



RURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE
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Rural Advisory Committee

Purpose

The Rural Advisory Committee has been established to provide advice to the Paroo Shire Council in relation to broad-based road infrastructure and rural community issues. The Rural Advisory Committee is an advisory committee of Council with a Councillor or Councillors nominated on a two yearly basis. The establishment of a Rural Advisory Committee provides an important forum for identifying region-wide issues and opportunities and advising Council about effective policy and service provision regarding roads and rural related matters within the Paroo local government area.

The Rural Advisory Committee has a purely strategic focus. The committee should focus on issues and opportunities that are relevant across the entire region. The committee should provide specialist advice to Council as an input into decisions that impact region-wide Council policy. The Rural Advisory Committee has no delegated decision making power from Council.

Objectives

The objectives of the Committee are:

- Assets are managed and used to meet the needs of the community and provide for current and future generations;
- Quality community infrastructure that are well used and accessible;
- Infrastructure and community support that meets community needs;
- Connected and effective community groups;
- Strategic advice and input relating to the development of Council's plans and policies;
- Discussion regarding 'special interest' topics as determined by Council;
- Participation in the ongoing consultation, review and implementation of rural related strategic documents;
- Input into Council's processes where requested eg provide feedback regarding projects to be considered by Council for submission to external funding programs;
- Provision of feedback to group on priorities for individual committees;
- Update group of progress of key issues; and
- Identification of synergies between groups and links to progressing the Community and Council Plan.

Principles

- Be inclusive, open minded and respectful of everyone's perspective
- Put our personal agendas aside and provide advice for the greater good of the diverse Paroo Shire community
- Challenging and exploring are an integral part of what we do and how we operate
- Represent and commit to the value of the committee

- Actively participate and engage in the work of the committee
- Be punctual, well prepared, timely with responses and we follow through
- Be realistic about what we can achieve
- Have a strong focus on outcomes

Membership

The Rural Advisory Committee will consist of the following membership structure:

- A maximum of three (3) Councillor representatives;
- Two (2) Council Officers, Director of Infrastructure and Director of Community Support and Engagement or other officers as directed by the Chief Executive Officer; and
- A maximum of eight (8) representatives from within the Paroo Shire with a maximum of two (2) representatives from each quadrant of the shire.

It is expected that each member will attend a minimum of 75% of meetings annually. If a member attends less than 75% of meetings annually, Council could appoint a replacement member if deemed necessary.

Applications

The process to appoint community members will be advertised on Council's internet site, social media and through local networks. Applicants must make application via an expression of interest process. Applications will be assessed based upon their interest, knowledge and expertise relating to:

- Leisure, sporting and health and fitness trends;
- Roads infrastructure;
- Community capacity building;
- Community networks;
- A working knowledge of the rural environment within Paroo Shire; and
- The provision of services provided within a Local Government context.

Term

Non-Councillor members on the Committee will be appointed for a maximum term of two years. At the conclusion of each term, pending Council approval, new Committee members will be appointed via the aforementioned application process.

Councillors

Council will appoint Councillor representation every two years.

The role of Councillors is to participate in the meetings, listen to community and stakeholder views and keep the Council informed, through reports on committees by Councillors at Council meetings, on issues of community interest being considered at meetings.

Council Officers

Council officers will be nominated to support the committee by the Chief Executive Officer as required to provide advice and administrative support to the committee.

Meetings

Decision Making and Voting Rights

As this is an advisory committee, voting on issues is not required. Any recommendations will generally be developed through consensus. Where a matter cannot be agreed, the differing opinions should be clearly expressed in the notes of the meeting.

The Committee acts in an advisory capacity only and has no delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of Council.

Quorum

A quorum will be fifty per cent (50%) of the Committee membership plus one.

Any proxy attendance should be notified to Council's nominated officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

The Committee may invite observers to meetings from time to time. This is at the discretion of the committee.

Guests may also be invited to attend and participate at meetings, this would generally be for a specific purpose and/or specified period of time. This is at the discretion of the committee.

Chair

The role of Chairperson will be undertaken by a Councillor. The appointed Chairperson is responsible for the conduct of meetings, ensuring fair and equitable opportunities for views and opinions to be voiced and discussed by the Advisory Committee. A Deputy Chairperson should be elected to chair meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.

Secretariat

Administration support will be provided by Council.

Meeting and Minutes

Agendas and Minutes must be prepared for each meeting of the Committee. The Agenda must be provided to members of the Committee not less than seven days before the time fixed for the holding of the meeting.

The Chairperson must arrange for minutes of each meeting of the committee to be kept.

The Minutes of a Committee meeting must:

- a) Contain details of the proceedings and recommendations made;
- b) Be clearly expressed;
- c) Be self-explanatory; and
- d) In relation to recommendations recorded in the minutes, incorporate relevant reports or a summary of the relevant reports considered in the decision making process.

Draft Minutes must be:

- a) Submitted to the Committee Chairperson for confirmation within seven days of the meeting;
- b) Distributed to all Committee Members following confirmation from the Chairperson and within 14 days of the meeting; and
- c) Submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for formal endorsement.

Minutes must be approved by the Chairperson before being published or distributed and then formally endorsed at the subsequent meeting.

Agendas and Minutes of the Committee will be made available on Council's intranet.

Agendas and notes from meetings are not required to be made available to the public.

Reporting Meeting Outcomes

A report of each Rural Advisory Committee meeting is to be presented to all Paroo Shire Council Councillors and Executive.

Minutes of each meeting will be provided to all Councillors of the Paroo Shire Council at the next available Ordinary meeting.

A report of the Rural Advisory Committee activities will be presented to the Council by 30 June annually.

Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality

The *Local Government Act 2009* identifies direct and indirect conflicts of interest which require disclosure as and when they arise. Members of the Rural Advisory Committee must be fully aware of their responsibilities with regard to the management of interests in relation to the discharge of their duties as members of the Rural Advisory Committee.

Any matter deemed by a member to represent a Conflict of Interest will be reported to the Chairperson and the Council's Governance team either prior to a meeting or before the specific item is discussed and dealt with in line with the Act and any relevant Council policies or guidelines.

It is intended that the Rural Advisory Committee will be a forum for discussing proposed policies and actions that may impact the Paroo community.

It is envisaged that members will be provided with information that is not available in the public realm. It will be critical that committee members are seen as a group that can be trusted with confidential information.

The Rural Advisory Committee's ability to fulfil its purpose will be severely hampered if trust is undermined in any way. Given the level of confidentiality that will be associated with some of the information provided to members, any discussion with non-committee members is limited to information already available to the public.

Confidential discussion will not be disclosed without the Chair's prior approval.

Review

To be reviewed biennially - at the commencement and midway through term of Council.