



BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

(INTERNAL USE ONLY)

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| Responsibility | Director Sustainable Environment and Economy | | |
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Document History

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| E2018/66646 | 2 August 2018 | Res 18-486 – community members confirmed |
| E2021/147945 | February 2022 | Draft to Biodiversity Advisory Committee for adoption. |
| E2022/98755 | June and September 2022 | Res 22-280 Adopted 23/6/2022 and new members appointed 29/9/2022 Res 22-518 |

Further Document Information and Relationships

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| Related Legislation | Section 355, Local Government Act (1993) |
| Related Policies | Code of Conduct 2016 Work Health Safety Policy Code of Meeting Practice Guide to Operations – Advisory Committee and Panels (E2016/85075) |
| Related Procedures/ Protocols, Statements, documents | |

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1. Preamble

The Biodiversity Advisory Committee is an advisory Committee of the Council and does not have executive power or authority to implement actions.

The role of the Committee is to report to Council and provide appropriate advice and recommendations on matters relevant to this Constitution.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee is:

1. To assist Council in the development, implementation and review of relevant biodiversity plans and policies such as: Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Integrated Pest Management Plan, Flying Fox Camp Management Plan, Coastal Koala Plan of Management, Pest Animal Management Plan.
2. To support our Agricultural Action Plan's goal to improve productivity and sustainable land use practices on rural lands in Byron Shire
3. To identify and report biodiversity (terrestrial and coastal) and sustainable/regenerative agriculture matters to Council including, but not limited to: issues and concerns; community or collaborative opportunities; grant funding opportunities; special events; consultation and community engagement ideas; government policy; best practice or improved guidelines/guidance.

It is proposed that meetings can target specific issues related to biodiversity (terrestrial and coastal) and sustainable agriculture and that in order for the Committee to understand the issue and identify opportunities, experts on the subject can be invited to contribute.

It is also proposed that meetings can be held outside the Council building within environments that are relevant to that meeting's theme. For example, different formats could be used such as field days and workshops.

**Note: Strategic coastal planning and preparation of Coastal Management Programs will be reported directly to Council*

3. Timeframe for Committee

The lifespan of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee is for the term of Council 2022-2024.

4. Responsible Directorate

This Committee is administered by the Sustainable Environment and Economy Directorate. The Director or their delegate will attend these meetings and minutes will be taken by a member of their staff.

5. Membership

Council must appoint all advisory Committee members. Appointment must take place prior to a member being conferred the responsibilities and rights as set out in this document.

Council may release individual members from the advisory Committee at any time by a resolution of council. Council may also appoint any new members to a Committee at any time by a resolution of council.

Membership is to include:

- 3 Councillors
- 6 relevantly qualified community representatives (including 1 farmer/rural landholder)
- 1 Brunswick Valley Landcare representative
- Byron Shire Council General Manager (or staff member delegate)

Note: Staff members participating on the Committee do not have any voting entitlements.

6. Induction

All members will be required to participate in an induction process at the establishment of a new Committee, and at any time a replacement voting member joins a Committee. The induction will be scheduled prior to the first meeting of the Committee and will cover topics such as this Constitution, the Code of Meeting Practice, Conflicts of Interest and Code of Conduct.

Replacement voting members will be inducted by experienced Committee members at, or prior to, their first meeting.

7. Quorum

A quorum is to constitute at least half the number of members plus one (resulting half numbers go down), one of which is to be a Councillor. The General Manager or delegate, who must be a member of staff, is to attend the Advisory Committee meeting and is not counted in the quorum for the meeting.

8. Confidentiality

Members of the Committee will, in those circumstances where confidential matters are subject to deliberation, maintain confidentiality.

9. Election of Chairperson

The position of Chairperson is to be elected from Councillors comprising the Committee but only in circumstances where the Mayor elects not to assume the position of Chairperson.

10. Voting

- a) Each member of the Committee (with the exception of staff members) is to have one vote, with the Chairperson to have a casting vote in addition to a deliberative vote.

- b) Members of the Committee who are not Councillors may abstain from voting in any circumstances without such abstention being recorded in the negative.

11. Majority Decision

A majority decision of the Committee requires a majority of appointed members to be present and voting on any item subject to the requirements of a quorum being met at the meeting.

12. Convening Meetings

Meetings will be held quarterly. An annual timetable of meetings will be prepared in advance and adopted by Council for the following 12 months.

A meeting of the Committee may be convened in response to either the direction of the Mayor (or in the Mayor's absence the Deputy Mayor) in written form to the General Manager; or two Councillors in written form to the General Manager, or by resolution of the Council.

13. Agenda Preparation

It is the responsibility of the chairperson to prepare the agenda in consultation with the relevant Director, setting out the terms of business to be considered.

The agenda is an organised list of the business, in order, that will be transacted at the meeting. An agenda for each meeting, containing a brief report on each item, is to be provided to Committee members and available on Council's website at least 7 days prior to the meeting being held.

Each item of business to discuss at the meeting is required to be listed on the agenda and in written form. Verbal reports at the meeting are not an acceptable practice.

For some matters, it will be necessary to attach other relevant information to the agenda to inform and direct discussion. Such information is to be circulated with the agenda.

Committee members may request items for inclusion in future agendas, through the Chair.

14. Conduct of Business

Each item of business is discussed in the order in which it appears on the agenda. No new matters will be introduced at the meeting. New items of business may be included in a future agenda as noted in clause 13 above.

15. Records of meetings

- a) The minutes of meetings are to be circulated to members of the group within 7 days of the meeting so that members can provide feedback through the Chair on the draft unconfirmed minutes.
- b) Minutes of Committee meetings will be kept and presented to Council at its next meeting via a report of the Committee meeting.

16. Absence from Committee Meetings

All Committee members are required to advise the chair when they are unable to attend Committee meetings. The absence of Committee members from the meeting is to be recorded in the minutes. A Committee member (other than the Mayor) ceases to be a member of a Committee if the member:

- a) has been absent from three consecutive meetings of the Committee without having given reasons acceptable to the Committee for the member's absence, or
- b) has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the Committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the Committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.

17. Project Reference Groups

Project Reference Groups may be established by Council at the recommendation of the Committee to address issues clearly identified by the Committee.

Project Reference Groups operate in accordance with Council's adopted Constitution template for Project Reference Groups.

18. Section 377 Delegation

The Committee does not have any delegated functions pursuant to section 377 of the Local Government Act (1993) and does not have the power to direct staff.

19. Meeting Practice

Meetings are to be conducted in accordance with this Constitution and, where required, reference to Council's Code of Meeting Practice.

20. Miscellaneous

- a) **Insurance:** All group members are covered by the public liability policy of Council. This insurance does not preclude the Advisory Committee from due diligence and all Council policies must be adhered to.
- b) **Code of Conduct:** All group members to abide by Council's adopted Code of Conduct at all times.
- c) **Pecuniary Interest:** Pecuniary Interest may be defined as an interest that a person has in a matter, as a group member or employee of a company or other body, because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person, or another person with whom the person is associated. Such other person includes the spouse or de-facto partner or relative of the group member.

Section 446 of the Local Government Act states that "a member of a council Committee, other than a Committee that is wholly advisory, must disclose pecuniary interests..."

Even though the Local Government Act provides an exemption to disclose pecuniary interests Council's preference is for all members to declare pecuniary interests where applicable.

- d) **Work Health Safety:** All group members are required to comply with the "Worker Responsibilities" as prescribed in the Work Health Safety Policy.