

**FIRST PEOPLES ADVISORY COMMITTEE - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- Intent** The First Peoples Advisory Committee (FPAC) aims to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of the Cairns Local Government Area with input into Council decision making processes. Council wishes to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the opportunity to participate in and enjoy life, the facilities and the opportunities that our region has to offer with dignity and respect.
- Scope** The First Peoples Advisory Committee provides advice and recommendations to Council and Council officers on activities of Cairns Regional Council as required.

**OBJECTIVES**

The Committee will have the opportunity to assist Council by providing a communication link to and from Council to service providers, State Agencies and the Cairns Indigenous community in general, enabling Council to be better informed of the community's aspirations and expectations.

The key function of the Committee is to:

- Oversee the implementation, monitoring and reporting of Council's current Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
- guide the development of future RAPs
- provide advice to Council on matters of relevant policy and initiatives
- Provide advice to Council on emerging issues impacting the Cairns Indigenous population

The Committee aims to support and increase awareness and appreciation of Indigenous people as the First Peoples of this country, both within Council and the wider community. This includes acknowledgement and respect of the value of cultural diversity and First Peoples' contributions to the Cairns region as a whole.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

At all times the FPAC is to be aware of its obligations and responsibilities to the wider community of the Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area.

The Committee may use its expertise and local knowledge to provide feedback to Council in the delivery of core Council services; policy initiatives; economic, social, cultural and environmental matters.

Any advice from the Committee is non-binding and adoption will be at the discretion of Council.

Should a conflict of interest arise it is the obligation of the Committee member to declare that conflict and act accordingly or as directed by the CEO's delegate on the Committee, being the General Manager, Community Sport and Cultural Services.

The table below outlines the key Community Services functions of FPAC.

<b>Community Services Function</b>	<b>Role of FPAC</b>	<b>Level of Endorsement</b>
Reconciliation Action Plan	Nominated FPAC members and Community Services Officer provide feedback and monitoring of Council's RAP through FPAC participation in Council's internal RAP Working Group (RAPWG) to report, review and monitor the progression of the RAP.	As per Council's RAP, endorsement by the General Manager CS&CS and Council.
Community Services Grants	To provide advice on the First Peoples' (NAIDOC, Reconciliation Week, Mabo etcetera) and community needs.	As per the Grants Guidelines approval by the full Council.
Cultural Awareness	Provide advice regarding Cultural Awareness protocols, Welcome to Country, Sorry Business etcetera.	As per the Cultural Diversity Policy endorsement by the Community Development Branch Manager (and in some cases Council).
Events and Programming	To provide advice and guidance on significant First Nations events such as Mabo Day, Referendum Day, Sorry Day, Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day, etcetera.	As per the RAP and coordinated by the Community Services Officer, endorsement by the Coordinator Community Services and Manager Community Development.
Community Engagement	To provide advice and assistance regarding community engagement activities.	As per the Reconciliation Action Plan and coordinated by the Community Services Officer, endorsement by the Coordinator Community Services and Manager Community Development.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Membership**

Membership of the Committee is in a voluntary capacity and comprises of 10 people from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of the Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area with representation and expertise to be sought from:

- local Aboriginal Traditional Custodians/ Owners
- other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents
- indigenous service providers and community networks

Specifically, to be eligible for nomination for membership to the Committee, applicants must:

- be of Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander heritage and be acknowledged and accepted as being a member of the Indigenous community of Cairns
- reside within the Cairns Regional Council Local Government area
- have demonstrated strong community links
- be able to articulate and represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with an understanding of the issues to be addressed by the Committee
- have a commitment to work in partnership with fellow FPAC members and Council to achieve successful and productive outcomes.

The General Manager, Community, Sport and Cultural Services or their delegate will attend Committee meetings and provide facilitation and support but will not formally be a member of this Committee.

Call for membership (or replacement of members) of the Committee will be by public advertisement. Council shall appoint Committee members based on their skills, expertise, knowledge and abilities. It is important that the membership as a whole has sufficient breadth of experience and skills to represent the needs and aspirations of the broader community. Committee membership will be for the balance of the term of the current Council, unless changed by Council resolution.

