**Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel**

**Terms of Reference**

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| Policy owner | Community, Assets and Operations |
| Approved by | Council |
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| Relevant legislation/codes | Code of Conduct for Council Committee Members and Other Council Officials  Code of Meeting Practice |
| Related policies/procedures/guidelines | Randwick and Waverley Regional Disability Inclusion Framework 2017-2021  Waverley Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021 |
| Related forms | Waverley Access and Inclusion Panel Expression of Interest Form |

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# Acknowledgement

Waverley Council acknowledges the Bidjigal and Gadigal people who traditionally occupied the Sydney Coast and we also acknowledge Aboriginal Elders both past and present.

# Objective

The aim of the Panel is to promote an inclusive community and enhance the inclusion and participation of people of all abilities in community life.

# Purpose Statement

The role of the Panel is to:

1. Provide input into policy development and review and planning
2. Provide input to enhance the inclusion and accessibility of Council infrastructure, facilities, services, events, programs, systems, and information
3. Provide advice to Council on how to identify barriers to people’s full participation in community life
4. Provide input into helping Council keep the broader community informed and engaged in initiatives that promote inclusion
5. Assist in the development, implementation and review of the Disability and Inclusion Access Plan, and related actions within the Waverley Community Strategic Plan

# Authority

The Panel is an advisory body to Council that assists the Council to fulfil its functions. It does not have any delegated authority to act on behalf of Council. The advisory status of the Panel means that it may provide input to Council officers and make recommendations to Council or its Standing Committees.

# Membership

Committee membership will comprise:

* The Mayor (or Mayor’s nominee) and three (3) Councillors
* Up to eight (8) community representatives who have a direct experience of disability either personally, professionally, academically or through a care/support role.

## Appointment of Councillor members

The four (4) Councillor members of the Panel must be appointed by resolution of the Council.

In the absence of one of the Councillor members, Council may resolve to appoint an alternate Councillor member to attend Committee meetings. The alternate Councillor member will have the same voting rights as the Councillor member being replaced.

## Appointment of community representatives

The eight (8) community representatives may only be appointed to the Panel by resolution of the Council.

The community representatives shall be sought by way of public advertisement inviting expressions of interest for assessment by a selection panel comprising the Mayor (or the Mayor’s delegate), the three councillor members and the Director Community, Assets and Operations or officer assigned by the General Manager.

Members are to be appointed on an individual basis and not as a representative of an organisation, advocacy body, or stakeholder group.

Applicants may request assistance to submit their expression of interest to become a Panel member. Council’s Community Development Officer Access and Inclusion will be available to provide support to interested community members.

An Easy Read version of the Expression of Interest form will be made available.

In recognition of the expert advice sought by Council from the Panel, each community representative will be paid a nominal fee of $200 per meeting.

Meetings of the Panel will be held three times per year in March, June, and September each year. Panel members must be available to attend all three meetings unless otherwise approved by the Chair.

The selection panel will evaluate the candidates against the following selection criteria:

* Live, work or study in the Waverley LGA or the Eastern Suburbs
* Support the values of Waverley’s diverse community
* Have capacity to contribute views and perspectives that represent, as far as is possible, a diverse range of disability
* Have interest in and the capacity to provide advice on one or more of the following;
  + The built environment and urban planning
  + Social inclusion and civic participation
  + Economic participation
  + Promotion of inclusive attitudes and behaviours
  + The development, implementation and review of Council’s strategies, policies and practices.
* Be willing to make an active contribution to the review and delivery of the Waverley Disability Inclusion Action Plan.
* Be available to attend meetings out of business hours.

The selection panel will recommend the community membership to Council for its determination.

Where there are more nominations than positions available, an eligibility list may be established, and if a vacancy arises during the Panel’s term, the assessment panel will make an appointment from the list. If there is no list, the selection panel may co-opt a member with relevant expertise for the remainder of the period of the term.

## Vacancies

A vacancy for a community member of the Panel will occur upon the resignation of the member, expiry of a term of appointment as outlined in Section 5 of this Terms of Reference, failure to attend without cause for two consecutive meetings, or removal of the member by resolution of the Council.

At the end of the Panel’s term, vacant community member positions on the Panel must be filled by way of public advertisement inviting expressions of interest for assessment by the selection panel, who will recommend a new member/s to Council.

Council may establish a pool of suitable candidates to fill vacancies on the Panel. A candidate may be a member of the pool for a maximum period of 12-months.

## Non-voting Invitees

The Panel will issue a standing invitation to the following people to attend meetings of the Panel as non-voting invitees:

* All non-member Councillors
* The General Manager
* All Directors

Other Council staff may be invited by the Chair of the Panel to attend meetings as observers, advisors or to provide information and presentations as required.

The Panel may also invite other external parties to provide expert advice, information or presentations as the Committee deems necessary.

Councillors who are not Panel members may attend meetings of the Panel. However, they are not entitled to:

* Give notice of business for inclusion on the agenda of the meeting;
* Move or second a motion at the meeting; or
* Vote at the meeting.

## Chair of the Panel

The Mayor (or the Mayor’s nominee) is the Chair of the Panel.

The Chair is to have precedence over the control and management of the meetings. In relation to any procedural matter, the ruling of the Chair shall be final.

The Chair may call any member to order whenever in the opinion of the Chair it is necessary to do so.

Should the Chair be unable to chair a meeting or part of a meeting, prior to the meeting the Chair will nominate a delegate to Chair the meeting. In the case that the nominated Chair does not attend, Council’s most senior Officer in attendance will become Chair.

# Term of Office

Councillor members of the Panel shall hold office for a 12-month term, as determined by Council in September each year.

Community members of the Panel shall hold office for up to two years and may reapply via expression of interest for another two years, provided the combined terms served does not exceed four years. The expression of interest recruitment process will be undertaken in September every two years.

# Panel Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Panel members to:

* Attend and contribute to meetings, or with the consent of the Chair, contribute by electronic means if physically getting to a meeting is difficult.
* Understand the relevant legislation and regulatory requirements appropriate to the Panel.
* Contribute the time needed to study and understand the papers/information provided.
* Apply good analytical skills, objectivity and good judgment.
* Keep up to date and informed of the work of the Panel.
* The Panel is a working Panel and therefore it is anticipated that some of the tasks you choose to undertake may occur outside of meetings.
* Any other duties that may reasonably be determined from time to time and agreed by Panel members e.g. site visits.

## Code of Conduct

Members of the Panel must comply with Council’s *Code of Conduct for Council Committee Members and Other Council Officials* in carrying out their functions as Panel members.

## Conflict of Interests

Panel members must declare any conflict of interests at the start of each meeting or before discussion of a relevant agenda item or topic. Details of any conflicts of interest should be recorded in the minutes.

Where Panel members at meetings are deemed to have a real or perceived conflict of interest, it may be appropriate they be excused from Panel deliberations on the issue where the conflict of interest may exist.

For the avoidance of doubt, non-councillor members of the Panel are not ‘designated persons’.

## Confidential and Personal Information

In the course of their work on the Panel, Panel members will be entrusted with sensitive or confidential information about Council’s operations.

Panel members must maintain the integrity and security of confidential and personal information in their possession, or for which they are responsible.

Provisions concerning the use and security of confidential and personal information are set out in Part 7 of Council’s *Code of Conduct for Council Committee Members and Other Council Officials*.

Should a Panel member become aware of any breach of security, or misuse of Council’s confidential or personal information, they should inform the General Manager immediately.

## Media Protocol

Panel members must not make public comment, including to the media and on social media, on any matter related to Waverley Council.

## Responsibilities of Non-voting Invitees, Observers and Non-member Councillors

All non-voting invitees, observers and non-member Councillors must comply with sections 6.1-6.4 of this Terms of Reference.

# Establishment of Working Groups and Workshops

Working groups and/or Workshops may be established at the direction of the Chair to address specific issues or work out the detail of specific initiatives. The Panel may develop briefs for working groups and co-opt people with the necessary knowledge and skills to contribute as needed.

# Review of the Terms of Reference

The Panel Terms of Reference will be reviewed every four years, following each Council election and in line with the review of the Community Strategic Plan.

The Terms of Reference may be added to, repealed or amended by resolution of Council in consultation with, or upon the recommendation of the Panel or as it sees fit.

# Administrative Arrangements

## Panel Administrative Support

The Panel and its working groups will be supported by relevant Officers assigned by the General Manager.

Council’s main contact for the Panel will be the Executive Manager Community Programs, who will initiate communication on behalf of Council with regard to Panel recommendations, maintain a record of advice, and prepare an update for each meeting.

## Meetings

Meetings of the Panel are not open to the public. However, members of the public may be invited to speak at a meeting on the issues being considered by the Panel at the discretion of the Chair. External specialist advisors may also be invited to attend meetings where required.

Panel meetings will normally be held outside business hours three times per calendar year, or otherwise as determined by Council or the Chair.

Meetings may be held in person, by telephone or by video conference.

Regular meetings may be deferred if the Chair considers them not necessary at that time.

In general, meetings of the Panel will take place without strict adherence to the rules of debate and other procedural requirements. The Panel is intended to provide more detailed consideration of matters than is possible in formal Council meetings and provide comment and input into the development of advice to Council.

Where these Terms of Reference do not address the conduct of the meetings, Council’s Code of Meeting Practice will apply.

## Agendas and Minutes

Council officers will provide agenda items and reports for Panel meetings in consultation with the Committee Chair.

Members may raise other matters within the parameters of the Terms of Reference for Panel consideration, discussion and comment. Where practicable, members should notify the Director or officer assigned to support the Panel of an item at least 21 days prior to a scheduled meeting to enable its inclusion in the agenda. Agenda items put forward must be aligned with the Waverley Disability Inclusion Action Plan and Waverley Community Strategic Plan.

The assigned support officer will ensure meeting agendas and associated documents will be issued to Panel members, all councillors and non-voting invitees at least seven days before the meeting.

The General Manager, through the assigned support officer, must ensure that full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of Panel meetings are kept. The minutes must record:

* The date and start time of meetings, attendees and any apologies.
* Any conflict of interests declared at the meeting.
* The confirmation of the minutes from previous the meeting.
* The Committee’s recommendation on each item.
* The Action
* The time the meeting closed.

The draft minutes must be approved by the Chair of the Committee. The assigned support officer will then circulate the draft minutes to all Committee members, Councillors and relevant staff within 10 business days of the meeting being held.

Draft minutes are not publicly available.

A summary of the Minutes, including Panel recommendations and an Action Tracking Table will be reported to the next relevant Council meeting for consideration and endorsement. Should the recommendations of the Panel be adopted by the Council, they will become resolutions of Council.

A summary of the minutes will also be published to Council’s web site following endorsement.

* 1. **Access and Inclusion Panel Tracking Report**

An Action Tracking Report is to be maintained by Council’s Community Programs team. The report will be a running agenda item for the Panel and reported to Council with the Minutes. As an item is completed and reported to a Panel meeting, it will be removed from the list of actions in the report.

## Quorum

A quorum for a meeting of the Panel will be a majority of Panel members, at least one of whom must be a Councillor.

## Voting

A motion supported by the majority of Panel members, by means of a vote, at a meeting of the Panel at which a quorum is present is a decision of the Panel.

Voting at a Panel meeting is to be by a show of hands or by voices.

A member of the Panel is entitled to one vote only on each matter. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chair of the Panel has a casting vote. Where the Chair decides not to exercise their casting vote, the motion being voted upon is lost.

Whether or not the Chair used their casting vote shall be recorded in the minutes.

## Induction

New committee members will receive information packs and briefings upon their appointment to assist them to meet their Committee responsibilities.

## Attendance

A Panel member ceases to be a member of the Panel if they have been absent for more than two consecutive meetings in any 12-month period without giving acceptable reasons for their absence.

The Chair will assess the member’s response and determine if the member should continue to hold office or whether the position should become vacant and be re-advertised.

If a Panel member is absent from a meeting, they will not receive payment of the nominal fee for that meeting.