



**ENVIRONMENT
STRATEGIC REFERENCE
GROUP**

TERMS OF REFERENCE &
OPERATING GUIDELINES

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENT SRG

- To help shape Council's future directions in relation to the high-order strategic theme of Environment *
- To consider actions and strategies that support Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) goals in relation to the high-order strategic theme of Environment *
- To provide guidance and support for the priority projects and actions outlined in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan in relation to the high-order strategic theme of Environment*
- To enable Council to engage with its community in relation to the high-order strategic theme of Environment *

* Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 10 Year aspiration statement for the theme of Environment:

“Wollondilly’s pristine and beautiful natural environment is protected, responsibly managed and enhanced as we grow and play our part for the future”

2. KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SRG

The Environment SRG will generally consider strategic matters relating (but not necessarily limited) to:

- Conservation and environmental management
- Land management (conserving and managing nature reserves, forests and agricultural land, weed management etc.)
- Environmental sustainability practices (to reduce waste, water use, greenhouse gas emissions etc.)
- Energy management (efforts to use and encourage the adoption of renewable energy, electric vehicles etc.)
- Waste management (efforts to reduce landfill, encourage recycling, responsible consumption and circular economies etc.)
- Waste collection services
- Water management (water conservation and recycling, flood management, river and creek management etc.)
- Natural disaster management (preparedness, response, recovery and resilience)
- Climate change (reducing Wollondilly's impact, increasing climate change resilience etc.)

OPERATING GUIDELINES

3. MEETING FREQUENCY, TIMES AND VENUE

- The Environment SRG will meet up to 3 times per year.
- Up to 2 extraordinary meetings may be called by the Chair in extenuating circumstances with a minimum two weeks' notice. Any meetings required in addition to this needs to be resolved by Council.
- The Chair of the SRG may create additional subcommittees, working groups or Advisory Groups as they deem necessary under their own delegation.
- Council staff may seek feedback and advice informally from SRG members in between SRG meetings to progress initiatives and actions raised at SRG meetings.
Meetings will take place at either Council's Administration Buildings in Picton, or via on-line platforms (such as Zoom or MS Teams).
- Meetings will generally be held after 3:00pm on a Thursday.

4. COMPOSITION & MEMBERSHIP

The composition and membership of the Environment SRG will comprise:

Voting Members:

- The nominated Councillor Chair and Deputy Chair (based on Council's resolved allocation of portfolio topics for Councillors).
- The Mayor has delegation to Chair the SRG and on occasion may choose to do so.
- Any Councillors who choose to attend.
- A maximum of ten (10) community members (either as interested individuals or as representatives of key community/industry organisations).

Non-Voting Attendees:

- Council staff attending as subject matter experts.
- Council staff providing administrative support.
- Guest speakers and representatives from other Government agencies and/or community organisations who may be invited to attend from time to time as needed.
- Members of any associated Advisory Groups

5. MEMBERSHIP SELECTION, TENURE & RENEWAL

- Community members (either as interested individuals or as representatives of key community/industry organisations) are to be recruited through a public Expression of Interest (EOI) process which will be advertised and promoted through various media channels and on Council's website.

- Selection will be based on set criteria which will be outlined as part of the EOI process.
- The numbers of representatives from any given community/industry organisation will be considered and managed on a case-by-case basis with the aim of ensuring equitable community representation opportunities.
- Membership for all Community members will be dissolved / renewed in line with the electoral term of Council.
- 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 (EOI).

