

1. PURPOSE

The aim of this Advisory Committee is to provide support and advice to Council for:

- The strategic direction for the Exchange, including in the preparation of master plans, business plans and related policies and programs
- Identifying opportunities to improve the functioning of the Exchange, in relation to productivity for all users, quality and safety processes and animal welfare
- Encouraging all users of the Exchange to participate in the improvement of the functioning of the exchange.

2. INTRODUCTION

The Advisory Committee will work collaboratively with Council staff and provide advice to support the decision making of Council.

The Committee's deliberations and recommendations will be minuted and communicated to Council at the next available Council meeting.

Council will work directly with the Committee to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership will include a maximum of **ten** people (excluding ex-officio) to ensure an efficient functional committee.

Membership shall include:

- A nominated Councillor (non-voting)
- Committee Sponsor or delegate (ex-officio)
- Skills-based community representative(s); and/or
- Stakeholder representatives

The current skills-based and stakeholder representatives are as follows:

- Community Representatives (**up to five**)
- Livestock Buyers representative
- Horsham Stock Agents Association
- Livestock and Rural Transporters Association of Victoria or an active livestock transport industry operator.
- Victorian Farmers Federation

Ex Officio attendees may include

- Agriculture Victoria representative(s)

- Director Infrastructure
- Manager Roads and Facilities
- Coordinator Commercial Enterprises

Ex-officio representatives are non-voting.

- Selection criteria will be established to suit the purposes, aims and objectives of the Committee and will also include:
 - Regular involvement in and an awareness of the issues to be addressed by the Committee
 - A willingness to work with others and share decision making to achieve improved outcomes
 - An ability to represent a broad range of views that reflect the diversity of the community
 - A willingness to contribute to meetings in a fair and unbiased manner
 - A capacity to commit to the Committee for the duration of the term of membership
- If a member is unable to attend three or more consecutive meetings, they will be contacted and if required, a new member selected.
- Membership will reflect and comply with Council's equity and inclusion policy and procedures
- The filling of any vacancies of the committee will be consistent with the original selection processes.

3.1 Selection

- Members will be selected through an expression of interest/nomination process which may be advertised in local newspapers, word of mouth to relevant organisations, Council's website and Council's social media accounts.
- Selected stakeholder organisations will be contacted by the relevant Council officer and invited to nominate a representative for the committee.
- Membership will aim to achieve a gender balance. Membership should also aim to include a diverse representation of age, experience of disability and cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The Committee Sponsor will be responsible for membership selection.
- The selection criteria for membership of the Advisory Committee will be
 - affiliation with an identified stakeholder organisation / industry sector knowledge and experience in the livestock industry
 - specific expertise that will aid the purpose of the Committee.
- The Terms of Reference and membership will be endorsed by Council
- Council staff are not eligible to be members of the committee.

3.2 Participating Organisations

Nominated Participating Organisations will be contacted by the relevant Council officer and invited to identify a representative for the Committee.

3.3 Alternative Representatives

As required, alternative representatives may attend meetings on behalf of the named user groups. Alternative representatives are entitled to vote if the main representative of the user group is not present.

3.4 Council endorsement of nominations

In the event that there are more applications/nominations than available positions, the Committee Sponsor will assess the applications and recommend appointments which will be forwarded to Council for determination subject to the requirements of 3.1 being met.

3.5 Specialist Advice

Individuals and groups may be invited to attend Committee meetings to provide specialist advice. They cannot be involved in the decision making process and cannot vote on the issue.

External individuals and groups that are selected should understand the importance of supporting gender equality and challenging gender stereotypes.

3.6 Council's Role

Council's role in support of the Committee is:

- Provide secretarial support to the meetings, i.e. arrange the meetings, meeting papers and minutes.
- To ensure the attendance by appropriate staff representatives so that relevant information can be provided to the Committee for its consideration.
- To ensure that resolutions of the Committee are forwarded either to Council or the relevant officer, depending on delegation levels and the nature of the resolution.
- To fully consider the advice of the Committee, and report back on actions taken based on the advice, or the rationale for not adopting the advice of the Committee should that be the case.

3.7 Term of Office

Members are appointed on two year terms. Members may apply for re-nomination to the Committee for a second or subsequent term.

Membership is to be reviewed once every two years along with the Committee's Terms of Reference. Each review will be conducted in collaboration with the Committee.

3.8 Resignations

Horsham Regional Livestock Exchange Advisory Committee members who resign prior to the end of their appointment should submit their resignation in writing to the Chairperson.

If a vacancy occurs within two months of the end of the term, the vacancy will not be filled. In all other instances, the vacancy may be filled, subject to the requirements of 3.1 being met.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Advisory Committee is not a decision-making body. Its role is to:

- Help identify key issues with regard to Horsham Regional Livestock Exchange's operations and future planning
- Provide representative insight and advice into the relevant issues as follows:
 - Opportunities to maximise usage of the Livestock Exchange
 - Planning and supporting the development of the Exchange to improve its operation and viability
 - User arrangements: scheduling, use of resources and access to the Livestock Exchange
 - Improvements to the safety of users of the Exchange, including in relation to Heavy Vehicle National Law
 - Improvements to the welfare of animals
 - Quality assurance, pricing structures and fees
 - Promotion of the Horsham Regional Livestock Exchange

4.2 Committee Meetings

The Committee will:

- As a standing agenda item, the Chair will acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional custodians of the land as per the Council's Acknowledgement of Country.
- Meetings will typically be held on the third Thursday of every second month at the HRLE Canteen, commencing at 5:00 pm.
- A Chair will be elected annually from and by the representatives who are eligible to vote, i.e. excluding ex-officio representatives.
- The agenda will be set by the Committee Sponsor or delegate in collaboration with the Chair
- The secretariat (meeting organisation, minutes distribution etc) will be provided by Council
- The Committee Sponsor (or delegate) will report back to the Committee on the outcomes of all recommendations of the Committee
- Other Councillors may attend the Advisory Committees as observers, and should provide prior notice to the chair of their planned attendance.

