





TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
KEY DRIVERS FOR CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT	3
Why is communication important	4
What did we consider when developing this strategy:	4
Current Situation	5
How We Currently Communicate and Engage	5
Current Capability	6
2019 Community Survey	6
What does the Community Want and Expect?	8
Who Are Our Key Stakeholders	10
STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT	11
Waratah-Wynyard Corporate Strategic Plan 2017-2027	11
Strategic Objective – Guiding Principles	12
Communication and Engagement Goals	13
IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum	13
COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	15
Action Plan	16
COMMINICATION AND ENGAGEMENT EDAMEWORK AND TOOLS	21

INTRODUCTION

Waratah-Wynyard Council plays an important role in shaping the future of our region. As a local government organisation, we provide more than 100 services to more than 14,000 residents living in urban and rural communities across an area of 3532 square kilometres.

At Waratah-Wynyard Council Communication is at the core of everything we do. By having good communication and engagement practices and by encouraging open conversations and interactions on local issues we will improve our service delivery and help inform, empower and connect our community.

The Communications and Engagement Strategy has been prepared to support Council's Strategic Plan and as part of Council's commitment to encourage open, transparent and active relationships between the Council, staff and the Community and to ensure we are working towards delivering best practice communications and engagement outcomes.

It sets outs our approach to communicating with residents, ratepayers, businesses, visitors, community groups and other members of our community. It includes actions to show how we will continuously improve over the next few years.

KEY DRIVERS FOR CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATION AND FNGAGEMENT

Councils now need to communicate in a world that looks very different today than what it did a generation ago and even 4 years ago, and as such our policies and practices must mature in line with changing technologies and community expectations.

Social media has driven a level of connectedness and visibility. As a result, public scrutiny has increased, demanding a greater transparency from organisations in general, but Local Government in particular.

The community has greater access to information from a range of sources, creating a knowledge base formed through the amalgamation of differing facts, opinions and personal representations – rather than relying on organisational and media statements alone.

There is a greater emphasis from Local Government on providing value for money and being able to communicate the value of their decision-making effectively.

Local Government also often finds itself in the position of having to be the 'middle man' in solving problems for their community that fall outside its legislative boundaries.

Communities expect a high level of advocacy from their Local Councils on matters such as road safety, economic growth, employment and education. In these instances, Council needs to listen carefully to its communities concerns and communicate them to governing bodies, then engage with both parties in the problem-solving activity.

Increasing pressure on Local Government to become more innovative in their approach to business activities has created an opportunity to challenge traditional policies, service levels and business models, and provide products that align more closely with community expectations.

The change that has probably had the greatest impact on modern organisational communication is the rise of mobile communication. Smart phones, digital screens, tablets and iPads – all mean people have the ability to seek information, ask questions and provide feedback instantly, on their terms, without waiting for an organisation to initiate a conversation. Modern communication strategies must respond to the challenges and opportunities this creates.

WHY IS COMMUNICATION IMPORTANT

Effective communication and engagement can build a strong sense of community, where there is a shared purpose and ownership of goals, decisions and actions.

Effective communication can also remove the barriers that impede good decision making by Council and build respect, trust and mutual understandings.

Organisations and communities interact to advance key outcomes for both, and whilst every situation may not require a deep level of collaboration between the two parties, effective communication recognises that the decisions and actions of Council impact broadly across the community therefore there is a requirement for open and honest dialogue.

On some occasions it will be appropriate that Council simply delivers news in a timely manner. Other activities will require feedback from stakeholders in order to inform decision-making or to evaluate service delivery satisfaction.

More complex matters such as strategic planning, project development and priority setting will demand a more dynamic and sophisticated level of engagement over a long period of time in order to engender trust, increase community capacity and build strong stakeholder relationships

WHAT DID WE CONSIDER WHEN DEVELOPING THIS STRATEGY:



Current Situation

How We Currently Communicate and Engage

Council uses a range of tools to communicate with local media outlets, community groups, organisations and politicians. Current communication and engagement methods consist of:

	MEDIA RELEASES – Releases are distributed to local media outlets (print, radio and television) Audience: Local media consumers, including residents who read community newspapers, watch local news and listen to local radio.
	LOCAL RADIO – Monthly radio interviews with the Mayor on 7AD's Mayor on Air. Used to promote a range of Council services and events. Audience: commercial radio audience in the broadcast area.
www.	COUNCILLORS INTRANET – News, events, agendas and other documents shared with elected members and senior staff members. Audience: Councillor's and senior staff
F	FACEBOOK — Regular posts about events, projects, works, services and other important information for community members. Council has close to 3500 followers. Audience: Residents, partner agencies, politicians, media, stakeholders, other councils and not for profit organisations
Y	TWITTER - Used less frequently than Facebook but has similar content. Is aimed more at media than residents. Council has approximately 750 followers. Audience: Media, politicians, other councils and not for profit organisations.
	YOUTUBE-Has primarily been used for video recorded Mayor's Messages. Audience: Residents, visitors, media, politicians and other stakeholders
NEWS	STAFF NEWSLETTER- Monthly newsletter emailed to all staff. This includes staff profiles, recruitment information, project updates and stories about Council events. Audience: Council Staff
NEWS	COUNCIL WEBSITE - Publishes news and events for residents, visitors and media outlets. Also publishes monthly agendas, minutes, public notices, Council policies and corporate documents. Audience: residents, visitors, partner agencies, politicians, media, stakeholders, other councils and not for profit organisations
	POSTERS, BROCHURES AND FLYERS- Distributed in hard copy and electronic form to various community organisations and businesses
8	WARATAH COMMUNITY BOARD- Consultative committee of Waratah residents to lead the community's relationship with Council

	WARATAH-WYNYARD YOUTH LEADERS - Group of students aged between 13 and 24 years who meet regularly to discuss youth issues and plan events for young people in the municipality.
Meus	NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING- Council is required to place public notices in the local newspaper for Council activities including Council meetings, the annual report and expressions of interest

Current Capability

Council has a Communications Officer (50/50 resourced-shared with the Circular Head Council). This position is overseen by the Manager, Tourism and Marketing, and sits within the Community Engagement Directorate. Responsibilities include:

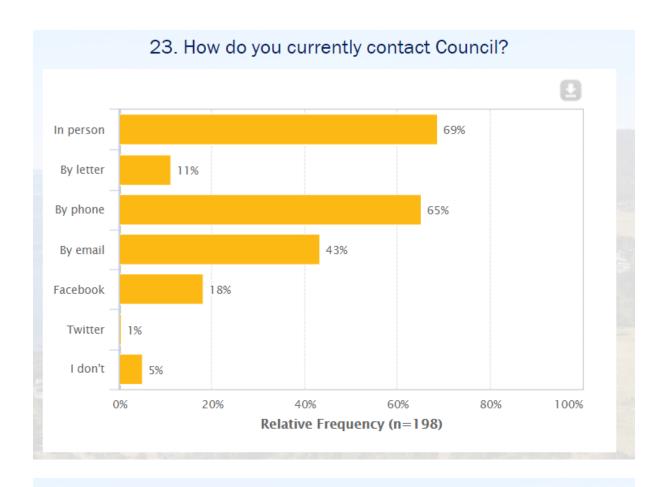
- Media and Issues Management
- Community and Stakeholder Engagement
- Policy and Strategy Development
- > Electronic and Social Media
- Brand Management and Identity
- Corporate Documents and Publications

2019 Community Survey

The recently completed Community Survey highlighted some key points for Council to consider and highlight that there is a growing requirement for Council to communicate better. It also highlights that the method of communication and engagement is critical in particular with different towns and different age groups.

Key Questions Relating to Communications and Engagement

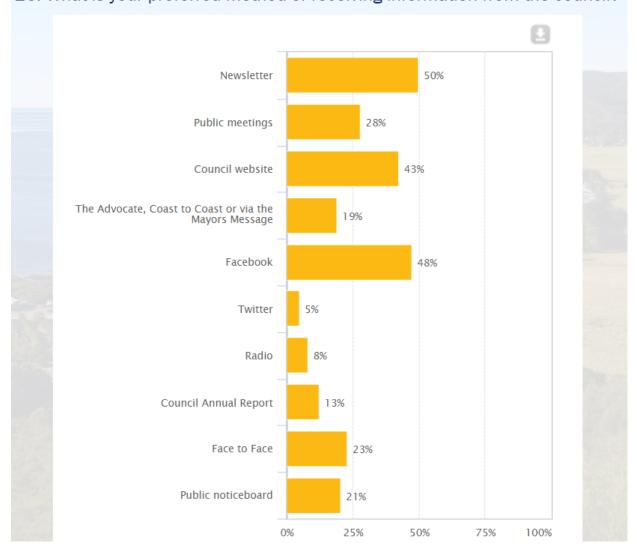
Survey Question	Importance Average	Performance Average
Opportunities for the community to participate in decision-making	6.0	3.6
Council reporting to the community through publications and meetings	6.0	3.8
Consistency of information provided by staff	6.1	4.1
Council working with the community to develop a sense of place through branding, enhancing local identity and promoting social cohesion, health and well-being.	5.7	3.9











What does the Community Want and Expect?

In the 2016 Community Survey 54% of respondents noted that Community Engagement was in the top three priority areas"

As noted in the previous table, during the 2019 Community Survey approximately 200 people provided feedback on how they currently interact with the Council and how they would prefer to interact with council, with almost 50% of the respondents selecting Newsletters, Council Website and Social Media as their preferred method of interaction with Council.

We considered results from previous reviews of our communication and engagement practices.

While Council's communication and engagement practices have improved over time since initial strategy and policy development in 2010, with the many advances in technology and change in how residents want to receive information it is timely that a full review of communication and engagement strategies and resourcing is conducted.

The below table shows review of communication in 2010 (prior to previous strategy/policy being developed), a desktop review of current practices and target for year 1 of strategy. *Refer to scoring legend below*.

COMMUNICATIONS COMPONENT		Level of Practice			
	2010	2019	Goal 2020	Achieved 2020	
Written communications plan, flowing from strategic plan	0	1	4	4	
Communications style guide	0	2	4	3	
Consistent communications style, reinforcing branding (typeface, palette, structure, graphics, logo)	0	1	4	3	
Key messages (existing, demonstrated)	0	1	4	4	
Defined target audiences	2	4	4	4	
Communications objectives	2	2	4	5	
Language appropriate to target audiences	2	3	4	4	
Appropriate number of communications tools (too many/too few)	1	2	3	4	
Appropriate application of communications tools	1	2	3	3	
Structured implementation of communications (timely, regular, proactive)	2	2	4	4	
Engagement with media	3	2	4	4	
Image library	3	3	4	4	
Agreed responsibilities within staffing structure	2	2	4	4	
Management support for communications	4	3	4	4	
Organisation-wide embracing of communications (everyone represents the brand; all staff are advocates)	1	2	3	3	
Identifiable brand (discernable brand values)	2	2	4	3	
Website is easily navigable	4	3	4	5	
Website has sensible content flow	4	3	4	5	
Analysis of website visits	2	2	4	4	
Use of new media	0	2	4	4	
Public face engagement: Reception; face-to-face; telephone; processes	2	3	4	3	

LEVEL OF PRACTICE KEY 0. Not performed

1. Ad hoc/not planned

2. Patchy

3. Regular/ somewhat strategic

4. Demonstrated and strategic

5. Optimal practice

Who Are Our Key Stakeholders

OUR COMMUNITY

- Residents
- Community groups
- Service users
- Businesses
- Visitors

INFLUENCERS

- > State and Federal Government
- Media
- ➤ Leadership Organisations such as the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT)

INTERNAL

- Councillors
- Council Staff and Contractors
- Volunteers



OUR VISION

To Deliver Innovative, Sustainable Services to our Community through Strong Leadership, Clear Direction and Collaborative Relationships.

OUR MISSION

Building Our Community and Region, Providing Leadership,
A Strong Voice; and Delivering Outcomes Based on Value for Money.

OUR VALUES

Respect Honesty Fairness Ethical Pride

Communication and engagement links with many (if not all) of the organisations plans and strategies, it can be particularly related to the following key strategic objectives:

Waratah-Wynyard Corporate Strategic Plan 2017-2027

GOAL 1: Lead	lership and Governance
Desired Out	comes
We make pu	plicly transparent decisions on spending and future directions while encouraging community feedback.
OUR PRIOR	ITIES TO THE STATE OF THE STATE
1.1	Commit to best practice in community engagement.
1.2	Strengthen our communication with the community using diverse communications channels relevant to the demographic.
1.3	Encourage increased participation by all stakeholders.
1.4	Facilitate the meeting of community needs through strong advocacy and local and regional collaboration for shared outcomes.

Strategic Objective – Guiding Principles

To encourage open, transparent and active relationships and collaboration between the Council, staff and the Community and to ensure we are working towards delivering best practice communications and engagement outcomes we will work to the following guiding principles.

