



HUME CITY COUNCIL

SUSTAINABILITY TASKFORCE

Reviewed and updated June 2024

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung as the Traditional Custodians of this land. Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander living cultures as a vital part of Australia's identity and recognises, celebrates, and pays respect to the existing family members of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and to Elders past and present.

2. INTRODUCTION

The Hume Sustainability Taskforce is Council's community environment advisory committee. Council acknowledges the important role of local environmental groups and community members working to protect the environment. To help Council achieve its vision to be a sustainable city, collaboration between the community and Council is vital.

The Hume Sustainability Taskforce (Taskforce) is an important link between Council and the community for feedback and action on important local environmental issues.

Hume's Council Plan outlines the strategic priorities and actions of Council. The Council Plan contains the *Pathways to Sustainability Framework*. Several other environmental strategies and action plans sit under the *Pathways to Sustainability Framework* and identify targets, key performance indicators and actions. These include:

- Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Land and Biodiversity Plan
- Integrated Water Management Plan
- Open Space Strategy
- Climate Action Plan
- Live Green Plan.

3. ROLES AND PURPOSE

The Sustainability Taskforce provides a mechanism for the Hume community to have direct input into the implementation of Council's environmental policies and programs as well as other key Council strategies, programs and activities that impact significantly on our environment and sustainability.

Objectives:

- To provide strategic guidance, input, and advice to Council on environmental and sustainability issues including consultation in relation to relevant policies, strategies, and programs, evaluating successes and identifying opportunities for improvement,
- To provide communication with and direct community feedback to Council in relation to local environmental issues,
- To facilitate community action and collaboration on sustainability programs,
- To assist in strengthening links and partnerships between Council and the community in relation to environmental sustainability.

Roles and Responsibilities of Taskforce members:

- Assist Council to review the success of Hume's environmental and sustainability strategies and programs and identify opportunities for improved outcomes,
- Be advocates for a sustainable Hume through their actions and interactions with the community,
- Promote Council environment and sustainability programs to their networks in Hume,
- Contribute to the Taskforce meeting agendas, and actively participate in meetings,
- Assist Council Officers to prepare draft recommendations to Council for other members to consider and discuss.

4. TASKFORCE COMPOSITION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Membership of the Taskforce will consist of: One Councillor, as nominated by Council to chair the committee.

- Community representatives selected from – the Hume community (people who live, volunteer, work, or study in Hume), environment groups, the rural sector, business and industry, the education sector and social support / health and wellbeing sectors.
- Council Officers - Manager Community Health and Wellbeing and Sustainability Engagement Officer.
- Council officers provide professional advice and secretarial services to the Taskforce.
- Once community representatives are endorsed by Selection Panel, organisation of upcoming meetings and induction document preparation can commence.

Community representatives will be sought via an Expression of Interest (EOI) process once per year. The selection criteria are:

- Broad understanding of and commitment to environmental issues,
- An ability to commit to regular participation of Taskforce meetings (attending at least four of six meetings),
- Understanding of Council's role in progressing sustainability,
- Ability to facilitate Community participation and networks.

Representation and inclusion:

Representation of Hume's diverse community, geographical areas and a range of environmental interests will be sought. For continuity and knowledge sharing, current (or former) members of the Taskforce are encouraged to re-apply. Appointment to the Taskforce will be for two years. An annual membership renewal will apply to half the positions on the Taskforce. This will ensure an ongoing combination of new and returning members.

Appointment and recruitment

- Members will be assessed by a selection panel consisting of a community member who is a former member of the Taskforce but not reapplying for membership, the Manager, Community Health and Wellbeing and a Councillor who sits on the Taskforce (nominated by Council).
- During the recruitment process, Council will make every effort to ensure that people of all abilities, different cultural backgrounds, age groups, and diverse genders are encouraged and supported to submit an EOI. The Taskforce will promote and support diverse thinking and decision-making, and actively listen to and respectfully consider the views of all participants.
- Council staff will provide reasonable accommodations to participants with differing abilities and will take steps to ensure equity so that members with differing abilities can participate. This may involve the removal of barriers to participation.
- Members remain on the Sustainability Taskforce at the discretion of Hume City Council. Members are expected to notify the Sustainability Engagement Officer of an absence in line with section 13.
- Appointment to the Taskforce will be for two years. An annual membership renewal will apply to half the positions on the Taskforce. This will ensure an ongoing combination of new and returning members.

