



ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES POLICY

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Policy Statement

The Advisory Committees and Working Parties Policy (the Policy) provides a framework for establishing and operating advisory committees and working parties within Walgett Shire Council (Council).

The core role of these bodies is to provide advice to the governing body and the General Manager, contributing to the informed decision-making processes of Council. While not decision-making bodies themselves, they offer valuable insights and recommendations on strategic matters. Furthermore, where deemed appropriate by Council, these committees and working parties serve as a platform for community members to have input into Council's decisions and directions.

The Policy aims to support good governance and informed council decision-making by promoting clarity and consistency in operations and expectations associated with Council committees. It also aims to enhance service delivery, the economic and efficient use of public money, and public confidence in the Council.

Definitions

TERM	MEANING
Advisory Committee	A formally established body by the Council to provide non-binding strategic advice and recommendations on specific matters or issues. Advisory Committees may be composed of Councillors, staff, representatives from other agencies and/or community members.
Working Party	A formally established body by the Council or by an Advisory Committee to provide non-binding strategic advice and recommendations on specific matters or issues. Working Partys may be composed of Councillors, staff, representatives from other agencies and community members and may either report to Council or to the Advisory Committee who established the Working Party.
Community Member	A person appointed by the Council to serve on an Advisory Committee or Working Party. Community members must either reside within or demonstrate a strong connection to the Walgett Shire Local Government Area. These individuals are selected based on their ability to contribute

	valuable insights, local knowledge, or expertise relevant to the objectives of the Committee or Working Party.
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1. Policy

- 1.1. The Council may establish advisory committees or working parties through a resolution to enhance decision-making processes and engagement in achieving objectives under the Community Strategic Plan.
- 1.2. Such committees contribute to objectives by providing information and advice that the Council may rely on in its decision-making processes and complement the broader skills and knowledge available to the Council.
- 1.3. Advisory Committees and Working Parties are not decision-making bodies, and the decisions or recommendations made during meetings of Advisory Committees and Working Parties are not binding on the Council, the General Manager or any other member of staff, until resolved to be so by the Council.
- 1.4. Council will establish and approve individual Terms of Reference for each committee or working party to guide their operation and support effective engagement underpinned by strong governance.
- 1.5. Such Terms of Reference shall:
 - a. Including a clear purpose and function;
 - b. The makeup and term of committee membership, including how committee members are to be recruited;
 - c. Outline who is the chair of the committee or working party, or where such role is elected by the membership of the committee or working party, the limitations placed on who may be elected chair and the process and frequency in which such election takes place; and
 - d. explain how the committee or working party contributes to a key focus area and identify the relevant objective under the Community Strategic Plan.
- 1.6. This policy does not apply to the following committees:
 - a. Committees of the whole, governed by the Code of Meeting Practice
 - b. Statutory and other committees whose membership is determined by legislation, regulation, or separate Council policy. Examples of such committees include the Traffic Committee and Local Emergency Management Committee
 - c. Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
 - d. Internal Council staff-only committees
 - e. Community operating committees or groups with authority delegated under section 355 of the *Local Government Act 1993*
 - f. 'External' committees which are administered outside Council.

2. Establishment of an Advisory Committee or Working Party.

- 2.1. Advisory Committees or Working Parties may only be established by resolution of Council.
- 2.2. The General Manager may, by putting a report forward to Council, recommend the establishment of an Advisory Committee or Working Party. When doing so, the General Manager should, where possible, present the Council with a draft Terms of Reference.

Otherwise, such Terms of Reference should be put to Council at the next available opportunity.

- 2.3. Councillors may, by way of Notice of Motion, seek the establishment of an Advisory Committee or Working Party. When doing so, Councillors should discuss the matter with the General Manager prior to lodging their notice. This allows the General Manager to consider the matter and any associated impacts, including on staffing and resources, to allow proper consideration by the Council.
- 2.4. Where an Advisory Committee or Working Party is resolved as a result of a Notice of Motion, the General Manager should present a draft Terms of Reference at the next Council meeting or the next available opportunity.

