



KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
your council. your community

Your community, ***your say***

A vibrant diversity of voices



Community Engagement Report

Your community, your say

Phase 2: Consultation – Public Exhibition
17 April – 17 May 2024

Acknowledgement of Country

Kiama Municipal Council acknowledges the Wodi Wodi people on Dharawal country as the traditional custodians of the land on which our Municipality is located. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. We are committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to our community.



Table of contents

Introduction	4
Who we engaged during Phase 2 (Public Exhibition).....	4
What we heard – Summary	5
What we heard – Detailed consultation insights	6
Community Pop-ups.....	6
Youth Engagement	10
Industry Forum	12
Jamberoo Valley Ratepayers and Residents Association	13
Disability Inclusion Conversations	13
Submissions	15
Other significant additions or amendments	20
Thank you	20
Appendix 1: Summary of engagement activities	21

Introduction

This report presents the results of Phase 2, the Public Exhibition of the draft Community Engagement Strategy (the draft Strategy). Insights from this phase have been used to refine and finalise the Strategy to provide a practical framework for Council to engage with diverse voices across our community, businesses, and other stakeholders in a meaningful and measurable way.

During Phase 1, the Co-design of the Strategy, Council engaged with stakeholders through workshops, pop-ups, and surveys, capturing more than 1,000 interactions. This inclusive approach included staff, Councillors and committees, as well as gathering community feedback through direct interactions with community members in various locations and events throughout our Municipality. Representatives of community groups in the Kiama area, including the Precincts and Associations and Kiama High School students, were also engaged. The Phase 1 Engagement Summary Report is available on our [Your Say](#) page.

Who we engaged during Phase 2 (Public Exhibition):

The following engagement activities were undertaken to receive feedback on the draft Strategy during the Public Exhibition.

Community and staff consultation

- The draft Strategy was placed on public exhibition for 28 days from 17 April – 17 May 2024, which was promoted through the usual website and social media channels, as well as emailed to 125+ “Your community, your say” survey participants.
- Staff were updated through the staff newsletter and an intranet news article.
- Promotional posters were distributed across Council buildings in the Municipality, and local community groups were engaged to help spread the word by providing them with posters/flyers to distribute.
- Community pop-ups across four locations in our Municipality during Phase 2 reached around 200 community members, with in-depth engagement with about 60 individuals through conversation and participation in interactive engagement activities. (This builds on the 1,000+ community members and stakeholders reached in Phase 1, co-design).
- Presented and discussed the draft Strategy with Jamberoo Valley Ratepayers & Residents Association.
- Held several disability Inclusion focussed conversations that build on the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (2023-27) consultation findings.
- Observed the effectiveness of interactive youth engagement activities across the libraries, primarily school and high school, reaching around 450 young people.
- Thirteen (13) formal submissions were received.

The planned consultation with the First Nations reference group was unfortunately not able to be undertaken during the exhibition period. Consultation is planned as part of the Strategy review which will occur post-Local Government election (by December 2024).

[See Appendix 1](#) for a summary of all engagement activities undertaken.

What we heard – summary

Staff told us:

- Provide clarity on roles and responsibilities for all stages of community engagement.
- Build staff capacity and provide practical tools.
- Important to consider how much time it takes to effectively plan, design, implement and report on community engagement.
- Continuously evaluate community engagement activities to ensure the program effectively meets community needs.
- Limited resources and budget are significant barriers to overcome.

Community told us:

- Meet community where they are to reach a greater diversity of voices.
- Clearly communicate the purpose of engagement and the extent of community influence on decisions.
- Community pop-ups with relevant staff are a popular, informal and effective way for the community to interact with Council staff.
- Close the loop through follow-up communications that prompt and are tailored to specific audiences, detailing progress, outcomes, and fulfilment of commitments.
- Collaborate with youth and other underrepresented groups to design and implement engagement activities that are relevant and accessible to them.

How people hear from Council:

Multiple mediums, with a preference for:

- Local newspapers (88%)
- Regular e-newsletter (47%)
- Rates notice (41%)
- Council's Facebook page (36%)
- Brochures in letterbox (29%).

Provide Council with input and feedback:

Multiple mediums, with a preference for:

- Filling out a survey (68%),
- Community Pop-ups (65%)
- Writing a letter or email (61%),
- Phoning us (37%)
- Quick online polls (31%)



Your community, your say
A vibrant diversity of voices

Have your say on our **Draft Community Engagement Strategy** on exhibition until Friday 17 May.

Scan here to have your say!

KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

What we heard - detailed consultation insights

Community pop-ups

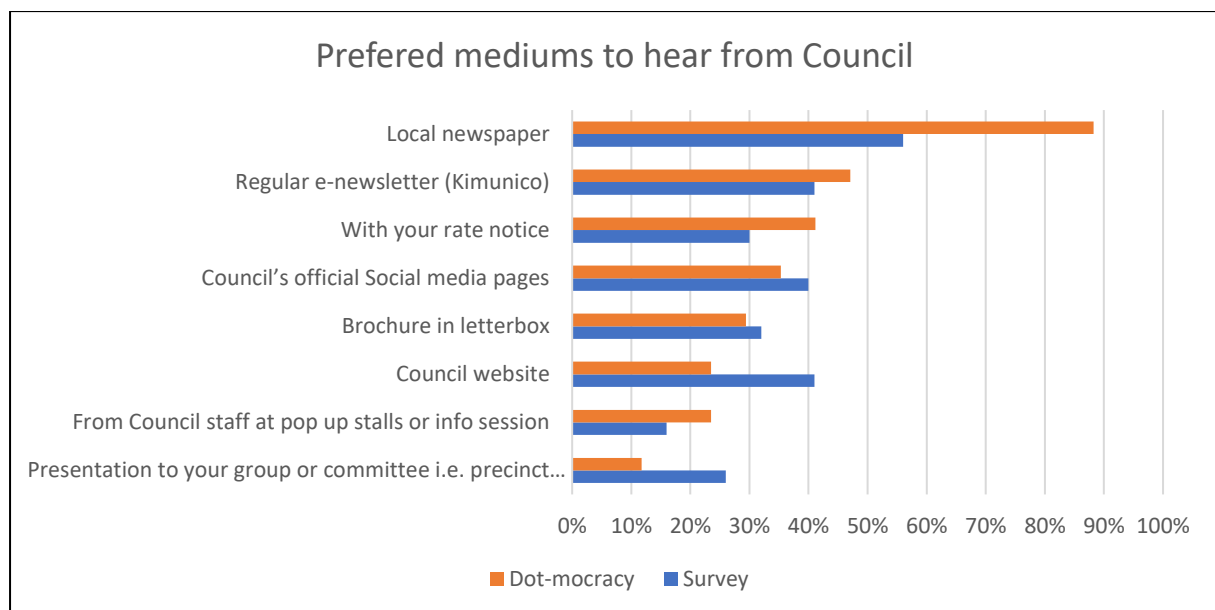
The community pop-ups were held at various locations, including Kiama Leisure Centre, Kiama Farmers Market, Gerringong Library, and Kiama Library. These events were strategically timed to maximise participation, such as during after-school swimming lessons at the Leisure Centre and early learning activities at the Kiama Library. These pop-ups build on the work Council had already done with nine (10) Community Pop-ups in Phase 1: Co-design of Strategy development, where we reached 1,000+ individuals.

The community responded positively to seeing Council staff actively engaging on the draft Strategy alongside the Growth and Housing Strategy. Overall, the Phase 2 pop-ups reached around 200 additional community members, including in-depth engagement with more than 60 individuals through conversations and participation in engagement activities. These activities included interactive sticky notes and dot-mocracy exercises, allowing participants to consider different aspects of the draft Strategy and provide immediate input. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to make a formal submission.



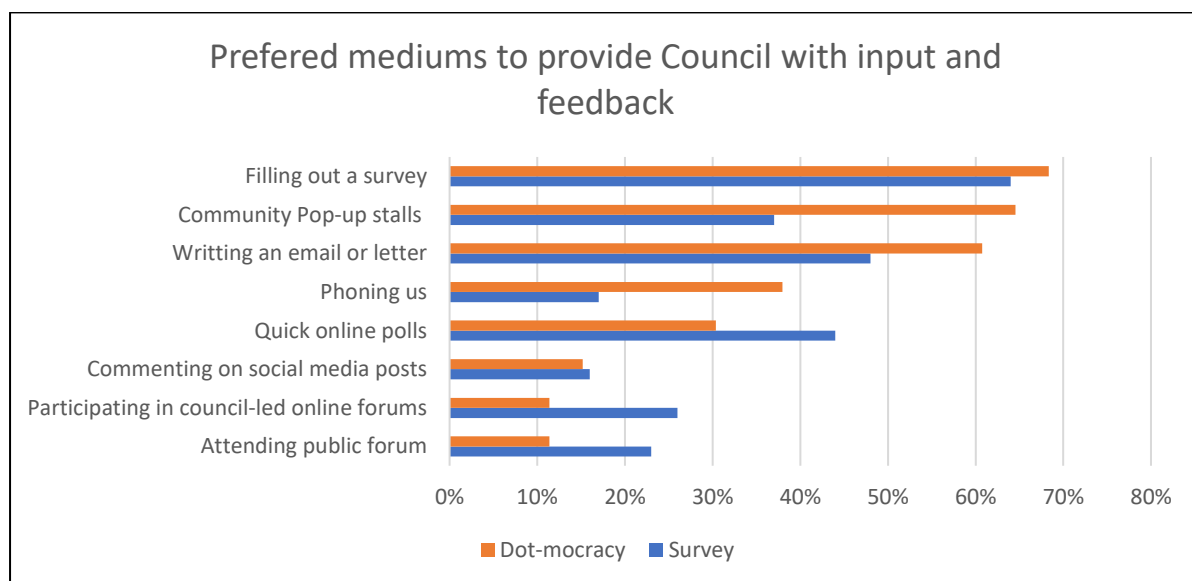
Interactive engagement activities:

Each pop-up included two dot-mocracy activities that asked participants to vote on their preferred mediums regarding “How would you like to hear from Council” and “How would you like to provide input and Feedback to Council”.



The results of the dot-mocracy activity on “How community like to hear from Council” mirrored the hierarchy of preferred communication mediums from the Phase 1 survey. Local newspapers were highly favoured at 88%, followed by Council’s regular e-newsletter, Kimunico, at 47%, and the rates notice at 41%. A notable difference between the dot-mocracy and survey results was the community's indication that they would not regularly visit Council’s website without prompts, such as those provided via social media or the e-newsletter.

Community feedback emphasised a preference for receiving information through multiple mediums, indicating that calls for action need to be seen multiple times and across different platforms for them to act. Council is responsive to all media requests, as per our Media Policy and subsequently receives good coverage in local newspapers. Additionally, community-administered Facebook pages are common sources of local news and information. Although these pages are not administered by Council, and staff have limited influence over the content, Council however maintains good relationships with the administrators of most community pages, and information is regularly shared through these channels.



The outcomes of the dot-mocracy activity on “preferred mediums for providing input and feedback to Council” showed a slight adjustment to the hierarchy from the Phase 1 survey results. While filling out a survey remains the most popular medium at 68%, community pop-ups emerged as the second preferred medium at 65%, likely influenced by the positive experiences of those who participated in the pop-ups. This was followed closely by writing an email or letter at 61%.

Like the feedback on receiving information, community input emphasised the need to engage through a combination of face-to-face, online and paper-based opportunities to make participation accessible to all. Additionally, there was a desire for engagement tools that showcased others' opinions to broaden the community's perspective on the diversity of viewpoints and understanding of why decisions are made.

Observations

These were obtained from testing the pop-ups in different locations, the conversations held, and the interactive sticky note activity responses collected during the pop-ups:

- Community pop-ups are an effective way to meet the community where they are and engage with a wide range of community members who don't usually connect with Council. Many participants indicated they found the pop-ups approachable and a unique opportunity to engage with Council.

- Successfully delivering the pop-ups in conjunction with the Growth and Housing Strategy highlighted the possibility for consolidating engagement efforts on multiple topics.
- Meaningful engagement through pop-ups requires the presence of relevant staff, preferably senior officials or subject-matter experts (SMEs). Connecting the community with SMEs helps rebuild trust with Council and provides relevant staff with valuable insights into community needs, concerns, and aspirations, leading to more sustainable outcomes.
- Attending sporting activities, such as swimming, rugby, football or Oz tag training, is an effective way to reach families with primary-school age children. This was evidenced by a spike in survey responses from that demographic after hosting a pop-up at the Kiama Leisure Centre. Using pre-loaded iPads for surveys or online polls can further enhance engagement with this stakeholder segment.
- Community members emphasised the importance of timely information about upcoming pop-ups and spreading events across different townships to ensure a diversity of perspectives on local issues and differing voices are captured.
- Many community members raised non-engagement-related concerns or enquiries during the pop-ups, highlighting that this process could be an opportunity to capture and address additional Council-related issues. Common topics included grass mowing, parking, maintenance, safety issues, and resource distribution.
- The community's engagement experience is closely tied to the community's perception of Council's responsiveness. While this perception is sometimes influenced by information shared on Facebook groups, community pages, and local gossip, providing confirmation of receipt of communication, expected waiting times, next steps, and keeping the community informed throughout the process is crucial. Response templates will be developed as part of the engagement toolkit to ensure the community is kept in the loop.
- Some community members suggested that Councillors join the pop-ups to provide a direct and approachable opportunity to communicate with elected officials.
- The timing of pop-ups should align with Council meetings to provide the community with a sufficient timeframe for providing input. A duration of two hours for each pop-up was considered ideal by participants and staff hosting.

Potential location for future pop-ups:

Township	Location	Day	Time	Demographics
All (other than Kiama)	Outside local supermarkets	Any day	Anytime	Mix
Gerringong	Gerringong Markets	3rd Saturday of the month	8:30am - 1:30pm	Mix, including tourists/visitors
Gerringong	Library	timed with early learning activity	10am - 12am	Families with infants and young children + mix
Gerringong	Dementia Dancing, Uniting Age Care Facility	First Friday of each month	10am -12pm	People with a disability and carer
Gerringong	Mayflower, Uniting Age Care Facility	During the week	Between 9 am - 5pm	Older persons, people with a disability and carer
Jamberoo	Jamberoo Football Club	Training days or Saturdays for games (April – September)		Families with young children
Jamberoo	Jamberoo Markets	Last Sunday of every month	8am - 3pm	Mix, including tourists/visitors
Jamberoo	Pool	From Dec	3pm - 5pm	TBC
Kiama	Farmers Market	Wednesdays	2pm -4pm	Families with young children, retirees + Mix
Kiama	Woolworths	Any day	Anytime	Mix
Kiama	Topshop	During the week	Anytime	Mix
Kiama	Leisure Centre	During the week	3pm - 5pm	Families with young children
Kiama	Main street / Old Fire Station Gallery	During the week	9am - 5pm	Mix, including tourists/visitors
Kiama	Library	timed with early learning activity	9:30am - 11:30am	Families with infants and young children + mix
Kiama	Blue Haven Bonaira and Terralong	During the week	9am - 5pm	Retirees, older persons, people with a disability and carers
Kiama	Rugby League, Kiama Showgrounds	Training days or Saturdays for games (April – September)	Afternoon/ Morning	Families with school-age children
Kiama	AFL, Bonaira Oval	Training days or Sundays for games (April – September)	Afternoon/ Morning	Families with school-age children s
Kiama	Community Transport	During the week	9am - 5pm	Older persons, people with a disability and carer
Kiama	Alchemy Chorus Uniting Church	Every Thursday	10am – 12pm	People with a disability and carer
Kiama Downs	Oz tag, Gainsborough Oval	Tuesday / Wednesday afternoons (October – March)	4pm - 6pm	Families with school-age children

Note: Due to budget limitations, Council staff will generally avoid scheduling pop-ups on Saturdays and Sundays when alternative options are available during the week.

Youth Engagement:

Young people are the future of our region, and it is important that they have the opportunity to shape that future. Building on the learnings from the youth engagement focus group undertaken with the SRC representative student from Kiama High School during Phase 1, the following engagement activities are considered from an observational and reflective lens to identify an effective engagement approach to encourage youth participation. It was decided not to combine the engagements to avoid potential confusion for the young participants.

Pre-school-aged children

Council staff from the Strategic Planning, Community Engagement and Library teams installed an interactive activity station at both Gerringong and Kiama Libraries from 16 April to 31 May to engage children in thoughts around growth and housing. The interactive set-up included cardboard houses that could be decorated and drawing sheets prompting children to draw or write about what makes our community special (beyond their family and pets) and what would make this town an amazing place to live in 20 years.



Although the constructive feedback from the children was limited, the activity successfully engaged young children and sparked conversation amongst the parents and caregivers who were, through the activity, informed of the project and encouraged to complete the available survey.

Primary school

Council staff from the Strategic Planning, Community Engagement and Community Hubs teams facilitated an interactive workshop to engage primary school-aged youth, specifically about 90 students from Years 5 and 6 at St Peter & Paul Catholic Primary School. The workshop began with an overview of the role of local government and an introduction to town planning. Following this, the students participated in two hands-on activities designed to gather their insights and ideas.



The first activity provided aerial maps of suburb and village areas, asking, 'What do you like about the Kiama LGA?'. The students were given three sticky notes to write down their thoughts and place them on the map. A total of 324 responses were received, demonstrating the effectiveness of this activity. It ensured that everyone could write down their thoughts anonymously, allowing quieter or more reserved students to share their ideas without the pressure of speaking in front of the group. Students also actively reflected on their peers' responses, stimulating further discussion.

The next activity focused on 'What does the Kiama LGA look like in the future?' and the students got to be town planners for a day. They were provided with a map of a new greenfield site and, together in small groups, designed a new town that included visual representations and written words. The students enjoyed the activity's creative process, allowing them to express their imagination and ideas while working together towards a common goal.

Overall, this interactive workshop was a great way to meet the young people where they are, empower students to take an active interest in their community's future and spark conversations beyond the school boundary.

"Thank you for this initiative. It started a great conversation at home with my son about our community. He felt really engaged." Parent of Participant, SS Peter & Paul Catholic Primary School, Kiama

High School

Council staff from the Strategic Planning, Community Engagement and Community Hubs teams, together with students from the Student Representative Council (SRC), facilitated 10 workshops over 2 days which were attended by about 200 students from Years 9, 10, 11 and 12, including a Specialist Support class.



The Workshop included a brief introduction to the role of Council, the aim and objectives of the engagement, an online game of Kahoots to warm up, 3 activities and some practical time at the end for building Lego houses. Using a diverse and interactive mix of learning, competitive, practical, and personal-based activities worked well, and effectively kept students interested and engaged. The involvement of SRC students in co-designing and co-facilitating the workshops significantly enhanced engagement levels, indicating a potential for their deeper involvement in future activities.