5. EXPECTATIONS OF TASKFORCE MEMBERS

Members of the Taskforce are expected to agree to:

- Advocate to Council and other decision makers on environmental issues.
- Act in a manner consistent with, and supportive of the roles, values, and priorities of Hume City Council.
- Act in accordance with collectively agreed approaches.
- Advise the Taskforce in their areas of knowledge and expertise.
- Contribute to Taskforce meetings and to the work of the Taskforce.
- Be able to meet the time and workload commitments of the Taskforce. In addition to attending meetings members are expected to read and compile input on meeting papers which may take one to two hours between meetings. Attending additional events, compiling more detailed feedback and research etc. is optional.
- Agree to having their email address and phone number provided on a contact list to be distributed to other Taskforce members for the purposes of advocacy and collective action. Taskforce members will not pass a member's contact details on to other parties without the consent of that member.
- Agree to having their photograph taken and distributed to promote the work of the Taskforce.
- Respect confidentiality. Some details of issues discussed in Taskforce meetings may not be appropriate for general community discussion if they are part of work in progress of Council operations.
- Declare any conflict of interest that may arise during the term of the Taskforce for a member, or their family member/s. Members are expected to declare their conflicts of interest and remove themselves from voting on issues involving conflict.

6. CHAIRPERSON

The Taskforce will be chaired by the nominated Councillor. The role of the Chairperson is to:

- Liaise with the Manager Community Health and Wellbeing to establish the meeting agenda,
- Chair meetings,
- If the Chairperson is unable to attend the meeting the Manager Community Health and Wellbeing will assume the role of Chair for that meeting.

7. PUBLIC VOICE OF THE TASKFORCE

The Chairperson/Councillor representative is the person authorised to speak on behalf of the Taskforce. Such representations shall be based upon the agreed position of the Taskforce.

8. QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of not less than 50% of Taskforce members eligible to vote. Meetings can be held without a quorum present; however, a quorum will be required should any matter necessitate a vote. The Taskforce aims for consensus decision making and thoughtful discussion on items being voted. If consensus is not achieved, a motion will pass with more than 60% approval.

9. MEETINGS

- Six formal Taskforce meetings per year (meeting dates will be set at the first meeting of the calendar year)
- The Sustainability Engagement Officer will provide secretariat duties (distribute agenda, and minutes).
- An agenda and minutes of the previous meeting will be forwarded to the Taskforce members to the email address provided on the member's application form 5 days prior to the meeting. Where possible, email will be the preferred method of distribution.
- Accidental omission of a notice or the non-receipt of a notice of a meeting shall not invalidate any meeting.
- Council Officers have a non-voting role. Officers have responsibility to report back to the Taskforce regarding the status of input and advice previously provided by Taskforce members. This may happen verbally during a meeting or in written format via the minutes or a document outlining the status of Taskforce input and recommendations.
- Additional gatherings such as working groups may be organised by Taskforce members for the purposes of conducting research or making recommendations on specific topics.

10. RELATIONSHIP TO COUNCIL

- The Taskforce is convened by Council in accordance with these Terms of Reference to provide strategic guidance, input and advice on Council's environmental framework and activities.
- The Taskforce may make recommendations to Council in an advisory capacity, such as recommendations for Council to undertake environmental advocacy or in the delivery of operations and services.

11. INDUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

The Sustainability Engagement Officer shall ensure that new members are provided with an induction that includes links to the following documents:

- The Terms of Reference
- *Pathways to Sustainability*
- Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Climate Action Plan
- Land and Biodiversity Plan
- Live Green Plan
- Open Space Strategy
- Waste Strategy
- Live Green and RE-source newsletters (most recent editions)
- Other relevant documents

12. RESIGNATIONS

Resignations from the Taskforce shall be tendered in writing to the Chairperson through the Sustainability Engagement Officer.

13. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- A written apology prior to any meeting will serve as a request for a leave of absence.
- If required, members may apply for an extended leave of absence (for 2 or more consecutive meetings), which will be considered for approval by the Chairperson and Manager Community Health and Wellbeing.
- In the case of any member missing three meetings within any 12-month period, without leave of absence or apology, a Council Officer will contact the member to determine their participation. If the member does not attend the next meeting following, they shall be deemed to have resigned. Confirmation of the decision will be provided in writing through the Manager Community Health and Wellbeing.

14. PROCEDURE

- The Sustainability Engagement Officer will act as secretariat to the Taskforce and will take and distribute minutes to members.
- Following preparation of the Taskforce meeting minutes they will be made available to councillors and to the public (via the Council website).
- Taskforce members can list items for consideration on the agenda by contacting the Sustainability Engagement Officer.

15. REPORTING & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Where the Taskforce makes a recommendation to Council (as described in Section 10 Relationship to Council), then Council officers will prepare a Council report regarding the recommendation for Council's consideration.
- At the final meeting of each calendar year a summary document and discussion of the Taskforce's achievements for the year will be presented to the group by the Sustainability Engagement Officer or Manager Community Health and Wellbeing.