

National Local Government Community Development Conference

Just and Vibrant Communities



A Case Study: The Journey From the Strengths and Weaknesses of Community Participation and Consultation

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Maroochy
Shire Council



Maroochy Cares, Maroochy Dares

Because we care about the lifestyle of the residents of maroochy, we must dare to do things differently – by protecting our environment, seeking out opportunity, promoting diversity, developing our economic future our sense of community.

Objective 1 : Involving our Community

Maroochy
Shire Council



What Needed Improving?

- No Policy
- Lack of trained staff
- No Corporate Memory
Developed
- Information Giving Being Sold
as Consultation



Consultation Action Team

- Focused on encouraging debate in the organisation about the need to change
- From consultation as a necessary evil add-on to a culture where consultation/participation at the core of this organisation



Consultation Action Team

- Identified the following elements requiring action
 - Staff Training
 - Policy
 - Software
 - Community Charter



Consultation Action Team

- Consultants brought on to provide staff training
- Identified the need to develop framework to tie all elements together within Council Corporate system



VISION.....ELEMENTS

- Policy
- Register
- Training
- IAP2

Vision & elements do not connect operationally

Challenge was to build a bridge

What are the building blocks?



BUILDING BLOCKS

KEY CONCEPTS

Owned by:

Councillors & CEO

Managers

Project Staff

PROCESS

Engagement Mechanisms

Councillors & CEO

Management Steering
committee

Broad Reference Group
(45)

Super Group (3)



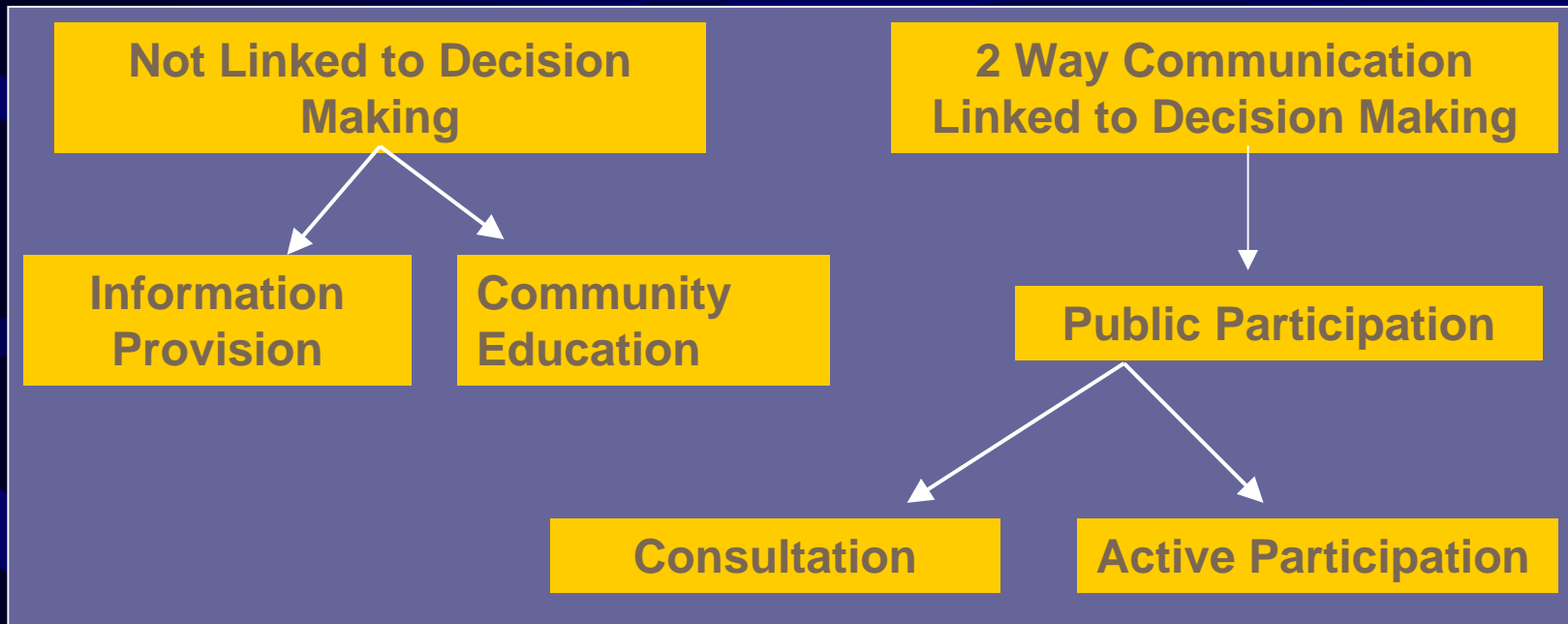
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



Key Learning

SPECTRUM OF INFLUENCE

“ If you are not looking for input to help you make a decision...don't call it public participation”



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS OBJECTIVES

These will guide the PP process



Key Learning

IF YOU DO NOT ENGAGE YOU CANNOT PLAN EFFECTIVELY

In the past – key emphasis was on planning with limited emphasis on engagement to inform planning

Early engagement ensures planning is effective

- **Assess risks & develop risk management strategies**
- **Identify issues & key stakeholders**
- **Determine appropriate communication & involvement methods**
- **Assess impacts & potential controversy**
- **Identify relevance to the community & what range of influence is appropriate**



