. DELEGATION

Engagement activities will be determined on a case by case basis, by:

- Council resolution;
- The CEO;

- A Council delegate (with the Appropriate Power(s) under the Act, the Charter or this policy).
Delegations are set out in Council's Delegations register, available via Council's [Website](#).

7. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every four years, or more frequently as deemed necessary in consideration of any changes to legislation, relevant standards, codes and guidelines, audit findings and/or any corrective actions/controls. Council may, from time to time, alter or substitute a new policy, following Consultation.

8. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Records will be managed in accordance with Council's Records Management Policy RM001, available via Council's [Website](#).

9. POLICY AVAILABILITY

Policies will be available for inspection without charge at Council's Principal Office and on Council's [Website](#). A copy may be obtained on payment of a fee in accordance with Council's Register of Fees and Charges (also available via Council's [Website](#)).

10. REFERENCES AND LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1999

Community Engagement Charter (established by the Minister for Local Government under Section 50 of the Local Government Act 1999)

11. RELATED COUNCIL OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Strategic Plan 2025 – 2035

- Good Governance
 - Leadership Commitments
 - Policies and Procedures
 - Risk Management
 - Continuous Improvement
 - Transparency and Accountability
- Theme 1 Cohesive
 - 1.2 Ensure everyone can have a say in Council decision making
- Leadership Commitments
 - Listen and respond to the views of our community through meaningful and effective engagement
 - Keep our community informed using a variety of ways to communicate about important matters
 - Be available to you to discuss an issue or concern and follow up with a response

Complaints Policy GOV012

Records Management Policy RM001

Risk Management Framework Policy GOV029

Signed

Mayor

ACTING

Chief Executive Officer

Date

24/09/2026

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Attachment 1 – Definitions

Appropriate Power(s)	For the purpose of this policy, power(s) to: • Undertake community engagement; • Make a decision or undertake an activity or process that requires community engagement; under the Local Government Act 1999, the Community Engagement Charter established by the Minister for Local Government under Section 50 of the Local Government Act 1999 or this policy.
Charter Principles	As set out in the Community Engagement Charter established by the Minister for Local Government under Section 50 of the Local Government Act 1999: • Community members should have reasonable, timely, meaningful and ongoing opportunities to gain access to information about proposed decisions, activities, processes of councils and to participate in relevant processes; • Information about issues should be in plain language, readily accessible and in a form that facilitates community participation; • Participation methods should seek to foster and encourage constructive dialogue, discussion and debate in relation to proposed decisions, activities and processes of councils; • Participation methods should be appropriate having regard to the significance and likely impact of proposed decisions, activities and processes; and • Insofar as is reasonable, communities should be provided with information about how community views have been taken into account and reasons for decisions or actions of councils.
Community	Individuals, groups and/or stakeholders that are impacted by or interested in a particular Council decision or action and includes people who live, work, study, own property, conduct private or government business, visit or use the services, facilities and public spaces and places of Council.
Council	Copper Coast Council and, for the purposes of this policy, includes a delegate or other person exercising power on behalf of Copper Coast Council.
Public Consultation (Consultation)	In accordance with the Local Government Act 1999 and for the purposes of this policy, consultation conducted in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Community Engagement Charter established by the Minister for Local Government under Section 50 of the Local Government Act 1999 (Charter) and Council's community engagement policy.
Workers	All personnel undertaking tasks/duties for and/or on behalf of the Council, including persons employed directly by the Council in a full time, part-time or casual basis, volunteers, contractors, agency personnel, consultants and work experience/student placements.

Attachment 2 – Local Government Act 1999 Public Consultation Obligations by Category of Consultation

Category	Matter	Act Reference	Description
Significant— annual business plan and rating policy	Annual Business Plan	Section 123(3)(b) Local Government Act 1999	Adopting an annual business plan. Annual business plans set out the decisions a council makes each year on the rates and income they will receive and how they will spend these funds.
Significant— annual business plan and rating policy	Basis of rating	Section 151(5)(e) Local Government Act 1999	Consultation that a council takes when it is proposing changes to the basis of its council rates, including declaring differential rates; imposing a separate rate, service rate or service charge; changing the basis on which land is valued for the purposes of rating.
Significant	Representation reviews	Section 12(7) Local Government Act 1999	Consultation that a council undertakes when it is doing a review of its internal representation (including possible changes to its ward structure, number of council members, change of council or ward names).
Significant	Strategic Management Plans	Section 122(6) Local Government Act 1999	The development and review of a council's strategic management plan. Strategic management plans lay out the council's strategic directions for a future ten-year period, including council's long-term financial plan and infrastructure and asset management plan.
Significant	Differential rating and special adjustments	Section 156 (14a)(b) Local Government Act 1999	Consultation that a council takes when it is proposing changes to its use of differential rating.
Significant	Revocation of classification of land as community land—in all other cases	Section 194(2)(b) Local Government Act 1999	Consultation that councils must undertake before revoking the community land status of any land that is community land.
Significant	Community Land Management Plans—adoption	Section 197(1) Local Government Act 1999	Before a council adopts a community land management plan, it must undertake consultation.

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Category	Matter	Act Reference	Description
Significant	Community Land Management Plans—significant amendments	Section 198(3) Local Government Act 1999	If a council amends a community land management plan, and the amendment has a significant impact on the community, it must undertake consultation.
Significant	Alienation of community land by lease or licence	Section 202(2) Local Government Act 1999	Consultation that a council undertakes when it is proposing to lease or licence community land.
Standard	Substantial changes to the opening hours and place of council offices	Section 45(3) Local Government Act 1999	A council's decision about the manner, places and times at which its offices will be open to the public, where the impact of the decision would be substantial.
Standard	Community engagement policy	Section 50A(6)(b) Local Government Act 1999	Councils must consult before adopting its community engagement policy, which is the document that demonstrated how the council will consult in accordance with this charter and on other matters.
Standard	Council behavioural support policies	Section 75(F)(6) Local Government Act 1999	Consultation that a council undertakes when it is proposing to adopt behavioural support policies.
Standard	Access to meetings and documents	Section 92(5) Local Government Act 1999	How councils ensure that council documents are made available and accessible to community members.
Standard	Power to make orders	Section 259(2)(b) Local Government Act 1999	Councils must have policies in place on how they make orders relating to hazards on land adjoining a public place and the inappropriate use of a caravan or vehicle as a place of habitation and must consult before they adopt these policies.
Local	Council is proposing a permit or authorisation for alternation of a road or use of roads for business purposes	Section 223(1) Local Government Act 1999	Consultation that a council takes when there are works on a road that require the council's permit and authorisation, and where traffic will be impeded for more than 48 hours (with a detour in place) or where no detour will be available.

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Category	Matter	Act Reference	Description
Local	Consultation on proposed planting of vegetation on a road	Section 232(b) Local Government Act 1999	Consultation that a council takes when it proposes or authorises or permits for planting street trees or other vegetation on council roads, if the planting may have a significant impact on residents, nearby business or advertisers in the area.
Inform	Minor changes to opening hours and place of council offices	Section 45(3) Local Government Act 1999	A council's decision about the manner, places and times at which its offices will be open to the public, where the impact of the decision would be minor.
Inform	Council is proposing a permit or authorisation for alternation of a road or use of roads for business purposes	Section 223(1) Local Government Act 1999	Consultation that a council takes when there are works on a road that require the council's permit and authorisation, and where traffic will be impeded for less than 48 hours and the council ensures that a detour is in place.
Inform	Election information	Section 13A(2) Local Government (Elections) Act 1999	Councils must provide information, education and publicity for local government elections.

Attachment 3 – Community Engagement Activities

Where more than one Community Engagement Activity is specified against a [Charter](#) Requirement, Council are not obliged to utilise all of the Community Engagement Activities. Provided at least one activity (and the required activities as prescribed in the Charter) are undertaken then public consultation requirements will be met.