- ➤ We will keep stakeholders **informed** with timely communication about Council projects, events and other newsworthy items.
- We will **listen** to our community by facilitating open, respectful two-way communication in order to build trust, encourage feedback and increase stakeholder understanding and support.
- ➤ With consideration for the diversity of our community, we commit to **engaging** with our stakeholders in innovative and meaningful ways that broaden our communication reach and increase the level of stakeholder engagement.
- We will **collaborate** with our stakeholders on major projects from conception to completion, incorporating feedback, advice and recommendations throughout the project lifecycle.
- ➤ We will deliver a **consistent** brand message and implement strategies to build awareness and advocacy amongst our stakeholders.



COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT GOALS

- 1. Develop an ongoing communications program to keep the community and key stakeholders informed about our programmes, services and decisions.
- 2. Build our reputation and identity through consistent messaging and engaging visual presence
- 3. Strengthen our Partnerships and community involvement through a council wide approach to communication, engagement and collaboration.
- 4. Build the capacity of staff and Councillors to communicate, engage and champion Council business.
- 5. Continue to build the tools and practice the principals of the International Association for Public Participation to become a leader in communication and community engagement.

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

Council uses the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum model to guide our engagement with the community. (all IAP2 references and tools are printed with permission of the IAP2)

IAP2 is the International Association of Public Participation which developed an international framework for engagement and is considered a best practice benchmark worldwide. The purpose of the spectrum is to improve the practice of public participation or community engagement, incorporating individuals, governments, institutions and other entities that affect the public interest.

The table below describes the different levels of engagement that can be applied from a basic level of information through to empowering people to make their own decisions. Our communication and community engagement practices will require an engagement plan for all major projects and our Community Engagement Framework will provide guidance to staff on the step-by-step process.

IAP2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM

*all IAP2 references and tools are printed with permission of the IAP2

	INFORM	•	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
ICIPATION GOA	with balanced and objective information	feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decision.	the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently	public in each aspect of the decision including	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input	We will look to for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decision to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
EXAMPLETOOLS	Factsheets Websites Letters Media Signage/displays Open houses	Public comments Focus groups Surveys Public meetings	Deliberate polling	Citizen advisory committees Consensus building Participatory decision making	Citizen juries Ballots Delegated decisions

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

While the communication and engagement strategies outline a range of different services and activities the following are the key activities Council will focus on over the next two years. This will be supported by a detailed action plan – an example of which is attached.

YEAF	ONE		
	ACTION	KPI	
1	Upgrade Council Website to link to council branding, improve functionality, stability and overall user experience to increase visits to website	•	Website updated Monitor visitor numbers and report quarterly
2	Develop a Communications Toolkit to embed consistent best practice processes in all communication mediums	•	Completion of tool kit by 30/9/2019 Training as appropriate for staff completed
3	Develop Annual Communications Calendar which incorporates key activities and projects	•	Calendar produced and being utilised by staff
4	Increase media coverage related to key council projects, key lobbying activities and general stories	•	Monitor number of articles and report quarterly (TBC)
5	Develop a plan to grow our online community and engage more through social media and email communications (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, email etc)	•	Council has presence on Instagram and Twitter utilising mini surveys Record number of followers and retweets/shares
6	Increased community Participation in public consultation opportunities, including 30 second surveys to get answers on single question topics.	•	Keep record of number of activities and participants and report annually
7	Conduct a complete audit of Council's branding to ensure consistency in the use of the Council's branding strategy across all areas.	•	Audit conducted Budget submission prepared for 2020/21 Staff consistently using branding in all messaging
8	Conduct review of staffing of communications role to ensure adequate resources to complete activities expected	•	Adequately resourced to deliver expected outcomes

YEAF	RTWO		
	ACTION	KPI	
1	Conduct review of this strategy and results achieved in year one, update strategy and actions for year two and three as required	Completion of Review and report to council with updated actions by July 2020	
2	Continued upgrade of council website to increase services offered on line	 Website updated Monitor visitor numbers and report quarterly Monitor number of people using on-line services 	
3	Upgrade Councillor and Staff Intranet	 Improved functionality and user-friendly site for councillors New intranet for staff – Central information source All policies and documents available 	
4	Increased participation in community survey	Measure participation results aim for increase from 28% to 35% take-up rate	

ACTION PLAN

We will keep stakeholders **INFORMED** with timely communication about Council projects, events and other newsworthy items.

