

# SHAPE YOUR IPSWICH

## COMMUNITY PANEL

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## GUIDELINES FOR THE IPSWICH COMMUNITY PANEL

► [Shapeyouripswich.com.au/communitypanel](https://Shapeyouripswich.com.au/communitypanel)



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## INTRODUCTION

Ipswich City Council (council) is committed to [meaningful engagement](#) with the community on topics affecting the city, and on local issues that significantly impact on the community. Community engagement is the foundation of good decision-making and is mutually beneficial to the community and council.

One of the ways that council engages with the Ipswich community is through the Ipswich Community Panel. The panel is an opportunity for community to shape the future of Ipswich by sharing their views and feedback on important matters with council.

## TERMINOLOGY

You may see the terms 'community panel' and 'community panels' used at different times.

The term 'community panel' is used to refer to the entire program. When engaging on particular topics

of interest, a number of sub-panels may be formed. Council will be guided by what people selected as

their interest areas in the registration process when forming sub-panels.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the panel is to provide a flexible, as needed, and inclusive engagement forum for community members to:

- discuss and contribute to strategic topics of community interest and impact

- contribute to council decision-making by sharing their views on topics of community interest and impact
- represent the collective views of their communities.

The focus of the engagement will be on the catalyst projects within iFuture.

## IFUTURE

iFuture is council's leading strategic plan. It will guide all decisions and actions that council undertakes over the next five years (2021 – 2026). It provides council

with a 20-year vision for Ipswich as well as a five-year roadmap. A summary of how the panels respond to iFuture is below.

<b>Theme</b>	Theme 2. Safe, Inclusive and Creative
<b>Outcome</b>	11. The community feels heard and engaged and we close the loop with our consultation
<b>Catalyst project</b>	We will be <b>inclusive in our engagement</b> with the community using technology where we can to increase accessibility for all including closed captions, translation services, Wi-Fi, programming for our events, and exhibitions that represents and celebrates the diversity of our history and cultures.

The panel will support delivery of most catalyst projects by providing a primary avenue for community engagement requirements.

## COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS

The *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)* (HRA) commenced operation in full on 1 January 2020. There are 23 human rights identified in the HRA. Council respects the inherent dignity and worth of all human beings and is [committed to promoting the objectives of the Act](#).

One of the main objectives of the HRA is to help promote a dialogue about the nature, meaning and scope of human rights.

Council sees the community panel program as an opportunity to incorporate human rights into the discussions it has with the community about its strategic direction and projects.

The community panel program strengthens council's commitment to Human Rights through promoting *freedom of expression* and *taking part in public life*, as they relate to strategic decision making by council.

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## MEMBERSHIP

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Community members register to join the panel through council's online community engagement platform [Shape Your Ipswich](#). During registration, members provide a limited range of personal information and select their preferred topics of interest. Members can opt-out of being on the panel by emailing [communityengagement@ipswich.qld.gov.au](mailto:communityengagement@ipswich.qld.gov.au).

Community members are eligible to become a member of the Community Panel if they are 16 years of age or older and meet at least one of the below criteria:

- live in Ipswich
- work in Ipswich
- study in Ipswich
- are a business owner in Ipswich
- are an Ipswich rate payer.

Community members are not eligible to become a member of the Community Panel if they are:

- under 16 years of age
- employed by Ipswich City Council
- an elected member of the City of Ipswich.

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## REPRESENTATIVENESS

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At times, council will seek members who represent the diversity of demographics, interests and knowledge within the community. This is to ensure engagement is, where possible, representative of the whole community.

Representativeness may include:

- age
- gender
- culture
- geography

When engagement opportunities are offered and council receives a large amount of interest from panel members, council will ensure that all participants are offered fair opportunity to take part through random selection.

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## MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

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- Panel members are responsible for attending engagement opportunities, providing constructive feedback and representing the views of their wider community networks.
- Members are not to utilise the panels to pursue individual interests or complaints.
- Panel members are expected to act respectfully to others in forums and be open to different perspectives and experiences.
- Members are to declare any actual or perceived conflict of interest with the Community Engagement Team before participating in engagement opportunities.

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## COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

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- Council is responsible for administering and facilitating engagement forums, closing-the-loop with community after engagement sessions and conducting an annual review of the program.
- Council staff will act respectfully towards all panel members and be open to different perspectives and experiences that different panel members bring.
- The contribution of panel members to the community will be acknowledged by council in its annual reporting.

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## ROLE OF COUNCILLORS

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Community engagement forums are an important place for Councillors to listen to and understand community sentiment.

This improves council's ability to make better decisions that are in the best interests of the community.

A schedule of engagement activities for the panels will be provided to Councillors prior to forums occurring. Councillors may attend engagement forums, at their discretion, to listen to discussions and answer questions directed towards them.

Councillors will not lead discussions or facilitate forums. However, there may be forums where a presentation by a Councillor/s may be valuable and required for the topic/s being discussed.

Reporting of the panel discussions will be provided to all Councillors after engagement has occurred.

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## PROCESS

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The engagement program will be guided by a calendar of engagement opportunities, mapped out by council in advance. The calendar will be available on Shape Your Ipswich. Members can also submit items for consideration via Shape Your Ipswich. Council will consider the suitability of these items as they relate to iFuture, and resources to deliver.

Members will be invited to attend engagement opportunities as and when needed (based on the calendar) and based on their selected topics of interest. Engagement types and mediums will vary and include a

mix of digital and/or face-to-face (when possible). Where large numbers of people select a particular topic of interest, digital engagement will be the preferred medium.

Council will provide at least two weeks' notice for engagement events and provide members with relevant information leading up to and/or during the engagement. After the engagement has been completed, council will 'close-the-loop' with participants, advising members how their feedback influenced or will influence decision making.

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## DECISION MAKING

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Feedback from panel members will provide council with a range of valuable information that will be considered in various decision making processes. This information will be used by council staff to inform council policies, strategies, programs and other plans that impact our

community. Feedback provided by panel members will be de-identified, collated and reported to council as part of reporting processes. Final decision-making authority is held by Elected Representatives.

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## CONTACT

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The program will be administered by council's Community Engagement Team.

The team is contactable via email, [communityengagement@ipswich.qld.gov.au](mailto:communityengagement@ipswich.qld.gov.au) or by phoning (07) 3810 6666.



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