



**AGRICULTURE & RURAL
INDUSTRIES STRATEGIC
REFERENCE GROUP**

TERMS OF REFERENCE &
OPERATING GUIDELINES

1 OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE OF THE AGRICULTURE & RURAL INDUSTRIES SRG

- To help shape Council's future directions in relation to the strategic theme of Agriculture and Rural Industries
- To consider actions and strategies that support Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) goals in relation to the strategic theme of Agriculture and Rural Industries
- To provide input and advice to inform the development of relevant council policies, plans and strategies
- To provide guidance and support for the priority projects and actions outlined in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan in relation to the strategic theme of Agriculture and Rural Industries
- To enable Council to engage with its community in relation to the strategic theme of Agriculture and Rural Industries

2 KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR THE AGRICULTURE & RURAL INDUSTRIES SRG

The Agriculture and Rural Industries SRG will generally consider strategic matters relating (but not necessarily limited) to:

- Matters falling within the following Councillor portfolios:
 - Agriculture
- Developing and supporting Agricultural industries
- Rural Lands
- Rural Industry
- Rural Land Management
- Review and Implementation (as appropriate) of The Rural Lands Strategy
- Increasing awareness of Wollondilly Rural Lands, Agriculture and Rural Industries
- Providing constructive feedback into the development of a range of Council policy documents relating to agriculture and rural industries
- Identifying challenges and the opportunities for sustained and growth of agriculture and rural industries in Wollondilly
- Identifying opportunities to leverage agriculture, agri-business and rural industries off Sydney's second airport
- Representing the views and needs of all rural landowners in Wollondilly in relation to agriculture, agri-business and rural industries

3 MEETING FREQUENCY, TIMES AND VENUE

- The Agriculture and Rural Industries SRG will meet four (4) times per year.
- Up to two (2) extraordinary meetings may be called by the Chair in extenuating circumstances with a minimum two weeks' notice. Any meetings required in addition to this will need to be resolved by Council.
- The Chair of the SRG may create additional sub-committees, subject to Director Shire Connections confirming sufficient staff resources available. The chair of the SRG may also form working groups for specific projects as necessary from time to time, noting working groups don't utilise staff resources. Sub-committees and working groups are to comprise members of the SRG unless otherwise resolved by Council.
- Cross functional sub-committees and working groups comprising members of more

than one SRG may be formed for specific projects as necessary from time to time, with the approval of the Mayor and concurrence of the Director Shire Connections or by resolution of Council. Cross functional subcommittees are to be comprised of members of an SRG, unless otherwise resolved by Council.

- Feedback and advice may be sought informally from SRG members in between SRG meetings (i.e. out of session via email) to progress initiatives and actions raised at SRG meetings.
- Meetings will take place at Council's Administration Buildings in Picton, or at an agreed off-site venue where availability allows
- On-line attendance options via platforms such as Zoom or MS Teams will be enabled and provided.
- Meetings will generally be held from 4:00pm – 6:00pm on a Wednesday.

4 COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP

The composition and membership of the Agriculture and Rural Industries SRG will comprise of:

- The nominated Councillor Chair and Deputy Chair (based on Council's resolved allocation of portfolio topics for Councillors).
- The Mayor has delegation to Chair an SRG at their discretion or where a current chair is unwilling or unable to do so. The Mayor may also designate an alternate Councillor to chair a meeting in cases where the chair and deputy chair are unavailable.
- Any Councillors who choose to attend.
- A maximum of ten (10) community members (either as interested individuals or as representatives of key local community/industry organisations).
- The relevant Council staff Manager/s.

Other Attendees:

- Council staff attending as subject matter experts.
- Council staff providing administrative support.
- Guest speakers and representatives from other Government agencies or other organisations who may be invited to attend from time to time as needed.

5 MEMBERSHIP SELECTION, TENURE AND RENEWAL

- Community members (either as interested individuals or as representatives of key local community/industry organisations) are to be recruited through a public Expression of Interest (EOI) process which will be promoted through various media channels and on Council's website.
- The final composition of each SRG will be by resolution of Council. Priority will be given to a broad cross section of expertise, experience and interest that represents the full breadth of the key focus areas for the SRG.
- The numbers of representatives from any given local community/industry organisation will be considered and managed on a case-by-case basis with the aim of ensuring an equitable approach to community representation

- Prospective members are expected to disclose through the EOI process any information about themselves which may cause a potential or perceived conflict of interest or which has the potential to create a risk of Council being brought into disrepute.
- Membership for all Community members will be dissolved / renewed in line with the electoral term of Council.
- A member may be removed from an SRG:
 - At the discretion of the SRG Chair if they fail to attend more than 50% of ordinary meetings of the SRG within a calendar year.
 - By the Mayor or the SRG Chair if in their opinion the member has failed to abide by the behavioural expectations outlined in the “Responsibility of Members” section of these Terms of Reference.
 - By resolution of Council

Casual Vacancies:

- If a community member resigns from the SRG, following the expression of interest process, a new member may be directly appointed to the SRG on the recommendation of the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate, provided the SRG Chairperson concurs with the appointment.
- If the SRG Chairperson does not concur with the proposed appointment, the matter will be reported to Council for resolution.
- If a member is removed from the SRG, the vacancy may be filled through an expression of interest process or by resolution of Council.
- A vacancy may be left unfilled where less than 25% of the SRG term remains, or where Council, or the SRG where appropriate, determines that the position should remain vacant.

