



Kiama Council  
**Community Engagement Strategy**  
**Community Strategic Plan 2017-27**



# Community Vision

Working together for a healthy, sustainable and caring community

## Council Mission Statement

Kiama Council will work to create a Municipality that has a healthy vibrant lifestyle, beautiful environment and a harmonious, connected and resilient community

## Council's Values/Principles

Kiama Council:

- values the commitment of the community to our local region
- recognises the value of the area's rural and coastal lifestyle
- will strive to maintain the natural beauty of the environment
- will plan for sustainability
- will build on the strengths of the community to create a Municipality that is a vibrant place to live, work and enjoy.

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## **Introduction**

The NSW Integrated Planning and Reporting framework integrates and streamlines all statutory planning and reporting, strengthens Council's strategic focus and most importantly ensures accountability and responsiveness to local communities.

This framework mandates that local councils hold important discussions with their communities about their long-term aspirations, funding priorities, service levels and planning in partnership to ensure a sustainable future.

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is the highest level plan that Council will prepare. The purpose of this plan is to identify the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future and to plan strategies to achieve these goals.

Kiama's first Community Strategic Plan 2011-2021 was developed in partnership with the community and was adopted by Council on 28 June 2011. Kiama's next Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022 was adopted by Council on 20 November 2012. In line with the Integrated Planning and Reporting guidelines the community has the opportunity to revisit this plan every four years when its new Council is elected. The community may review or amend strategies, or may wish to add new long-term objectives, or change the timeframes originally planned for some projects. The reviewed Plan will reflect a 10 year timeframe, commencing 1 July 2017.

## **Previous engagement**

Kiama Council has a long history of engaging with its community ensure it is better able to make informed decisions to foster the health and wellbeing of the local community.

In 1986/87 Council implemented a social planning process in order to develop Council's first Social Plan. Council's first Health Plan was developed in 2001 also following extensive community consultation. In 2002 IRIS Research was commissioned to conduct a community survey to gain an understanding of the level of satisfaction from the community about the services and activities that Council provides, as well as to gain information about planning directions for the future of Kiama.

## **Framework for engagement**

Council is committed to engaging with its community to ensure the Community Strategic Plan reflects meaningful dialogue with the community. Good community engagement incorporates democratic process into improved decision making and management. It is recognised that Council is able to make better informed decisions when it engages with the widespread knowledge, skills and ideas of the people who live, work and visit the Municipality.

## Increasing Level of Public Impact

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
<b>Public participation goal:</b>	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 that 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.

*Integrated Planning and Reporting Manual*

This community engagement strategy for the review of the Kiama Community Strategic Plan is based on the scale developed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2). As indicated in the table above, the scale is based on “the greater the impact an issue may have on the community, the more comprehensive the style of engagement should be”. The review of the Community Strategic Plan has a significant impact on the community and therefore the engagement strategy will:

- **Collaborate** – we will collaborate (partner) with our community to review the goals contained in the Plan to ensure that their long-term aspirations are considered and reflected.
- **Involve** – we will involve our community in the setting of strategies to achieve the long-term goals of the Plan.
- **Consult** – we will consult with the community by obtaining feedback and comments on the proposed goals and strategies.
- **Inform** – we will inform the community of each phase of the review process and we will inform the community at regular intervals throughout the duration of the Plan on our progress towards these goals and strategies.

### Principles for engagement

The process of engaging with the community will, at all times, reflect the Social Justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights; principles which also underpin the Community Strategic Plan itself.

The NSW Government's Social Justice Strategy is based on the following interrelated principles:

- **Equity** – there should be fairness in decision making, prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need. Everyone should have a fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community. The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances
- **Access** – all people should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life
- **Participation** – everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives
- **Rights** – equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided or people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

*(Taken from the Planning & Reporting Manual for local government in NSW, 2010)*

Council will ensure these Social Justice principles are reflected in the review of this plan by:

- ensuring that engagement activities are planned to encourage involvement from all sections of the community, including minority groups and groups whose voice is often not heard in the community
- ensuring that key stakeholders, including community organisations and State agencies, have input into the review
- ensuring that engagement activities are held throughout the entire geographical area and by several different engagement methods
- ensuring that the Goals contained in the Plan are tested against these principles to make certain that the Plan is fair and doesn't exclude or disadvantage any member of the community.

## Engagement goal

Our overall objective is to work with the community to review the key goals and strategies contained in our Community Strategic Plan for the next ten years, in order to work towards achieving our long-term Community Vision. We aim to engage with all who have an interest in the Municipality, including residents, ratepayers, business owners, people

working in the area, community and business organisations, service providers, government agencies and individuals.

During our engagement activities we will encourage participants to consider the following four key questions, to guide them in identifying all major issues and how they may impact the community:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be in ten years' time?
- How will we get there?
- How will we know when we have arrived?

### **How are we going to achieve this goal?**

To ensure that we have sought the broadest level of engagement with our community possible, we are seeking to engage with (but not limited to) the following stakeholders:

Families	Young people	Aged
Frail aged	People with a disability	Aboriginal community
Business community	Active community	Elected councillors
Culturally and linguistically diverse community	Community groups	State and Federal agencies

### **Information to inform participants**

Information sheets covering the four key areas of Community, Environment, Economy and Civic Leadership will be available at all engagement activities and on Council's website to ensure that the participating community members are well informed of key issues and challenges. The information sheets will provide a brief snapshot of the Municipality of Kiama, including its demographics, geography, Council's principal activities, as well as current and future issues identified by our 2016 IRIS Community Survey.

### **Review of existing data**

Information obtained from all engagement activities undertaken by Council since the development of the 2012-2022 Community Strategic Plan will be reviewed to identify ongoing priorities or changing trends. These will include information collected from:

- IRIS Research Kiama Community Survey 2016
- Local Environment Plan 2011
- Council's End of Term Report 2012-2016
- Kiama Health Plan 2011-2017

- Council's State of the Environment Report
- Review of NSW State Plan and Illawarra Regional Plan to ensure due regard is given to these plans during the review process.

## **Engagement activities**

Engagement activities are planned to encourage involvement in this review process from all sections of the community, including minority and hard to reach groups. Our engagement activities to carry out this review will include:

- mail out to all community groups, consultative committees and service providers advising of the review process and invitation to complete the survey
- media campaign to encourage participation by community members, including Council's newsletter Kimunico (delivered to all residences within the local government area), local publications (including 'free' press) and Council's website
- website survey
- information kiosks held at various locations throughout the local government area, including Council's library and advisory committee meetings.

## **Ongoing engagement**

As required by legislation, the full suite of Integrated Planning and Reporting documents (Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Operating Plan and Resourcing Strategy) will be placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days prior to formal adoption.

During this exhibition period, community members will be invited to make written submissions in regard to these draft plans and may also address Council at designated Council meetings at which these plans will be placed on exhibition and also when formally adopted. All submissions made by the community will be considered prior to formal adoption of the Plan.

To encourage community feedback and ensure community understanding of the proposed planning documents we will hold information kiosks at various locations throughout the local government area during the review period.

## **References**

- NSW Integrated Planning and Reporting Manual
- International Association for Public Participating (IAP2)