



Terms of Reference – Sunshine Coast Community Strategy Leadership Group

1. Context

Sunshine Coast Council's corporate vision is to be Australia's most sustainable region. Healthy. Smart. Creative. The *Sunshine Coast Corporate Plan* sets the pathways we will pursue on behalf of our community to realise this vision. It is underpinned by five goals, including "Our Strong Community". A strong community is a place where people consistently do a variety of simple things together that give them opportunities to connect with others, building trust and social connection. A strong community is one that keeps itself informed and feels empowered to respond to local issues together. This web of trusting relationships and local awareness fosters greater connection, collaboration, innovation and strengthens resilience.

Community is defined as "a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common". We form communities not just to connect and belong, but also because communities have been important for our survival. In a contemporary context, a healthy and connected community is an essential component of social and emotional wellbeing and resilience. These are factors that contribute to the social sustainability of our communities.

Council is committed to the vision outlined in the *Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019-2041* (the Community Strategy) being:

Together we thrive

"In all of our communities people are connected, included and feel welcomed. At the heart of our communities are our people who come together and actively participate in their community and contribute to the social, cultural and creative life of our region. People are welcoming, caring and respectful and equal opportunities are available to all".

The Sunshine Coast Community Strategy Leadership Group (the Group) is an initiative that will bring together key partners in the implementation of the Community Strategy to lead and guide the delivery of the Community Strategy's Action Plan and track and report upon its progress and impact.

2. Guiding principles

The following principles which are embedded in the Community Strategy will guide the Group.

Place-based

Place-based approaches bring together the efforts of a range of stakeholders in local communities (residents, community organisations, the private and public sector) to respond to issues and opportunities of local importance. Place-based approaches are highly collaborative and drive shared accountability that leads to longer-lasting social change and impact within communities.

Collective approach

A collective approach brings together the four foundational elements of asset-based community development and best practice community engagement. A collective approach brings together communities and local organisation to build a vision of the future based on common values and narrative, in turn opening up peoples' hearts and minds to new possibilities.

Outcome-focused

Outcomes are the effects of a program or activities on participants and communities. An outcome-based approach means outcomes are aligned with goals and that we try to measure the extent to which we have achieved our goals. Measurement of progress towards an outcome tracks performance and provides feedback that is used to inform adjustments to a strategy where necessary.

3. Responsibilities

The Group's responsibilities are to:

- support the deliverables of the Outcome areas in the Community Strategy through the provision of expert advice
- engage and work cooperatively with Local, State and Federal government, community and business organisations to facilitate implementation of the Community Strategy Action Plan and priorities
- facilitate ongoing communication and consultation between established and emerging communities, the not for profit sector, government agencies and Sunshine Coast Council
- provide rigorous and transparent advice to Council on its policies, plans, programs and services as they relate to the community and sector
- provide advice to Council regarding effective engagement with the community and sector
- assist with measuring and understanding what matters to the Sunshine Coast community
- measure the outcomes of the Leadership Group's actions, with clear measurement processes established from the onset to garner the full value and impact of the Group's work
- inform periodic reporting and review of the Community Strategy, and assist Council to track and promote the benefits and impact of the Community Strategy.

In addition, Sunshine Coast Council will:

- provide timely and accurate information as requested by the Group, including providing briefings on any related activities or matters
- support the Group in its activities through professional administration duties
- make strategic links with groups, organisations, agencies, service providers, business, and State and Federal Government agencies that can contribute to the implementation of the Community Strategy Action Plan, and advise the Group on such, and
- coordinate any requests for advice required from within council regarding draft plans, policies, advocacy positions or operational activities that may impact or intersect with the priorities and outcomes of the Community Strategy.

4. Membership

The Group will consist of members that reflect the community and the community sector on the Sunshine Coast who are actively contributing to building a stronger Sunshine Coast community.

Membership is open to:

- any community representative who lives on the Sunshine Coast and who is contributing to the strengthening the Sunshine Coast community
- representatives of government, community groups, organisations, agencies and service providers who have a focus on provision of social and community services
- specialists and academics on social planning and community development on the Sunshine Coast.

The Group comprises up to 12 members, including council representatives.

The Group will be based on the principles of participatory leadership and shared action. The leadership of the Group will be shared amongst its members so that there is collective responsibility of the Group and its actions.

Members who are not participating in the Group as part of their core work responsibilities will be required to register as a council volunteer. This ensures the members activities while volunteering are covered by appropriate insurances. The member will also be required to complete a Volunteer Application Form and an online safety induction.

The Group may establish sub-groups or task groups as required for the implementation of the Community Strategy Action Plan.

Additional representatives may be invited to attend meetings as observers and to provide specific expert advice on matters as required.

How is the Leadership Group established?

Council will establish the Group through an expression of interest process.

Membership will be determined by a selection panel of council representatives.

Membership commitments

Participation in the Group will require commitment from participants, including:

- Availability and ongoing commitment to contribute in a positive way and deliver outcomes associated with the Community Strategy and associated Action Plan
- Seeking at all times to obtain and represent the views of the broader community
- Availability to meet regularly as determined by the Leadership Group
- Preparation for Leadership Group meetings
- Contribute to the organisation and facilitation of Leadership Group meetings and in shared collective action
- Availability to meet at a venue in the Sunshine Coast Council Local Government Area
- Representing the Leadership Group to other groups
- Ability to work collaboratively and constructively with multiple stakeholders to achieve positive outcomes.