After delivering the first two workshops, adaptations were made to the run sheet based on feedback from the SRC students, highlighting the importance of agility in responding to participants' needs. The workshop with the Special Support class underscored the necessity for tailored activities, suggesting a need for co-design with teachers and support staff for future engagement. Post-workshop feedback from SRC students emphasised the importance of timely, youth-specific communications to close the engagement loop. This includes sending a thank you email, providing overviews of the next steps, sharing feedback summaries, and organising follow-up activities to review outcomes.



Looking ahead, there is strong interest from high school teachers, SRC students, and the broader student body in continued engagement activities. Sufficient time should be allocated within the engagement timeline to support the co-design and facilitation together with the SRC students. Additional methods such as vox-pop stands, explanatory videos, and combining face-to-face with online engagements can enrich the process. The collaboration across various departments proved beneficial, though clearer role delineation could improve future efforts.

*“Students liked feeling heard and giving feedback on big issues impacting the community,”
Gemma, Relieving Head Teacher Wellbeing*

*“Our youth are the future of our community, so being heard is something that is very important to today’s society. This program has really nurtured youth’s voice in a positive manner.” Thomas,
School Captain*

“It was an engaging program for the students to have their opinions on issues in the Kiama LGA heard, and suggest improvements that can be made to benefit young people,” Ruby, School Vice-Captain

“An amazing interactive experience, as it allowed the future of the community to have their say on relevant and future issues.” Jack, School Vice-Captain

Industry Forum

Council staff from the Strategic Planning, Economic Development and Community Engagement teams hosted an industry forum as part of the Growth and Housing on 12 April, attended by over 60 stakeholders, including builders, developers and building designers. The session included presentations from Council staff, Q&As and round table discussions. Feedback from the round table discussions on Community engagement and notification included:

- Matters interested in including DAs, Council strategies, DCPs etc.
- The preferred medium to receive information includes email, e-newsletter, and social media,
- The preferred medium to provide feedback includes submitting forms, surveys, and open discussions, i.e.: the industry forum.
- To not just listen to the squeaky wheel but hear from the silent majority.



Jamberoo Valley Ratepayers and Residents Association

Members of the Communication and Engagement team presented at the Jamberoo Valley Ratepayers and Residents Association meeting on 7 May, attended by about 20 community members. The team discussed the development of the draft Strategy and its key themes. This was followed by an interactive session inviting attendees to use Menti to respond to several prepared questions about the draft. Menti proved to be less ideal for the setting, which resulted in opening the floor to audience questions. Key themes included:

- The role of precincts and committees to be more formally recognised in the Strategy, particularly in their ability to provide place-based feedback on Council plans, projects, policies etc.
- Some concern over newer Council staff being unfamiliar with local issues and all locations in the municipality.
- A desire to know who does what at Council and how to contact them directly.
- Suggestions for face-to-face engagement included holding regular, widely promoted pop-ups at schools, especially during pickup times.
- 'Closing the loop' was another common theme, with participants expressing a desire for regular updates or outcomes from consultations and to be notified of results. This stresses the importance of timely action on survey results and consultation /exhibition submissions.

Recommendation: The draft Strategy to be updated with a link to the Committees Framework Policy, this policy provides an overview of how Council continues to support and value the contributions of the Precinct Groups and Community Associations and a roadmap for how Council committees operate with community members as committee members.

Disability Inclusion Consultation

Building on the community engagement undertaken to develop the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (2023-27), the Community Engagement Officer held extensive conversations with the Community Hubs team, Illawarra Advocacy, and the Dementia Inclusive Kiama Project. The objective was to cross-check and refine the actions included in the Strategy to support and encourage the participation of people with lived experience and/or experience in disability in decision-making processes.

These conversations highlighted the following points:

- It is crucial to disseminate information through established and trusted networks. Emphasising the importance of building on existing networks and collaborating with community champions can enhance outreach and engagement. Some suggestions include Illawarra Interagency, Dementia Inclusive Kiama Project, Carer Gateway, Meals on Wheels, and the Parkinson Network.
- Carers and support workers play a vital role in the daily lives of individuals with disabilities; therefore, they are key stakeholders in the participation of the disability community. This was further underscored by observations made during the engagement with the Special Support class at the local high school.
- It is essential to engage with the community in locations and settings where they feel most comfortable and supported. Some suggestions include Community Transport, Mayflower Uniting Church Age Care Facility, Blue Haven independent living and residential aged care, Alchemy Chorus at the Uniting Church in Kiama, and Dementia Café.

These insights have been instrumental in refining the Strategy actions related to disability inclusion and informing the Community Engagement Schedule to ensure it is inclusive and effective in meeting community members with experience of a disability and their carers where they are.

