

28<sup>th</sup> April 2011

## Councillor briefing on Community Engagement Policy will be open to the public

Council resolved on the 19<sup>th</sup> April to hold a councillor briefing on the future direction of its draft Community Engagement Policy and that the public would be invited to attend and participate in that session.

The briefing will take place on the 31<sup>st</sup> May and will focus on the background to the policy, its aims and objectives and when the different levels of community engagement would apply.

A draft Engagement Strategy was prepared for community consultation in 2010, and a community workshop was held in late 2010 where citizens and Councillors identified improvements for Council's consideration.

A revised draft Community Engagement Policy was placed on public exhibition from 1 to 28 February, 2011 and this again attracted some comments and suggestions from the community.

General Manager Russ Pigg said "A council's charter set out in the Local Government Act expects council to consult widely with and facilitate involvement of the public on a range of issues including the services it provides and the development, improvement and coordination of local government in the area."

"In recent years, council has moved from the traditional advertisements in local papers to greater community engagement through its website and we will be introducing more interaction via social media such as Facebook soon." Mr Pigg said.

"The councillor briefing, with community participation is another major step forward to ensure the final Policy creates a win-win situation for both council and the community. We need to be working together to achieve the best outcomes and best decisions for the benefit of all residents." Mr Pigg said.

The Councillor's briefing in May will provide a further opportunity for this important pillar of Council's engagement with the community, as part of its leadership responsibilities, to be explored and defined.

The briefing will be held in Council's reception room on Tuesday the 31<sup>st</sup> May commencing at 4pm.

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