GOAL	ACTION	WHEN	MEASURE	PROGRESS
Promote Council activities	Send media releases to local and wider media audiences as appropriate	Ongoing	Media release written and distributed for all Council activities of public interest Media outlets report on Council matters	»
	Increase use of Social media	ongoing	Two Facebook posts per day Twitter – as appropriate Measure effectiveness with insights/analytics	>>
	Local radio – monthly interviews with the Mayor to promote Council activities	ongoing	Regular radio interviews to share information about Council activities	>>
	Posters, flyers distributed to local venues and community noticeboards	ongoing	Community kept updated on Council events/activities with printed materials	>>
Provide timely and transparent information to stakeholders	How your rates are spent brochure included as an insert with rates notice	annually	Reduced number of enquiries about rates/feedback	٧
	Investigate the cost of producing a Council newsletter/newspaper for the community – whether digital or printed	Year 3	Number of subscribers Feedback from community	
	Investigate the cost/feasibility of digital signage in town centres	Year 2	Understand cost/benefit of digital signage	٧
	Ensure the community has access to a consolidated events calendar via various mediums.	Year 2	Community and Council events are posted on website	>>
	Update stakeholder mailing lists (eg media and internal newsletter)	Year 3	Mailing lists updated annually	
	Produce Annual report	Annual	Annual report produced and available to public within statutory timeframes	٧
	Investigate options for media logging, scheduling and monitoring	Year 3	Most efficient use of Communication resources Practical reporting tools	
	Investigate options for internal sharing of social media sentiment/general media stories	Year 3	Staff, management, councillors informed of public sentiment	

Progress legend: V complete

We will **LISTEN** to our community by facilitating open, respectful two-way communication in order to build trust, encourage feedback and increase stakeholder understanding and support.

GOAL	ACTION	WHEN	MEASURE	PROGRESS
Provide a range of opportunities for the community to present feedback and complaints	Community survey - Investigate whether the current Community Survey format provides the best value to Council.	Year 1 Year 3	Cost Number of responses Validity of data	٧
·	Encourage more community members to attend Council meetings – and have their say.	Year 2	Meeting attendance Visits to Have your say page on website	٧
	Community forums — conduct open forums where matters of high community concern arise to listen to and alleviate concerns	Year 1 ongoing	Number of attendees at Community Conversations in each community and general community response to the concept	٧
	Web site – redesign the community feedback form on our website to ensure it is easily located and simple to complete	Year 2	Found in multiple places and simple to complete	٧
	Trial use of facebook polls for project feedback and other uses where appropriate	Year 3	Numbers of responses	
Promote and measure our success against our Customer Service Charter	Ensure staff are aware of the customer service charter and its impact on all council activities and ensure the charter is displayed in appropriate places for public and staff to see.	Year 2	Charter adopted Conquest timeliness improved Increased Customer satisfaction	
Connect with a broad cross-section of our community in meaningful ways that demonstrate a willingness to listen	Continue to support the Waratah Community Board providing guidance and advice, listening to community concerns and actioning agreed priority projects	ongoing	Board engages with Council constructively Projects are progressed	٧
	Explore making a formal partnership arrangement with Building Somerset Futures	?		

Progress legend:

√ complete

→ actioned and ongoing

→ in progress

★ delayed/not pursuing

With consideration for the diversity of our community, we commit to **ENGAGING** with our stakeholders in innovative and meaningful ways that broaden our communication reach and increase the level of stakeholder engagement.

GOAL	ACTIONS	WHEN	MEASURE	PROGRESS
Ensure consistent, professional and respectful communication	Develop a policy covering Council's social media, general media and community engagement activities.	Year 2	Policies completed and adopted by Council	•
Ensure timely and strategic distribution of information	Continue to develop Communications Plans for key projects	Ongoing	Increase in understanding and support for Council projects. Reduced load on customer service as information is more readily available	>>
Make better use of existing technologies to broaden our communication reach	Promote the Council's existing My Local Govt app to residents to encourage its use for information on local waste collection, events and for reporting	Year 2	No longer used – will look at more appropriate partnerships for this type of app	×
	Video - Mayors message	ongoing	At least 6 per year	
	Facebook – monitor and measure success of posts	Year 3	increase social media followers by 20%	
	Use twitter to stimulate interest from news agencies in Council news	Year 3		
	have metrics measured for 6 months by SHUNT media	July-Dec 2021	Greater understanding of our social media channels and audience – baseline data to monitor success of future strategies	
Investigate new technologies and innovate ways to communicate with our diverse community	YouTube and Video – use short video clips to promote activity and inform community	2021-22	At least one video every 2 months Number of views	

Progress legend:

V complete

→ actioned and ongoing

→ in progress

✓ delayed/not pursuing

We will **COLLABORATE** with our stakeholders on major projects from conception to completion, incorporating feedback, advice and recommendations throughout the project lifecycle.

