

Planning for community needs for the next four years

Council is seeking feedback on draft Community Development Strategy

If you are interested in the future of your community in the Tweed region, Council wants to hear from you.

Council's draft Community Development Strategy 2020 – 2024 is now on public exhibition and will help guide future service for the diverse communities in the Tweed, whether you live in one of the coastal communities, inland villages or in the Tweed Heads area.

The strategy has been developed from extensive research and community engagement. This included consultation with 250 individuals and 31 service providers via surveys, interviews, pop-up stalls, markets, network meetings, focus groups and a community forum. From this engagement, four focus areas were identified to guide and strengthen how Council works with the community.

Council's Acting Manager Community and Cultural Services, Joanne Watters said the strategy addresses matters such as the importance of access and inclusion, the need to address growing homelessness, maintaining community safety and resilience to climate change and the health and well-being of all residents.

"It also outlines the need to ensure additional support is available for more vulnerable residents and that there are adequate opportunities for everyone in the Tweed," Ms Watters said.

"Council uses a variety of approaches from planning, researching and awareness raising on matters that are important to the community through to managing community facilities, assisting not-for-profits to access grants and holding events and activities that promote inclusion such as Youth Week, International Day of Disability and Reconciliation Action Week.

"We also act as an advocate to other levels of government or agencies on topics outside of the direct role of Council," Ms Watters said.

Community development also seeks to ensure Council decision making and operations reflects the principles of equity and fairness.

"We work to achieve this by hosting four Advisory Committees that help to inform decision-making and by creating policies and plans that promote equity and fairness such as the Homelessness Policy, Reconciliation Action Plan, Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and Cultural Plan," Ms Watters said.

Council works collaboratively with the community as an active participant in over 40 community networks, forums and committees on an array of topics including homelessness, domestic violence, community halls and public art.

The Community Development team also works with other departments in Council to ensure their projects meet the needs of Tweed's diverse communities.

The strategy is part of Council's commitment to working toward safe, healthy and more inclusive communities and ensuring the voice of the community is reflected in the final strategy that will be implemented.

The strategy is on public exhibition until 30 January 2020 and Council welcomes community feedback. To make a submission or for more information, visit www.yoursaytweed.com.au/communitydevelopment

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