

TERMS OF REFERENCE

BUSHLAND MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

August 2022



PREAMBLE

Hunter's Hill Council has obligations to manage parks and natural areas and to protect bushland and biodiversity under legislation including the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) and the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (NSW) and in its implementation of plans including the Greater Sydney Commission *North District Plan* and Council's *Local Environmental Plan, Consolidated Development Control Plan, Plans of Management, the Hunters Hill Community Strategic Plan* and *Parramatta River Masterplan*.

The importance that our community places on biodiversity and the natural environment is reflected in the Council's values and objectives to ensure that our natural environment including the flora, fauna and ecology that it supports, is protected, conserved, well-managed and maintained and, where necessary, restored for future generations.

Council values urban bushland and tree canopy within its Municipality as an important environmental and community resource and seeks to protect, conserve and restore it in close partnership with the community.

Bushcare is a mutually beneficial volunteer activity supported by Council and, to this end, Council wishes to ensure that valuable local knowledge and expertise is applied to the task of managing bushland for its long-term benefit and that of the community.

1 NAME OF THE COMMITTEE

The name of the committee is: Bushland Management Advisory Committee (**Committee**).

2 STATUS AND COMMENCEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee is an Advisory Committee of Council constituted to achieve the objectives and perform the functions stated hereunder. The Committee has no powers to act on behalf of Council but can make recommendations to Council in relation to matters referred to it.

The Committee commences on appointment of the first members of the Committee by resolution of Council.

3 DEFINITIONS

"Bushland" means land on which there is vegetation which is either a remainder of the natural vegetation of the land or, if altered, is still representative of the structure and floristics of the natural vegetation. (*Local Government Act 1993* – Dictionary.)

4 OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Committee is to provide a formal mechanism for Council to consult with key stakeholders, seek advice and assistance from the community and enable community participation in the formulation, development and delivery of bushland management strategies, initiatives and activities to:

- protect, and promote the intrinsic value of Hunters Hills bushland.
- protect, preserve and enhance Hunters Hill bushland to achieve ecological diversity, including local native flora and fauna that it supports; associated habitat and wildlife corridors; as well as Endangered Ecological Communities in the Municipality listed under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, namely Sydney Turpentine Ironbark forest, Coastal Saltmarsh, Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest and Sydney Freshwater Wetlands.
- protect, preserve and enhance Hunters Hill's natural heritage and associated cultural heritage, including Aboriginal heritage.
- provide advice, community views and information, where requested, to assist the Council in meeting its statutory and other requirements regarding bushland management.

5 FUNCTIONS

The functions of the Committee are to:

- provide comment and advice on Council policies and strategies in relation to bushland management in furtherance of Council's Plans of Management and Community Plan objectives.
- provide advice to Council about best practice, bushland health and care, priority areas/species and bushland management and rehabilitation.
- provide advice and assistance to Council with grants for bushland management and bush care, including from local Landcare Services.
- provide advice and assistance to Council with identifying existing hazards and/or risks impacting bushland and other natural areas.
- provide advice to Council regarding plantings for parks and streets particularly in relation to tree canopy and biodiversity corridors.

6 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

6.1 Members, Chair and Secretary:

Members comprising:

- One Councillor elected by Council - to be elected as Chair at the Committee's first meeting in the current term of Council (**Chair**).

- Two other Councillors elected by Council – one of whom will act as Chair, if the Chair is unable to attend.
- Two (2) community members appointed by Council from public nominations.
- One representative from each active Hunters Hill local government area Bushcare group.

The General Manager shall nominate a suitably qualified Council Officer to attend Committee meetings as standing invitee to provide technical advice, assistance and secretarial support.

Volunteers and other advisors may attend the Committee meetings from time to time by invitation of the Committee for the purpose of consultation but are not entitled to vote. Non-member Councillors may attend the Committee meetings at any time but are not entitled to vote.

6.2 Selection Criteria

Community representatives of the Committee shall be appointed by public nomination in accordance with Policy Guideline 3 of Council Policy No CORP.S.23 Committees Policy.

A community representative must not be a currently serving Councillor.

6.3 Term

Members shall be appointed for a term commencing on the date of their appointment by Council until the day before the date of the next General Election of Council.

6.4 Vacancies

Council may, at its discretion, approve the filling of any vacancy in the membership of the Committee.

A member absent for three or more consecutive meetings without apology or leave of the Committee shall have their membership position declared vacant.

6.5 Removal of Member

Council may at any time remove a member of the Committee but shall observe the principles of natural justice.

7 MEETING PROCEDURE

7.1 Quorum

The quorum is a majority of the members of the Committee who are entitled to vote.

7.2 Decisions

Decisions of the Committee will generally be made on a consensus basis, except where making a recommendation to Council, or if a formal vote is called for by the Chair, where decisions will be made by a majority of voting members present.

7.3 Frequency

The Committee will meet not less than quarterly and more frequently as required.

7.3 Notice of Meetings

The Councillor members of the Committee, in consultation with Council Officer nominated as standing invitee advisor by the General Manager, will finalise the agenda before each meeting. Members may suggest additional agenda items and may raise at any meeting items not on the agenda.

A notice of each meeting confirming the date, time, venue and agenda will be approved by the Chair of the Committee and forwarded to each member and the General Manager generally not less than three business days prior to the date of the next meeting. Non-member Councillors should also receive a notice of each meeting and agenda.

Meetings may be held in person or by using any combination of in person attendance and technology or combination of technologies, which permits each person participating in the meeting to communicate with every other person participating in the meeting.

8 REPORTING

The discussions, resolutions and recommendations of the Committee will be recorded in minutes kept by the Council Officer nominated as the standing invitee advisor by the General Manager.

The nominated Council Officer will prepare and circulate minutes of meeting to all members within a reasonable time after each meeting.

Following each meeting the nominated Council Officer, in consultation with the Chair, shall provide a report, including the minutes and recommendations for consideration by Council.