

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Charter - Grants Assessment Committee</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Community Environment Grants Committee</b></p>	
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## 1 PURPOSE

Grants assessment committees assess applications for funding from grants programs offered by Council.

The purpose of the Community Environment Grant Committee (the committee) is to assess applications and make recommendations for funding under the Community Environment Grants program in accordance with Council's Sustainability Policy and the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan and other associated plans and strategies.

## 2 AUTHORITY

The committee is a grants assessment 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.

The committee will operate in accordance with this charter and relevant funding policies and guidelines.

A work plan for the committee must be approved by the Manager Community Partnerships for the term of the committee.

## 3 ALIGNMENT TO THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The committee assists Council to achieve the following Community Strategic Plan objectives:

- Unique Landscape - Natural environments are protected and enhanced
- Unique Landscape - Our natural landscape is an integral part of our city's identity
- Connected Communities - Public spaces help connect us with each other and the world
- Connected Communities - Our community responds and adapts to change.

## 4 OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

The objectives of the committee are to assess Community Environment Grant Applications against the funding guidelines and make recommendations to Council for the allocation of funding for community-initiated environmentally sustainable projects located in Lake Macquarie City.

The functions and responsibilities of the committee are to:

1. assess and score the grant applications using the grant project assessment criteria and template prior to the committee meeting
2. discuss and prioritise applications and to make funding recommendations
3. consider applications for grant project variations out of session as needed.

The priorities of the committee are to approve grant funds to support community-initiated projects which:

- a) align with one or more of the strategic themes from Council's Environmental strategies.
- b) meet eligibility criteria
- c) demonstrate clear environmental education and/or community engagement outcomes and/or social benefits for participants and target audience(s)
- d) involve the wider community
- e) implement projects identified in the applicant's organisational plan

- f) represent good value for money demonstrated by clear, realistic and balanced project budget and matching investment
- g) propose a creative, innovative or robust project.

## 5 TERM OF COMMITTEE

The committee will operate for a four-year Council term under the *Local Government Act 1993*. All grants assessment committees 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 two Councillors, appointed by Council resolution. Council will appoint Councillors for the Council term and consider reviewing Councillor membership or seek alternative Councillors at any time throughout the Council term.
- b) Up to two suitably skilled community members to be selected by the chairperson through an expression of interest process and appointed by the chairperson. Community representatives must have the following skills and knowledge:
  - i) Knowledge and connection to local groups with a focus on social and environmental sustainability.
  - ii) Knowledge of Council's environmental strategies and plans.
  - iii) Ability to assess and score grant applications.
  - iv) Ability to work collaboratively with committee members.
- c) External agency representatives by invitation, if required.
- d) Up to two Council staff members responsible for relevant subject matter.

### Period of membership

Members will be appointed for a term aligning with the Council term.

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.

Non-members may attend meetings of the committee only for the period 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, including punctual commencement and conclusion of meetings and ensuring quorum is achieved
- all rules and regulations applying to the conduct of the committee are followed, including to ensure all motions and amendments are put in clearly understood terms and related to the business of the meeting
- 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 will be a Councillor, elected at the first meeting of the committee held immediately after commencement of a new Council term.

### **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 will be a Councillor, elected at the first meeting of the committee held immediately after commencement of a new Council term.

### **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 held twice a year to make funding recommendations for each round of the Community Environment Grants.

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 the Sustainability Engagement Officer responsible for the Community Environment Grants. 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 seven days prior to a meeting. All Councillors must receive a copy of the agenda.

Supporting business papers should include full details of applications for funding for consideration at a meeting.

## **Attendance at meetings**

Attendance at meetings includes participation by 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 way it was managed.

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

## **10 VOTING AND DECISIONS**

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.

Formal minutes (with agreed outcomes and action items) will be recorded and circulated to committee members.

## **11 REPORTING**

A report will be prepared by the Community Partnerships department to the elected Council to present the agreed assessment outcomes and the committee's recommendations on matters falling within the committee's authority.

The report will include details of any declaration of conflicts of interest made by members of the committee at the meeting.

The secretariat is responsible for preparing the report to Council. Reports are to contain relevant context information to support Council's decision.

## **12 EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

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

All grants assessment committees are to be subject to a mid-term review to ensure this charter adequately reflects the purposes and objectives of the committee and to assess the work plan for the committee. The responsible Council department will undertake the mid-term review in consultation with the committee and report any recommendations for amendments to the charter to Council.

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

## Controlled Document Information

### Authorisation Details

<b>Folder No:</b>	F2004/12276-005	<b>TRIM Record No:</b>	D11641451
<b>Audience:</b>	Council Wide - Members of the Community Environment Grants Committee		
<b>Department:</b>	Community Planning		
<b>Officer:</b>	Sustainability Engagement Officer - Melinda Brown		
<b>Review Timeframe:</b> Max < 4 years	4 years	<b>Next Scheduled Review Date:</b>	28 October 2028
<b>Authorisation:</b>	Adopted by Council – Ordinary Meeting of Council		
<b>Committee Business Paper TRIM No:</b>	D11760867	<b>Authorisation – Committee/Council Adoption Date:</b>	28 October 2024

### Related Document Information, Standards & References

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

### Definitions

Term / Abbreviation	Definition
Nil	

### Consultation (update for each version created)

<b>Key Departments, Teams, Positions, Meetings:</b>	Community Partnerships, Sustainability Engagement Team, Community Environment Grants Committee
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### Version History

Version No	Date Changed	Modified By	Details and Comments
1	August 2012	Kerry Brown	Terms of Reference created
2	August 2016	Janet Purcell	New template and review As requested by Committee - additional wording added to 5. Composition of the Committee - <i>or alternate member nominated by the Alliance</i>
3	February 2022	Chris Harle	Charter prepared in new template in accordance with Community-centred Council Committee Framework Policy. New name of committee.
4	October 2024	Melinda Brown	Charter review for new Council term.

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