6 QUORUM REQUIREMENTS AND DECISION MAKING

- The minimum quorum requirements for any meeting of the Agriculture and Rural Industries SRG shall be:
 - Four appointed community members; and
 - A Chair
- If a quorum is not reached, the Chair will seek to reschedule the meeting for the earliest convenient time to allow for the quorum to be met.
- Wherever possible decision making (pertaining to minutes or filling casual vacancies) will be by consensus. In cases where the chair is of the view that a consensus will not be able to be reached they may opt to take a majority vote on the matter.
- At times, the Agriculture and Rural Industries SRG may make recommendations which require further consideration by the full elected Council body. Any such recommendations needing referral to Council will need to be identified by the Chair and recorded in the minutes. The matter will then be referred for consideration by Council as required (see section 9 below).
- Matters may also be referred to the Agriculture and Rural Industries SRG for consideration and comments by Council via a Council resolution.
- Items that require resolution, or are proposed to make a recommendation to the elected Council are to be included in the agenda; however, in extenuating circumstances, these items can be raised in General Business at the discretion of the

SRG Chair. Items must be relevant to the objectives and purpose of the SRG.

- SRGs may not directly send any external correspondence. Where necessary a recommendation from the SRG may be made to Council recommending that Council send correspondence on a specific matter.
- Matters may be considered electronically out of session at the discretion of the SRG Chair in order to facilitate achieving the objectives of the SRG.

7 RESPONSIBILITY OF MEMBERS

- Community Members will be required to sign a declaration that they have read, understood and will act in accordance with these Terms of Reference and Operating Guidelines. This includes:
 - Adhering to Council's Code of Conduct.
 - Conducting themselves in a respectful, courteous and constructive manner
 - Acting in good faith and disclosing any past or current information about themselves that could bring Council into disrepute.
 - Not using meetings as a platform for personal accusations / defamatory statements or as an interrogation of Council business.
 - Not directing staff in how to perform their duties and/or responsibilities
 - Agreeing to sign any Confidentiality Agreement as and when required
 - Not participating in any caucusing. If caucusing occurs the matter may be referred to Council.
- Ongoing membership will be dependent on adhering to the above.
- Members will be responsible for their own travel and costs as a result of attending any meetings and associated events and activities and for any technology to connect to online meetings.
- No sitting fees or out of pocket expenses will be paid to members.
- Members will be expected to actively and constructively participate in meetings and any associated activities or events.
- In the event that a member cannot attend a meeting, an apology or notification must be made to the SRG Chair or the relevant Council staff who attend the SRG prior to the meeting commencing so that the number required for a Quorum can be decided.

8 ROLE OF COUNCIL STAFF

Council staff are responsible for:

- Coordinating the meeting arrangements including calendar notifications to members.
- Attending as subject matter experts to present on matters and to contribute to general discussions as required.
- Preparation and distribution of agendas, minutes and other reports and communications as required.

9 MINUTES, AGENDAS AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- Meeting date schedules are to be arranged with a forward horizon of 12 months and shall be placed in Council's corporate calendar and distributed to all SRG members and attendees.
- Members will be encouraged to contribute relevant items to the meeting agenda through the SRG Chair or the relevant Council staff.
- The Agenda for each meeting is to be approved by the SRG chair in consultation with the relevant staff member. In the event the chair is unable to approve the agenda within the required timeframe it may be approved by the Deputy Chair or the Director Shire Connections.
- Advice of upcoming meetings will be distributed to all SRG members and attendees at least 10 days prior to the date of any scheduled meeting (this advice will include an Agenda, the previous meeting's Minutes and any associated papers and reports).
- All meetings shall be recorded with the minutes providing a record of:
 - Key discussion points against each agenda item.
 - Any actions, recommendations and decisions (pertaining to minutes or filling casual vacancies) made.
 - Any matters and recommendations requiring referral to Council.
- All Agendas and Minutes shall be placed on Council's website to enable easy public access and be made available to all Councillors.
- A report to Council is to be provided following each meeting of the SRG. This report shall include:
 - The minutes of the SRG meeting.
 - A summary of any key matters that Council needs to be aware of or needs to consider.
 - Any SRG recommendations to Council
 - Any relevant staff advice on SRG recommendations to inform council decision making

10 STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

- The following shall be the minimum Standing Agenda items for all Meetings of the Agriculture and Rural Industries SRG:
 - Acknowledgement of Country
 - Disclosure of Interests
 - Attendance and Apologies
 - Confirmation of Minutes
 - Previous SRG Actions and Updates
 - Workshop Items
 - Briefings
 - Any matters referred to the SRG by Council resolution
 - General Business



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