

Transparent Governance

Community Reference Group

Minutes



Date	24 October 2019	Time	6 - 8pm
Location	Lockyer Room, Ipswich Civic Centre		
List of Council Attendees (P = Present, A = Apology, NA = Not in attendance)			
P	Greg Chemello – Interim Administrator (Convenor)		
P	Nick Hughes – Acting Interim Administrator’s Executive Officer		
P	Andrew Knight – General Manager, Corporate Services (Facilitator)		
A	Sean Madigan – General Manager, Coordination & Performance (Facilitator)		
P	Wade Wilson – Manager, Executive Services		
P	Lynn Mathers - Digital Engagement and Systems Officer		
P	Dianne Nikora – Integrity and Complaints Manager		
P	Community Engagement Team Member (Melanie Rippon)		
Community Reference Group Attendees (P = Present, A = Apology, NA = Not in attendance)			
P	Megan Buxton	P	Steve Mallet
P	Jade Connor	P	Trevor Reynolds
P	Martin Corkery	P	Cecil Maddox
P	Susan Dunne	P	Adrianne Robinson
P	James Fazl	P	Christine Ryan
P	Fuad Paul Forghani	P	Geoffrey Yarham
P	John Fraser	A	Mira Yates
P	Robert Gould	NA	David Harris
P	Marie Kavanagh	NA	Kate den Otter
P	Warren Keel		

Agenda Item		Participants	Minutes
1	Convenor's Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country	Greg Chemello – Interim Administrator	<p>Greg Chemello (Interim Administrator) welcomed members to and delivered an Acknowledgement of Country.</p> <p>Electoral boundaries review: Overview of divisional boundaries final decision was provided (4 multi-member divisions, 8 Councillors (2 per division), 1 Mayor). Final decision reflects the draft proposal.</p> <p>Local laws: Following an extensive engagement process, amendments to a suite of local laws were adopted by council resolution on Monday 28 October, 2019. These amendments will commence Friday 1 November, 2019.</p>

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2	Group check-in <i>What are the ingredients of good community engagement?</i>	Facilitator Community Reference Group members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How feedback is used and heard; • Feedback is used to build strategy; • Ability to see/understand information that previously wasn't there; • Important to disclose level of engagement; • Core of good engagement is honesty. Honest about level of stakeholder input and influence; • A positive approach is needed. Good engagement should allow people to feel safe; • Honesty in communication; • The town (Ipswich) should develop to the benefit of all (the whole community); • People need to feel heard; • More specific questions and creative feedback options to tailor for a diverse community; • ICC's website – ability to now easily locate information (different from before period of interim administration); • Being able to communicate <u>and</u> engage well; • Locally relevant to communities; • Ongoing feedback – this is the most important part; • Acknowledge that engagement means different things to different people; • Enhance the culture of engagement with authorities; • Genuine, respectful approach; • Specific questions; document the process and outcomes; think outside the box; Diversity and inclusion; Different forums and mediums; • People want to be heard; • Representative. Close the loop; • Now there is more disclosure than before (within Council); • Need objective, positive people. Need the 'right' people; • Should be genuine; • Don't over promise. Genuine consideration of feedback; • Diverse views. Hear different points of view;

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture of ICC still needs to change (regarding engagement practice). <p>The image shows a collection of handwritten notes on pink sticky notes, titled "What are the ingredients of good community engagement?". The notes are arranged in a grid-like fashion and contain the following text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How feedback is used. Feedback is heard. Use feedback to build strategy Ability to see info that previously wasn't there. Disclose level of engagement Core of good engagement is honesty Positive approach Making people feel safe. Honesty in communication Town should develop to the benefit of all 'People need to feel heard' 'More specific ex's' 'Creative feedback options' Website - ability now to easily locate info. Being able to communicate & engage well. Locally relevant to communities Ongoing feedback 'most important part'

