

# Environment and Sustainability Community Reference Group

## Terms of Reference

<b>Approval Body:</b>	Environment and Sustainability Community Reference Group
<b>Endorsement Date:</b>	8/4/2021
<b>Council Plan Reference:</b>	2.3 A place to Prosper - A city that sustainably plans and manages growth while protecting its diverse landscape
<b>Current Version:</b>	1.0
<b>Compulsory Review Cycle:</b>	4 Years
<b>Review Date:</b>	<p>13 March 2022 (12 months from Endorsement)</p> <p><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></p> <p><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></p>
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Sustainability and Waste
<b>Relevant Legislation:</b>	<p>Local Government Act 2020</p> <p>Planning and Environment Act 1987</p>
<b>Relevant Council Documents:</b>	<p>Council Plan 2017-2021</p> <p>Rethink Your Waste</p> <p>Emissions Management Plan</p> <p>Biodiversity Strategy</p> <p>Sustainability Plan</p>
<b>Breaches:</b>	<p>Breaches will be dealt with under the provisions of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Conduct for Volunteers</li> </ul>
<b>ECM ID:</b>	14886520

## 1. Purpose

The Environment and Sustainability Community Reference Group provides Council with strategic and expert advice from local community, service organisation, and research perspectives on matters related:

- Development of an Environmental Strategy
- Climate Change

Priority will be given to emerging community needs. Sub-groups will be formed to focus on specific issues, projects, areas, and cohorts within the City of Casey as deemed appropriate by Council.

## 2. Objectives

The objectives of the Group are to:

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

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

## 3. Definitions

Key term	Definition
<b>Council</b>	means Casey City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 2020
<b>Council officer</b>	means the Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.
<b>Group</b>	means the Environment and Sustainability Community Reference Group

## 4. Membership and Term of Appointment

Membership shall be as follows:

- Relevant Council officers
- Up to 15 Representatives from the Casey Community and subject matter experts from relevant organisations and academic institutions not limited to:
  - First Nations Representatives across Casey and relevant organisations
  - Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne
  - South East Councils Climate Change Alliance
  - Landcare, Friends Groups and Committees of Management
  - Tertiary education bodies
  - Casey Youth Action Committee
  - Other environmental/sustainability-based organisations

Additional subject matter experts will be invited to provide specialist information and advice to the Group as required.

Group members will be appointed for an initial term of 12 months. 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 officers 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 translators, 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 on Council owned channels (for example website and social media) and other relevant electronic forums as deemed appropriate, and through networks relating to the Group's areas of interest.

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

Community membership 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 environmental and sustainability matters
- 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 Group 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 (with the exception of the Chairperson) 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 Group shall meet on a quarterly basis with meetings of up to two hours in duration. 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 appointed members, unless otherwise determined and agreed by the Group for an appropriate reason.

## **9. Sub-committees and Working Groups**

Membership of sub-committees and working groups is limited to members of the Group. Sub-committee and working group meetings are not minuted. A representative of the Sub-committee or working will provide a report to the Groups next 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](mailto:media@casey.vic.gov.au)

#### 15. Responsibilities

Who	What
Team Leader Sustainability and Environment	Provides oversight of reference group, will coordinate meetings and sharing of relevant information
Team Leader Site assessment and Environmental Remediation	Will Chair meetings as they relate to the development of the Environment Strategy
Environmental Planner	Will Chair meetings related to Climate Change

#### 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's Occupational Health and Safety policy

Council may terminate the membership of members who do not respect the format, scope or conduct of the Group meetings, miss more than 2 consecutive meetings or 3 meetings in a calendar year without explanation or renounce their membership.

#### 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**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Link</b>
Community Reference Group – Member Declaration	<b>N/A</b>

**19. Document History**

<b>Date approved</b>	<b>Change Type</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Next Review Date</b>
13/3/2021	Adopted	1.0	13/3/2022