

**Terms of Reference  
Bushland and Natural Heritage  
Advisory Committee  
(including the Griffin Reserves  
Advisory Group)**

**September 2023**

# TERMS OF REFERENCE

## 1. BUSHLAND AND NATURAL HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## 2. PURPOSE

2.1 Advisory Committees are created for the sole purpose of providing independent, expert and impartial advice on the development and implementation of strategic priorities of Council.

2.2 This Committee will assist Council in achieving sustainability of bushland and natural heritage in Willoughby through:

2.2.1 Providing advice on strategic bushland and natural heritage issues and policy development, including:

- Willoughby's Urban Bushland Plan of Management;
- The natural heritage aspects of the Griffin Reserves Plan of Management
- Reserve Action Plans for all Community Land that includes bushland and / or other natural heritage features.

2.2.2 Providing advice on the implementation of key projects and initiatives.

2.2.3 Providing advice on how to raise awareness and promote behaviour change within the community or with existing organisations focused on bushland and natural heritage.

Subjects in Scope:

- The sustainability of natural heritage
- Development of the natural heritage register
- Educational opportunities and needs, with respect to Willoughby's natural heritage
- Create awareness and appreciation of Willoughby's natural heritage and bush care initiatives
- Threatened Species Conservation Act; State Environmental Planning Policies, Regional Environmental Plans
- Conservation of natural landscapes

Key Strategies: Urban Bushland Plan of Management; Griffin Reserves Plan of Management; Reserve Action Plans

Subjects out of scope: Operational matters but not so as to exclude consideration of current projects or practices to suggest improvements, in accord with the review process for that project or initiative.

The Committee will need to agree to their priority focus and work plans, aligned to the Operational Plan.

In providing advice to Council, the Advisory Committee will adopt the principle that the concept of natural heritage recognises the role that Indigenous people have played in using and shaping Australian landscapes for at least 50,000 years and possibly much longer. Conservation of a place should identify and take into consideration all aspects of natural and cultural heritage - *Ref Australian Natural Heritage Charter 2nd Edition 2002, p.4.*

2.3 The Advisory Committees will be successful if they:

- Focus on strategic initiatives that support the delivery or review of the identified strategic priorities including increased community uptake of relevant initiatives
- Are active and productive
- Are where members collaborate
- Promote self-initiative, resilience and empowerment of both members and the broader community
- Are representative of the community and community interests.

### **3. ALIGNMENT TO THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

3.1 The Bushland and Natural Heritage Advisory Committee assists Council to achieve the following Community Strategic Plan objectives:

Outcome 1: A City that is green

Priority 1.1: Create and enhance green spaces, urban tree canopy and greening

Priority 1.3: Enhance, protect and respect waterways, bushland, wildlife and ecological systems

### **4. ALIGNMENT TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM**

4.1 The Bushland and Natural Heritage Advisory Committee assists Council to achieve the following Delivery Program initiatives:

- Implement Our Green City Plan 2028
- Implement the Resilient Willoughby Strategy and Action Plan 2021
- Implement the Urban Bushland Plan of Management
- Implement the Griffin Reserves Plan of Management and other Reserve Action Plans

### **5. CHAIRPERSON**

5.1 A community member is the Chairperson of Bushland and Natural Heritage Advisory Committee.

5.2 The inaugural Chairperson shall be confirmed or not at the third meeting of the Committee and thereafter on an annual basis.

5.3 In the absence of the Chair, another community member selected by the Committee will perform the role of Chairperson.

5.4 The committee can request that a councillor present at the meeting be the Chairperson.

### **6. SECRETARY**

6.1 Council will provide a staff member to make room bookings, send invitations, prepare and distribute the agenda and minutes and provide the report to Council.

### **7. MEMBERSHIP**

7.1 A minimum of six and maximum of 12 community representatives are to be appointed to the committee. It is anticipated that the majority of Advisory Committee members will be local residents.

7.2 Community representatives are required to have skills and knowledge and/or community experience relevant to the purpose of the Advisory Committee, including:

- Qualifications or demonstrated experience in one of the following areas: environment; natural heritage; bushland management; threatened species; conservation; education; or sustainability
- Ability to create to have existing connections with community groups, organisations or stakeholders within the Willoughby Local Government Area

7.3 To ensure a broad representation, all members are limited to holding a maximum of two concurrent memberships to Council Advisory Committees.

7.4 Willoughby City Council Councillors can attend any Advisory Committee as observers with speaking rights.

7.5 Willoughby City Council staff are excluded from membership.

7.6 There is no payment for membership.

## **8. COUNCIL OFFICERS**

8.1. In addition to the staff member mentioned at 6.1, the Chief Executive Officer will arrange for appropriate staff dealing with the subject matter on the agenda to attend meetings. The Chief Executive Officer will attempt to ensure continuity of staff attendance as much as possible.

## **9. MEETING FREQUENCY AND NOTICE**

9.1 Meetings shall be held a minimum of two and maximum of six occasions per year.

9.2 All meetings will be conducted in Council owned facilities or via video conferencing.

9.3 Notice of meetings and agendas will be provided at a minimum of two weeks prior to the meeting and advertised for the information of the public on Council's website.

9.4 At the inaugural meeting of the Advisory Committee, the Committee will determine their operating arrangements, including methods of communication, frequency of meetings, tenure and other considerations relevant to achieving their objectives. Staff will also induct them into their roles and obligations and conduct the process of selecting the Chair.

## **10. ATTENDANCE**

10.1 If a member is absent for three consecutive meetings their position will be declared vacant.

## **11. QUORUM**

11.1 A quorum of the committee is any number over 50% of its ordinary membership.

## **12. RESPONSIBILITY OF MEMBERS**

12.1 All committee members are expected to abide by Willoughby City Council's Code of Conduct 2020.

12.2 Members are required to declare any conflicts of interest in accordance with Willoughby City Council's Code of Conduct 2020.

12.3 Members will be expected to work collaboratively with other committee members and contribute to the discussion of agenda items.

12.4 Members will be required to be inducted into their roles and obligations by staff and may be required to undertake training relevant to the purpose of the committee. Any such training will be at Council's expense.

12.5 Members do not have decision making authority, nor can they direct staff. Any recommendations from the Committee will be reported to Council for consideration.

### **13. MINUTES**

13.1 Minutes of the meeting shall report on the outcome of discussions in regard to agenda items, this will include details of any action or recommendation of the committee and will be reported to Council at the next available meeting. Draft minutes shall be made available to member of the Committee within two weeks of the meeting.

### **14. PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

14.1 The ruling of the Chairperson is final in regard to all procedural matters.

### **15. TERM OF MEMBERSHIP**

15.1 Community representatives will be appointed by Council.

15.3 All committee members will cease at the commencement of the caretaker period associated with Local Government Elections.

### **16. VACANCIES**

16.1 Members wishing to resign from the committee are requested to do so in writing.

16.2 Council will undertake an expression of interest to establish Advisory Committees; vacancies will be filled from suitable respondents to this process.

16.3 Vacancies may not be filled in the final 12 months of the Council term; they will not be filled in the final six months.

### **17. TERM OF THE COMMITTEE**

17.1 All Advisory Committees will be disbanded prior to the commencement of the caretaker period preceding the Local Government Election.

17.2 Should the purpose of the committee be achieved prior to this time, the committee will be disbanded.

17.3 An end of term report outlining the work and achievements of the committee during the term, be submitted to Council, prior to the caretaker period.

### **18. WORKING PARTIES**

18.1 Working parties may be established to assist the Committee in working through specific issues.

18.2 Working parties will be open to community members with a specific interest and/or expertise in the subject matter relevant to the working party.

18.3 A member of the Advisory Committee must sit on each working party.

18.4 Working parties will need to be resourced by the Committee (e.g., meeting arrangements, minutes), and will be provided a space in a Council facility or access to video conferencing to meet.

18.5 Working parties Terms of Reference will be in accord with a template approved by Council, effective from the time they are adopted by resolution of the Advisory Committee, but subject to disallowance by Council.

## **19. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

19.1 Terms of Reference of the Advisory Committee must be adopted by Council.

19.2 These Terms of Reference may only be amended by a resolution of Council.