6. QUORUM REQUIREMENTS & DECISION-MAKING

- The minimum quorum requirements for any meeting of the Environment SRG shall be:
 - At least half of the appointed community members; and
 - A Chair
- If a quorum is not reached, the Chair will seek to reschedule the meeting for the earliest convenient time to allow for the quorum to be met. However, in some circumstances, the Chair may still choose for the meeting to proceed, but no significant decision making or voting will be conducted.
- Decisions will be made by consensus. If this is not possible or appropriate, the Chair may put certain matters to a vote at their discretion in order for a decision to be recorded. Only voting members can participate in any such voting processes. Non-voting attendees are however able to contribute to consensus decision-making.
- At times, the Environment SRG may make recommendations which require further consideration by the full elected Council body. Any such recommendations needing referral to Council will need to be identified by the Chair and recorded in the minutes. The matter will then be referred for consideration by Council as required (see section 9 below).
- Matters may also be referred to the Environment SRG for consideration and comments by Council via a Council resolution.
- Formal feedback/submissions on Council policies, strategies or similar may be gathered via email or other online/digital methods without a formal meeting of the Environment SRG, where there is consensus agreements from all voting members on the contents of the submission.
- Working groups may be created at the discretion of the Chair to allow further informal discussion and/or detailed working through of issues or initiatives within the scope of the Environment SRG. Outcomes of the working group must be reported to the Environment SRG for consideration.
- Any working group created must be self-resourced and managed, meeting at a frequency determined by the Chair. Working group meetings are not included in the meeting count (up to 3 times per year) of the Environment SRG.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

- Members will be required to sign a declaration that they have read, understood and will act in accordance with these Operational Guidelines and Terms of Reference. This includes:
 - Adhering to Council's Code of Conduct.
 - Conducting themselves in a respectful, courteous and constructive manner.
 - Not using meetings as a platform for personal accusations / defamatory statements or as an interrogation of Council business.
 - Not directing staff in how to perform their duties and/or responsibilities
 - Agreeing to sign any Confidentiality Agreement as and when required
 - Not participating in any caucusing. If caucusing occurs the matter may be referred to Council.
- Ongoing membership will be dependent on the above.
- Members will be responsible for their own travel and costs as a result of attending any meetings and associated events and activities and for any technology to connect to online meetings.
- No sitting fees or out of pocket expenses will be paid to members.
- Members will be encouraged to contribute items of interest to the meeting agenda by contacting the SRG Chair or the relevant Council staff who attend the SRG prior to the meeting. Items that require resolution, discussion or debate need to be included in the agenda; however, in extenuating circumstances, these items can be raised in General Business at the discretion of the SRG Chair. Items must be relevant to the objectives and purpose of the SRG.
- Members will be expected to actively and constructively participate in meetings and any associated activities or events.
In the event that a member cannot attend a meeting, an apology or notification must be made to the SRG Chair or the relevant Council staff who attend the SRG prior to the meeting commencing.
- Lack of attendance (3 consecutive meetings or more) may result in the individual member's position being declared vacant.

8. ROLE OF COUNCIL STAFF

Council staff are responsible for:

- Coordinating the meeting arrangements including calendar notifications.
- Attending as subject matter experts to present on matters and to contribute to general discussions as required.
- Preparation and distribution of agendas, minutes and other reports and communications as required.

9. MINUTES, AGENDAS & REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- Meeting date schedules are to be arranged with a forward horizon of 12 months and shall be placed in Council's corporate calendar and distributed to all SRG members and attendees.

- Advice of upcoming meetings will be distributed to all SRG members and attendees at least 10 days prior to the date of any scheduled meeting (this advice will include an Agenda, the previous meeting's Minutes and any associated papers and reports).
- All meetings shall be minuted with the minutes providing a record of:
 - Key discussion points against each agenda item.
 - Any decisions made.
Any matters and recommendations requiring referral to Council.
- All Agendas and Minutes shall be placed on Council's website to enable easy public access and be made available to all Councillors.
- A report to Council is to be provided following each meeting of the SRG. This report shall include:
 - The minutes of the SRG meeting.
 - A summary of any key matters that Council need to be aware of or needs to consider.
 - Any recommendations to Council being made by the SRG which require a Council decision.

10. MINUTES, AGENDAS & REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The following shall be the minimum Standing Agenda items for all Meetings of the Environment SRG:

- Acknowledgement of Country
- Disclosure of Interests
- Attendance and Apologies
- Confirmation of Minutes
- Reports, Minutes and updates from Advisory Groups
- Community Strategic Plan Strategies and Actions
- Matters referred to the SRG by Council resolution
- General Business