

Policy number	Policy 101
Policy title	Governance of Council Advisory and Working Groups
Strategic outcomes supported	CL2 – Communication and engagement with community. CL3 - Accountability and good governance.

Policy objective:

To provide for the governance of Council’s advisory and working groups, inclusive of requirements for establishment, appointment, remuneration, operation and reporting.

Policy scope:

This policy applies to all Council-established working and advisory groups comprised of community members, staff and elected members.

Policy definitions:

Advisory group is a group established by resolution of Council, which may consist of elected members, community members and officers, for the provision of strategic advice on a matter.

Working group is a group established by resolution of Council, which may consist of elected members, community members and officers, for the purpose of delivering strategic outcomes.

Policy statement:

1. The Town recognises the importance of engaging meaningfully with its community and ensuring that its citizens are able to participate and influence the decision-making process. While there are many methods in which the Town promotes public participation and engages with its community, the establishment of advisory groups are intended to give community members a formal avenue to advise Council on a specific matter, whilst working groups are intended to empower and support the community in delivering strategic outcomes in partnership with the Town. The creation of an advisory or working group shall align with Policy 103 – Communication and engagement.

Establishment:

2. To establish an advisory or working group, Council must resolve to:
 - a. Create that group for the purposes outlined in clause 3 and 4 of this policy
 - b. Set the purpose and objective of the group in line with clause 3 and 4 of this policy
 - c. Endorse the criteria for membership and composition of the group
 - d. Give public notice relating to the establishment of the group and its community vacancies.
3. An advisory group may be established to provide advice on a specific matter, which contributes to achieving strategic outcomes within the Strategy Community Plan, as determined by Council.

4. A working group may be established to develop a policy and/ or a strategic document for the Town to be adopted by Council in the future, or to deliver a strategic outcome for the Town through the implementation of a Council-adopted strategy or plan.
5. Members of advisory and working groups may include elected members, community members and staff members. The number of positions available, as well as the composition of the group, is to be determined by Council as stipulated in clause 2(c) of this policy.
6. Council must also determine the criteria in which candidates are to be assessed against before being formally appointed to the group. The criteria can include skills, education or experience relevant to the set purpose and objective of the group.
7. Advisory and working groups established by Council, pursuant to this policy are not, and are not intended to be, committees established under Section 5.8 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Membership and appointment:

8. There are three types of members that may be appointed to advisory and working groups, which are: community members, elected members and officers. Each type of member has different appointment requirements and voting provisions.

Elected members

9. The number of elected members in an advisory or working group shall not exceed one-third of the total number of elected members holding office. Appointment of elected members will be by resolution of Council.
10. The term for an elected member appointed to an advisory or working group shall be for two years with appointments of elected members being made by resolution of Council following an ordinary local government election.
11. An elected member cannot serve more than three (3) consecutive two (2) year terms on any specific group.
12. Elected members formally appointed by Council to an advisory or working group are to be participating members of that group.

Community members

13. Once Council has resolved to establish a group, inclusive of endorsing its composition and criteria for membership, the Chief Executive Officer is to publicly advertise the community vacancies for a period of at least two weeks.
14. At the close of the application period, the Chief Executive Officer is to assess the applications based on the criteria for membership set by Council, as stipulated in clause 2(d) of this policy. Where required, the Chief Executive Officer may choose to interview applicants as part of the application process.
15. Appointments of community members to an established group will be upon recommendation of the Chief Executive Officer and by resolution of Council.
16. The term for community members appointed to an advisory or working group shall be for two years with appointments of community members being made by resolution of Council the year following an ordinary local government election.

17. Community members cannot serve more than three (3) consecutive two (2) year terms on any specific group.
18. Community members formally appointed by Council to an advisory or working group are to be participating members of that group.
19. Should any community member be unable to fulfil their role on an advisory or working group at any point in time they may apply in writing to the Chief Executive Officer to be released from the group. The Chief Executive Officer will then reappoint their replacement from those previous applicants in order of merit until a replacement has been filled. The Chief Executive Officer may choose for the community member position to remain vacant depending on the nature of the groups' terms of reference and / or length of time remaining for the group's term.

Officers

20. The Chief Executive Officer is to appoint relevant officers to the group as follows:
 - a. To provide professional advice and conduct research in line with the group's purpose and objective
 - b. To provide administrative and governance support, inclusive of ensuring adherence to the group's terms of reference as adopted by Council, and to the reporting requirements in this policy.
21. Although appointment of officers will be at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer and is not to be resolved upon by Council, the Chief Executive Officer is to advise Council of the appointments once made.
22. Officers formally appointed by the Chief Executive Officer to an advisory or working group are only advisory and/or secretarial members of that group.

Remuneration and expenses:

23. Members appointed to a Council-established group are not entitled to a sitting fee, or any such type of remuneration, unless otherwise considered and resolved by Council.
24. Should Council resolve to provide remuneration to members of a Council-established group, the amount must be determined by Council and be in line with the adopted budget.
25. Elected members and officers that are members of an advisory or working group are not to be remunerated under any circumstance.
26. Members appointed to an advisory or working group, excluding elected members and officers, that are unable to drive a motor vehicle or whose primary mode of transportation is by public means, may be reimbursed for the cost of the incurred fare to and from meetings.
27. The reimbursement of expenses for elected members is dealt with in Policy 021 – Elected member fees, expenses and allowances.
28. To be eligible for reimbursement, a community member must seek approval from the Chief Executive Officer who will process the reimbursement.