4.3 Attendance at meetings

Members of the Committee may participate in the meeting via a conference telephone or similar means, as long as all members can communicate with one another. Such participation constitutes attendance.

If a member misses half of the meetings per year, without explanation to the Chairperson, their position may be considered vacant.

If a member resigns, their position may be filled subject to the requirements of 3.1 being met.

4.4 Confidentiality

Whilst an important role of the Committee will be to champion and help promote the activities of the Exchange, information discussed, received, used or created by the Committee may be confidential. A Committee member must not disclose, discuss or otherwise make public confidential information, unless authorised by the Council Officer supporting the Advisory Committee. Confidential information will be clearly marked as such.

4.5 Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest must be declared. In the event of a conflict of interest, the declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the Committee and appropriate action taken dependant on the Conflict of Interest declared.

Council may terminate a member's appointment if they have been found to breach confidentiality, conflict of interest or code of conduct requirements.

4.6 Media

The Chairperson is empowered to be spokesperson for the activities of the Committee. Media releases, flyers, brochures, pamphlets or other sources of information distributed by the Committee must be first approved by the Committee Sponsor or nominee. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Responsible Manager is empowered to be the spokesperson for the Committee.

4.7 Chair

Wherever practicable, the Committee will be chaired by the Councillor representative on the Committee.

Should there be a reason that the Councillor representative is not the chair, a Chair will be elected annually from and by the representatives who are eligible to vote. (Excluding ex-officio representatives).

The responsibilities of the Chair include:

- Ensuring the activities of the Committee and its meetings are conducted in accordance with these Terms of Reference
- Working with the relevant staff member to establish the agenda for Committee meetings
- Ensuring all members have the opportunity to voice their opinions
- Facilitating the communication of the Committee's recommendations and considerations to Council.

4.8 Code of Conduct:

- The Advisory Committee or its members do not respond to personal or individual complaints. They may acknowledge a person's concern and advise a person how to register their concern with Council.
- All members must abide by the policies of Horsham Rural City Council.

- Members are expected to work considerately and respectfully of any diversity of opinions and experience.
- It is not the role of Committee members to speak with the media regarding the work of the Advisory Committee or on behalf of Council.
- All members shall refrain from any form of conduct which may cause any member unwarranted offence or embarrassment. Members are expected to act honestly, treat others with respect and be considerate of the diversity of opinions and experiences of committee members.
- Behaviours that encourage or support bullying, discrimination, sexism or sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Offensive or bad language will not be tolerated.
- If any behaviours breach the code of conduct, the Chair or Chief Executive Officer should be notified immediately. This member may be directed to step down.

5. OTHER

5.1 Grievance Procedures

Grievance Procedures are as detailed in the HRCC volunteer management policies and procedures toolkit.

5.1 Quorum and Decision Making

The quorum for meetings shall be half of the eligible voting members plus one. If a quorum is not present an informal meeting may still proceed, at which no resolutions shall be able to be made.

If a quorum is not present, a vote may occur within 24 hours to provide all members with the opportunity to participate. This will occur via email.

5.2 Council report

The Committee will make at least one presentation to a Council Briefing annually. All minutes are provided to Council at the next available meeting.

5.3 Recommendations and Actions

Resolutions or actions requested by the Committee will be referred either to Council or a relevant delegated officer with supporting information.

5.4 Supporting Participation

Applications for support must be made when completing the Expression of Interest form.

Council may reimburse the cost of necessary expenses for childcare up to and including 16 years of age, and the care of elderly or disabled family members of Committee members.

Council may reimburse the cost of transport to and from the meeting venue for Committee members who cannot otherwise participate.

Council may also support members of the Committee with other forms of specific assistance, such as interpreters.

Reimbursement needs to be supported by a tax invoice.

6. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The Terms of Reference are to be reviewed once every two years. Each review will be conducted in collaboration with the Committee and will be endorsed by Council.

7. COMMUNICATION

The Terms of Reference are available on Council’s website and provided to all committee members upon commencement of membership.

8. RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Sponsor: Director Infrastructure

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years or earlier as required by changed circumstances including changes to legislation and plans, strategies or policies of HRCC.

9. DEFINITIONS

Nil

10. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Document	Location
Committee Framework Policy	Website and Intranet

11. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version Number	Approval Date	Approval By	Amendment	Review Date
01	5 Sept 2016	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New TOR 	-
02	April 2025	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review 	
03	27 October 2025	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor change to Livestock Industry rep 	November 2027
04	23 March 2026	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision for Cr rep to be Chair 	22 March 2028

It is recognised that from time-to-time circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to Terms of Reference (ToR). Where an update does not materially alter a ToR, such a change may be made administratively, without the need for formal adoption by EMT or Council. Examples include a change to the name of a Council Department/Position Title, 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, all changes will be noted in the document control section and version number updated.