

	<p>Charter - Reference Committee</p> <p>Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel</p>	
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1 PURPOSE

Reference committees focus on addressing a specific action, project or deliverable, and provide advice, insight or expertise to inform Council activities undertaken in accordance with operational plans and strategies.

The committee represents the interests of older people, carers, and people with disability to ensure equity of access to services and facilities for all residents of Lake Macquarie. The committee will provide advice and recommendations to Council on the needs of the target group as required.

Advice and recommendations of the committee are not binding on Council when making decisions.

2 AUTHORITY

The committee is a reference committee of Council, established by Council resolution.

The committee has the authority and terms of reference set out in this charter, which must be approved by Council.

The charter will be subject to review and approval by Council within 12 months after the commencement of each new Council term. Any variation or amendments to the charter must be approved by Council. The Chief Executive Officer may approve minor administrative amendments to the charter.

3 ALIGNMENT TO THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The committee assists Council to achieve the following Community Strategic Plan objective/s and aligns with community values including:

- Lifestyle and wellbeing – Our community has access to adaptable and inclusive community and health services
- Mobility and accessibility – People of all abilities use and enjoy our places and spaces
- Connected communities – We are a supportive and inclusive community

4 OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

The objectives of the committee are to:

- a) identify actions Council can take to improve access to services and facilities for the target group
- b) promote awareness of ageing and disability services within Council and the community
- c) support initiatives which promote non-discriminatory access and use of services and facilities.
- d) assist with monitoring Council's non-discriminatory access and use policies and their implementation
- e) contribute information for Council's strategic plans and policies relevant to the target group
- f) provide advice to Council on programs and events to ensure the inclusion of the target group.

5 TERM OF COMMITTEE

The committee will operate for a four-year term under the *Local Government Act 1993*. The committee will cease meetings at the commencement of the caretaker period preceding the local government election.

If Council does not approve a charter within 12 months of commencement of a new Council term, the committee will cease.

6 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE

The committee will consist of the following members:

- a) Up to three Councillors appointed by resolution.
- b) Up to two Council staff members including Community Planner Ageing and Disability and Ageing and Disability Officer.
- c) Up to a total of 12 suitably skilled community members and service providers, selected by the chairperson through an expression of interest process, with the capacity to co-opt as needed.

Community representatives who reside or work in Lake Macquarie City are eligible to nominate as target group members including:

- individuals from the target groups
- representatives from local organisations providing services to people within the target groups.

Members will have recent and relevant experience and knowledge in:

- the ageing, disability and/or carer sector
- representing and working with others to promote the needs of the target group within the wider community
- connections and networks within the community.

Council will consider the balance of representation from all sections of the target groups when appointing members.

Period of membership

Members will be appointed for a term agreed by the committee.

At the commencement of the caretaker period under the *Local Government Act 1993*, all positions on the committee will become vacant and new committee members will be sought and appointed.

Resignation and termination of membership

Members wishing to resign from the committee are requested to do so in writing to the committee chairperson.

The committee may stand down or terminate a member or declare a member's position vacant if the member has failed to conduct themselves in accordance with this charter.

If a member is absent for three consecutive meetings their position will be declared vacant unless otherwise determined by the committee.

Vacancies

Council will undertake an initial expression of interest for committee membership (including reappointment of members) within 12 months of each new term of Council.

Vacancies that occur after the committee is established will be filled through an expression of interest process.

Vacancies are not required to be filled in the final 12 months of a Council term.

Subject matter expertise, assistance or advice

The committee may invite members and other persons to provide subject matter expertise, advice or assistance on matters raised by the committee from time to time. On occasions a subject expert within Council departments will be invited to present.

Non-members may attend meetings of the committee only for the period of time required by the committee and are not entitled to voting rights.

Any costs of subject matter expertise, advice or assistance to the committee must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer prior to commitment. The committee may request the Chief Executive Officer to obtain professional advice where the committee reasonably considers that advice necessary for the performance of its duties. The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate will respond to a request in writing.

7 CHAIRPERSON

Chairperson

The role of the chairperson is to facilitate the proper conduct of the committee, including to ensure:

- meetings are properly convened in accordance with Council policies, procedures and the charter
- all rules and regulations applying to the conduct of the committee are followed
- meetings are conducted in an orderly and respectful manner, each issue is thoroughly discussed, those wishing to speak are allowed to do so uninterrupted and private discussions among members do not take place during meetings.

The chairperson of the committee is Council's Community Planner Ageing and Disability.

Deputy chairperson

The role of the deputy chairperson is to act on behalf of the chair in his or her absence, including to:

- perform the role of chairperson in accordance with applicable requirements, in the absence of the chairperson
- assist the chair by attending formal meetings or engagements if the chairperson requests or is unable to attend.

The deputy chairperson of the committee is Council's Ageing and Disability Officer.

Absence of chairperson

If at the commencement time of any meeting of the committee the chairperson and deputy chairperson are absent, the committee may appoint a member present to perform the role of chairperson for that meeting. The person appointed will stand down if and when the chairperson or deputy chairperson arrives.

8 OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS

Members of the committee will comply and act in accordance with this charter and the following Council policies:

- Code of Conduct for Council committee members, delegates of Council and Council advisors
- Business Ethics Policy.

General conduct

In performing their duties, committee members will:

- act honestly and in good faith
- actively participate in the work of the committee and contribute to discussion of agenda items
- perform their duties in a manner that engenders public trust in the integrity, objectivity, and impartiality of the committee
- declare and manage any conflict of interest in relation to any matter before the committee
- conduct the business of the committee with the care, diligence and skill appropriate to the role
- work collaboratively with other committee members

- regularly review their personal circumstances and conduct, and declare any change relevant to the committee (such as employment status)
- comply with the charter and any lawful and reasonable instructions given by the committee or Council officers.

Privacy

Members of the committee will comply with Council policies in relation to confidentiality, privacy and reporting.

Members of the committee will not disclose matters dealt with by the committee to third parties except with the specific approval of the committee.

Conflicts of interest

A member of the committee is required to declare and manage conflicts of interest in any matters dealt with by the committee, in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Council committee members, delegates of Council and Council advisors and other relevant Code of Conduct. This includes pecuniary interests and non-pecuniary conflicts of interest (significant or less than significant).

Declarations are to be made at the commencement of a meeting where a matter in which they have an interest is to be discussed.

9 MEETINGS

Meetings of the committee will be every two months, with a minimum of five meetings to be held annually. Council staff will work with the committee to establish meeting dates and any necessary supports.

At the first meeting of the committee in a new Council term, the committee will confirm their operating arrangements, including methods of communication, tenure and other considerations relevant to achieving the committee's objectives.

The secretariat for the committee is Council's Ageing and Disability Officer. The secretariat is responsible for providing secretarial and administrative support for the committee.

Notice of meetings

The secretariat will provide notice to committee members at least one week in advance of the time and place of a meeting. The chairperson may call a special meeting at any time he or she deems appropriate and necessary, as long as two days' notice of the meeting is given to all members. Decisions made at that meeting will have the full status of decisions made at an ordinary meeting.

Agenda and business papers

The secretariat will prepare and circulate an agenda, together with supporting business papers, to all committee members at least one week prior to a meeting. All Councillors must receive a copy of the agenda.

Attendance at meetings

Attendance at meetings includes participation through the use of technology, for example virtual meetings or dialling in to a meeting, where appropriate and allowed by the committee.

Procedure

The procedure for meetings, including motions and amendments, will be guided by Council's Code of Meeting Practice unless otherwise specified in this charter.

Minutes of meetings

The secretariat is responsible for preparing and keeping accurate minutes of each meeting, containing:

- attendance of members
- outcomes of discussions about agenda items
- action items for committee members
- details of any disclosure of pecuniary interests or non-pecuniary conflicts of interest at a meeting, and the manner in which it was managed.

The minutes will be circulated to committee members and confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.

10 VOTING AND DECISIONS

Decisions about actions to be taken by committee members or recommendations to Council staff will be taken by consensus wherever possible, rather than formal voting.

If consensus cannot be reached, a decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting at which a quorum of the committee is present is a decision of the committee. A quorum of the committee is 50 per cent of its members plus one, one of which must be a Councillor. Each member present is entitled to one vote.

11 REPORTING

Information or advice provided by the committee will be presented to the Manager Community Partnerships.

12 EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The charter for a reference committee is to be reviewed and approved by Council within the first year in a Council term.

The committee may recommend changes to the charter at other times throughout the Council term.

Controlled Document Information

Authorisation Details

Folder No:	F2004/12276-04	TRIM Record No:	D10532893
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Department:	Community Partnerships		
Officer:	Community Planner Ageing and Disability - Jennifer Linton-Webb		
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Related Document Information, Standards & References

Related Legislation:	(Legislation Name)	(Relationship/Context)
Related Policies (Council & Internal):	(Policy Name) Community-centred Council Committee Framework Policy	(Relationship/Context) Guidance about creating and managing council committees.
Related Procedures, Guidelines, Forms, WHS Modules/PCD's, Risk Assessments, Work Method Statements:	(Document Name)	(Relationship/Context)
Standards COP's & Other References	(Standard, COP or Other References)	(Relationship/Context)

Definitions

Term / Abbreviation	Definition
Nil	

Consultation (update for each version created)

Key Departments, Teams, Positions, Meetings:	Community Partnerships
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Version History

Version No	Date Changed	Modified By	Details and Comments
1	15/02/2017	J Linton-Webb	New Charter
2	19/08/2020	J Linton-Webb	Lake Macquarie Ageing & Disability Advisory Panel changed to Lake Macquarie Access & Inclusion Advisory Panel
3	February 2022	Jennifer Linton-Webb	Updated to new Charter template

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