Naracoorte Lucindale Council

Better by Nature

Communication and
Engagement Strategy
2021 - 2026

Introduction

Naracoorte Lucindale Council plays an important role in shaping the future of the Naracoorte area. The Council provides a wide array of services to 8,500 people, living in a wide geographical spread of townships and communities over 4,500km2.

Good communication is a key part of Council's service delivery; helping to inform and empower our community as well as supporting the region to progress and flourish.

To achieve this, we will communicate with our community, not just to inform them, but to support the building of community capacity by increasing our community's knowledge on the themes and issues affecting people in their daily lives.

This Communication and Engagement Strategy has been prepared to support Council's commitment to open, transparent relationships and fosters a strong two-way communication between Council and our community.

Thank you to everyone who completed a survey and took the time to contribute to this process.

Mayor Vickery OAM

All photos used in this publication were entries in Council's "Better by Nature Community Wellbeing Short Film and Photo Competition 2020"
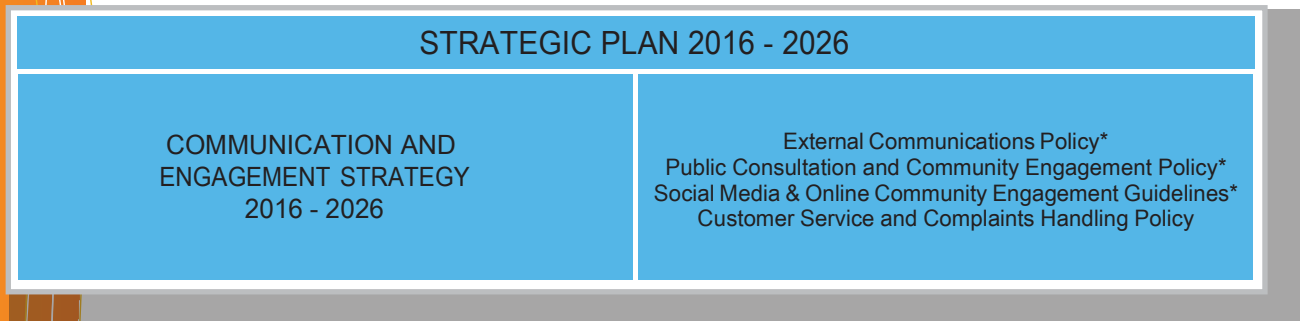
COVER PHOTO: Poppy Moyle-Read

PURPOSE

The Naracoorte Lucindale Council Communication and Engagement Strategy 2021-2026 will help guide Council's communication activities with internal and external audiences as well as set a foundation in the way in which Council engages with the community and other stakeholders by:

- Increasing community awareness
- Maximising community engagement
- Promoting the brand and reputation of Council
- Making best use of resources and tools available to Council
- Providing consistency across communications
- Supporting effective internal communications

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This Strategy supports the ongoing work of the Strategic Plan 2016-2026 to build a more prosperous community and demonstrate progressive leadership.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016 - 2026	
COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2016 - 2026	External Communications Policy* Public Consultation and Community Engagement Policy* Social Media & Online Community Engagement Guidelines* Customer Service and Complaints Handling Policy

*Policies are being reviewed as part of the Local Government Review Act 2021

DELIVERING OUR VISION

Naracoorte Lucindale Council will be the place in regional South Australia to live, work, do business, raise a family and retire. This is supported by a prosperous community with healthy landscapes, liveable neighbourhoods and a focus on harmony and culture.

To achieve this vision, Council needs to deliver outcomes for our community in a way that adds value and builds trust. As a Council we consider the following guiding principles when undertaking communications and engagement:

Transparent and Inclusive
Our community understands how decisions are made and can contribute to the process

Clear and Timely
People who live, work and visit the Naracoorte Lucindale area can find out what they need to know

Positive and Relevant
Our brand is strengthened by positive interactions with the community

Diverse and Flexible
We recognise our diverse and unique community through our communication methods

Co- operative and Supportive
We support, celebrate and recognise the things that matter to the community.

Demographic Profile

Council is responsible for delivering a wide range of services to communities and knowing the composition of our communities influences the choice of communication tools that might be used to inform the community about an issue or project. Our message and approach to individuals, groups, organisations will vary depending on the purpose of the communication and Council will carefully consider the approach when communicating and engaging with specific members of our community.