Charter Requirement	Mandatory Minimum Actions to Achieve Charter Requirement	Charter Category					Community Engagement Activities
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
Website	Publish information about the matter that can be easily found on a Council website.	X	X	X	X	X	Information published on a Council website.
News publication	Publish information about the matter in a local news publication (print where available, but otherwise digital) that circulates in the Council area and is not produced by the Council.	X	X				Information published in a print or digital newspaper, community newsletter or other (non-council) publication circulating in the Council area.
Consult with the whole Council area	Consider appropriate forms of notifications to the Council area. Consider whether additional information or notification should be made available to the community to bring their attention to the matter and to support participation.	X	X	X			Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council. Information made available via Council's Principal Office. Information published in a print or digital newspaper, community newsletter or other publication circulating in the Council area.

Charter Requirement	Mandatory Minimum Actions to Achieve Charter Requirement	Charter Category					Community Engagement Activities
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
Invite submissions	Provide information about how the community can make a submission, including timeframe.	X	X				Engagement material provides information about how the community can make a submission, including the minimum 21 day timeframe for submissions.
Explain decision making process	In material prepared explain what the Council proposes to do, why it proposes to do it, and what it seeks to achieve. Explain how community feedback will inform the Council's decision.	X	X				Engagement material explains what the Council proposes to do, why it proposes to do it, and what it seeks to achieve. Information published explains that feedback received will be taken into account by the Council before making a decision.
Seek and consider feedback from the community—significant matters	Consider how best to invite feedback from the community. Provide a minimum community engagement period of 21 days to enable the community to provide feedback. Include a summary of community engagement feedback to the Council ahead of the decision.	X	X				Feedback will be invited by (e.g.) • Written submissions • Completion of survey or questionnaire • Attendance in person, by representative or via electronic means at a Council meeting or public meeting • Attendance in person, by representative or electronic means at a workshop, focus group or interview. Community Engagement period open for a minimum of 21 days.

Charter Requirement	Mandatory Minimum Actions to Achieve Charter Requirement	Charter Category					Community Engagement Activities
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
							Summary of community engagement feedback considered by Council ahead of decision.
Public meeting	Hold a public meeting where the community is invited to provide submissions (written or verbal) on the matter. The public meeting may be part of a Council meeting or a separate event.	X					A public meeting will be held either as part of a Council meeting, or as a separate event, for the making of written or verbal submissions.
Council meeting invitation	Invite people who have made a written submission to attend a Council meeting to speak to their submission before the decision is made.		X				People who made written submissions will be invited to attend a Council meeting and speak to their submissions before a decision is made
Seek and consider feedback from the community	Consider how best to invite feedback from the community Provide information about how community feedback will inform the Council's decision. Ensure an appropriate period of time is provided to enable			X	X		Feedback will be invited by (e.g.) • Written submissions • Completion of a survey or questionnaire • Attendance in person, by representative or via electronic means at a Council meeting or public meeting • Attendance in person, by representative or via electronic means at a workshop, focus group or interview.

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Charter Requirement	Mandatory Minimum Actions to Achieve Charter Requirement	Charter Category					Community Engagement Activities
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
	communities to provide feedback.						Information published explains that feedback received will be taken into account by the Council before making a decision. Community Engagement period open for a period of 21 days or such other period as determined by the Council.
Consult with local community	Consider appropriate forms of notifications to the area within the Council affected by the Council decision or action. Consider whether additional information or notification should be made available to the local community to bring their attention to the matter and to support participation.				X		Notification/information will be by (e.g.) • Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council • Information published in targeted letters or leaflet drops to the area within the Council affected by the Council decision or action • Information made available via Council's Principal Office • Information published in a print or digital newspaper, community newsletter or other publication circulating in the Council area.
Information to the whole Council area	Provide information to the whole of the Council's community if it may be directly affected by the Council decision or action.					X	Information will be by (e.g.) • Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council • Information made available via Council's Principal Office

Charter Requirement	Mandatory Minimum Actions to Achieve Charter Requirement	Charter Category					Community Engagement Activities
		Significant ABP and Rating Policy	Significant	Standard	Local	Inform	
							Information published in a print or digital newspaper, community newsletter or other publication circulating in the Council area.
Information to local community	Provide information to the local community that may be directly affected by the Council decision or action.					X	Information will be by (e.g.) - Information published on a social media platform maintained by Council - Information published in targeted letters or leaflet drops to local community that may be directly affected by the Council decision or action - Information made available via Council's Principal Office - Information published in a print or digital newspaper, community newsletter or other publication circulating in the Council area.