Submissions

A total of 13 submissions were received during the public exhibition period, which were in read and considered in full by the project team. Respondents were asked to:

- Reflect on the feedback received by Council during Phase 1 – co-design - of the Consultation (via the Phase 1 Community Engagement Report) and offer additional insights.
- Review the draft Strategy and identify any potential gaps or omissions.
- Contribute insights to scheduling face-to-face community engagement activities, such as community pop-ups.

Summary of submission comments	Themes	Response and recommended adjustments
<p>Four (4) submissions indicated that the draft Community Engagement Strategy lacks the opportunity for community members and groups to be recognised and heard and to be able to influence Council decisions. To resolve this, the following additions are called for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear definition of the "stakeholders" and who defines who a "stakeholder" is and who is not. • Community Stakeholders list (incl. community groups) that you intend to engage with, which is a requirement by the Office of Local Government (OLG). • A new formal connection between the Precincts with Councillors and staff to be identified in the Community Engagement Strategy. • Pre-defined pathways on how to access and organise access to Councillors and KMC to openly discuss community matters (rather than the community members "being informed" of what Council has decided). 	<p>Community Stakeholders definition and identification</p> <p>Precincts and associations</p> <p>Clear pathway to engage Councillors and staff</p>	<p>The different cross-sections of community have been identified through the table on p10 in the Strategy. The role of community is also included in the Roles & Responsibility table on p12-13. The Strategy highlights that community engagement is undertaken when there is an opportunity for impacted communities to influence specific actions, outcomes or decisions or when there is a legislative requirement to do so. The IAP2 matrix allows Council project teams to determine if engagement is required and the degree to which community will be engaged. Council will continue to support and value the contributions of the Precinct Groups and Community Associations, as outlined in Council's Committees Framework Policy, (Endorsed September 2023)</p> <p>Recommendation: The draft Strategy to be updated with an adjustment of the "Engaging with Community" to "Engaging community and other stakeholders" with a clear definition of how stakeholders are defined. The table to be updated with the inclusion of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community organisations and groups • Schools and education providers • Mayor and Councillors • Council staff <p>In addition, the Committees Framework Policy had been added under "Council Strategies and Action Plans" on p11</p>

<p>Five (5) submissions included suggestions for future face-to face opportunities in the engagement schedule. Overall, welcoming additional genuine face-to-face opportunities for Council staff and locals to have conversations and be kept in the loop.</p> <p>The following comments are community pop-up specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have relevant staff, ideally senior, to be present at the pop-up to be able to address any concerns and give confidence that the source is reliable. • Councillors to be present • To involve genuine two-way information between the Community and Council with the opportunity to make a submission, not just an information session with pamphlets. • Location suggestions: farmers markets, Kiama Leagues Club, Bowling Club, Council Halls, at Council and Libraries • Time and place variety to make it accessible to as many community members as possible e.g.: 6pm for those who work full time. • Timing to be aligned to council meetings or important consultation cut offs. <p>In addition, presentations at Precinct Groups and Associations were highlighted as another face-to-face opportunity to engage with community.</p>	<p>Relevant staff</p> <p>Meaningful engagement</p> <p>Meeting community where they are</p> <p>Alignment with Council Meeting schedule</p> <p>Precincts and Associations</p>	<p>All comments have been considered in developing the community pop-up schedule. In addition, this schedule will be reviewed and adjusted throughout the year to ensure it remains effective and continues to meet the community where they are.</p> <p>Recommendation: The draft Strategy is to be updated with a community engagement schedule in Appendix 2. The pop-ups are typically scheduled for the week following the Ordinary Council meeting, which occurs on the third Tuesday of the month. This timing allows community members to have their say on any new plans, policies, and strategies placed on public exhibition or opened for consultation.</p> <p>Councillors to be invited to attend pop-ups as appropriate</p>
<p>Three (3) submissions called for more transparent and genuine engagement and communication, with the urge to rebuild trust with the community.</p>	<p>Meaningful and transparent engagement,</p>	<p>Meaningful and transparent engagement is reflected in the objective and principles of the draft Strategy. Additionally, Council's commitment to close the loop on engagement activities more effectively will support rebuilding community trust.</p> <p>Recommendation: No amendment to the draft Strategy.</p>