3. Councillor Members

- 3.1. Where the Terms of Reference for an Advisory Committee or Working Party includes Councillor membership, such Councillors shall be elected by resolution of the Council.
- 3.2. Councillor members of Committees or Working Parties established at the commencement of a Council term will serve a set term of two years.
- 3.3. Councillor terms for Committees or Working Parties established during a Council term will be set to a maximum period that aligns with the expiration date outlined in clause 3.2.
- 3.4. Councillors elected to fill vacancies at any time during the Council term will have the same expiration date as the Councillor initially appointed to that Committee or Working Party.
- 3.5. Notwithstanding clauses 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4, the Council may review or change Councillor members at any time during the Council term.

4. Community Members

- 4.1. Expressions of interest for membership on Advisory Committees or Working Parties will be called from the community as deemed appropriate by the Council.
- 4.2. Advertising for Expressions of Interest for Community Members will be done as widely as possible in the community.
- 4.3. The Council may impose eligibility requirements for community members wishing to serve on an Advisory Committee or Working Party. For instance, the Council may determine that eligibility is contingent upon the individual being a user of a specific facility, such as an airport or sporting field, or require that the individual identifies as a member of a particular group or community, such as identifying as Aboriginal or being from a designated town or location.
- 4.4. The Council may impose eligibility requirements stipulating that a community member must possess specific skills, experience, or qualifications in order to serve on an Advisory Committee or Working Party. For instance, the Council may determine that eligibility is contingent upon the individual being a member of a particular profession or having experience in a particular work area.
- 4.5. Expressions of Interest should include an outline of the applicant's skills and experience, why they believe they should be appointed and the value they will bring. Where Council has imposed eligibility restrictions, Expressions of Interest must also indicate how the applicant meets such restrictions.
- 4.6. Community members will be appointed by resolution of the Council following a review of expressions of interest.
- 4.7. The Council will set the term for community membership, with terms to be aligned with the Committee or Working Party's objectives and timelines.

- 4.8. The Council reserves the right to remove a community member from an Advisory Committee or Working Party at any time and for any reason, without prior notice.
- 4.9. Community members appointed to an Advisory Committee or Working Party will be subject to Council's Code of Conduct and are expected to adhere to the same ethical standards, behaviours, and responsibilities as outlined for Councillors and staff.
- 4.10. In accordance with clause 4.7, Community Members are required to disclose any interests or potential conflicts of interest that may affect their ability to provide impartial and independent advice to the Council. These disclosures must be made either at the time of the Community Member's appointment to an Advisory Committee or Working Party or as soon as the member becomes aware of any circumstances that could give rise to a conflict of interest.

5. Agency Representatives

- 5.1. The Council may invite agencies (such as the Police, Rural Fire Service, Royal Flying Doctors, or any other organisation) to nominate a representative to serve as a member of an Advisory Committee or Working Party. In such cases, the appointment of a representative is at the discretion of the agency.
- 5.2. The agency representative's term will continue until they are replaced by the agency or until the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee or working party are amended to remove the agency representative.
- 5.3. Agency representatives are required to disclose any interests or potential conflicts of interest that may affect their ability to provide impartial and independent advice to the Council. These disclosures must be made either at the time of the Community Member's appointment to an Advisory Committee or Working Party or as soon as the member becomes aware of any circumstances that could give rise to a conflict of interest.

6. Staff Members

- 6.1. The Council may appoint the General Manager and a set number of staff members to serve on an Advisory Committee or Working Party, as determined by the Council's resolution.
- 6.2. The General Manager, at their discretion, will appoint the most appropriate staff members to fill the staff positions on the Committee or Working Party.
- 6.3. Staff members appointed to an Advisory Committee or Working Party will serve for a duration as determined by the General Manager, based on the operational needs of the Committee or Working Party.

7. Reporting Requirements

- 7.1. Where the Chair of an Advisory Committee or Working Party is a Councillor, that Councillor will provide a verbal or written report to the Council within two months of each meeting.
- 7.2. If the Chair is not a Councillor, the attending Councillor members will collectively provide a report to the Council within two months of the meeting.
- 7.3. In the event that no Councillor is present at a meeting, the General Manager will ensure that a staff member provides a report to the Council within two months of the meeting.
- 7.4. Each year, the General Manager will provide a report to the Council detailing the number of meetings held by each Advisory Committee or Working Party.
- 7.5. The annual report will also include the attendance record for each Councillor and community member appointed to these committees or working parties.

8. Related Policy/Procedure

Code of Conduct.

History

Minute Number	Meeting Date	Description of Change
	22 October 2024	Draft resolved for exhibition
R-11-12-2024	17 December 2024	Adopted by Council