



# **COMMUNICATION STRATEGY 2020-23**

**PREPARED BY WINGS PUBLIC RELATIONS**

**September 2020**

**Edited by Principal Specialist, Communications and Marketing**

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## Introduction

We have a critical task in setting the future vision for the region. In fact, our corporate mission as outlined in our Corporate Plan (2018-2023) states: *Scenic Rim Regional Council* will enable a sustainable future for our region that enhances our unique rural communities and environments.

At the heart of our rural communities and environments, however, are our residents. With more than 43,000 people calling the Scenic Rim home, as well as 4,500 businesses, it is important that we communicate effectively about the programs and services we provide day-to-day to build community wellbeing and prosperity.

As part of our Customer Centricity Project, our communities told us that we should be listening and communicating better in order to develop deeper partnerships.

This Communication Strategy is our promise that we will be more transparent and keep you updated on what we are doing, but more importantly, that we will also listen to your feedback.

We will aim to communicate with our community not just to inform, but to support the growing community by increasing their knowledge about the key themes and issues that are affecting them in their everyday lives.

How we communicate to current and potential residents, ratepayers, business owners, investors, other levels of government, community groups and our employees is of vital importance to us. This Communication Strategy is supported by clear actions on how we will implement the principles, objectives and goals outlined in this document.

Together, we are One Scenic Rim.

# Our strategy

## Our communication goals

We want our communities to be aware of, and be satisfied with, the programs and services we deliver each and every day to make the Scenic Rim a better place to live.

We also want our communities to trust that we make the right decisions to ensure a sustainable future for our region. There will be times when we can involve the community in that decision-making process – and also times when we cannot – however we will always strive to keep our communities informed on material decisions that impact our region.

Council serves the whole Scenic Rim – One Scenic Rim.

## Our communication objectives

The purpose of the Communication Strategy is to engage and connect Councillors and the organisation with the community to improve the community's quality of life and increase satisfaction and support with decisions made by Council.

The objectives of the strategy are to:

1. Increase awareness and understanding in the community of Council's programs, services and decision-making processes, always with an open-door policy focused on enhancing the everyday lives of locals.
2. Use accessible, preferred communication channels that strengthen relationships with our community, while also engaging in two-way communication with the community to better enhance our services.
3. Deliver clear and relevant information proactively and in a timely manner that best meets the needs and interests of the community.
4. Build our reputation through consistent, accurate, open and honest messaging that positively reflects our identity.

## Strategic alignment

This Communication Strategy aligns and supports the objective in the *Scenic Rim Community Plan 2011-26* and the *Scenic Rim 2023 Corporate Plan*.

As an organisation, we focus on seven key themes developed for the Community Plan:

- Healthy, engaged and resourceful communities
- Spectacular scenery and healthy environment
- Accessible and serviced region
- Sustainable and prosperous economy
- Open and responsive government
- Vibrant towns and villages
- Relaxed living and rural lifestyles

**This strategy is a specific action in the Operational Plan 2020-21 as part of the *Open and Responsive Government* theme.**

The Communication Strategy also links to our recently-adopted Customer Charter.

We are also seeking to adopt a Community Engagement Framework to guide how we can work together with our communities to achieve our future sustainably.

## Our communication commitments

We are focused on building and enhancing trusting relationships with our community.

- We will clearly communicate in a variety of ways to inform and educate residents, ratepayers and other stakeholders about the services and support we provide, as well as our decisions, vision and plans.
- We will demonstrate that we are One Scenic Rim by being consistent, accurate, open and honest in what we say and do.
- We will listen to the community, inviting feedback, respecting views and providing purposeful, relevant information in response.
- We will support and empower elected members and employees to become ambassadors for Council and the Scenic Rim region.

## Our guiding principles for communication

Principle	Why is this important	The expectations of our community	Our responsibilities
<b>Open and Honest</b>	So the community believes what is said. Trust will be eroded if there is a perception of secrecy.	We exist to serve the Scenic Rim community, and residents and ratepayers have a right to know how services are being delivered, and where money is being allocated. Transparency is key.	To be open and honest about what is happening across the organisation and what is being delivered to the community.
<b>Timely</b>	So the community doesn't feel left behind or blindsided by decisions or operations.	The community expects that we will be immediately upfront when a message needs to be communicated and subsequently heard. This supports the notion of trust in the organisation.	To be proactive and responsive, always providing timely information to the community.
<b>Accurate</b>	So the community gets the facts about Council's policy positions and resolutions.	The community deserves to know facts and information, not spin.	To disseminate factual information to the community, even if the message is not positive.
<b>Clear</b>	So the community can easily understand what is said.	The community expects that it will not be confused by what we do.	To not use jargon, and to present concise information in plain English and/or diagrams to ensure understanding amongst key audience.
<b>Purposeful</b>	So each audience within the Scenic Rim receives purposeful and specific messaging that is relevant and topical.	The community is informed and educated as soon as practicable regarding decisions/changes impacting their everyday lives.	To provide relevant information that is of interest to the community.

## **How will we achieve our communication objectives?**

We will deliver on our principles and objectives and work to keep our community informed and involved. To help us achieve our objectives we have established key strategies, which underpin our Action Plan on page 8.

### **Refresh internal operations**

We will review and refresh our internal operations to provide high quality streamlined service to our internal and external customers.

### **Work with the media**

We will continue to build stronger working relationships with journalists and the media so we can inform residents about our services, decisions, vision and plans.

### **Improve our external communication**

We will continue to improve our communications with clear and consistent messaging and by building a strong visual identity, and making best use of communication channels available that consider the whole community.

### **Inform our employees, inform our community**

We will increase employees' knowledge and understanding of Council initiatives so they can help provide accurate information on behalf of the Council.

### **Support our elected members**

We will support our elected members by keeping them informed about strategic and operational initiatives so they can provide accurate information on behalf of the Council.

### **Build trust and reputation**

We will be responsive to the community's opinions by managing and addressing issues as they arise.

### **Develop a community engagement framework**

We will endorse a community engagement framework to build trust and confidence in the organisation, ensuring we work to best practice standards and engage in two-way conversations by genuinely listening to the community.

## Our key messages

Key messages for the Communication Strategy 2020-23 have been developed in alignment with the *Scenic Rim Corporate Plan 2018-2023* and the Customer Charter.



- We are One Scenic Rim, proudly working together for our region.
- Council provides essential services and infrastructure to improve our residents' quality of life and build a prosperous region.
- Our elected members and employees care about our communities within the Scenic Rim and strive to make individuals' lives better each day.
- Our services are high-quality yet value-for-money.
- We are open for business if you need our help.
- No matter what is thrown at us (bushfires, floods, droughts, pandemics), we always support each other and get through it.
- We are close to urban areas, however our rural charm remains. That's why people like to visit us, and we welcome their contributions to our economy and community.
- The Scenic Rim offers great and affordable lifestyles.

## **Our communication and engagement model**

Council will use the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum model to guide our engagement with the community.

## **Our audiences**

We acknowledge there are a diverse range of audiences that live within the region. Our key audiences include:

- Current and potential residents
- Ratepayers
- Business owners
- Investors
- Queensland and Australian Government departments and agencies
- Other councils
- Local Queensland and Australian members of parliament
- Partnership organisations
- Community clubs and groups
- Funding bodies
- Suppliers and contractors to Council
- Media
- Community organisations
- Visitors
- Mayor and councillors
- Employees
- Potential employees

## **Key demographics**

Some key statistics relating to residents, based on 2016 Census data, include:

- Median age is 44 years old
- The largest age group living within Scenic Rim Regional Council is 50-54 years old
- 22.9% of the population is aged between 0 and 17
- 27.2% are aged 60 years and over
- 16,902 are above the age of 50
- There is an emerging increase in the groups of people aged 50 and over (50-59; 60-69; 70-84 years of age)
- 15.9% of households stated they do not have an internet connection, which could indicate a level of disadvantage related to socio-economic factors, age, or geographical isolation
- 88.9% of the population speaks English only, while 3.2% spoke a non-English language
- 6.2% of the population (2,486) reported needing help in the day-to-day lives due to a disability.

With these demographics in mind, we will ensure our communication is tailored to meet the needs of everyone in our community.

## Action plan for Communication Strategy 2020-23

To help us deliver on our communication principles and achieve our objectives, we have established key strategies as outlined earlier. Within each strategy, there are specific initiatives that provide Council with clear direction to support improved communication with our audiences.

The implementation of this strategy and action plan will be managed by the Principal Specialist Communications and Marketing, however all our elected members and employees have a responsibility in communicating with our communities and key audiences.

The strategy will be reported on quarterly and the initiatives reviewed every 12 months, before the end of the calendar year.

Success will be measured by increased satisfaction with Council's programs and services, as measured through surveys and other research conducted as part of, but not limited to, the Customer-Centric Project.

### Refresh internal operations

We will review and refresh our internal operations to provide high quality streamlined service to our internal and external customers.

Initiative	Lead	Measure of success	Timeframe
Review communication and marketing operations to identify areas for improvement, including documenting procedures and developing databases to track work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operations are streamlined</li> <li>Team has a clear understanding of procedures and processes to help them serve internal and external customers effectively</li> </ul>	31 January 2021
Implement business partner (account management) model, assigning a team member to be point of contact for Mayor, Councillors, Executive Leadership team and each portfolio/business unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved internal relationships</li> <li>Valuable marketing and communication opportunities are realised and the community is better informed</li> </ul>	31 December 2020
Develop workflow guide for employees to refer to, and request for support system, that employees can use when they require communications and marketing support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing to develop</li> <li>Employees to use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal portfolios adopt workflow guide, reducing number of ad-hoc requests and tight timeframes.</li> </ul>	31 December 2020
Develop media and communication plans for specific projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing in partnership with key internal clients.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informed and engaged internal and external audiences</li> </ul>	Ongoing



<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Measure of success</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistency in messaging across Council</li> <li>• Increase in community feedback for projects when sought</li> </ul>	
Update Council's Writing Style Guide to ensure consistency of language and tone that reflects our customer-led vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Marketing to develop and provide training and promote it use</li> <li>• Employees to use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council's Writing Style Guide is approved by CEO</li> <li>• Council's Writing Style Guide is used by employees</li> <li>• Positive feedback from training sessions</li> </ul>	30 June 2021
Provide training for employees in 'writing in plain English', that also aligns to corporate style guide, to help reduce confusion for our customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Marketing</li> <li>• Human Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of employees trained</li> <li>• Feedback from attendees that training was beneficial</li> <li>• Anecdotal feedback from the community</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Develop Brand Strategy and Guidelines to ensure consistency of visual identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Marketing to develop and provide training</li> <li>• Employees to use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brand Strategy and Guidelines are adopted by Council</li> <li>• Brand Strategy and Guidelines are adopted by Council is well understood</li> <li>• Positive feedback from training sessions</li> <li>• Brand is used consistently</li> </ul>	28 February 2021
Establish a Template User Group/Brand Champions to determine suite of Word and PowerPoint templates to help employees service customers effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Marketing to lead</li> <li>• Other business units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Template User Group/Brand Champions identified</li> <li>• Suite of templates identified to support streamlining and consistency in materials being produced for the community</li> </ul>	31 March 2021
Develop a suite of consistently branded Word and PowerPoint templates that can be used by employees to create posters, fact sheets, flyers, forms etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Marketing to lead and provide training</li> <li>• Template User Group/Brand Champions to support roll-out and ongoing implementation</li> <li>• Information Services and Technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive feedback from training sessions</li> <li>• Employees feel ownership of work</li> <li>• Templates enable community to consume easy-to-understand communication</li> </ul>	30 June 2021

Initiative	Lead	Measure of success	Timeframe
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community complaints relating to works being undertaken and queries are reduced</li> <li>Reduction in co-dependency on the Communications and Marketing team</li> </ul>	
Include communication and branding as part of employee inductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human Resources</li> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of employees inducted</li> <li>Feedback from induction sessions that content was useful</li> <li>Inducted employees become advocates of Council's brand</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Streamline Council's existing Media and Social Media Policies into one policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> <li>Mayor and Councillors</li> <li>Governance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One policy provides clarity and governance around external communication and reduces confusion for users</li> </ul>	30 June 2021

## Work with the media

We will continue to build stronger working relationships with journalists and the media so we can inform residents about our services, decisions vision and plans.

Initiative	Lead	Measure of success	Timeframe
Develop annual calendar of opportunities each financial year based on operational plan and other key projects identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing with input from other portfolios and business units</li> <li>People and Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinated effort that is proactive and reduces reactive communications</li> <li>Increased number of media and communication opportunities realised</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Improve relationships with local, metropolitan and industry media by responding to media enquiries (and providing interviews or comments) in a timely manner as well as through regular meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Employees to supply information for media enquiries in a timely manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved relationships and reporting from media</li> <li>Better ownership from business units</li> </ul>	Ongoing

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Measure of success</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Provide media releases and background information to local and metropolitan media outlets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in media coverage as a direct result of targeted media approach</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Arrange media briefing sessions for significant projects with key spokespeople and at relevant sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved relationships and subject content knowledge</li> <li>• Improved reporting from media.</li> <li>• Improved understanding of region by media and community</li> <li>• Positive coverage as a result of comprehensive, transparent briefings</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Source photographs and introduce video and audio 'grabs' for broadcast media to access more easily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced relationships with media and community while also providing Council with a 'voice'</li> </ul>	Ongoing

## Improve our external communication

We will continue to improve our communications with clear and consistent messaging and by building a strong visual identity, and making best use of communication channels available that consider the whole community.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Measure of success</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Streamline social media accounts to avoid duplication, confusion for audiences and additional work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Messaging is targeted to an engaged social media audience.</li> <li>• Scheduled posts can free up time for other work</li> </ul>	31 January 2021
Develop social media/digital content plan including analysis of sponsored content to reach our communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased engagement on social media channels</li> <li>• Social media is incorporated into strategic communication planning</li> </ul>	30 June 2021
Develop and implement a regular e-newsletter that focuses on Council's core programs and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More informed audiences through consistent messaging across a range of platforms</li> <li>• Number of subscribers</li> </ul>	>12 months

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Measure of success</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analytics data confirms level of engagement</li> </ul>	
Investigate alternative communication opportunities to increase reach to members of the community who may not access online materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More informed audiences through consistent messaging across a range of platforms</li> <li>Positive anecdotal feedback</li> </ul>	31 December 2021
Investigate implementation of a news micro-site to enable the delivery of more engaging content such as video and feature stories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis completed and decision made</li> </ul>	31 December 2022
Increase use of live-streaming and video content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of views</li> <li>Audiences feel more engaged with Council and have a greater understanding</li> <li>Analytics data confirms level of engagement</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Review current brand to determine if the current branding reflects the region and Council's corporate vision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> <li>Councillors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Branding reflects the region</li> <li>Branding reflects a modern and contemporary Council that is customer-focused</li> <li>Councillors, employees and community feel positive and proud of the brand</li> </ul>	31 December 2020
Review advertising and advertorial opportunities in local newspapers to keep the community informed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More informed audiences through consistent messaging across a range of platforms</li> </ul>	31 December 2021
Review Council's website to ensure it meets accessibility requirements and can be navigated easily.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Customer Service Teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anecdotal feedback</li> <li>All members of the community can access important information about Council, regardless of ability</li> </ul>	30 September 2021

## Inform our employees, inform our community

We will increase employees' knowledge and understanding of Council initiatives so they can help provide accurate information on behalf of the Council.

Initiative	Lead	Measure of success	Timeframe
Distribute all media releases to employees at the same time as the media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees feel more engaged and share a consistent message in their networks.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Review and refresh current internal newsletters and bulletins to ensure communication is meaningful and helps build a shared understanding of the work Council is doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> <li>Management Leadership Team</li> <li>Employees to contribute content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees provide feedback they have better access to information and stronger understanding of work Council is doing for community</li> <li>Analytics from online newsletters</li> </ul>	31 January 2021
Implement internal briefings to share outcomes from Council meetings with employees in a timely manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> <li>Management Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees are better informed and understand the decisions being made that impact their day-to-day work.</li> <li>Improved relationships between executive, management and officer level employees</li> </ul>	30 June 2021
Implement Key Message Boards to help frontline leaders communicate important issues with employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frontline leaders feel more informed and better equipped to have conversations with their team.</li> </ul>	30 June 2021
Continue to improve intranet content as a key communication channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Key contacts within portfolios</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees indicate they are better informed and can access information easily</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Roll out roadshows for major Council initiatives to help employees understand what is happening within other portfolios.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant portfolios</li> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees feel better engaged and understand key Council initiatives</li> <li>Employees have the opportunity to ask questions and engage in two-way dialogue</li> </ul>	Ongoing

## Support our elected members

We will support our elected members by keeping them informed about strategic and operational initiatives so they can provide accurate information on behalf of the Council.

Initiative	Lead	Measure of success	Timeframe
Distribute media releases to Councillors at same time as media with heads up before distribution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Councillors provide feedback that they feel well informed on Council issues to share with their constituents using various channels.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Implement initiatives to keep Councillors better informed on operational and strategic issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Councillors provide feedback that they feel well informed on Council issues to share with their constituents using various channels.</li> </ul>	Ongoing

## Build trust and reputation

We will be responsive to the community's opinions by managing and addressing issues as they arise.

Initiative	Lead	Measure of success	Timeframe
Create a 'Get the facts' page on website for corrections and media statements to appear on when media articles do not represent Council fairly or accurately, and ensure these are also posted on Council's social media accounts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Other business units to provide input as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community sees Council's side of the story</li> <li>Community believes Council is open and transparent.</li> </ul>	30 April 2021
Develop a Corporate Crisis Communication Plan with a range of scenarios relevant to Council's operations, key messages and mitigating actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crises are managed rapidly and without too much reputational damage</li> </ul>	30 September 2021
Update Council's Disaster Communication Plan to reflect learnings from recent events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> <li>Chair Local Disaster Management Group</li> <li>Local Disaster Coordinator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community is well informed during disasters impacting the region</li> <li>Council's communication are congruent with lead agencies of the relevant disaster/crisis</li> </ul>	31 March 2021

Initiative	Lead	Measure of success	Timeframe
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator Disaster Management</li> </ul>		
Develop and implement a program where members of the community and businesses act as advocates for Council and the Scenic Rim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> <li>Management Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased reach in the community</li> <li>Authentic sources of truth for Council, separate to the organisation.</li> </ul>	30 June 2022

## Develop a community engagement framework

We will endorse a community engagement framework to build trust and confidence in the organisation, ensuring we work to best practice standards and engage in two-way conversations by genuinely listening to the community.

Initiative	Lead	Measure of success	Timeframe
Develop a Community Engagement Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Engagement Framework is endorsed by Executive Leadership Team, and adopted by Council</li> </ul>	28 February 2021
Develop a comprehensive plan for implementing and embedding Community Engagement within the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> <li>Management Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culture of community engagement is started to be embedded with employees</li> <li>Number of employees trained in using framework</li> </ul>	30 June 2021
Establish a community engagement hub (such as Bang the Table) to be the community's 'front door' to decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing Team</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anecdotal feedback indicates community feels more engaged in Council decision making</li> </ul>	30 June 2021
Investigate possibility of employing a dedicated Community Engagement expert to support better engagement with our communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications and Marketing Team</li> <li>Executive Leadership Team</li> <li>People and Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis completed and operational decision made.</li> <li>If decision is yes - greater engagement with the community</li> </ul>	30 June 2021

## Supporting background information

### Customer Centricity Project research (2019)

Council undertook significant customer research in 2019, which provides valuable insights for media and communication purposes. 'Customers' included elected members, employees of all levels and across different functions, residents, community groups, investors, developers, and businesses. The research methods used were vast and provided a good overview of customer sentiment.

Key themes from the *Customer Centricity Project Update - Sharing the research outcomes and progress towards a customer-centric organisation* report that are relevant to Council's media and communication activities include:

<p><b>Positive reflections</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council is doing some things very well, such as events, tourism, parks, and facilities for families.</li> <li>• The customer service team is regarded positively across all customer groups, within the castle concept.</li> <li>• Council is perceived to be delivering many services to a satisfactory standard.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Negative reflections</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little two-way engagement</li> <li>• Customers, including employees as internal customers, are kept from information.</li> <li>• Employees feel they have limited understanding or knowledge of what each other is doing, which leads to disconnection.</li> <li>• The organisation and Council officers are perceived to be not accessible or 'for the people'.</li> <li>• Particular processes and systems have been dehumanised with little direct, emotive connection between employees and customers (medieval castle).</li> <li>• Want to focus on an open castle system and not just quick temporary band-aid solutions.</li> <li>• Local businesses have concerns about the future economic sustainability of the region's towns.</li> <li>• Businesses believe that Council prevents companies from growing, improving, or developing their sites.</li> <li>• Council is fragmented and difficult to deal with (systems, processes, teams and resources)</li> <li>• Distrust of Council and its motives towards local businesses and developers, influenced by lack of transparency, accessibility and past history.</li> <li>• Council is reactive, particularly with commercial and developmental issues.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mixed reflections</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some believe Council is doing an excellent job while others believe it depends on the department you deal with.</li> <li>• Inconsistency in the level of services across the organisation.</li> <li>• Customers seek a partnership-style relationship rather than an 'us and them' culture.</li> </ul>

The top three issues that residents would like addressed were:

- Value from rates/fees
- Maintenance/roads
- Listening/communication/relationships



## External communication channel survey (2020)

In August 2020, residents and ratepayers were invited (via newspaper ads, social media and on Council's website) to participate in a survey to provide information on the channels they use to receive communication.

Key findings:

- Telephone calling, emailing, and looking up Council's website were the top three modes of communication chosen by respondents when communicating with Council, with more than 63% of respondents choosing to call Council via telephone.
- Council's website is the predominant platform that respondents choose to find out information about Council's business and services. Council's social media channels (excluding Twitter) and local newspapers were also among the top selected to seek information from.
- Respondents are most interested in hearing more about planning and development initiatives, regional and community events, and outcomes from Council's meetings.
- Scenic Rim Regional Council's Facebook page is the platform most followed by respondents.
- More than 53% of respondents would like the ability to subscribe to an email newsletter.
- When asked if there are 'any initiatives or communication channels that you have experienced that you would like to see introduced by Scenic Rim Regional Council? If so, what?' Several of the same responses were to have newsletter drops in mailboxes for those residents who are not tech-savvy. However, the general consensus in responses was to have more transparency in how the Council chooses to communicate.
- *The Beaudesert Times* is the most read newspaper among respondents, with the *Beaudesert Bulletin* and *The Fassifern Guardian* coming in second and third.
- 76% of respondents read their news online. Most of the responses said they read the ABC, *The Guardian*, and *The Courier Mail* online.
- 612 ABC Brisbane was the most popular radio station among respondents. But it is important to note, out of all the radio stations listed, more than 61.5% said they listened to other stations not listed.
- Channel 7 is favoured TV station for respondents.

Council would like to thank all the people in the community who took the time to provide their responses to the survey.