GOAL	ACTION	WHEN	MEASURE	PROGRESS
Develop a Community	Develop a standard process to incorporate community	YEAR 3	Plans in place, reviewed regularly and followed	
Engagement Plan for all	consultation into project development – guiding staff with		strategically.	
major projects	templates and checklists		Templates available and widely used within	
			Council	
Seek advice and input from	Consider the benefits of creating Focus Groups for major	YEAR 3	Councillors understand community sentiment	
key stakeholders	projects		and use this to inform decision-making	>>
	Post results from feedback onto website for transparency and	Year 3	Feedback incorporated into draft designs	
	accountability		where appropriate and decisions	
			communicated to stakeholders	
Ensure staff and	Council intranet – news, agendas and other events shared with	Year 2 -	Improved workplace culture	
Councillors are kept	elected members and senior staff	ongoing		>>
informed				
	Create Staff weekly newsletter	Year 2 -		
		ongoing		>>

Progress legend:

√ complete

→ actioned and ongoing

→ in progress

★ delayed/not pursuing

We will deliver a **CONSISTENT BRAND MESSAGE** and implement strategies to build awareness and grass advocacy amongst our stakeholders.

GOAL	ACTION	WHEN	MEASURE	PROGRESS
Develop a new consumer facing website for Council	New branded web platform and increase functionality for Council officers and the public	YEAR 1	Increased website visits, Consistent Council brand	٧
	Migrate tourism websites and other council satellite sites onto the same platform for ease of administration, cost benefits and brand consistency	POSTPONED		×
	Implement annual website audit with each department	YEAR 3		
Ensure strong and consistent branding of Council activities	Undertake branding audit and produce new materials based on priority and within budget/resource allocations	YEAR 2 - ongoing		>>
	Ensure all Council email signatures are consistent and compliant with Council brand guidelines	Year 1 - ongoing		>>
	Investigate functionality and cost effectiveness of current digital template for letterhead and other stationary	Year 3		
	Develop Signage Strategy with staged signage replacement plan	Year 2 - ongoing	Signage Strategy adopted by Council Budget reflects need to upgrade strategically	
	Use staff newsletter for key 'brand tips'	Year 3	At least one per month	
Produce professional corporate documents and marketing collateral	Review existing collateral and update as required	Year 2- ongoing	Professional quality materials that display consistent brand messaging and imagery	>>
	Centralise production/approval of collateral to Marketing and Comms team and develop a register of corporate marketing material	Year 3	Register of all collateral on orgment and in ECM	
Promote the municipal area consistent with our brand	Develop an Instagram strategy	Year 3	At least 1 post per week Audience followers	
	Assist with implementation of Council Organisational values	Year 3	Branding complete Successful launch Widespread take-up amongst Council	
	Create corporate photo library	Year 3	Professional quality photos available for all staff to access and use	

Progress legend: V complete

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND TOOLS

A Community Engagement Framework and Communication Toolkit will be developed in line with the objectives set out in this document.

Community Engagement Framework – to provide guidance for Best Practice Communication and Engagement.

Communication Toolkit Supporting Documents:

- > IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation
- ➤ IAP2 Core Values and Guiding Principles
- Community Engagement Model
- Community Engagement Plan Methodology
- Design Platform Essential Elements to Engagement Practice
- Understanding the Context
- Methods Matrix
- Communications Plan Toolkit
- Engagement Design
- Project Scope Statement
- Stakeholder Identification Matrix
- Stakeholder Mapping Tool
- Stakeholder Analysis Matrix
- Stakeholder Impact Analysis Tool
- > Determining the Purpose of a Communication Plan
- Engagement Plan Overview
- > Evaluation Criteria
- Method Design Tool
- Planning a Group
- Planning a Small Group Conversation
- Planning a workshop
- Assessing Risk
- Determining Resources Required

