

1. Policy intent

- 1.1 Tablelands Regional Council is committed to community engagement through the establishment of advisory committees to ensure the delivery of high quality, accessible and relevant services across the region that reflect community need.
- 1.2 The purpose of advisory committees is to:
- a. help maintain constructive public relations between Council and the community
 - b. assist Council in understanding current and changing community needs
 - c. provide constructive options for Council to adapt and address community needs within available resources
 - d. inform decision making processes.

2. Scope

- 2.1 Advisory committees are responsible for providing feedback, advice and recommendations to Council. They are not decision-making bodies. Recommendations requiring Council adoption cannot be acted upon until endorsed by Council at a formal meeting.
- 2.2 The committee must act within the bounds of its terms of reference or members may be liable for their actions and may not be covered by Council's insurance.

3. Background/supporting information

- 3.1 *Local Government Regulation 2012* section 264 – 270
- 3.2 Communication and Engagement Strategy 2019 – 2024
- 3.3 Community Engagement Policy

4. Committee establishment

4.1 Appointment of an advisory committee

- 4.1.1 An advisory committee is established by Council resolution under the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (sectionS 264 – 270). Council endorses the terms of reference for the committee.
- 4.1.2 For skills or community representative–based committees Council will call for expressions of interest. The CEO or delegate selects and appoints members to the committee from nominations received, in consideration of advice provided by relevant Council officers.
- 4.1.3 For collaborative, agency–based committees Council will seek representation from applicable organisations or specialist personnel to participate.

4.2 Committee membership

- 4.2.1 Committees shall have a minimum of three members excluding TRC representatives.
- 4.2.2 Members are appointed for the term of the committee as defined within the terms of reference.
- 4.2.3 If a committee member resigns during the term of the committee, the advisory committee members may seek and approve a replacement for the remainder of the committee's term.
- 4.2.4 A Council officer will act as support person for an advisory committee including preparing agendas, taking and distributing minutes and preparing any reports to Council.
- 4.2.5 If Council has not nominated a Chair of a committee, the committee shall appoint the Chair.

4.3 Conditions of membership

- 4.3.1 Committee members may resign in writing from their position at any time.
- 4.3.2 Members have a duty to act honestly and in good faith, exercise reasonable skill, care and diligence in carrying out their duties, and not make improper use of information.
- 4.3.3 Members are to work collaboratively towards the purpose of the committee as set out in the terms of reference.
- 4.3.4 Members are to acknowledge that disagreement in the committee is healthy so long as it is used to work towards a satisfactory outcome of the committee. Differences in opinion should be raised respectfully.
- 4.3.5 Membership may be revoked by the CEO for inappropriate conduct, misconduct or inability to carry out the committee's purpose.
- 4.3.6 The Chair or responsible Council officer may endorse the attendance of an alternative representative to attend a committee meeting if a member is unable to attend.
- 4.3.7 If any member fails to attend three consecutive committee meetings, without reasonable excuse, their membership may be terminated, and expressions of interest sought for a replacement.
- 4.3.8 Members are to comply with the Tablelands Regional Council Advisory Committees Policy, TRC Code of Conduct and endorsed terms of reference for the specific committee.
- 4.3.9 Any public or media comment is subject to the [Tablelands Regional Council Media Policy](#). Committee members have an advisory role only and must not publicly seek to represent the views of Council or the committee.

5. Meetings

5.1 Conduct of meetings

- 5.1.1 Business may be conducted at a meeting only if a quorum is present. A quorum will be determined to be greater than 50% of the members.

- 5.1.2 A committee may adopt its own meeting procedure and have agreed processes relating to the keeping of minutes, the tabling of agenda items, the consideration of recommendations to Council and the recording of recommendations.
- 5.1.3 Voting must be open by show of hands and a recommendation is decided by a majority of the votes of the members present.
- 5.1.4 Meeting minutes will provide a record of discussion topics and any resolutions or recommendations.
- 5.1.5 All written material associated with the committee is subject to the [Right to Information Act 2009](#) and may be made available to the public.

5.2 Chair responsibilities

- 5.2.1 The Chair of an advisory committee must ensure meetings and committee functions are carried out in accordance with this policy and the terms of reference for the specific advisory committee.
- 5.2.2 The Chair must ensure the meeting is properly convened and conducted:
 - a. welcome and introduce members and guests
 - b. keep individuals at the meeting focused on the topics being discussed and encourage all members to participate
 - c. give all members an opportunity to speak on each topic
 - d. keep track of time
 - e. ensure meeting content is in accordance with the purpose of the advisory committee
 - f. ensure recommendations are relevant and understood by members
 - g. close the meeting.

5.3 Meeting agenda

An agenda must be prepared for each meeting and circulated to all members one week prior to the meeting. Matters not listed on the agenda can be raised in general business at the discretion of the Chair.

5.4 Minutes of meetings

- 5.4.1 Committee meeting minutes will be taken by a Council officer in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*. Minutes are public documents and should reflect the actions and outcomes of the meeting. Minutes are not recorded verbatim, but rather as a note and action supported by a vote.
- 5.4.2 Any conflicts of interest that are declared by a member during the meeting shall be recorded in the minutes against the item of business to which it relates. A member with a conflict of interest must leave the room and not participate in the discussion or vote unless authorised to do so by resolution of the other members.

5.5 Recommendations to Council

- 5.5.1 An advisory committee may resolve to make a recommendation to Council for further action or investigation.

- 5.5.2 A committee cannot act on any such recommendation without this first being formally adopted or endorsed by Council, or by approval under a specific delegation from Council that provides for the CEO or delegate to give such approval.
- 5.5.3 The responsible Council officer providing support to the committee will prepare a report to Council outlining the recommendation of the committee and officer assessment of that recommendation. The officer assessment may present alternative options to the recommendation of the committee for the consideration of Council.

6. Insurance

- 6.1 The legal liability coverage provided by Council's membership of LGM Queensland extends to provide liability coverage to members of committees established by Tablelands Regional Council.
- 6.2 Council committees that have the benefit of the liability need to be *genuinely acting for and on behalf of Council and be genuinely supervised by and reporting to Council*. Their status as Council committees should not be conferred as a device to obtain the legal liability coverage provided by LGM Queensland for any functions or activities which are not genuine Council functions or activities.

7. Responsibility

Council is responsible for the adoption, amendment and repeal of the policy and the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the development and amendment of any associated procedures and guidelines relevant to the Policy.

8. Review

It is the responsibility of the CEO to monitor the adequacy of this policy and recommend appropriate changes. This policy will be formally reviewed every three years or as required by Council.

This Policy is to remain in force until otherwise amended/repealed by resolution of Council.

This Policy repeals the former Tablelands Regional Council Policy titled "Handbook for Advisory and Special Committees" adopted 28 June 2018.

BOB OWEN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER