

# Access & Inclusion Advisory Committee

## Terms of Reference

### 1. Purpose

The City of Casey Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee (the Committee) has an advisory role and it brings community perspectives to Council. The Committee provides strategic advice and advocacy to the City of Casey on access and inclusion issues of relevance to the municipality in line with the Council Plan and City of Casey Diversity, Access and Inclusion Policy.

### 2. Objectives

The objectives of the Committee are to:

- » Oversee the development and implementation of Council policies, strategies and action plans relating to access and inclusion
- » Assist Council to identify and make 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 Casey.
- » To enable greater public participation in decision making via a number of community engagement and consulting strategies

### 3. Role of the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee

The Committee has an advisory role. It provides strategic advice to the City of Casey on the development and implementation of relevant policies, strategies and action plans as they relate to the access and inclusion needs of people in Casey. These Terms of Reference are to be read in conjunction with Council's Advisory Committee Policy. (*Version 4.1, 21 February 2017*)

### 4. Membership and Term of Appointment

4.1 Membership will comprise:

- » Up to four (4) Councillors of the City of Casey
- » Up to 12 community representatives with a mixture of age groups and interests reflecting the Casey demographics
- » Two (2) Council staff representatives.

- 4.1 Additional members may only be added to the Advisory Committee by Council.
- 4.3 All members will represent the community interest and not individual interests.
- 4.4 Council delegates to the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee shall generally be appointed for one year at the annual Special Council meeting which elects the Mayor.
- 4.5 Membership to the Committee is aligned to the Council Plan with an interim review every two (2) years.
- 4.6 All Members are eligible for reappointment and there is no limit to the number of terms a person may serve on the Committee. A Committee member may resign at any time by advising of their resignation in writing to the Chairperson. Council may appoint a community representative to fill the casual vacancy for the remainder of the term.
- 4.7 A Committee member who is absent for more than two consecutive meetings without leave or reasonable excuse, may be requested to explain their absence. If absenteeism of a member is ongoing, the Committee may request Council to declare the position vacant.

## **5. Appointment of Committee**

- 5.1 Committee members shall be appointed by resolution of Closed Council, following recommendation by the Committee.
- 5.2 New members will be required to undergo an induction process as soon as possible after their appointment to the Committee.

## **6. Community Member Selection Process**

Community representatives shall be selected through a nomination process that is advertised in local newspapers, on Council's website, Facebook page and other relevant electronic forums as deemed appropriate, and through networks relating to the Committee's areas of interest.

An assessment panel of all delegated Councillors and two Council officers will recommend on the selection of representatives to fill the membership of the new Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee. Future assessment panels will revert to the following: An assessment panel of at least one delegated Councillor and two community members of the Committee.

All recommendations regarding the filling of vacancies will be submitted in a report by Council officers to a Closed Council meeting for determination.

Community membership on the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee will be based on the following criteria. Members must:

- » Be aged 18 years and over
- » Reside, work or study in Casey
- » Have strong community networks and linkages relevant to access and inclusion
- » Have a willingness to make active contribution to discussion
- » Have current involvement in the community and an understanding of access and inclusion
- » Have a capacity to commit to the Committee for the required duration.

## **7. Membership Voting Rights and Decision Making**

For voting purposes, the Chairperson shall accept motions duly moved and seconded by members of the Committee, with the vote taken by a show of hands. Council officers and guests are not members of the Committee and do not have voting rights. Councillors who are not members may attend as observers but are not entitled to vote.

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

## **8. Chairperson**

The position of Chairperson shall be filled by a Councillor and rotated between all nominated Councillors. In the event of a Councillor not being in attendance, the Committee will appoint a temporary Chairperson for that meeting.

## **9. Administration and Reporting of Minutes and Recommendations to Council**

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

- 9.1 The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee will meet at a minimum quarterly and will also have two (2) community engagement sessions with broader community per year.
- 9.2 All minutes of the Committee meetings will be presented to Council at the earliest available Council meeting. Council officers will prepare a report to accompany the minutes of each meeting.
- 9.3 Agendas and minutes of previous meetings shall be forwarded to members at least five working days before the meeting.

## **10. Assembly of Councillors**

An Advisory Committee with one or more Councillors present (whether members of the Committee or not) becomes an Assembly of Councillors, in accordance with Section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act. The minutes or notes of the meeting must be reported to the next meeting of Council.

Councillors must comply with the Councillor Code of Conduct.

## **11. Volunteers**

Advisory Committee members other than Councillors are volunteers. Following appointment by resolution of Council, they 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. A copy of the Code must be provided to all new members.

Volunteers must also comply with the City of Casey Trademark Behaviours: Show Respect, Take Responsibility, Be Positive, Listen and Respond, Think Things Through.

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

Membership of sub-committees and working groups is limited to members of the Committee. Sub-committee and working group meetings are not minuted, but a report back is incorporated into the Committee minutes which are reported to Council.

## **13.Conflicts of Interest**

If a member or attending Councillor has a direct or indirect conflict of interest (i.e. interest by close association, financial interest, conflicting duty, personal gain or loss, or future interest as stated in Section 77A and 77B of the Local Government Act) regarding an item to be considered or discussed by the Committee, the member or attending Councillor must disclose this to the Chairperson if they are attending the meeting.

Once a declaration of either direct or indirect conflict of interest has been made, the member or attending Councillor must leave the room and remain outside until the conclusion of the relevant discussion. The time of leaving the meeting room and the time of their return must be recorded in the minutes or notes of the meeting.

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

## **14. Limitations of Authority**

The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee has no authority to:

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

## **15.Publicity**

Committee members, except for the Chairperson, must not make statements to the media or on social media about Council business or items discussed by the Committee. Instead, all media enquiries should be referred to Council's Communications Department for response (as per Council's Code of Conduct for Volunteers). The City of Casey, by resolution of Council, may terminate a member's term for making any statement to the media or on social media.

## 16. Confidentiality and non-disclosure

Information discussed, received, used or created by the Committee is confidential. Any member of the Committee must not disclose information that they know, or should reasonably know, is confidential information in accordance with Section 77 of the Local Government Act. Members must sign and abide by a Confidentiality Agreement before attending their first Committee meeting.

Meetings are closed to members of the public due to confidentiality of matters discussed.

### 16.1 Restriction of Information Use

- » A Committee member must not photocopy or in any way record, retain, or reproduce confidential information.
- » A Committee member must not permit any person who is not a member of the Committee to view, read, photocopy, make notes of, or in any way record confidential information.

### 16.2 Breach of Confidentiality

The City of Casey, by resolution of Council, may terminate a Committee member's term for breaching the confidentiality rules. Breaches will be dealt with under the provisions of the following:

- » Code of Conduct for Volunteers
- » Councillor Code of Conduct
- » Section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989
- » Section 76BA of the Local Government Act 1989
- » Section 76D(2)(b) of the Local Government Act 1989
- » Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

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#### Contact City of Casey

03 9705 5200

**NRS:** 133 677 (for the deaf, hearing or speech impaired)

**TIS:** 131 450 (Translating and Interpreting Service)

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Cranbourne Park Shopping Centre

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Magid Drive

##### **Narre Warren South**

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