



MANSFIELD SHIRE

**CHARTER OF THE
ENVIRONMENT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Endorsed by Council – 19 February 2019



CHARTER OF THE MANSFIELD SHIRE COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. LEGAL BASIS

The committee shall be an advisory committee established by Council as described in section 3 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act).

Where indicated by the phrase '(AoC)' in the title, the advisory committee is also an assembly of Councillors.

Any advisory committee that is also an assembly of Councillors must comply with the provisions of section 80A of the Act.

The Mansfield Shire Council Environment Advisory Committee (the Advisory Committee) is a representative group established to:

- Assist and advise Council regarding key issues relating to Environment;
- Provide a forum for dissemination and consideration of information to the local community; and
- Act as the Project Reference Group for Environment projects and policy reviews.

The Advisory Committee shall report to Council following each of its meetings by submitting the minutes of each meeting and any recommendations for Council's consideration.

Council has the power to disband the Advisory Committee at any time.

2. COMMITTEE'S AUTHORITY

The Advisory Committee is an advisory committee to Council.

The Advisory Committee does not have the power to direct Council resources or officers but may make recommendations to Council to assist in its decision-making process.

In order to fulfil the Committee's objectives, members are expected to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of issues relevant to the municipality and surrounding region;
- Understand the role of local government in the Environment sector;
- Be conversant with relevant Council plans and policies, including the Council Plan; and
- Prepare for and actively participate in regular committee meetings.

Mansfield Shire Council is committed to providing a safe workplace for employees, Councillors and volunteers. Members of Council's advisory committees must:

- Adhere to the Equal Opportunity Act 1995, and refrain from discriminating, harassing or bullying other people and using offensive language in their capacity as a member of the Committee; and



- Adhere to the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 and have regard to the principles of health and safety. Committee members must ensure that they contribute to the notion of a healthy and safe workplace.

4. TERM OF THE COMMITTEE

The term of the Advisory Committee members will commence on the date of appointment by Council and will conclude after a two year period, or at the end of the term of that Council, whichever is the earliest.

Appointment of Advisory Committee members must be by Council resolution. Council will consider community representatives applications against published criteria following a publicly advertised 'expression of interest' process.

5. MEMBERSHIP

Membership will include:

- Nominated Councillor to act as chairperson;
- Volunteer community representatives from the following;
 - Up2Us Landcare
 - Gadhaba Local Indigenous Network
 - Victorian Farmers Federation
 - Mt Buller & Mt Stirling Alpine Resort Managements Environment Officer
 - Mansfield Secondary College youth representatives (2 persons)
- Community Representative (maximum of 4 persons)
- Council staff members with specialist skills and knowledge will be invited to attend the Advisory Committee's meetings only to provide specific advice or information.

Council officers are ineligible to nominate for Advisory Committee membership as Community representatives or as representatives of Community organisations.

In the case of casual vacancies, Council will consider appointment of new members for any vacant positions. The term of office for any new members will expire at the original date set down for the retiring member.

Councillor representatives will be appointed or reappointed as soon as practicable after Council elections and be appointed for a period no greater than the Council term.

Members may be granted leave of absence and replaced by secondment for the period of absence with the agreement of the chairperson.

A member shall cease to hold office if he or she is absent from four (4) consecutive meetings without a leave of absence with the agreement of the Chairperson.



Newly appointed members will be provided with an induction pack that will include:

- Environment Advisory Committee Charter
- Council Plan
- Mansfield Shire Council Advisory Committees Policy
- Mansfield Shire Council Environment Strategy
- Any other policies or documents relevant to the Advisory Committee at the time

6. MEETINGS

First Meeting

Date, time and place of the first meeting shall be determined by the Councilor appointed as the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee.

Quorum

Quorum will be half of the Advisory Committee members plus one.

Decision-making

The Advisory Committee is not a decision-making body and does not require voting protocols or other decision-making mechanisms.

Any advice provided by the Committee will be reached by consensus.

Where the Advisory Committee elects to make a recommendation to Council, the Council officer supporting the Advisory Committee will provide a report to Council outlining the views of the Advisory Committee, and make an officer recommendation in line with the endorsed policies of Council.

Minutes of the meetings are presented to Council for information at the next scheduled Council Meeting, by the Advisory Committee Chairperson.

Frequency of meetings

The Advisory Committee shall meet at a minimum frequency of quarterly each year.

Meeting Costs

All Advisory Committee representatives and substitute representatives will be responsible for their own costs incurred in attending meetings of the Advisory Committee.

Meeting Facilities and Administrative Support

The CEO will ensure that appropriate administrative support is provided to the Advisory Committee.



The CEO or his/her delegate will ensure the preparation and receipt of agenda items, preparation and distribution of agendas, recording and distribution of minutes for each meeting of the Advisory Committee and the provision of venue meeting arrangements.

An agenda will be compiled and distributed at least seven days before the proposed meeting and agenda reports (where applicable) must be submitted to the relevant Manager or his/her delegate at least ten days before the proposed meeting date.

The Advisory Committee shall report to ordinary Council meetings following each of its meetings by submitting a record of each Council meeting and any recommendations for Council's consideration.

Meeting minutes for all Advisory Committee meetings will be taken as read and confirmed as an accurate record of that meeting by the Advisory Committee at its next meeting. Copies of the Advisory Committee meeting minutes will be distributed to all members as soon as practical after completion.

Subject to venue availability, meetings will be held in the Mansfield Shire Council Office.

7. MEDIA COMMENTS

Members of the Advisory Committee cannot make public statements on behalf of Council.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

The Victorian *Local Government Act 1989* contains confidentiality provisions. Breaches of confidentiality are serious offences with significant penalties.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The *Local Government Act 1989* contains mandatory requirements for the declaration of direct and indirect conflict of interest. The objective of the provisions is to enhance good governance in Victorian local government and to improve public confidence in the probity of decision making in Victorian municipalities.

Advisory Committee members are responsible for ensuring that they comply with the relevant provisions of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

An online copy of the *Local Government Act 1989* and the Local Government Victoria publication "Conflict of Interest in Local Government" is available at www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au.

Alternatively, a printed copy will be made available if requested.

10. AGREEMENT TO ABIDE BY COUNCIL'S POLICIES

Members of the Advisory Committee must comply with the Mansfield Shire Council policies, in particular the Policy for Advisory Committees as updated from time to time.



AUTHORISATION TO IMPLEMENT CHARTER

Signed: 
Councillor

Witnessed: 
Chief Executive Officer

Approval date: 19 February 2019