Council retains the right to appoint additional members should the need arise during the term of Council.

Committee members are required to act impartially and represent the interests of the broader community above their personal interests. Whilst members have a role in providing specific sector or service provider opinions the Committee must strive to meet the needs and aspirations of the whole community in an unbiased and objective manner.

Council will appoint the Committee Chair. The Chair will be empowered by Council to ensure the good order and conduct of the Committee meetings.

Members of the Committee are to adhere to Cairns Regional Council's Code of Conduct Administration Instruction at all times. Failure to adhere to the Code of Conduct shall result in termination of membership from FPAC.

Councillors are welcome to attend Committee meetings in an observer capacity.

The Chair will approve the attendance of deputations or external agency/organisation or individual presentations to the Committee.

### **Committee Structure**

To ensure adequate participation the Committee structure will include:

- Ten identified members
- Executive positions will include (but not limited to):
  - Chairperson
  - Secretariat, Cairns Regional Council Community Services Officer (specified)
- Subcommittees may be established to address emergent issues as required.

### **Meetings**

A quorum will consist of at least eight members and should the Chair be absent then the Chair will be selected by the General Manager or delegate to preside for that meeting.

The General Manager or delegate will have the function and responsibility of the preparation of meeting agendas and minutes. Council is committed to sustainability and as such this Committee will operate in an environmentally sustainable manner. The dates, times, agenda and meeting minutes will be displayed on Council's webpage and information will be provided to members electronically.

Members are required to demonstrate due diligence by their preparation for, attendance at and participation in Committee meetings.

FPAC meetings will be regularly hosted at Council Chambers, 119 - 145 Spence Street, however can be convened at other venues as agreed.

Structured agenda items guide meeting focus and intent, including discussion items focussed on:

- RAP (development, monitoring and reporting)
- First Peoples events, programs and initiatives
- Community grants program
- Community engagement and consultation
- Relevant Council business as identified by Council and Chairperson

As part of implementing culturally responsive and appropriate engagement, FPAC will be governed by a "Yarning Circle" model, which traditional information sharing and learning approach. Indigenous 'Yarning' is an informal style of conversation that is culturally inclusive and distributes power equally among participants.

Observers and advisors may attend by invitation of the Chairperson.

**Authority**

As the Committee's role and responsibility is limited to advice and community feedback, there are no formal voting rights and members must respect and abide by any subsequent decision of Council.

The Committee or its members have no authority over management, should not get involved in day to day operational issues of Council and may not direct staff in any matter or action.

**Council Reporting**

The General Manager or delegate will ensure that a key activity report will be presented to Council bi-annually.

**Confidentiality**

All matters discussed at Committee meetings together with all material provided to members of the Committee is for the purposes of informed discussion and debate at the meeting. It is not for general public release unless directed by the Chair for the purposes of sector / community engagement.

All matters discussed by the Committee will be in accordance with the requirements of the Information Privacy Act and Right to Information Act. The views of other Committee members will be treated with respect will not be discussed with external parties.

All communication with the media will be undertaken by Council unless otherwise approved by the General Manager or delegate. Committee members must refrain from making any public comment or issuing any information, in any form, concerning the Committee or the matters of interest to the Committee without the authority of Council. Committee members must at all times act in the best interests of Council.

**Performance Indicators**

- six meetings each year
- regular attendance by a minimum of 6 Committee members
- regular contact and communication with individual Committee members
- Council has engaged and sought the involvement and participation of the Committee on matters and issues relevant to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of the Local Government Area.

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**This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by Council.**

**General Manager Responsible for Review:**

**Community, Sport & Cultural Services**

**ORIGINALLY ADOPTED: 7/012/2011  
CURRENT ADOPTION: 28/10/2020  
DUE FOR REVISION: 28/10/2024  
REVOKED/SUPERSEDED:**



**Christine Posgate  
Acting Chief Executive Officer**