

Terms of Reference

Latrobe City Council
Community Engagement
Groups



Latrobe City Council Community Engagement Groups

1. Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference govern Latrobe City Council's (Council) three Community Engagement Groups (Groups):

- Cultural Diversity Community Engagement Group (CDCEG)
- Disability Access and Inclusion Community Engagement Group (DAICEG)
- Positive Ageing Community Engagement Group (PACEG).

2. Purpose

The three Groups provide a structured forum for community voices to be heard and considered in Council's work. A strong connection between the community and Council is supported by the Groups through drawing on members lived experience and understanding of the local community. Members contribute insights to inform the development of Council plans, actions, future focus areas, with consideration of long-term outcomes and strategic priorities. The Groups are advisory in nature and do not have any delegated decision-making or financial authority.

3. Community Engagement Group Membership

Each Group will consist of ten (10) community members with diverse skills and lived experiences across disability, positive ageing and cultural diversity (as relevant to the Group), selected through an Expression of Interest process.

Members will:

- Be over eighteen (18) years of age.
- Have lived experience of the relevant Group cohort.
- Be able to take part in meetings and work respectfully with other Group members and Council Officers.

Membership for each Group will, as far as possible, reflect the diversity of the community, including different ages, genders, cultures, abilities and lived experiences.

People whose behaviour may place others at risk, are unwilling to engage respectfully with different views, or engage in behaviour that does not meet Council code of conduct will not be eligible.

Applicants' publicly available information, including social media content, and previous engagements with Council may be considered as part of the application process to support an assessment of suitability. This consideration helps Council ensure participants align with expected standards of conduct, can engage respectfully with diverse views, and contribute positively to a safe and constructive environment.

Group membership is a voluntary position and is not paid. Any reimbursement will be considered on a case-by-case basis and in line with Council policy.

Members are appointed to the Groups on an annual basis, with the option of reapplying for an additional year. The Manager Active and Connected Communities or equivalent role may fill any vacancies that occur within the determined period of appointment.

Members can only volunteer to serve on one Group at a time.

Members can leave the Group at any time by advising the Council Officer who convenes the Group in writing.

Council's Mayor, Councillors and Council Officers may attend meetings but will not be considered part of the Group membership.

Members are required to undertake a satisfactory National Police Check which will be paid for by Council. Members are also required to hold a valid Volunteer Working with Children Check.

If member behaviour does not comply with the Terms of Reference, then participation may be reviewed.

4. Meetings

Meetings of each Group will be held quarterly (four times per year), with additional meetings if required and advised by Council Officers.

Meetings will be in person at appropriate and accessible Council facilities. Where appropriate, online or hybrid options may also be offered.

Combined meetings of the three Groups may be arranged and advised by Council Officers if required.

Meetings will usually last two hours. If more time is required, a majority vote will be required to continue the meeting.

Agendas and relevant topic focussed information will be shared to the Group, two business days prior to the meeting.

Meetings of each Group will be chaired by Council Officers from the Community Strengthening team.

Minutes of each meeting will be shared with a Group five business days after the meeting takes place.

5. Attendance

Members are expected to attend meetings either in person or online and must RSVP no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Meetings will require more than five members present to proceed. Where five or less members of the Group RSVP attendance, the meeting will be rescheduled.

6. Code of Conduct

All members of the Group will abide by the Council Staff Code of Conduct and are expected to:

- Treat others with respect and listen to different views.
- Speak honestly and constructively.
- Allow everyone a chance to participate.
- Avoid personal attacks, discrimination or offensive language.
- Respect confidentiality when sensitive information is shared.

7. Confidentiality

Members must not share confidential information outside the Group unless advised by Council Officers. Confidential information is any type of information described as confidential information in the Local Government Act 2020.

Members of the Group will comply with Council's Privacy Policy in respect of personal information received through membership, including the personal information of other Group members.

8. Review

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually.