

Purpose

To report back on how feedback from the April 2025 Customer Panel interactive session has informed the development of Powerlink's draft Community Benefits and Social Value Framework.

Background

The intention of the session was to test whether the Framework's principles resonated, identify gaps, and understand expectations around fairness, governance, community agency, and cost transparency.

“The Customer Panel has been a vital sounding board in shaping our social performance and community investment approach. Their insights helped embed key principles in our strategies to ensure a collaborative and inclusive approach, grounded in local knowledge, and focused on delivering long-term, equitable outcomes for communities.”

~ Dana Boxall, General Manager Community and Delivery Services

The framework has since progressed through internal review and is now in early design development.

About the Framework

Our Community Benefits and Social Value Framework sets out how Powerlink designs and delivers community benefits and social value. Our objectives are to:

- enable community insights and participation to inform decision making
- foster community resilience and wellbeing to support sustainable communities
- support prosperity through economic participation and development.

The Framework identifies our areas of investment and activity that provide pathways to address both immediate needs and long-term legacy initiatives, helping to drive a balanced, prudent and impactful distribution of resources and opportunity.

Three areas of activity drive our approach to community benefits and value creation:

- community and social investment
- people and place-based initiatives
- economic participation and development.

We collaborate with stakeholders including Traditional Owners and First Nations groups, landholders and neighbours, communities, industry, proponents and government stakeholders to identify opportunities.

We will assess the outcomes of our activities against our objectives of participation, resilience, wellbeing and prosperity – crucial for supporting sustainable communities and strong economies

Outcomes

Powerlink's Community Benefits and Social Value Framework reflect the Customer Panel's feedback on clarity, fairness, local relevance and outcomes-focus.

1. Framework endorsed and clarified

A new Community Benefits and Social Value Framework has been approved, defining how Powerlink delivers benefits through direct payments, local economic participation, social value initiatives, and community-led investment.

2. Simple and defensible funding model

Powerlink has adopted an evidence-based approach that reflects the scale and impact of infrastructure.

3. Stronger governance and accountability

A new governance structure is being established, including a Senior Leadership Committee and a regional consultative approach to ensure transparent oversight, coordination and alignment with local priorities.

4. Clearer processes, categories and criteria

A supporting Community and Social Investment Specification defines investment categories (First Nations, local community, capacity and resilience, and legacy and regional), assessment criteria, financial delegations and delivery mechanisms (grants, partnerships, agreements).

5. Earlier engagement and funding

The framework provides for early investment during planning to demonstrate value sooner and strengthen social licence—addressing feedback about timing and the importance of early clarity.

What's next

- Design and develop collateral and material to communicate the framework, including supporting Q&As to update our externally facing website.
- Activate a Community Benefits and Social Value Pilot in Central Queensland.
- Design and deliver Regional Consultation Workshops.
- Continue to consider the opportunity for sustained benefits during the operations and maintenance phase of the project life cycle.

How we will keep you informed

We will maintain ongoing communication with the Powerlink Customer Panel through future meetings and ensure timely updates regarding specific consultation opportunities as they become available.

References

[Powerlink | 11 April 2025 Customer Panel Meeting Agenda and Summary \[pdf\]](#)

[Powerlink | 11 April 2025 Customer Panel Meeting Slides \[pdf\]](#)