

(Draft) Community Hubs Reference Group

Date Adopted:

Review Date:

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1. Purpose

The City of Greater Dandenong manages various community hubs across the municipality, which serve as central points for community development, civic engagement, and local services. These hubs are designed to enhance community connectivity, engagement, and well-being by promoting programs, activities, and partnerships tailored to local needs.

The establishment of the Community Hubs Reference Group aligns with the Greater Dandenong Council Plan and the objectives of Council's Community Engagement Policy and Framework, ensuring that the group operates within the levels of "Involve" and "Collaborate" on the public participation spectrum. This group contributes to Council's commitment to genuine and meaningful community engagement across multiple hubs within the municipality.

The purpose of the Community Hubs Reference Group is to provide advice to the Council of the City of Greater Dandenong on matters related to community development, engagement, and the promotion, evaluation, and development of all community hubs within the municipality.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Community Hub Reference Group are to:

- Provide advice to Council on current and emerging issues to enhance community connection and access to all community hubs within Greater Dandenong.
- Celebrate and promote the achievements of programs, activities and initiatives within Community Hubs
- Provide feedback on strategic plans, action plans and policies related to the community hubs.
- Identify opportunities for partnerships, programs, and activities to respond to ideas from the community.

3. Membership

The Community Reference Group/s will consist of members selected through an expression of interest process.

In selecting community members Council will seek to:

- ensure the group includes a broad community representation with diverse views; and
- ensure members of the group hold a mix of skills and knowledge.

Councillors, Council staff and consultants may also attend meetings as appropriate.

4. Schedule of Meetings

Meetings will be scheduled:

- At one of the Community Hubs and is likely to rotate venues
- Quarterly and promoted on Council website
- Commence on time and conclude by the stated completion time

The Reference Group may elect to meet more often, these meetings will be led by the community and will be promoted to the members and published on the Council website.

5. Chairperson

The Chairperson shall be an external non-council member elected by the Reference Group.

In the absence of the Chairperson from a meeting, the meeting will appoint an appropriate acting Chairperson.

6. Member Responsibilities

It is expected that the members of the Community Hub Reference Group will:

- Understand the role of the group
- Attend and participate actively in the reference group
- Review documents and provide feedback where appropriate in the time frames required
- Respect the roles of Councillors and Council officers
- Understand and sign the Terms and Conditions

Conflicts of Interest

Any matter deemed by a member to represent a Conflict of Interest shall be reported to the Chairperson either prior to a meeting or before the specific item is discussed. Disclosure must include the nature of the relevant interest

A member who has a direct or indirect conflict of interest (ie. Interest by close association, financial interest, conflicting duty, personal gain or loss) regarding an item to be considered or discussed by the group, must leave the meeting and remain absent until the conclusion of the discussion.

The conflict of interest, including the nature of the interest will be recorded in the meeting minutes including the time the member left the meeting and the time they re-joined the meeting.

If a community member nominates for Local State or Federal elections, they must stand down from their position from the time they declare they have nominated until the results of the election are announced. If a member is Elected, they will be required to resign from their current position on the group.

Media Protocols

All Community Hub Reference Group members must act in accordance with Council's Media Policy and refer all media enquiries to Council's Media and Communication Department for a response.

The Mayor of the day remains the spokesperson for all Council activities, Community Hub Reference Group members are not to represent the group or Council to the media or on social media, unless approved by the Manager Media and Communications.

Terms and Conditions

All members of the Community Hub Reference Group will be required to accept and sign the agreed Terms and Conditions as part of their membership.

Code of conduct

All members of the Community Hub Reference Group will be required to abide by Council's Code of Conduct -Staff (which includes volunteers).

Authority Constraints

The Community Hub Reference Group has no authority to:

- Expend money on behalf of Council
- Commit Council to any arrangements
- Consider any matter outside its area of reference
- Direct Council Officer in the performance of their duties.

7. Voting Rights and Decision Making

It is preferable that recommendations of the Community Hub Reference Group are made by consensus however there may be circumstances where a matter is decided by a vote.

Each member is entitled to one (1) vote. The Chairperson may exercise a casting vote should this be necessary.

Votes shall be taken by a show of hands and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Councillors, Council Officers and guest who are not members of the group are not entitled to vote.

8. Reporting and Requirements

The minutes of meetings will be provided on Council's website and routinely reported to an Ordinary Meeting of Council for noting.

Periodic progress reports on the activities and outcomes of the Community Hub Reference Group will be reported to a Councillor Briefing Meeting or via the Councillor's weekly newsletter (Infosum).

Additional advice and/or recommendations by the group may also be provided to Council through Infosum or a scheduled Councillor Briefing Session where appropriate.

9. Confidentiality

The Community Hub Reference Group must act in accordance with Council's Transparency Policy and the Public Transparency Principles as outlined in the Local Government Act 2020.

10. Freedom of Information

All documents produced by or relating to the Group that are not publicly available or deemed confidential are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

11. Breaches

The City of Greater Dandenong by resolution of Council may terminate a group member's attendance for breaching the Terms of Reference set out in this document and/or Council's Code of Conduct – Staff/Councillor.

All members of the Community Hub Reference Group will be required to accept and sign the Terms and Conditions statement.

12. Evaluation and Review

A review of the Community Hub Reference Group will be undertaken every twelve (12) months to ensure the purpose, membership and operations of the group remain effective and in line with Council objectives.

Appropriate changes to the purpose and outcomes of the group and amendments to the Terms of Reference maybe made as part of the review process.

Council has the right to conclude the Community Hub Reference Group by resolution of Council at any time if it is found that the group is no longer beneficial to the needs of the Community.

13. Contact

City of Greater Dandenong
225 Lonsdale Street, Dandenong
PO Box 200
Dandenong 3175
Tel: 8571 1000
council@cgd.vic.gov.au

Terms and Conditions

I agree to:

- ✓ Attend the Community Hub Reference Group meetings and provide apologies in advance where attendance is not possible.
- ✓ Act in an advisory capacity by disseminating authorised information within the community and to provide insight and advice to inform the Strategic Plan.
- ✓ Respect the ideas and beliefs of all members and provide an atmosphere where all members feel comfortable to participate.
- ✓ Contribute in a positive way to finding solutions to issues or concerns.
- ✓ At all times act in good faith, with honesty and integrity and apply the skills and expertise I possess with diligence and care.
- ✓ Represent the views of my organisation, interest group or community and not individual views at odds with my organisation or group.
- ✓ Notify Council of any potential conflict of interest that may arise with respect to my participation on the Community Hub Reference Group
- ✓ Allow my comments from the meetings to be noted in the written and recorded minutes.
- ✓ Not disseminate confidential or personal information that is discussed at the Community Hub Reference Group.
- ✓ Act in accordance with Council's Media Policy and not make any media comment on behalf of Council or the Community Hub Reference Group unless approved by the Media and Communications Department
- ✓ Adhere to the relevant Council Policies and Guidelines.

Signed: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____