Key Learning

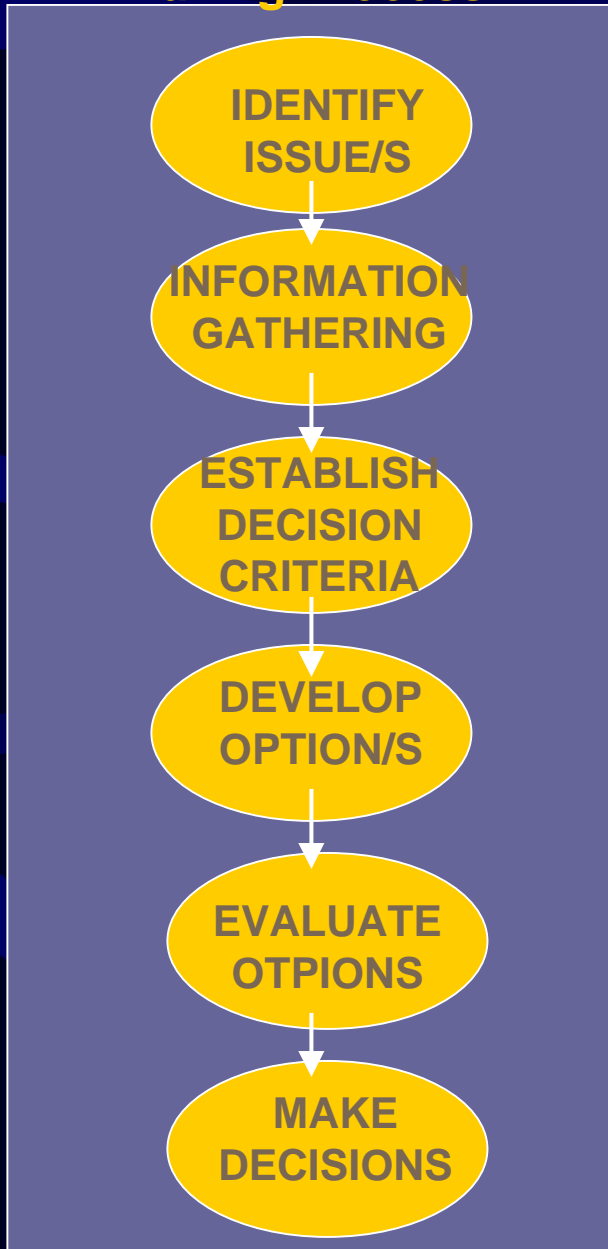
Experience has shown us that step 1 is the most important step, yet the step most often neglected.

A clearly defined process will provide sharp edged criteria for identifying who to involve, what techniques to use & how to use public input. Careful design & preparation is a key to successful participation. “ Don’t shortcut”, rewards will be in streamlining the implementation process & reducing unrealistic expectations.

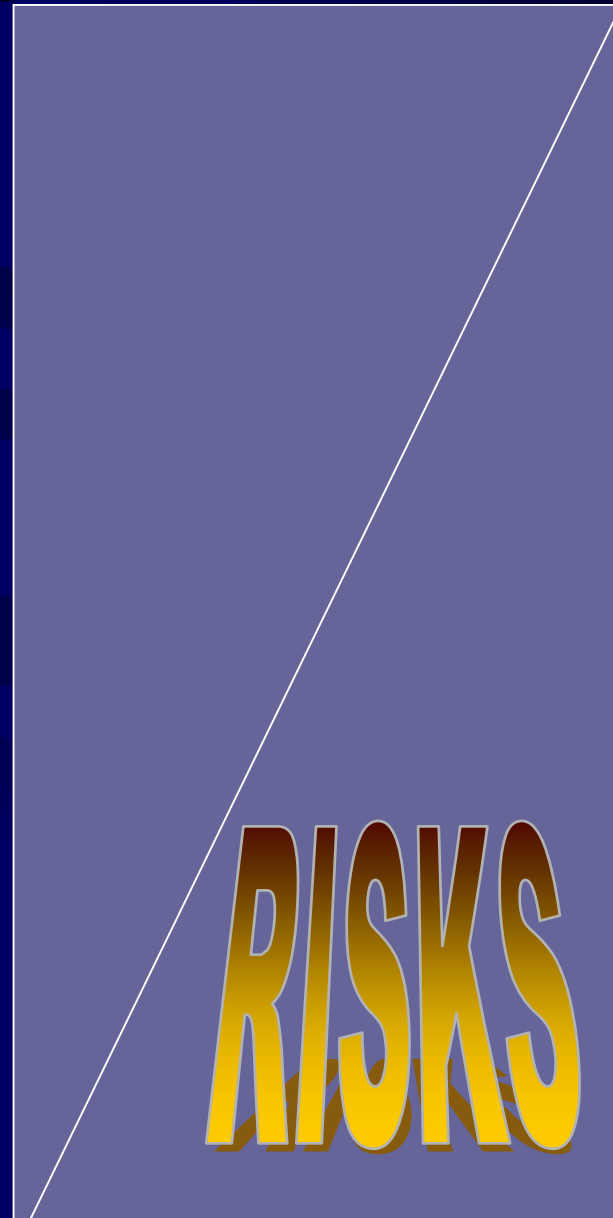
- **Complexity**
- **Different for every decision being consulted about**
- **Key elements**



Stages In A Decision Making Process



Level Of Risks



Key Learning

IT TAKES MORE THAN MONEY TO EFFECTIVELY CONSULT

- Attitude – confidence & willingness to engage
- Capacity – skill, knowledge & infrastructure
- Dollars – appropriate funds



Science & an Art