

Environment and Heritage Committee

Operational Guidelines and Terms of Reference

Trim 7632#132

October 2013

WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL

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ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE - TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. OBJECTIVE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

To bring together interested community members to engage with Council on Environmental and Heritage issues affecting and within Wollondilly Shire.

2. LINKS TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2033

The Environment and Heritage Committee directly supports Wollondilly Community Strategic Plan 2033 as it enables Council to engage with its community by listening to and responding to their needs and concerns.

The Environment and Heritage Committee will consider issues and pursue actions and strategies which support Wollondilly Community Strategic Plan 2033.

The Environment and Heritage Committee will report on its outcomes and achievements annually, in particular identifying how the activities have contributed to the overall outcomes of Wollondilly Community Strategic Plan 2033.

3. KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

The Environment and Heritage Committee will pursue specific actions and strategies which relate and contribute to the following key focus areas:

- Assist and advise Council on the development and review of policies and activities relating to Environment and Heritage issues
- Look at Strategic advocacy options for Environment and Heritage issues
- Effective communication through partnerships and cooperation between local community Environment and Heritage groups and the wider community
- Promotion of Environment and Heritage initiatives and opportunities for the Wollondilly community and raise awareness of value of Environmental and Heritage issues within the local community

COUNCIL COMMITTEE/ADVISORY GROUP - OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

1. MEETING FREQUENCY, TIMES AND VENUE

The Environment and Heritage Committee is to meet Quarterly (TBC) from 6pm until 8pm on a Wednesday at Council's Administration Building, Picton.

More frequent meetings may be convened as the need arises.

Alternatively, there may be a need in certain circumstances to establish temporary sub-committees or working groups to pursue specific issues / projects etc.

2. MEMBERSHIP

The Environment and Heritage Committee is to have a minimum of 5 community members/industry representatives and a maximum of 10 community members.

Individuals are limited to membership of ONE committee/advisory group only.

3. MEMBERSHIP SELECTION AND TENURE

Community members/industry representatives are to be recruited through a public expression of interest process which will be advertised in the local media and on Council's website.

Selection will be based on set criteria which will be outlined as part of the nomination process.

Membership is to be dissolved/renewed in line with the electoral term of Council. The next dissolution and renewal process would occur after the Council election in 2016.

If a member resigns or is terminated, the position may be filled through a review of earlier Expressions of Interest or a call for new Expressions of Interest.

4. OTHER ATTENDEES

Designated Council officer(s) will attend the committee. The role of this officer/s is to coordinate the Committee/Advisory Group and to fulfil secretarial duties (see section 7 below).

Councillor attendance is optional. Committee/Advisory Groups can meet without a Councillor present.

Guest Speakers/Observers may be invited as required and as determined by the Committee/Advisory Group.

5. CHAIRPERSON

A staff member will act as Chairperson and is required for the quorum.

Councillors will not be eligible to be Chairperson unless specifically appointed by Council.

If the Chairperson is absent, another member of the Committee/Advisory Group will be asked to Chair the meeting.

Training will be available to Chairpersons as required.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

Members will be required to sign a declaration that they have read and understood Council's Code of Conduct and will act in accordance with these Operational Guidelines. This includes communication, representing the Committee/Advisory Group, attendance at relevant meetings / forums / conferences and speaking to the media.

Council's Code of Conduct and associated protocols are to be followed by members.

Members will be required to be respectful of the diverse opinions of others during discussions.

Members are not to use the meetings of the Committee/Advisory Group as a platform for personal accusations / defamatory statements or as an interrogation of Council business.

Ongoing membership will be dependent on members conducting themselves in a respectful, courteous and constructive manner.

Members will be responsible for their own travel to and from Committee/Advisory Group meetings and associated events and activities.

Members will be encouraged to contribute items of interest to the meeting agenda by contacting the Council Officer prior to the meeting. Items may also be raised in General Business.

Members will have no power or delegation to make decisions on behalf of Wollondilly Shire Council or allocate funds.

Members will be expected to actively participate in meetings, working parties (where relevant) and associated activities or events.

In the event that a member cannot attend a meeting, an apology or notification must be made to the Council Officer prior to the meeting.

Consecutive lack of attendance (3 meetings or more) without prior apology may result in the individual member's position being declared vacant by a motion of the Committee/Advisory Group.

7. ROLE OF THE COUNCIL OFFICER

Designated Council Officers are responsible for:

- Chairing the meeting.
- Coordinating the meeting arrangements including calendar notifications.
- Preparation and distribution of agendas, minutes and other reports and communications as required.
- Ensuring that meetings and activities of the Committee/Advisory Group are conducted in accordance with these operational guidelines and any associated protocols including Council's Code of Conduct.
- Identifying any decisions which may require further consideration by Council's Executive or the elected Council body.
- Acting as spokesperson for the committee/advisory group through the Mayor.

8. QUORUM & DECISION MAKING

Five (5) community members would need to be present to form a quorum. The staff member/Chairperson is required for the Quorum.

Councillor attendance is not a requirement to form a Quorum.

The Committee/Advisory Group will make recommendations by consensus. If this is not possible, recommendations may need to be voted upon and a majority vote will be needed for a decision to be recorded.

Council officers and Councillors do not have voting rights but would be able to contribute to consensus decision-making.

At times the Committee/Advisory Group may make decisions which require further consideration by Council's Executive or the elected Council body. Any such decisions will be identified by the Council officer and recorded in the minutes. The matter will then be referred for consideration by Executive and/or Council as required.

9. MINUTES, AGENDAS & REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Meeting date schedules for the coming year are to be placed in the Councillor newsletter, Council's corporate calendar and on Council's website.

Advice of upcoming meetings will be distributed to members and Councillors and posted on Council's webpage at least 10 days prior to the date of the next scheduled meeting (this advice will include an agenda and the previous meeting's minutes).

Minutes are to be taken by the Council officer and distributed to Committee/Advisory Group members, placed in the Councillor newsletter and on Council's website within 14 days of the meeting date.

An annual report will be provided to Council outlining the activities of the Committee/Advisory Group during the previous year and upcoming 12 month period. This should demonstrate clearly

how the work of the Committee/Advisory Group has contributed to the Community Strategic Plan 2033 outcomes. The annual report should also outline proposed priorities for the Committee/Advisory Group in the upcoming 12 months.

10. STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

These Operational Guidelines and Terms of Reference have been developed and tailored to meet the specific needs of the Environment and Heritage Committee. The goals and tasks for the remainder of the 4 year term of the committee are outlined in the Terms of Reference on page 3 of this document.

Standing agenda items for all working groups:

- Acknowledgement of Country
- Disclosure of interests
- Attendance & Apologies
- Confirmation of minutes
- Tasks/Actions
- General Business
- WHS

11. FINANCIAL

The operational costs of convening Committee/Advisory Groups will be met by Council's budget.

No sitting fees or out of pocket expenses will be paid to members of the Committees or Advisory Groups.