<p>One submission raised concerns that surveys could be designed to elicit specific results and that replies might be 'hand-picked' to support certain views. Consequently, it calls for Council to consider polls as a consultation method, as their results are clear and straightforward.</p>	<p>Community engagement tools that provide feedback by design</p>	<p>The draft Strategy includes an action that commits to exploring digital engagement platforms to enhance accessibility and broaden community reach, including quick online polls.</p> <p>Recommendation: The draft Strategy action is to be updated to “Explore digital engagement platforms to enhance accessibility and broaden community reach, including online polls that provide feedback by design”.</p>
<p>One submission indicated not enough involvement of the community, direct voting on big Council decisions should be introduced.</p> <p>Not for every little decision, but for very big decisions, probably once or twice a year, like very large developments, sales of Council land (that belongs to the community!) Council should give the community the opportunity to directly vote pro or con. That way Council would truly see what the community wants</p>	<p>Empower (IAP2)</p>	<p>For Council to host a direct vote involving all community members has significant budget and resourcing implications. Councillors are the elected body responsible for voting on major council decisions. The draft CES highlights that community engagement is undertaken when there is an opportunity for impacted communities to influence specific actions, outcomes or decisions or when there is a legislative requirement. The IAP2 matrix allows Council project teams to determine if engagement is required and the degree to which stakeholders will be engaged. Community members are always welcome and encouraged to attend Council meetings and Public Access forums and/or watch via Livestream.</p> <p>Recommendation: No amendment to the draft Strategy.</p>
<p>One submission highlighted the need for an engagement Strategy to recognise the different needs of different locations.</p>	<p>Communities of place</p>	<p>The draft Strategy recognises communities of place in the table on P10-11. Also, the Community engagement schedule includes pop-ups across the municipality.</p> <p>Recommendation: No amendment to the draft Strategy.</p>
<p>One submission called to consider the inclusion of engagement on state and regional proposals to change legislation or regulations that have a significant impact on Kiama LGA within the Strategy. While there is usually a requirement for Council to formally respond to a proposal, and often Council submission is brought to the full Council for endorsement, there is often no broader publicity of the changes in the wider community.</p>	<p>Regional and state proposals and regulations</p>	<p>The draft Strategy recognises NSW and Federal government departments/agencies as key stakeholders in the table on P10. In addition, Council often acts as a conduit for information between the NS/Federal governments and the community, including opportunities for community to provide input.</p> <p>Recommendation: No amendment to the draft Strategy.</p>

<p>One submission highlighted a critical gap in Kiama Council's approach to community engagement and resource allocation. The Council has failed to effectively utilise the local knowledge and expertise available, particularly evident in the missed opportunities for dairy farmers under the Dairy Industry Recovery and Preparation Plan. This oversight has prevented the local dairy industry from benefiting from national funding initiatives to enhance resilience and preparedness. Calling for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening local networks by establishing a formal mechanism for regular communication and collaboration between the Council, local experts, and community leaders. • Developing and maintaining a dynamic database of local professionals and experts, especially those with significant ties to major projects and funding programs. These measures aim to ensure that the community fully benefits from relevant opportunities and resources. • Utilise Council engagement surveys to pinpoint the top two areas that community is most passionate about. Harness this insight to identify and mobilise local expertise, enhancing Council's personnel and funding capacity to successfully deliver on the outcomes of the engagement strategy. 	<p>Building on Local network</p> <p>Integrate local expertise</p>	<p>The draft Strategy references Council's commitment to build on existing community networks and Identify community champions to drive engagement with communities of place, identity, interest and need on p11.</p> <p>The development and maintenance of a public community expertise database are resource intensive and not currently within the Council's remit; however, as part of the Community Engagement toolkit, an extensive stakeholder overview will be developed to guide targeted engagements.</p> <p>Council will identify community priorities as part of the review of the Community Strategic Plan, which will take place within three months of the Local Government elections,</p> <p>Recommendation: No amendment to the draft Strategy</p>
<p>One submission highlighted that the draft Strategy does not detail the specific metrics or indicators that will be used to assess the effectiveness of the Community Engagement Strategy both during and after the exhibition period and requested clarity on how frequently these evaluations will be conducted to ensure the Strategy adapts and remains effective in meeting</p>	<p>Evaluation metrics</p>	<p>The Council will measure the Strategy's effectiveness against indicators linked to the actions on p8 in the draft strategy. This feeds into the operational plan action (5.2.3.1.1) proposed for 2024-25: Update and implement Council's Community Engagement Strategy following Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements and incorporating Community Participation Plan, in accordance with Local</p>

<p>community needs before its final endorsement by the Council.</p>		<p>Government Act and NSW Department of Planning (DPE) requirements.</p> <p>In addition, each individual community engagement project will be evaluated against the guiding principles of the Strategy as part of the reporting phase (p19) of the engagement framework.</p> <p>Recommendation: The draft Strategy is to be updated with Appendix 1: Evaluation Metrics.</p>
<p>One submission highlighted that Council does not advertise in <i>The Bugle</i>, which is one local newspaper. Please reference to advertising in the 'local newspaper' as 'optional' or the limitations noted.</p>	<p>Local newspaper</p>	<p>Council currently focuses its advertising spend on the Illawarra Mercury, which is a local newspaper.</p> <p>Council's Communications Officers continue to provide media releases and Council statements as well as supply answers to questions from Bugle journalists, as per Council's Media Policy. This means the editorial in the paper continues to provide broad coverage of Council events, projects, strategies and engagements.</p> <p>Recommendation: No amendment to the draft Strategy.</p>
<p>One submission called to include a sentence or two somewhere in this section to note the role of the CPP alongside the CES and to Community Participation Plan (2019) to the list on p11.</p>	<p>Community Participation Plan</p>	<p>The draft Strategy will be updated accordingly.</p> <p>Recommendation: The draft Strategy is to be updated with an additional paragraph on the Community Participation Plan (CPP) on p4 and the CPP has been included in the "Strategies and Action Plan" list on p11.</p>
<p>One submission highlighted Council's Community Strategic Plan references Social Justice Principles that underpin our work. Community engagement is a huge part of this. Suggest providing a brief description of the principles of equity, participation, access and rights.</p>	<p>Social justice principles</p>	<p>The draft Strategy will be updated accordingly.</p> <p>Recommendation: The draft Strategy to be updated with the inclusion of social justice principles.</p>

