

Environment Strategic Reference Group

Terms of Reference

Adopted March 30 2017

1. Scope

The Environment Strategic Reference Group (ESRG) consists of community members with demonstrated interest, skills and experience in understanding and addressing issues effecting the Inner West Council (IWC) environment. Their feedback and advice might be sought for input into development of:

- Community Strategic Plan
- Environment and Sustainability policies, strategies and plans
- Council initiatives and programs relevant to the environment and sustainability.

2. Purpose Statement

The ESRG is an advisory group, it is a forum for discussion to assist Council with development and review of environmental and other relevant strategies and programs.

3. Link to Community Engagement Framework

Council is currently developing a Community Engagement Framework which outlines the IWC commitment to including the community in decision-making processes.

Council's SRGs are recognised as a stakeholder in the Engagement Framework.

4. Meeting Principles

As a member of the ESRG, members agree to:

- attend meetings and participate in discussions;
- adequately review any agenda attachments or documents as required prior to meetings;
- allow all members to present their views and opinions;
- clearly declare any conflict of interest regarding any issue under discussion;
- maintain confidentiality where appropriate;
- treat all persons with respect and have due regard to the opinions, rights and responsibilities of others, including Council;
- act with integrity;
- only maintain membership to one SRG at any time.

Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest exists when a reasonable and informed person perceives that a member is potentially influenced by private interest, whilst making recommendations on issues of public interest.

If a member recognises a conflict of interest then the onus is on the member to disclose to the meeting any agenda item(s) that they have an interest in. The Chairperson must ensure that the minutes of the meeting record the disclosure of the interest and how it was managed.

Confidentiality

If issues arise that require the distribution of confidential information the Code of Conduct will come into play and members will be expected to abide by the Code of Conduct.

Media

Members must not speak, or purport to speak to the media on behalf of Council or the ESRG on any matter, whether or not that matter is explicitly raised in ESRG meetings.

Insurance

Members are covered by the public liability and personal injury policies of Council, whilst attending ESRG meeting or other activities.

5. Meetings

to the SRG will meet 5-6 times during 2017, at a day, time and venue to be set by SRG Facilitator in consultation with the members.

6. Membership, Chairperson and other participants

6.1 Members

Members of the ESRG are community representatives appointed by the Administrator after an expression of interest process.

The ESRG has been established by the Administrator and will operate until December 2017

If a member resigns they may be replaced in the same way as members were appointed.

Members of the ESRG are able to move recommendations to be considered by Council.

Each member is entitled to one vote which will be recorded in the minutes.

6.2 Chairperson

The Chairperson will be responsible for running the meetings and liaising with the ESRG Facilitator (Council staff member) to coordinate the agenda and minutes. The Chairperson is to be selected from members, by the members of the SRG. If the elected Chairperson is absent from a meeting the members are to elect a Chairperson for that meeting.

6.3 Other Participants

Council staff, including the Facilitator, invited speakers and Local Representation Advisory Committee (LRAC) members can participate in discussion at meetings but cannot move or vote on recommendations.

7. Quorum

The Quorum of the Strategic Reference Group will be 50% of appointed members plus 1, or a minimum of 6 members.

8. Facilitator

The Facilitator (Council staff member) will be responsible for supporting the ESRG i.e.: developing the Agenda, inviting speakers to attend the meetings, be present at meetings and take notes of any recommendations or actions.

9. Agenda availability

The Agenda will be circulated to members and other participants one week prior to the meeting.

10. Recommendations and Voting

Members of Strategic Reference Groups are encouraged to reach consensus on any recommendations they make. However, if consensus cannot be reached each member referred to in 6.1 above is entitled to one vote. Any Recommendations of the Strategic Reference Group will be referred to the relevant Group Manager for their consideration and action. An update on the action taken in regards to recommendations made by the Strategic Reference Group will be made at the following meeting.

11. Minutes

Minutes of the Meeting will record any recommendations or actions made by the Strategic Reference Group. Minutes will be published on Council's website within 10 days of each meeting.