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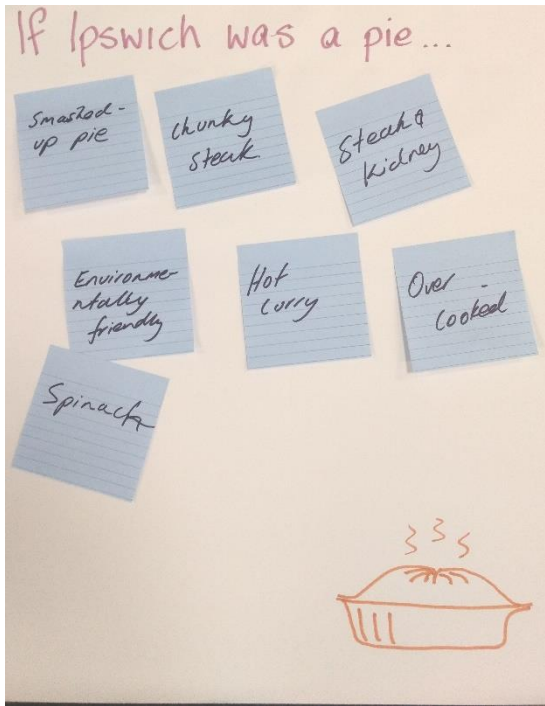
Agenda Item		Participants	Minutes
			<p><u>What are the ingredients of good community engagement?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Means different things to different people Enhance culture of engagement with authorities Genuine respectful approach 1 Specific & 2 Document 3 Think outside box 4 Diversity incl. AGS1 5 Different times 'People want to be heard.' Engage Representative Close the loop Now more disclosure than previously Need objective positive people Need the 'right people' Should be genuine. 1 Not to over promise 2 Genuine consideration of feedback. Diverse views Hear different points of view. Culture of all as an org still needs to change.
3	Standing Agenda Item: 'Declaration of potential or actual conflicts of interest'	Facilitator Community Reference Group members	Intention to run for elected representation was disclosed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> James Fazl; and Megan Buxton (currently considering running).
4	Actions from last meeting: - Follow-up survey for Councillor Integrity Policy Package	Facilitator Community Reference Group members Wade Wilson – Manager, Executive Services	<p>Wade Wilson thanked members for their feedback, which was gained in the August meeting and via an online survey (emailed to all members after the August meeting).</p> <p>The feedback was reviewed and some minor amendments were made to the package based on the feedback. Most of the feedback affirmed what the draft package included.</p> <p>The integrity package was adopted at the last Council meeting (October).</p>

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5	Shape Your Ipswich - Council's new community engagement portal (Transformation Project 15)	<p>Facilitator</p> <p>Community Reference Group members</p> <p>Lynn Mathers – Digital Engagement and Systems Officer</p>	<p>Lynn Mathers ran a short introductory engagement session, with the lead question of <i>If Ipswich was a pie.....what type of pie would it be?</i> Members responded with the following phrases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smashed-up pie • Chunky steak • Steak and kidney • Environmentally friendly / spinach • Hot curry • Over-cooked  <p>Members were encouraged to explain why they chose their phrases. This was linked back to some fundamental concepts in community engagement – it is different things to different people; to understand what sentiment / feedback there is, we need to start a two-way conversation with the community; engagement can be done in many ways e.g. observational engagement can be used for designing play spaces for children and young people (with consent provided by parents/carers)</p>

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			<p>A presentation of the Shape Your Ipswich platform (www.shapeyouripswich.com.au) was provided. A general site tour was provided, including the closed group functionality which has been established for all five community reference groups.</p> <p>Discussion and clarification on use and functionality of the platform occurred. The following issues and questions were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen names in sign up process – these are visible to others so be mindful that you will be identifiable to others when commenting either in a closed group or on the public facing areas of the platform. • Q: How are comments used in project / program development? A: This depends on the type of engagement process the responsible project officer is running. The process is conveyed by 'Timeline' bar on the side of every project. Comments and recommendations are available to project officers going forward via the platform's reporting functionality. • The moderation policy is an important aspect. Council does not want to censor debate however the moderation policy will be implemented when necessary e.g. swearing, defaming others. • The platform is a mechanism to help close the loop with community and CRG members. Information will generally stay up on the platform until the project has been completed. The specific length of time is determined on a case-by-case basis. • The web link for the specific page stays the same as a project progresses. • Ipswich Youth Advisory Council (IYAC) – we need better media for promotion of this opportunity for young people.
6	Community Complaints Management Framework (Transformation Project 6)	<p>Facilitator</p> <p>Community reference group Members</p>	<p>Dianne Nikora introduced and described the new Complaints Management Framework. The main points were disclosed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new model will have full accountability and transparency. • Detailed records and reporting will be documented and produced. • There will be a new Complaints Management Unit (CMU) which

