



# Diversity & Inclusion Reference Group – Terms of Reference (ToR)

# Diversity & Inclusion Reference Group

## – Terms of Reference (ToR)

### 1. Objectives and Purpose

1.1 The Campaspe Shire Council (the Council) Diversity & Inclusion Reference Group (the Group) is a formally appointed Reference Group of the Council.

1.2 The Group's role is to report to Council and provide appropriate advice and recommendations on matters relevant to this Terms of Reference (ToR) to facilitate decision making by the Council in relation to the discharge of its responsibilities.

1.3 The Group is to assist the Council by offering advice and assistance with research on issues of interest to Council and the Community.

1.4 The Group does not have any executive powers, nor does it have any delegated financial responsibility.

1.5 The Group does not have the authority to delegate tasks to subcommittees nor direct the work of Officers.

### 2. Duties and Responsibilities

The Group will carry out the following duties and responsibilities:

2.1 Bring forward issues identified by community/group members relevant to the Community of Priority that the Group member has been appointed to represent.

2.2 Council Officer Referrals:

2.2.1 Provide appropriate advice and recommendations to Officers when requested, including but not limited to:

- Infrastructure design projects
- Policy consultation
- Strategy consultation
- Community support and advocacy programs
- Civic and council managed events

2.3 Reporting Responsibilities

2.3.1 Report at least annually to the Council about Group activities, issues, and related recommendations through the circulation of minutes.

2.3.2 A review will take place 12 months after the establishment of the Group to ensure efficient and effective operations of the Group and their meetings.

2.3.3 A review will take place at least once every four years at which time the ToR will also be reviewed.

2.3.4 A review will be conducted on a self-assessment basis (unless otherwise determined by Council) with appropriate input sought from the Council, the CEO, all Group members, management and any other relevant stakeholders, as determined.

2.4 Other Responsibilities

2.4.1 Perform other activities related to this ToR as requested by Council.

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### 3. Membership

3.1 The Group will be a minimum of seven members, comprising of:

3.1.1 One Councillor, (non-voting rights, appointed by Council).

3.1.2 A minimum of six external independent members, and a maximum of nine, with a view to maximising diversity and inclusion.

3.1.2.1 The external independent members are to have lived experience in the Community of Priority for which they nominate to represent, being:

- LGBTIQA+
- Women
- People with mental illness
- Older people
- Culturally diverse communities
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- People with social disadvantage
- People with disability
- Youth

3.2 Council will provide secretariat support to the Group.

3.3 All members except the Councillor and Council Officers shall have full voting rights, with the Chairperson having a casting vote as required.

3.4 Appointments and Tenure

3.4.1 Council will appoint the external independent Reference Group members at the beginning of each Council term.

3.4.2 The CEO may appoint external independent Group members to fill any vacancy that occurs within the Council term and cannot reasonably be left vacant until the beginning of the next Council term.

3.4.3 The Group will nominate a community lead Chair on an annual basis. For the avoidance of doubt, the Chair position cannot be filled by the Councillor or an officer of Council.

3.4.4 Tenure of the external independent members shall be a maximum of four years.

3.4.5 Appointment of external members shall be made by the Council by way of public advertisement, and Council Resolution, and be to the end of that current Council Term (except in the case of a vacancy as per 3.4.2).

3.4.6 Appointment to the Group may be decided by factors such as suitability, experience, expertise, and with a view to ensuring a diverse and well-balanced Group.

3.5 Disqualification of a Member

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3.5.1 If Council proposes to remove a member from the Reference Group, it must give written notice to the member of its intention to do so and provide that member with opportunity to be heard if that member so requests.

3.5.2 If a member misses two consecutive Reference Group meetings without an accepted approval of absence, they will have disqualified themselves from membership.

3.6 Members are expected to:

3.6.1 Contribute the time needed to study and understand the papers provided.

3.6.2 Apply good analytical skills, objectivity and judgement; and

3.6.3 Express opinions appropriately, ask questions that go to the fundamental core of the issue and pursue independent lines of enquiry.

## 4. Meetings

4.1 Conduct of Meetings

4.1.1 The CEO will provide the support required to enable the meetings of the group and invite members of staff or others to attend meetings to provide pertinent information as necessary.

4.2 Attendance and Quorum

4.2.1 Reference Group members are expected to attend each meeting.

4.2.2 Quorum will be a majority of Reference Group members with at least four external independent members.

4.2.3 In the absence of the Chairperson from a meeting, the meeting shall appoint an acting Chairperson from the members present.

4.3 Meeting Administration

4.3.1 The Reference Group shall meet once a quarter, with authority from the CEO (which will not be unreasonably withheld) to convene additional meetings, as circumstances require.

4.3.2 To facilitate the operation of the Reference Group, Council will provide secretariat services and officer advice in respect of matters before the Group.

4.3.3 Meeting agendas will be prepared and provided at least one week in advance to members, along with appropriate briefing materials electronically.

4.3.4 Minutes will be prepared and distributed within one week of the relevant meeting.

## 5. Dispute resolution

5.1 Should a dispute arise over the actions and/or behaviour of members(s) within the Reference Group, the following procedure will be adopted to negotiate a satisfactory resolution:

5.1.1 The matter shall be referred to the Chair, which shall be made verbally and then confirmed in writing. Should the matter involve the Chair, then the matter shall be referred to the Director Communities, or suitable Council officer to resolve the matter.

## 6. Confidentiality

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6.1 All members are subject to Section 125 of the *Local Government Act 2020* in terms of information that the person knows or should reasonably know, is confidential information as defined by The Act.

6.2 Failure to comply with provisions of the Act with regard to confidentiality may result in termination of the members appointment.

6.3 The ToR and Reports from the Reference Group to Council where appropriate, will be available on Council’s website.

6.4 All independent members of the Reference group shall sign a confidentiality agreement as shown below:

THIS AGREEMENT is made on the \_\_\_\_\_ day month \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_\_

BETWEEN \_\_\_\_\_

AND \_\_\_\_\_

I herewith agree that I must not whether during or after my membership of the Campaspe Shire Council Reference Group, unless expressly authorised by the CEO or in accordance with the law, make any disclosure or use of:

1. Any information or trade secrets of the Council
2. The position of Council or of any Councillor or Council Officer on any confidential matter; or
3. Any other information whatsoever, the disclosure of which may be detrimental to the interest of Council or of any other person who has provided it to the Council on a confidential basis, unless I am required to disclose the information by law. I must use my best endeavours to prevent the improper publication or disclosure or use of any such information by anyone else.

The termination or expiry of my membership of the Reference Group, for whatever reason, does not affect or derogate from my obligations of confidentiality set out above.

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP MEMBER

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(On behalf of Campaspe Shire Council)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER