

Advisory Committees Guidelines

Inform

Consult

Involve

Collaborate

Empower

Level of participation adapted from the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

1. Description

Advisory Committees provide advice to Council concerning strategic or policy issues, enhance communication between Council and the community and complement other elements of community engagement.

2. Benefits

- Council can use Advisory Committees to seek expert advice to inform decision making.
- This approach can provide an effective way to involve stakeholders in Council's planning and policy functions.
- There may be an opportunity to maximise the skills and expertise that exist in the community to complement the role of Council in planning and policy-making.
- There is potential to test engagement techniques and audiences to improve community engagement outcomes for an issue.

3. When to use an Advisory Committee

- ✓ When a statutory requirement would produce a better outcome with the involvement of an Advisory Committee.
- ✓ When a collaborative approach with service providers and stakeholder organisations is desirable or required.
- ✓ When a specific issue would benefit from a high level of community input and has been assessed as a high risk initiative.
- ✓ If an issue is substantial and the resourcing required for an Advisory Committee justifies the benefits and outcomes achieved.
- ✓ If specific or expert input is required and this can be sourced from key stakeholders in the City of Greater Dandenong.
- ✓ Where collaboration with stakeholders is desirable to enhance the participation of the broader community in an issue.
- ✓ When increased community awareness of an issue is required.

4. When not to use an Advisory Committee

- ✗ When specific statutory processes exclude input from such a group.
- ✗ When similar groups already exist for the same (or similar) issue and there is a risk of the same community members belonging to an Advisory Committee.
- ✗ When alternate forms of collaboration are identified as being more effective.
- ✗ When informing, consulting and involving are more effective methods of engagement for the issue and the level of risk is defined as low or medium.

5. Membership of Advisory Committees

The membership of each Advisory Committee will be proposed as part of the establishment of the group and will comprise:

- Councillor representative (subject to note 3 below);
- Council staff members to resource the Advisory Committee with administrative support and technical expertise relating to the issue;
- A specific number of members to be defined in the Terms of Reference with a clearly defined term of membership:
 - Representatives from relevant providers and agencies;
 - Representatives from peak bodies and user representative groups; and
 - Representation from appropriate community organisations.

It is noted that:

1. Membership on a Advisory Committee is voluntary;
2. Residents will not form part of an advisory committee however will have opportunities to be involved in working through an issue in many other ways; and
3. Involvement of Councillors on a Advisory Committee will depend on needs and interests for each specific issue or activity. (Councillors' involvement in Advisory Committees will form part of the Councillor statutory appointments each year.)

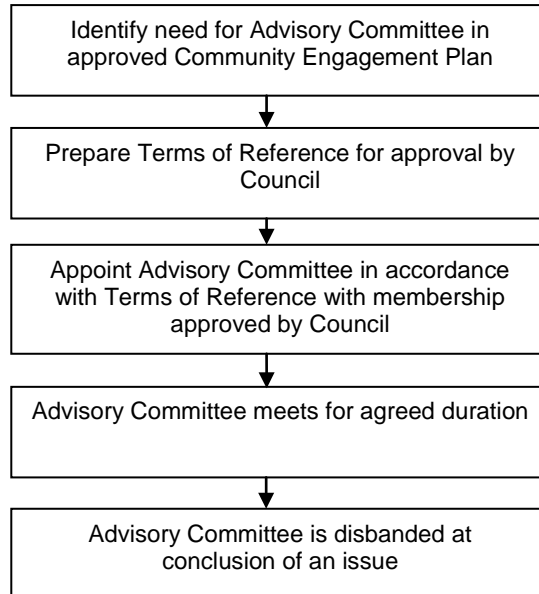
6. Basis upon which Advisory Committees are formed

An Advisory Committee:

- ✓ Operates as a mechanism to assist and support an issue;
- ✓ Has a start and finish date (sunset clause) and specific roles and responsibilities – the sunset clause will mark the end of the Advisory Committee or alternately it may be a trigger to review the benefit and value of the Advisory Committee;
- ✓ Is an equitable forum that is representative of the City of Greater Dandenong community and relevant stakeholders;
- ✓ Complements other elements of Council's community engagement processes;
- ✓ Enhances communication between Council and the community;
- ✓ Is not a decision making body but is able to advise Council on relevant matters related to the issue; and
- ✓ Operates as a transparent, representative and accessible forum.

7. Initiating an Advisory Committee

Council will develop an Advisory Committee and if the level of engagement is determined to be “Collaborate”, the formation of an Advisory Committee is one mechanism that might be selected. If this is the case, the following process will proceed.



8. Process for Membership of Advisory Committees

- Public Notice calling for Expressions of Interest.
- Nomination Form to be completed by interested people who wish to register an Expression of Interest. The nomination form must be submitted by the published due date.

8.1 Selection Criteria for Membership of Advisory Committees

Nominees for membership of an Advisory Committee must be able to demonstrate:

- Current involvement in the community in the interest area that relates to the purpose of the Advisory Committee.
- Endorsement by their own organisation.
- Strong community networks and linkages.
- An ability to constructively participate in an advisory capacity.
- An ability to represent a broad range of views that reflect the diversity of the community.
- A strong understanding of the local community and its social, environmental and economic influences.
- Good knowledge and understanding of the local issues that are relevant to the issue.
- A willingness to contribute positively to meetings in a fair and unbiased manner.
- An ability to look beyond personal interests for the benefit of the community and residents of the City of Greater Dandenong.
- An ability and willingness to encourage participation from and provide feedback to the community regarding the issue.

- ☑ A capacity to commit to the Advisory Committee for the required duration.
- ☑ A willingness to celebrate the success and achievements of the issue / issues.

8.2 Selection Panel to make recommendation of members on Advisory Committees

- Senior member of Council (CEO or Director – or delegated Manager).
- Nominated Council staff member from the specific service area related to the issue.
- Senior Manager of a local provider (if appropriate).
- Senior Manager of a local industry (if appropriate).

A recommendation about the membership of the Advisory Committee is made for the endorsement of Council.

It is noted that once the Advisory Committee has been appointed, this selection panel is disbanded.

9. Responsibilities of the Advisory Committee

The responsibilities of each Advisory Committee will be outlined in a Terms of Reference – attached.

10. Protocols

A code of conduct (attached) will be signed by all members of each Advisory Committee.

11. Reference Materials

- Community Engagement Policy.
- Community Engagement Planning Framework.