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		Dianne Nikora – Integrity and Complaints Manager	<p>will function as a central triage point for all complaints / feedback coming into the organisation. The CMU will also be custodians of the new centralised complaints database.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process will broadly follow the following escalation model: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First internal review of complaint at operational level 2. Second internal review by officer more senior than original decision maker at operational level 3. Escalation up to CMU for review by Customer Liaison Officer 4. Escalation up to Integrity and Complaints Manager for final internal review. 5. Customer can elect for an external review by relevant authority/body. The framework is based on a strong legislative and best-practice research. Models from QLD and NSW LGAs have been considered. There has been training from the Ombudsman's office provided to Council staff. Training will continue to ensure continued best practice in decision making. Supports TP 13 – Return to Elected Representation. Councillor's will not be solving complaints themselves anymore – everything will be lodged and handled through the CMU. This will allow for procedural fairness for all complainants. It will go live on 18th November, accompanied by communications and promotion. Internal performance monitoring (KPIs) are being developed internally so Council knows what's working and what isn't. The CMU Manager is also responsible for reviewing and quality assuring responses and, any outcomes provided. The process is also a way for officers to re-build confidence in decision making as there is now a clear process in place. <p>Comments and questions raised by CRG members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the past there was a lack of procedural fairness. The centralised CMU will help to change this but this change unlikely to happen quickly in Ipswich. It is hard to change this

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			<p>culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and empowerment still needed in the community. • Q: How can a resident complain? A: There is a 24/7 number into Council where complaints can be lodged. There is a dedicated email address for the CMU that is available for customers and during office hours customers can speak to a customer liaison officer if required. Complaints can also be lodged on line or via post. Council is mindful of ensuring accessibility to customers to allow for ease in the process of making a complaint. Comment: There needs to be a number of different complaints avenues to cater for diversity in the community. • A good process is important to help build trust. The new framework allows for consistency in Council's approach to complaint management. • Q: Can complaints be about officers and/or processes? A: Complaints made by customers about staff behaviour and or processes within Council will be receipted by the CMU and handled in accordance with internal processes. With regard to staff lodging a grievance, the Grievance Framework is still in development and will be available soon. • Previously there was no recourse/accountability regarding poor services and resolutions. This has improved with the period of Interim Administration and the adoption of the Complaints Management Framework. There has been a soft roll out of the CMU and results are evident of a reduction in escalation for internal reviews of decisions made to date. • A discussion occurred on the similarities and differences between and 'compliant' and 'request for service'. Recognising language used by customers, the term 'complaints' is being used to cover both aspects. Internal processes allow for request for service to be managed separately from complaints/all feedback. Complaints are now being viewed more as opportunities for business improvement, and culture change at Council.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues and staff should be documented in reports. There needs to be a level of oversight to ensure staff are appropriately handling requests according to a fair process. Comment: Pleased that the Ombudsman is involved. Q: Will Council be publishing the details of investigations? A: The level that this may be done is still being considered. There is no decision yet. Complaint stats are currently included in annual report. Comment: Recommendation from member to publish the investigation reports as a form of good community engagement. Q: Will this new process reduce the Right to Information applications from the community? A: Hopefully, in the long term. Responses will provide statement of reasons to identify how decisions were made – more transparency behind decision making - which will allow for a greater understanding by the customer of decisions made. Q: Can you attach a file for a complaint? A: Yes, via the centralised email channel. Q: What have we put in place to identify loopholes in the new system? Shortcuts may be identified and exploited (comment noted). Q: How will you work with the Office of the Independent Assessor? A: This is built into the new complaints management framework via the assessment matrix. The State Government has also changed thresholds for Councillor misconduct through the Councillor Conduct Tribunal.
7	Action Items	Facilitator Community reference group Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide follow-up information to TG CRG members regarding the employee Grievance framework/procedure, as it becomes available.

Meeting closed: 8pm

Date of next meeting: 11 December 2019