

Inclusive Communities Reference Group

Terms of Reference

Approval Body:	Inclusive Communities Reference Group
Endorsement Date:	15/12/2020
Council Plan Reference:	1. People Driven 1.1 An inclusive, safe and connected community
Current Version:	1.0
Compulsory Review Cycle:	4 Years
Review Date:	15/12/2021 <i>It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively.</i> <i>Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be by resolution of Council.</i>
Responsible Department:	Connected Communities
Relevant Legislation:	N/A
Relevant Council Documents:	Inclusive Casey Strategic Framework Diversity, Access & Inclusion Policy
Breaches:	Breaches will be dealt with under the provisions of the following: • Code of Conduct for Volunteers
ECM ID:	

1. Purpose

The Inclusive Communities Reference Group provides Council with expert advice on matters related to diversity, access, and inclusion from local community, service organisation, and research perspectives. Where required, membership will be sought from areas including:

- Ageing well in Casey
- Cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- People living with a disability
- LGBTIQ inclusion
- Social isolation and loneliness
- Social and economic disadvantage
- Religious diversity
- Place-based disadvantage
- How an intersectional lived experience impacts on community life.

Priority will be given to emergent community needs and sub-groups will be formed to focus on specific issues, projects, areas, and cohorts within the City of Casey.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Group are to:

- Oversee the development and implementation of Council policies, strategies and action plans relating to access and inclusion
- Assist Council in identifying and making recommendations on issues of access and inclusion affecting residents of the City of Casey
- Encourage and support activities and events which promote access to services and programs in the City of Casey
- Enable greater public participation in decision-making via community engagement and consultation strategies.

Council will ultimately determine the matters having regard to the advice of the Group.

3. Definitions

Key term	Definition
Council	means Casey City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 2020
Council officer	means the Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.
Group	Means the Inclusive Communities Reference Group

4. Membership and Term of Appointment

Membership shall include:

- Council Officers
- Community Representative/s from the Casey Community
- Representatives and subject matter experts from relevant organisations and academic institutions.

Group members will be appointed for a term of two years. Any Group member may resign at any time by advising his or her resignation to the Group in writing. Council will be responsible for appointing any person to fill such a casual vacancy for the remainder of term for the Group.

Council's will make efforts to ensure Group members can access, understand, and contribute feedback in a way that is appropriate, productive, and respectful.

Reasonable support such as interpreters, childcare or transportation will be considered when needed to enable participation. Consideration will also be given to time and location of engagement activities to ensure accessibility.

5. Community Member Selection Process

Community representatives shall be selected through an expression of interest process that is advertised in local newspapers, on Council's website, Council's social media and other relevant electronic forums as deemed appropriate, and through networks relating to the Groups areas of interest.

An assessment panel of Council officers will select community representatives to sit on the Group.

Community membership on the Group will be based on the following criteria. Members must:

- Live, work, study, or play in the City of Casey
- Have current involvement in the community and an understanding of diversity and inclusion
- Represent the interests of all rather than personal or narrow group/organisational interests
- Have a willingness to make an active contribution to discussion
- Have a capacity to commit to the Committee for the required duration
- Be able to work constructively as part of a team.

6. Membership Voting Rights and Decision Making

For voting purposes, the Chairperson shall accept motions duly moved and seconded by members of the Group, with the vote taken by a show of hands. Council officers and guests do not have voting rights.

A quorum of members is not less than fifty percent of the number of members of the Group who are entitled to vote. If a quorum is not present within half an hour after the scheduled commencement time of the Group meeting, the meeting is to be abandoned.

Consensus decision making is preferred. However, all members are entitled to vote and a matter may be voted upon at the discretion of the Chairperson, who shall have casting vote in the event of an equal number of votes.

7. Chairperson

The position of Chairperson shall be filled by a Council Officer.

8. Meetings

Unless otherwise determined the overarching Inclusive Communities Reference Group shall meet twice annually with meetings of up to two hours duration (see item 9 for sub-group meetings). In the circumstance that Council Officers are required to call an extraordinary meeting, all members of the Group will where possible be given two weeks' notice of the meeting.

Meetings of the Group are restricted to members appointed by Council and Officers, unless otherwise determined by the Group for an appropriate reason.

For voting purposes, the Chairperson shall accept motions duly moved and seconded from members of the Committee and the vote taken by a show of hands. Council officers and other attendees do not have voting rights.

9. Sub-committees and Working Groups

Sub-reference groups will be formed on the basis of project, cohort, and/or locality of interest (e.g. a sub-group could form for a major consultation, for LGBTIQ+ inclusion matters, or issues related to Cranbourne North). These sub-reference groups will be supported by staff who have knowledge and experience regarding the interest of the group.

Membership of sub-reference groups are limited to members of the Group. Sub-reference group meetings are not minuted, but a report must be presented to the next Group meeting.

10. Administration. Agendas and Minutes

All secretariat tasks for the Group will be undertaken by Council Officers appointed by the relevant department manager.

Agendas and minutes of previous meetings shall be forwarded to members at least five working days before the meeting.

11. Volunteers

Committee members other than Council staff are volunteers.

Following appointment committee members, must sign a declaration that they will abide by any guidelines approved by the Chief Executive Officer to cover the conduct of volunteers, including the avoidance of conflicts of interest; and undertake training and skills development as required. Council's Code of Conduct for volunteers must also be complied with and a copy of the Code must be provided to all new members.

12. Conflicts of Interest

If a member has a General or Material conflict of interest (i.e. interest by close association, financial interest, conflicting duty, personal gain or loss, or future interest as stated in Section 127 and 128 of

the Local Government Act 2020) regarding an item to be considered or discussed by the Group, the member must disclose this to the Chairperson if they are attending the meeting.

Once a declaration of either a direct or indirect conflict of interest has been made, the member must leave the room and remain outside until the conclusion of the relevant discussion. The time the member leaves the room and returns to the room must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

If a member of the Group nominates themselves for Council elections they must stand down from their Group position from the time of declaring the nomination until the result of the election is announced.

13. Limitations of Authority

The Group has no authority to:

- Expend moneys on behalf of Council
- Commit Council to any arrangement
- Consider any matter outside these terms of reference
- Direct Council officers in the performance of their duties.

14. Publicity

Members of the Community Reference Group who are approached to provide comment on the items discussed by the Community Reference Group must make clear their response is a personal view, rather than the collective view of the Community Reference Group.

All media enquiries seeking a formal position of Council should be referred to Council's Communications and Marketing Department for response at media@casey.vic.gov.au

15. Responsibilities

Who	What
Coordinator Inclusion and Wellbeing	Provides oversight of reference group project
Health and Wellbeing Project Lead	Manages reference group and provides support to Council Officers facilitating sub-groups

16. Code of Conduct

All members and guests of the Group are expected to act with integrity, objectivity, openness and honesty. In addition, members are requested to:

- agree to work within the CRG's Terms of Reference
- arrive on time and stay for the duration of meetings
- commit to attend all meetings or provide advance notice of non-attendance
- respect the rights of other members to express their views, even if they are different from their own

- respect the confidentiality of items of business which the group may determine are confidential in nature
- agree to have their details published in materials relating to the CRG
- abide by the CRG's media and public speaking protocol; and
- abide by Council policy if attending a Council site.

Council may terminate the membership of members who do not respect the format, scope or conduct of the Group meetings or renounce their membership and nominate an alternative.

17. Breaches

Any breaches of these terms of reference will be handled in accordance with the, Code of Conduct for Volunteers and Staff Code of Conduct

18. Relevant Forms

Title	Link
Community Reference Group – Member Declaration	TBA

19. Document History

Date approved	Change Type	Version	Next Review Date
TBA	Adopted	1.0	