Tenure of Appointment

The Group membership is for a period of two (2) years on a voluntary basis (out of pocket compensation is available if participation sits outside the member's core work responsibilities).

If a member fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings of the Group, his/her appointment shall be automatically terminated, unless Leave of Absence has been granted and approved by the Group.

Council shall advise any member, in writing, when their membership of the Group is terminated.

Council may terminate the appointment of any member prior to the expiry of his/her term, if:

- a) The member is no longer employed by the organisation they represented when joining the Group
- b) The member is found to be in breach of the Sunshine Coast Council Code of Conduct or a serious contravention of the *Local Government Act 1995*
- c) A member's conduct, action or comments brings Sunshine Coast Council into disrepute
- d) The member is not making a positive contribution to deliberations of the Group.

Members can resign at any time from their position in the Group by providing their resignation in writing to council.

After the initial two-year term all members may reapply via nomination through an expression of interest process.

Vacancies

Vacancies shall be filled either by targeted selection or by calling for nominations through an expression of interest process, overseen by a selection panel.

Members filling a vacated position will hold that position for the remainder of the two (2) year duration of the convened Group, as approved by council.

Delegates

Members of the Group are not able to nominate a delegate to attend a meeting in their absence, due to the participatory processes and relational nature of the Group.

5. Code of Conduct

Sunshine Coast Council's Code of Conduct shall apply to members of the Group.

All Group members shall be required to declare any conflicts of interest in matters being considered by the Group.

A copy of council's Code of Conduct will be provided to each member upon their appointment.

6. Meeting Procedures

Meeting hosts

One council and one Group representative will co-host at meetings.

Secretariat

A council employee will be assigned as Secretariat to provide administrative support to the Group for each meeting.

The Secretariat will be responsible for the following:

- Issuing of the Agenda
- Recording of Apologies prior to the meeting
- Preparation of the Minutes
- Room booking
- Catering requirements.

Meetings

The Group shall convene no more than six (6) meetings each year, from January to November. Additional meetings may be convened if there is a need to address an urgent issue. Email correspondence and communication may take place between the Group as necessary, to progress and reach scheduled key milestones.

Quorum

A quorum will be by simple majority plus one, which must include at least one council member.

Special guests and observers

Special guests and observers may be invited to attend meetings from time to time as required and agreed to by the Group.

Agendas

The meeting hosts will determine the Agenda for each meeting. The Group may submit items for consideration and listing on the Agenda.

All meetings shall be confined to items listed on the Agenda.

Minutes

The Minutes will record group discussion and consensus agreement on actions and any points of agreement/disagreement.. At the end of each meeting, the agreed actions and any points of agreement will be confirmed to ensure they are accurately reflected.

A copy of the Minutes shall be included in the Agenda for the next meeting of the Group for endorsement.

Dispute Resolution

Where any dispute or dissent arises in respect of prevailing views, opinions or research evidence, the alternative view will be noted by the meeting hosts and minuted.

Confidentiality

Discussions at the Group meetings are to be treated by members as confidential.

Leadership Group Recommendations

Implementation of any Group recommendations in relation to strategies and responses will be subject to council consideration and approval.

7. Creation of action groups

The Group may establish one or more action groups where necessary and as agreed by all members of the Group. The purpose of establishing an action group would be to drive the implementation of one or more actions from the Community Strategy Action Plan, across any of the five outcome areas.

The Group will have oversight and responsibility for leading an action group's activities, progressing decisions beyond the responsibility of the action group and communicating their progress to council.

Each action group would be required to:

- drive the progress of an action(s)/project(s)
- forge a strong working partnership between Local, State and Federal Government, community and business organisations to achieve effective outcomes, and
- regularly provide timely and accurate information to the Group on the progress of the action(s)/project(s), including any identified risks.

8. Conflict of Interest

All members need to be aware that any conflict of interest needs to be recognised. Generally, if a matter is being discussed by the Group and a member has an interest in the matter, then the member is required to declare the interest and remove themselves from the meeting whilst discussion on that issue is taking place.

The minutes of the meeting will record the declaration and note the absence during the discussion. Once the matter has concluded, the meeting hosts will invite the member back into the meeting. If a member is unsure whether they have an interest in a matter, they are encouraged to raise the issue with the meeting hosts.

Any person who has a financial interest in a matter shall exclude themselves from the room and not participate in that part of the meeting.

9. Media and Public Relations

Official public comment on the Group deliberations may only be made by consultation and agreement of the Group and with agreement from council's Communication Branch.

Group members are not precluded from commenting to the media on issues in the capacity of their daily role/s and which are outside their Group responsibilities.

10. Budget and Remuneration

Council will meet the administration costs of the Group including, venue hire, catering, printing, publicity etc.

Participation in the Group is voluntary and members will not be remunerated for attendance at meetings. However, if participation sits outside the member's core work responsibilities a remuneration for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses may be provided i.e. travel and expenses incurred.

11. Evaluation and Review

Informal verbal feedback will be gathered from the Group regarding the content of the meetings and ideas for future discussions.

An annual review of the Group will be carried out to identify successes, challenges and areas of improvement for the Group, along with general planning for the coming year.

The Group Terms of Reference will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis or as required for any significant changes.