



# ADVISORY COMMITTEE and REFERENCE GROUP POLICY

|                                 |   |
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| <b>Date Adopted / Approved</b>  | 9 December 2019                                 |
| <b>Next Review Date</b>         | November 2023                                   |
| <b>Version</b>                  | 1   |
| <b>Responsible Position</b>     | Governance, Risk and Corporate Planning Manager |
| <b>Administration Reference</b> | Doc Set ID 5750429                              |

## 1. PURPOSE

To provide guidance on the operation of Advisory Committees and Reference Groups who assist the delivery of Council's strategic priorities.

## 2. CITY STRATEGY OUTCOME

Our Future Willoughby 2028 identified five city outcomes guiding our community's future direction in relation to Council's policy making, along with 29 community priorities. The following two priorities are applicable to *a city that is effective and accountable*.

5.1 – BE HONEST, TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE IN ALL THAT WE DO

5.5 – MAKE IT EASY FOR CITIZENS TO PARTICIPATE IN DECISION MAKING

## 3. APPLICATION

This policy applies to all Council staff, Councillors and Advisory Committee and Reference group members.

## 4. POLICY PRINCIPLES

- Advisory Committees and Reference Groups play an important role in the implementation of Council's strategic priorities.
- Advisory Committees assist Council to achieve strategic priorities through the provision of technical advice.
- Reference Groups assist Council to achieve strategic priorities through the provision of consumer or local knowledge.
- Advisory Committees and Reference Groups contribute to Council's strategic objectives through the provision of information and advice that Council may rely on in its decision making processes.

## 5. POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to complimenting the skills and knowledge of staff through Advisory Committee and Reference Groups to assist the delivery of Council's strategic priorities.

## 6. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

The Governance, Risk and Corporate Planning Manager is the responsible officer for this policy.

## 7. MONITORING AND REVIEWS

The Governance, Risk and Corporate Planning Manager is responsible for:

- providing advice in relation to the application of this policy

- maintaining, monitoring, reviewing and suggesting improvements to the policy

The policy will be reviewed as required, or at a minimum every four years.

## 8. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 8.1 FRAMEWORK FOR COMMITTEES AND REFERENCE GROUPS

Council’s Framework for Advisory Committees and Reference Groups, as show in Attachment 1, complements other broader forms of community engagement facilitated by Council as outlined in Council’s Community Engagement Policy.

The Framework contains two dimensions that indicate a continuum from:

- Local knowledge to technical advice on the vertical axis
- Operational matters to Strategic Priorities on the horizontal axis.

Advisory Committees operate in the Strategic and Technical quadrant and are defined by their ability to provide technical advice on strategic priorities of Council in a manner that complements staff competencies.

Reference Groups operate in the Local Knowledge and Strategic Priorities quadrant and are differentiated from Advisory Groups on the basis of their local or consumer knowledge. This is distinct from technical/local knowledge for operations which is typically provided by staff.

### 8.2 MODEL TERMS OF REFERENCE

In order to guide the operation of Advisory Committees and Reference Groups Model Terms of Reference have been developed and are contained in Attachment 2.

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Related policies and other documents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Engagement Policy</li> <li>▪ Community Engagement Framework</li> <li>▪ Our Future Willoughby 2028 – Community Strategic Plan</li> <li>▪ Delivery Program 2017-2021</li> </ul> |
| Document History                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Date adopted: 9 December 2019</li> </ul>  |

**Attachment 1**

**Framework for Advisory Committees and Reference Groups**



## Attachment 2

### Model Terms of Reference for Advisory Committees

1. **XXXX** Advisory Committee

2. **Purpose**

Advisory Committees are created for the purpose of providing technical advice on strategic priorities of Council in a manner that complements staff competencies.

**Include details of why the committee has been formed; consisting of one or two sentences.**

3. **Alignment to the Community Strategic Plan**

The **insert name** Advisory Committee assists Council to achieve the following Community Strategic Plan objectives:

**Insert objective**

4. **Alignment to the Delivery Program**

The **insert name** Advisory Committee assists Council to achieve the following Delivery Program objectives:

**Insert objective**

5. **Chairperson**

5.1 The Mayor, if in attendance, is the Chairperson of all Advisory Committees.

5.2 In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Chair, who will be a Councillor, will perform the role of Chairperson.

6. **Membership**

Membership of the committee shall consist of Councillors appointed by Council and ordinary members of the Committee appointed by Council.

Membership of the Advisory Committee shall consist of:

6.1 Councillor(s) **XXX**

6.2 A minimum of **XX** and maximum of **XX** community representatives to be appointed to the committee.

6.3 Community representatives are required to have skills and knowledge relevant to the purpose of the Advisory Committee.

6.3.1 **Please specify**

6.3.2 **Please specify**

6.3.3 **Please specify**

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

7. **Council Officers**

The following officers of Council will attend meetings of the Advisory Committee:

7.1 **Title only**

7.2 **Title only**

7.3 **Title only**

8. **Meeting frequency and notice**

8.1 Meetings will be held a minimum of three and maximum of six occasions per year.

8.2 All meetings will be conducted in Council owned facilities.

- 8.3 Notice of meetings will be provided at a minimum of two weeks prior to the meeting, unless otherwise agreed by members. This notice is to be included on Council's website and in Councillor's diary dates.
- 8.4 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.

## **9. Attendance**

- 9.1. If a member is absent for three consecutive meetings their position will be declared vacant unless otherwise determined by Council.
- 9.2. Attendance at meetings includes participation through the use of technology, for example virtual meetings or dialling in to a meeting, where appropriate.

## **10. Quorum**

A quorum of the committee is 50% of its ordinary membership plus one, one of which must be a Councillor.

## **11. Responsibilities of Members**

- 11.1 All committee members are expected to abide by *Willoughby City Council's Code of Conduct 2019*.
- 11.2 Members are required to declare any conflicts of interest in accordance with *Willoughby City Council's Code of Conduct 2019*.
- 11.3 Members will be expected to work collaboratively with other committee members and contribute to the discussion of agenda items.
- 11.4 Members may be required to undertake training relevant to the purpose of the committee.

## **12. Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting shall report on the outcome of discussions in regards to agenda items, this will include details of any action or decision of the committee and will be reported to Council.

## **13. Procedural Matters**

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

## **14. Term of Membership**

- 14.1 Council will determine Councillor representation on the committee.
- 14.2 Community representatives will be appointed by Council.
- 14.3 All members will be limited to serving two consecutive Council terms on any committee. In the circumstance where specialist technical knowledge is required and there is no suitable alternate nominee for a community representative position, a member may serve an additional term/s.
- 14.4 All membership will cease at the commencement of the caretaker period associated with Local Government Elections.

## **15. Vacancies**

- 15.1 Members wishing to resign from the committee are requested to do so in writing.
- 15.2 Council will undertake an initial expression of interest to establish Advisory Committees early in each new term of Council. Vacancies that occur after the committee is established will be filled through an expression of interest process.

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

**16. Term of the Committee**

16.1 All Advisory Committees will be disbanded at the commencement of the caretaker period preceding the Local Government Election.

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

**17. Variation of Terms of Reference**

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

## Model Terms of Reference for Reference Groups

1. XXXX Reference Group

### 2. Purpose

Reference Groups are created, as needed, for the purpose of providing local or consumer knowledge relevant to Councils strategic priorities, to supplement other forms of consultation.

Include details of why the group has been formed; consisting of one or two sentences.

### 3. Alignment to the Community Strategic Plan

The insert name Reference Group assists Council to achieve the following Community Strategic Plan objectives:

Insert objective

### 4. Alignment to the Delivery Program

The insert name Reference Group assists Council to achieve the following Delivery Program objectives:

Insert objective

### 5. Chairperson

5.1 The Mayor, if in attendance, is the Chairperson of all Reference Groups.

5.2 In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Chair, who will be a Councillor, will perform the role of Chairperson.

### 6. Membership

Membership of the reference group shall consist of Councillors appointed by Council and ordinary members of the reference group appointed by Council.

Membership of the Reference Groups shall consist of:

6.1 Councillor(s) XXX

6.2 A minimum of XX and maximum of XX community representatives to be appointed to the reference group.

6.3 Community representatives are required to have skills and knowledge relevant to the purpose of the Reference Group.

6.3.1 Please specify

6.3.2 Please specify

6.3.3 Please specify

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

### 7. Council Officers

The following officers of Council will attend meetings of the Reference Group:

7.1 Title only

7.2 Title only

7.3 Title only

8. At the inaugural meeting of the Reference Group, the group will determine their operating arrangements, including methods of communication, frequency of meetings, tenure and other considerations relevant to achieving their objectives.



## **9. Responsibilities of Members**

- 9.1 All Reference Group members are expected to abide by *Willoughby City Council's Code of Conduct 2019*.
- 9.2 Members are required to declare any conflicts of interest in accordance with *Willoughby City Council's Code of Conduct 2019*.
- 9.3 Members will be expected to work collaboratively with other members and contribute to the discussion of agenda items.
- 9.4 Members may be required to undertake training relevant to the purpose of the Reference Group.

## **10. Record of Proceedings**

Records of proceedings will include details of discussions. This may include a brief summary of the discussion of the Reference Group, subsequent actions and timeframes. These records of proceedings will inform a report to Council regarding the purpose for which the group was established.

## **11. Procedural Matters**

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

## **12. Term of Membership**

- 12.1 Council will determine Councillor representation on the committee.
- 12.2 All membership will cease at the commencement of the caretaker period associated with Local Government Elections.

## **13. Vacancies**

- 13.1 Members wishing to resign from the Reference Group are requested to do so in writing.
- 13.2 Council will undertake an initial expression of interest to establish Reference Groups early in each new term of Council. Vacancies that occur after the group is established will be filled through an expression of interest process.
- 13.3 Vacancies may not be filled in the final 12 months of the Council term; they will not be filled in the final six months.

## **14. Term of the Reference Group**

- 14.1 All Reference Groups will be disbanded at the commencement of the caretaker prior preceding the Local Government Election.
- 14.2 Should the purpose of the Reference Group be achieved prior to this time, the group will be disbanded.

## **15. Variation of Terms of Reference**

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