1. **PURPOSE**

 **TERMS OF REFERENCE – TR04/XXX**

To provide support and advice to Council to ensure the needs of people living with disability are considered thereby ensuring Council projects, the organisation and the community are more accessible and inclusive and improve liveability for people with disability.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

Council committed to the establishment of a Disability Advisory Committee when it adopted the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2023-2026. The Terms of Reference outlines the administrative and meeting protocols for the Committee, the process of selection for members, and associated roles and responsibilities.

1. **MEMBERSHIP**

**3.1 The Committee**

The Committee will consist of a maximum of 10 people

The Disability Advisory Committee membership includes:

3.1.1 Six people with a disability;

3.1.2 Two staff representing organisations, agencies & service providers;

3.1.3 Two carers of a person/s with disability.

In the event that the Committee membership does not reach the maximum number of positions, applications for membership will be offered on an ongoing basis until filled.

**3.2 Selection**

Members will be selected through an expression of interest process which will be advertised in a variety of local newspapers, word of mouth to relevant organisations, plus Council’s website and social media accounts.

The selection criteria for membership will include:

* + 1. An understanding of the issues and barriers that people with a disability face in accessing the community;
		2. An understanding of the social model of disability, universal design and how that relates to planning in local government;
		3. An experience of disability, either from a personal lived experience or in a professional setting.

Membership will aim to achieve a gender balance and should also aim to include a diverse representation of age, experience of disability and cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The Council officer will be responsible for membership selection.

In the event that there are more applications than available positions, the Council officer will assess the applications and recommend appointments, subject to the requirements of the Committee Membership (at 3.1) being met.

Council staff are not eligible to be members of the Disability Advisory Committee.

**3.3 Participating Organisations**

Nominated participating organisations will be contacted by the relevant Council officer and invited to identify a representative for the Disability Advisory Committee.

**3.4 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.

**3.5 Council endorsement of nominations**

Recommendations regarding the filling of any vacancies of the Disability Advisory Committee will be submitted to Council for approval, subject to the requirements of 3.1 and 3.2 being met.

**3.6 Specialist Advice**

Individuals and groups may be invited to attend Disability Advisory 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.

**3.8 Term of Office**

Membership shall be for a term of two years from 1 July, 2024. The relevance of the Disability Advisory Committee will be reassessed at the conclusion of this date.

Members may apply for re-nomination to the Disability Advisory Committee for a second or subsequent term.

**3.9 Resignations**

Disability 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 and 3.2 being met.

1. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITES**
	1. **Council**

Council will:

* + 1. Allocate an annual operating budget;
		2. Provide annual expenditure reports;
		3. Document minutes of each scheduled meeting and distribute minutes to members;
		4. Support conversations with the Committee to discuss how members would like to be referred to in meetings;
		5. Ensure the confirmed and signed copy of the minutes is forwarded to council@hrcc.vic.gov.au;
		6. Ensure a Council officer or delegate is present at all meetings, wherever possible;
		7. Determine a schedule of meetings in advance, where relevant. Members may be consulted to determine whether there are any constraints that may limit participation at meetings;
		8. Distribute the agenda at least one week prior to the meeting;
		9. Rotate staff to document the minutes of the meeting;
		10. Select locations for meetings that are safe and accessible for all members;
		11. Provide members with updates on how their advice and recommendations have been used;
		12. Council may provide refreshments if a meeting occurs over a meal period.
	1. **Committee**

The role of the Disability Advisory Committee is to:

* + 1. Ensure meetings will be two hour or less in length and will not go later than stated;
		2. The Disability Advisory Committee is not a decision-making body. Its role is to:
1. Help identify issues and barriers that people with a disability experience;
2. Provide representative insight and advice into relevant issues such as:
	1. access to Council services and facilities;
	2. projects that impact community members;
	3. prioritisation of actions in the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan;
	4. Council commitments in strategic plans.
	5. **Council Officer**

The Council officer of the Disability Advisory Committee will be the Community Inclusion Officer.

Their role is to:

* + 1. support the Committee to conduct meetings;
		2. support the chairperson with their duties;
		3. distribute the agenda prior to meetings;
		4. record and distribute minutes.
	1. **Attendance at meetings**

Members of the Disability Advisory 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 and 3.2 being met.

* 1. **Confidentiality**

Whilst an important role of the Committee will be to champion and help promote the activities of the Committee, 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.

* 1. **Conflicts of Interest**

Conflicts of interest must be declared and the declaration must be recorded in the minutes.

* 1. **Media**

Media releases, flyers, brochures, pamphlets or other sources of information distributed by the Committee must be approved by the nominated Council officer.

* 1. **Chair**

Committee members will nominate to be Chair at the first meeting of each year, then the selected Chair will be determined on the second meeting of each calendar year.

The responsibilities of the Chair include:

4.7.1 Ensuring all members have the opportunity to voice their opinions;

4.7.2 Determining the agenda in consultation with the nominated Council officer;

4.7.3 Take requests for agenda items from other members of the Committee.

* 1. **Code of Conduct:**

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 this Code of Conduct, the Chair or Chief Executive Officer will be notified immediately. This member may be directed to step down.

1. **OPERATING PROCEDURES**
	1. **Quorum and Decision Making**

The quorum is at, the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote.

* 1. **Councillor report**

The standard Council Report template must be used when preparing a report. Such reports will be prepared by the supporting Council Officer for the Disability Advisory Committee.

* 1. **Recommendations and Actions**

Recommendations will be recorded in the minutes of each meeting with minutes provided to Council at the next available meeting date for information.

Actions arising from the meetings will be recorded in the minutes of each meeting. The supporting Council officer will distribute a list of previous actions with the agenda and minutes for each meeting.

* 1. **Supporting Participation**

Council may reimburse the cost of necessary expenses for childcare, care of elderly or disabled family members of the Disability Advisory Committee members. The cost of transport to and from meetings for Disability Advisory Committee members, where members would not otherwise be able to attend, may also be considered for reimbursement. Other forms of specific assistance, such as interpreters, will also be provided where possible.

Applications for support must be made when completing the Expression of Interest form. Any claims for reimbursement need to be supported by a tax invoice.

1. **EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

The composition, activities and Terms of Reference of the Committee will be reviewed at least every four year, or earlier as required by changes in legislation, policy or similar.

1. **COMMUNICATION**

The Terms of Reference will be included in the promotion of the Disability Advisory Committee. It will also be placed on the Disability Advisory Committee webpage on the Horsham Rural City Council website.

Upon request, the Terms of Reference will also be available to pick up in hard copy from Horsham Rural City Council Customer Service.

1. **RESPONSIBILITY**

**Owner:** Community Inclusion Officer

1. **DOCUMENT CONTROL**

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| **Version****Number** | **Approval Date** | **Approval By** | **Amendment** | **Review Date** |
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