



NEW YOUR SAY PLATFORM TO RENEW COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Dubbo Regional Council (DRC) is launching *Your Say*, a new community engagement platform which will be the centralised hub for all public participation and engagement activities.

Community members can use the new platform to engage, participate and provide feedback on a range of council's projects, plans, policies and studies including public exhibitions and be able to make formal submissions online.

The *Your Say* platform will be accessible 24/7 on all devices and features a translation option to convert the website into one of the top 10 languages spoken in the Dubbo region.

"Community input and feedback are critical to informed Council decision making. It is important that the Council continues to look at ways to improve our engagement practices and it's equally important that the community continues to participate and engage with Council," Mayor of

Dubbo Regional Council, Mathew Dickerson said.

“Delivering greater inclusivity and accessibility via this platform will help Council gain important insights from voices in the community we may not have been hearing from previously.”

Renewing and revitalising Council’s approach to community engagement was a key strategic priority set from Councillors to the organisation. This priority included improved access to increase community participation and increased transparency on how Council has considered community feedback as part of an informed decision making process.

“Council staff have really embraced the challenge to renew its approach and develop a more holistic community engagement strategy. Having access to more community insights through the new *Your Say* platform will help Councillors make more informed decisions.”

“It is very important that the community engages in the decision-making process on Council matters, this includes asking questions and providing valuable submissions to help shape what the future looks like for our region,” Cllr Dickerson said.

The draft 2023/24 budget, delivery and operational plan will be the first opportunity for the community to use the *Your Say* platform and provide feedback from early May.

The *Your Say* platform is just one aspect of Council’s revitalised strategy for community engagement. An independent review of communication and engagement services was undertaken in 2022 which helped inform the creation of a new engagement and customer insights team to lead

engagement activities and support projects across the organisation.

“Building the organisation’s internal capacity and capabilities were important steps to gain greater benefits from effective engagement and informed decision making from real-time insights,” DRC Chief Executive Officer, Murray Wood said.

Council is currently drafting a Community Engagement Strategy that will ensure an agreed framework for effective community consultation.

“The new *Your Say* platform reflects Council’s genuine desire to improve community engagement outcomes. It was a clear priority of the Council to improve community access to information, increase transparency in the overall decision making process and gain greater community insight from consultations. This platform provides a great opportunity to achieve that, in addition to other engagement pathways such as our committees, interest group meetings and targeted stakeholder sessions,” Mr Wood said.

The *Your Say* platform will provide user-friendly information on projects including timelines, frequently asked questions and the ability to engage in a conversation forum, surveys, and polls. Community members will be able to subscribe for notifications on areas of interest and follow projects that impact them for continued updates.

“This improved approach to community engagement will enable Council to more effectively report back to the community on how their engagement influenced a program, project or strategy.”

All residents who sign up to the *Your Say* platform before 31 May 2023 will go into the draw to win a \$500 My Dubbo Region gift card. In

addition to the *Your Say* platform, hard copies of any documents on public exhibition will continue to be available in Council's Customer Experience Centres in both Dubbo and Wellington.

To view and sign up to the new *Your Say* platform visit
<http://yoursay.dubbo.nsw.gov.au>

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