Operation:

Terms of Reference

29. Each group is responsible for drafting its own terms of reference, inclusive of:
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Objective
 - c. Membership including roles and composition
 - d. Meeting procedures including, but not limited to, its general conduct, meeting frequency, administration and other such requirements.
30. Within three months of members being appointed, the Chief Executive Officer, with agreement from members of that group, is required to present a group's proposed terms of reference to Council for adoption.
31. Upon adoption by Council, the group's terms of reference, including its membership, must be made publicly available on the Town's website.
32. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring that each established group has appropriate administrative and professional support.
33. A sample Terms of Reference Template is included in Schedule A.

Delegation

34. A group shall have no delegated authority to make any decisions for or on behalf of Council and no group, or individual member thereof, shall, in particular:
 - a. Expend, or authorise the expenditure of, any Town funds
 - b. Correspond with any party
 - c. Speak for or on behalf of the Town or Council
 - d. Issue any press release
 - e. Issue any instruction to Town staff.
35. A group may make decisions relating to the conduct and operation of its meetings, and any other decisions, within its scope, that will allow it to deliver its objectives as set by Council.

Reporting:

36. Being formally established and appointed by Council, each advisory and working group is required to publish its agenda and minutes on the Town's website in the prescribed form.
37. The minutes of each group must be presented to Council for receiving at the next relevant Ordinary Council Meeting.
38. Council may, at any time, request that the Chief Executive Officer to present a report on the progress of each group.
39. Where appropriate, Council may also request a group, or members thereof, to make a presentation at an informal Council meeting, including an elected member workshop or Concept Forum.

Related documents

Nil.

Responsible officers	Coordinator Governance and Strategy
Policy manager	Manager Governance and Strategy
Approval authority	Council
Next evaluation date	August 2026

Revision history

Version	Action	Date	Authority	Resolution number	Report number
1	Approved	19/05/2020	Council	413/2020	Item 15.1
2	Reviewed and amended	20/04/2021	Council	78/2021	Item 15.4
3	Reviewed and amended	12/04/2022	Council	73/2022	Item 15.5
4	Reviewed and amended	15/08/2023	Council	176/2023	Item 11.6

SCHEDULE A

[Name of group] Terms of reference

Purpose and objective

For advisory group

1. The purpose of the [name of group] (the group) is to provide strategic advice to Council on [outline specific matter and objective]. This advice is related to the following strategic outcomes:
 - a. [Include strategic outcomes]
 - b. [Include strategic outcomes]

For working group

2. The purpose of the [name of group] (the group) is to deliver [name objective –i.e. policy/strategic document/strategy or plan] for Council consideration. This [policy/document/strategy/plan] is related to the following strategic outcomes:
 - a. [Include strategic outcomes]
 - b. [Include strategic outcomes]

Membership

3. The group shall be comprised of:
 - a. [number] elected members
 - b. [number] community members
 - c. [number] officers

Term

4. All memberships are for a two-year term. Elected members are appointed following an ordinary local government election and community members are appointed the year following an ordinary local government election.

Roles and responsibilities

5. Each member of the group is responsible for attending meetings, reviewing relevant material to enable informed discussion, and making timely decisions/actions to progress the objectives of the group.
6. Each member is expected to abide by the Town's Code of Conduct, to have open and honest discussions and to treat each member with due courtesy and respect.
7. In addition to these, the specific roles for each membership type are as follows:
 - a. Elected members are responsible for ensuring that the group adheres to the direction set by Council, contributing from a Town-wide perspective, and ensures that delivery of the group's objective – *[to be altered depending on agreement from group]*
 - b. Community members are responsible for contributing to the delivery of the group's objectives within the scope of their skills, knowledge and capabilities – *[to be altered depending on agreement from group]*
 - c. Officers are responsible for conducting necessary research as required by the group, providing professional advice, and for administering its meetings.

Meeting procedures

8. The group will elect a presiding member and deputy presiding member at its first meeting. The presiding member will be the person consulted on the day-to-day operations of the group and its required preparations, including the agenda, for its next meeting.
9. The group will meet [include timeframe] or the group will meet as required, upon the calling of the meeting by the presiding member.
10. A meeting quorum will be at least 50% of the participating members of the group. Decisions are to be made by consensus (i.e. members are satisfied with the decision even though it may not be their first choice). If not possible, the presiding member can make the final decision.
11. If a member is unable to attend the meeting, they must advise the presiding member as soon as reasonably practicable.
12. The agenda and minutes of the meeting are to be prepared by the Town, as follows:
 - a. The agenda will be distributed no later than three working days before the meeting on the Town's website.
 - b. The minutes will be distributed no later than five working days after the meeting on the Town's website.
 - c. Both the agenda and minutes are to be developed in the prescribed form.

Reporting

13. The group is expected to report to Council, in accordance with Policy 101 Governance of Council Advisory and Working Groups.