<p>One submission highlighted (under strategies and action plans) community action plans should not be sitting separately to the list above and the wording to describe them is inaccurate. They currently read as secondary plans. Suggest having two subheadings, one for strategies and one for action plans.</p>	<p>Strategies and Action plans</p>	<p>The draft Strategy will be updated accordingly.</p> <p>Recommendation: the draft Strategy is to be updated with the inclusion of social justice principles.</p>
<p>One submission highlighted there to be relatively short time span to respond to the “Your community, your say” survey. Being launched between the resumption of schools & universities and close to Easter. Council should conduct community engagement at times of the year that are not close to holiday periods.</p>		<p>The survey was provided as part of the co-design process and, therefore, was not a legislative requirement with a specified timeline. Considering the survey was live for from 13 March to 2 April and received 250+ responses, representing roughly 1% of Kiama LGA’s population, it was a good result. Council during this co-design period also reached around 1,000 community members to make them aware of the Strategy being drafted and gather their thoughts and feedback.</p> <p>Recommendation: No amendment to the draft Strategy.</p>

Other significant additions or amendments

Section	Addition / Amendment	Reason
Strategic approach (p8-9)	Refined “Actions” section	Based on the learnings from engagement during Public Exhibition phase
Engaging with Community (p10-11)	Added “Decision-making” section	To highlight the other factors that play a role in Council decision-making
	Moved the Diversity, equity and inclusion actions into the “Actions” section p9	For consistency
4. Report (p19)	Rename “Report” to “Close the Loop”	To emphasise the importance of this phase
Appendix 1: Community Engagement Schedule (p20)	Added “Community Engagement Schedule”	Developed during the Public Exhibition phase

Thank you!

Thank you to those who joined us at the community pop-ups throughout the Municipality, participated in our workshops or provided us with a submission. Your input and feedback are invaluable in this process and ensure that the Strategy meets the needs and aspirations of our community and stakeholder.

Appendix 1: Summary of engagement activities

Date	Event	Reach	Engaged
Phase 1: consultation - Co-design			
29- Feb	Your community your say Project page	879	
29-Feb	Press release: "Growth and Community Engagement" on Council website, distributed to media lists.	959	
29-Feb	Social media schedule launched of 8 posts		
13 March	Launch of "your community, your say" survey – online and paper versions		242
13-Mar	Infrastructure & Liveability Committee – workshop		7
14-Mar	Flyers printed and handed out, and available at Council's Administration Centre and Libraries.	1000	
14-17 March	Council staff at Household Bulky Waste event engaging with community and handing out flyers	520	50
22-Mar	Community pop-ups at Kiama Downs - FoodWorks	100	20
22-Mar	Community pop-ups at Kiama Downs - IGA	30	10
22-Mar	Meeting with Precincts and Associations (KAPA)	40	9
23-Mar	Community pop-ups at Minnamurra	20	5
23-Mar	Community pop-ups at Jamberoo	50	20
23-Mar	Community pop-ups at Gerringong	200	25
23-Mar	Community pop-ups at Gerroa	2	
26-Mar	Sustainable Communities Committee – workshop		7
27-Mar	Community pop-ups at Farmers Market	50	25
2-Apr	Meeting with Kiama High School SRC students		16
12-Apr	Industry forum round table discussion		60
Phase 2: Consultation - Public Exhibition			
17-Apr	Press release "Draft Community Engagement Strategy placed on public exhibition" on Council website, distributed to media lists	256	
17-Apr	Publication Community engagement report: Phase 1	15	
18-Apr	Social media schedule launched of 6 posts		
30-Apr	Community pop-ups at Kiama Library	50	15
1-May	Observation of Primary School Engagement		90
2-May	Community pop-ups at Gerringong Library	20	8
2-May	Community pop-ups at Kiama Leisure Centre	55	10
7-May	JVRRRA - presentation and discussion		20
8-May	Community pop-ups at Kiama Farmers Market	40	10
9-May	Community pop-ups at Kiama Leisure Centre	40	10
15-May	Observation of Highschool School Engagement		200
31-May	Disability Inclusion conversations		3
	Total	3311	620