Residents	Ratepayers
Customers	Volunteers
Project Partners	Community Groups
Media	Businesses
Tourists	Federal, State and other Local Government
Regulatory Authorities	Suppliers
Contractors	Mayors and Elected Members
Staff	People with a lived experience of disability
People with limited literacy	Other minority groups
Cultural and linguistically diverse community members	First Nations People

Demographic Highlights

|		
Population 8,574 ERP 2020	Median Age 41	Couples with Children 27%
Lone Person Households 26%	Median Household Income $1,201	Overseas Born 19.6%
Language at home other than English 9%	Current University Attendance 1%	Obtained University Qualification 10%
Trade Certificate 22%	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander 1.6%	Blended Families 5.4%
Need for Assistance due to a disability 4.0%	Volunteering 35.8%	Providing unpaid care 10.4%
Employed in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing 26.1%	Managers, Labourers and Technicians in workforce 56.8%	Estimated Number of Homeless Persons at time of 2016 Census 50 People
Internet Access 80%	Older Couples without children 13%	Providing unpaid childcare 27.5%
Households with a mortgage 31%	Households Renting 27%	Males 52% Females 48%
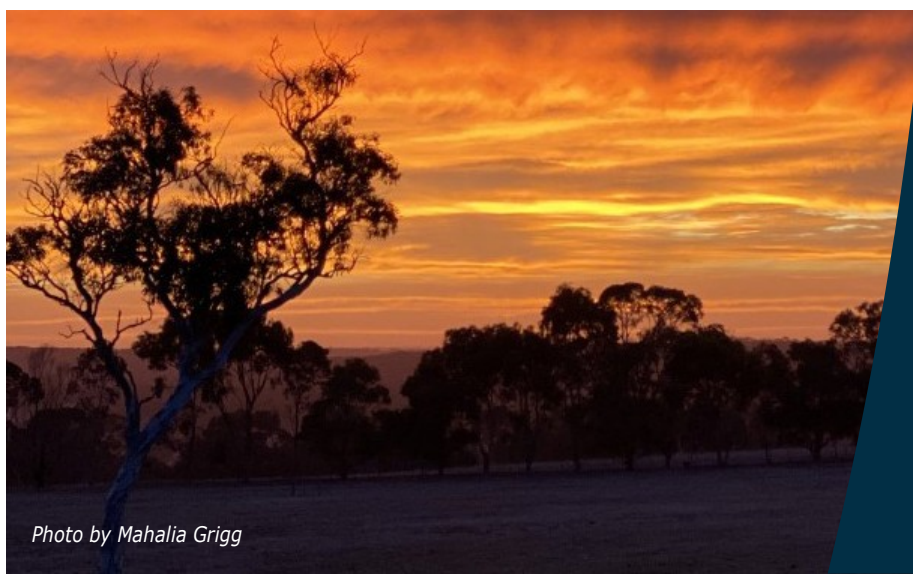
Photo by Mahalia Grigg

Photo by Amber Nisbett

AGE STRUCTURE - Service Age Groups

Limestone Coast Region Total persons (Usual residence)	2016			2011			
Service age group (years)	Number	%	Regional SA %	Number	%	Regional SA %	Change 2011 to 2016
Babies & pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	3,778	5.8	5.5	4,191	6.6	6.1	-413
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	6,015	9.3	8.6	5,987	9.5	8.9	+28
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	4,894	7.6	7.2	5,272	8.4	8.1	-378
Tertiary education and independence (18 to 24)	4,756	7.3	6.8	4,656	7.4	7.1	+100
Young workforce (25 to 34)	7,037	10.9	10.4	7,179	11.4	10.3	-142
Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	12,353	19.1	17.8	13,014	20.6	19.9	-661
Older workers and pre-retirees (50 to 59)	9,172	14.2	14.6	8,834	14.0	14.4	+338
Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	8,434	13.0	14.4	6,992	11.1	12.8	+1,442
Seniors (70 to 84)	6,674	10.3	12.1	5,660	9.0	10.3	+1,014
Elderly aged (85 and over)	1,663	2.6	2.7	1,293	2.0	2.3	+370
Total	64,776	100.0	100.0	63,078	100.0	100.0	+1,698

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2011 and 2016. Compiled and presented by .id (informed decisions).

Photo by Diana Vine

Engagement Model

Naracoorte Lucindale Council has adopted the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) model to guide its community engagement and communication with the community. IAP2 developed the spectrum to help groups define the role of those affected by a decision in the decision-making process.

Elected Members of Council retain their decision-making power, however an engagement model such as this is a powerful tool to inform the decision-making process of Council, ensuring final decisions are well-informed, equitable and sustainable.

When considering each level of engagement, Council considers factors such as: level of community interest, legislative requirements, time, resources and budget as well as the perceived impact of the decision on the community. There is always movement across the spectrum back and forth, depending on how the engagement is implemented.

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
GOAL	Provide balanced information in a timely manner	Obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives and decisions	Work with the public to ensure concerns and aspirations are understood and considered	Partner for each aspect of the decision making	Decision making is placed in the hands of the public
PROMISE	"We will keep you informed"	"We will listen to your concerns and aspirations and provide feedback on the decisions"	"We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are reflected in the decisions made"	"We will look to you for advice and innovation and incorporate your recommendations into the decisions as much as possible"	"We will implement your decision"
EXAMPLES	Newsletters Website Flyers	Public Survey Focus Group	Workshops World Cafes	Advisory Committees	Ballots

Photo by Meg Clothier

Community Survey Results

Council undertook a Community Communication and Engagement survey during May 2021. Approximately 50 respondents responded in hard copy and online:

• 56% of respondents were aged between 65 years and over

• 42% of respondents were aged between 35 – 65 years old

• Male (48%) and Female (52%) response ratio

• 88% live in Naracoorte

• 64% hear about Council events and activities in a newspaper, followed by Facebook (38%) and the quarterly Council newsletter (36%)

• 78% have not accessed the Your Say Naracoorte Lucindale platform

• 62% feel they have the opportunity to comment on Council projects, plans and strategies

• 70% have not taken part in any community consultation in the past 12 months

• The most popular areas most accessed on Council's website are (in order of preference) Community News and Information (54%); Latest News (32%) and Recycling and Waste (32%); Grant and Funding (26%)

• Facebook is the most popular social media tool (70%)

• Other popular social media usage was You Tube, Instagram, Twitter and What's App

• The topics people would like to most hear about are: Community News and Information (62%), Grants and Funding, Latest News and Recycling and Waste (38%), Art and Culture and Planning (30% equally)

• 70% of respondents have no interest in viewing livestreaming of Council Meetings

• 74% read Council's quarterly newsletter

• Most people felt somewhat informed or informed about Council Events and Activities (60% collectively)

• Most people were neutral or satisfied with how they received Council information (64% collectively)

What the Community Said...

"More open & frequent communication"
"More positive news stories"
"Refute inaccurate reporting in the media"
"Engage with the business community"
"Share success stories & celebrate"
"Increase accessibility to Elected Members"
"Coffee & Chat with the Mayor"
"NLC Facebook is good"
"Promote key agenda items & decisions from Council Meetings"
"Survey is a good start"
"Engage better with tourists & visitors"
"Introduce a more business focus in town promotion"
"Get to know the Council staff better"

"Learn more about the Works Team"
"Cross promote activities with other community platforms on social media"
"Easy read events calendar"
"Centralise news and events information"
"Review the website as it's messy"
"Keep rates down"
"Listen and return phone calls"
"Keep the community informed on the Sports Centre"
"Keep up the good work"
"Have a suggestion box"
"Community Notice Board"
"Be more upfront"

Staff Survey

19 staff participated out of a staffing cohort of 70.

The majority of responses were from the Engagement and Community Team and the Infrastructure and Services Team (37% response rate for each department).

• 52% received information via Council Agendas or Facebook

• 47% receive information via email

• 58% would like to receive information via staff meetings

• 47% would like to continue to receive information via email

• Staff want to hear most about Latest News, Community News and Information, Council Agendas and Minutes.

What the staff said...

"Greater cross departmental sharing"
"Pass on relevant information across departments"
"Clarity of message to the public"
"Tell interesting and relatable stories"
"Promote what we do well"
"Interactive engagement"
"Drop in session for community – on the couch"
"More staff meetings"
"Email community newsletters"
"Broader range of information for staff"
"Internal staff memo or newsletter"

"More information from Corporate Services"
"Regular depot meetings"
"Improve Council corporate documents"
"Update newsletter format"
"Keep things simple"
"Share good news stories"
"More information about projects shared"
"Less printed materials"

Photo by Nellie Bilney

Elected Member Survey

Four (4) Elected Members participated in the survey with similar questions being posed to that of staff. All 4 respondents currently obtain Council information via email and Council Agendas and Minutes, with workshops being the third avenue of obtaining information about Council.

All 4 respondents would like to continue to receive information through Agendas and Minutes, emails and Workshops but added in they would like to receive more information via Council's Website.

Elected Members would like to receive more information on a large variety of topics across the full spectrum of Council operations, with no particular area of interest being significantly more or less important than the other.

What the Elected Members Said...

"Elected Members and Staff should be readily available to offer commentary to the media"
"Contextualise communication by referencing background to decisions"
"Set the scene for information – why and how?"
"Make Elected Members names and contact details available on communications"
"Remind people we are their representatives"
"Happy with staff appointments and format being presented"
"In person interviews conducted and shared on You Tube and other social media"

How Council will reach out to our community and other stakeholders

- Advocacy
- Branding
- Corporate Publications
- Customer Service
- Direct mail
- Email Signatures
- Events
- Facebook
- Face to Face Engagement such as 'Coffee and Chat'
- Flags and Banners
- Internal communication tools
- Media Releases and interactions
- Newsletters
- Newspaper Advertising
- Other Social Media Platforms
- Printed promotional materials, posters, flyers and brochures
- Public meetings and information sessions
- Signage
- Speeches and Presentations
- Sponsorship and Grants
- Stationery and corporate templates and documents
- Stakeholder relationships
- Style Guide
- Uniforms
- Vehicle branding
- Website - naracoortelucindale.sa.gov.au
- Your Say Naracoorte Lucindale

Photo by Janet Haebich

Photo by Eddie Ottoson-Crossling

Objective 1 – Brand and Reputation

Develop a positive perception of Council in the community with good messaging and engaging visuals.

INITIATIVES	YEAR	MEASURE OF SUCCESS
Update corporate style guide	Year 1	• Updated Style Guide shared across the organisation
Develop conditions for use of Council logo for external stakeholders	Year 1	• Suite of usable templates for staff and Elected Members
Create FAQs for major projects to ensure information shared is accurate and easily understood	Year 1	• Diversity of images being used by staff in communication materials
Establish a Newsroom on Council's website for media resources - media releases, audio files, videos and photos	Year 2	• Increased engagement on social media
Look at opportunities for other social media platforms	Year 2	• Improvement in the quality and standard of publications and digital communications
Update and maintain organisational image library using professional and up-to-date images/visuals	Year 2	• Higher visibility of Council logo and brand
Review corporate templates with a focus on consistency, inclusivity and accessibility	Year 2	• Community begin to better understand Council approach
Introduce video and audio 'grabs' for broadcast media to access more easily and to be shared on Council social media and Newsroom	Year 3	• Authentic sources of truth are shared
Maintain an issues or opportunities register for major projects and initiatives	Ongoing	
Review Council's approach to graphic design and analyse an in-house v external consultant approach	Ongoing	
Develop an engagement and communications plan for key projects	Ongoing	
Review advertising and advertorial opportunities in local newspapers to keep the community informed	Ongoing	

Objective 2 - Residents and Ratepayers

Keeping the community engaged, informed and satisfied.

INITIATIVES	YEAR	MEASURE OF SUCCESS
Provide regular media releases and provide rapid response to media queries	Year 1	• Annual communications plan delivered
Better promote and utilise the 'Your Say' platform	Year 1	• Community Satisfaction Survey developed and responses indicate improvement
Implement a NRLE and Library/Town Hall Facebook Page	Year 1	• Number of 'Your Say' submissions and site visits
Review and refresh the current NLC Tourism Facebook Page	Year 1	• Number of website visits/queries
Review and improve website content and layout for a better user experience	Year 1	• Number of media releases
Provide timely updates on Council meetings and decisions through social media	Year 1	• Desktop review of the quality and coverage of media
Develop an Annual Communications Plan	Year 2	• Anecdotal feedback from the community
Use the Annual Report as a marketing tool and develop a communications plan to sit alongside the Annual Report to celebrate success	Year 2	• Consistent approach to social media
Review the Annual Budget Communications materials and approach	Year 2	• Success is celebrated
Establish an annual Community Feedback Survey	Year 2	• Culture of engagement is fostered
Investigate the option for an e- newsletter	Year 2	
Provide timely updates on Council meetings and decisions through social media	Ongoing	
Continually review communication methods to ensure they are cost effective and meet community needs	Ongoing	
Identify and connect with local community social media platforms	Ongoing	

Photo by Angela Willsmore

Photo by Poppy Moyle-Read

Objective 3 – Stakeholders

Strengthen partnerships and community involvement.

INITIATIVES	YEAR	MEASURE OF SUCCESS
Develop a Community Development Strategy	Year 1	• New Community Development Strategy delivered
Establish a Community Database	Year 1	• Increased participation rates in engagement
Review livestreaming or recording of Council Meetings	Year 1	• Community Satisfaction Survey Results show improvement
Establish a 'coffee and chat' opportunity in an informal setting with Elected Members and the Mayor	Year 2	• A STEM approach to projects
Develop opportunities to work with local schools in open space and other projects - placemaking	Year 2	• Increased media coverage
Work with community groups and key government stakeholders, including departments and politicians, to advocate for Council funding priorities	Ongoing	• Staff trained in IAP2 • Community Database created
Continue to explore ways to empower the community to participate in our decision-making processes	Ongoing	• Increased face to face interactions with the community
Establish community steering committees and working groups for key projects	Ongoing	• Greater transparency for the community in Council decision making
Consider the best type of engagement on major projects in line with the IAP2 approach	Ongoing	
Pursue more face to face engagement with the community	Ongoing	
Identify Council programs and activities that can be done with a partnership approach	Ongoing	

Objective 4 - Progress and Growth

Economic development, tourism, visitors, businesses.

INITIATIVES	YEAR	MEASURE OF SUCCESS
Develop a Naracoorte Lucindale Council Prospectus	Year 1	• Naracoorte Lucindale Prospectus created
Develop a Naracoorte Lucindale Council Tourism Destination and Marketing Plan	Year 2	• Census summary shared and reviewed
Review the events calendar approach & format	Year 2	• Tourism Plan and action list developed
Review new Census data (2021/2022)	Year 2	• Regional tourism actions and initiatives are supported
Develop a Business Database	Year 2	• Business Database established
Establish a Working Group to progress the Town Centre Rejuvenation Masterplan	Year 2	• Improved engagement with the business community
Establish a Business and Economic Development Page on the website to house resources and links	Year 2	• Online place for shared Business and Economic Development resources
Continued engagement with Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast	Ongoing	
Continued engagement with the local Business and Tourism Association	Ongoing	
Pursue funding opportunities to support local events	Ongoing	

Photo by Therese Oliver

Objective 5 – Elected Members + Staff

Shared information to ensure a high standard of service delivery across the organisation.

INITIATIVES	YEAR	MEASURE OF SUCCESS
Review and update policies relating to community engagement, communications and customer service	Year 1	• Timely policy review undertaken • Improved culture • Improved information sharing • Elected Members briefed on key issues and events • Profile of Elected Members and the Mayor increased • Staff are informed • Information is easily accessible • Better departmental alignment
Review any changes to legislation and approach as a result of the Local Government Review Act 2021	Year 1-2	
Review the Communications and Community Engagement aspect of the staff and Elected Member induction	Year 2	
Establish departmental meeting timetables	Year 2	
Investigate the opportunity for a staff and Elected Members intranet or portal	Year 2	
Develop a staff newsletter	Year 2	
Support opportunities for staff training in communications and engagement	Year 2	
Implement quarterly media and engagement reports for the Executive Team	Year 3	
Include all staff and Elected Members in media releases	Ongoing	

Photo by Rachael Bird