

Bega Valley Shire Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Group

Terms of Reference



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Preface

Council adopted the [Bega Valley Shire Affordable Housing Strategy](#) on 18 May 2022, including strategy 1 part c as follows:

Strategy 1: For the purpose of this strategy, Council adopts and adequately resources implementation of this strategy, including:

- c. convening and resourcing an Affordable Housing Implementation Group to implement and monitor progress of the strategy, including representation by Council elected representatives and staff, community agencies and community representatives, and broadening representation to fill existing gaps, for example, from the Aboriginal community

The Affordable Housing Implementation Group (AHIG) will be established through an open Expression of Interest process.

These DRAFT Terms of Reference (ToR) include information on the roles and responsibilities of implementation group members and the scope and limitations of the group.

Review

The ToR will be reviewed and amended by Council as required.

Feedback from implementation group members is welcome and should be forwarded to Council to ensure consideration in the review process. Correspondence can be forwarded to council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au

Support

These guidelines are designed to give implementation group members an understanding of the group's operating framework. Council is committed to ensuring that group members have access to the support needed to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. Any questions or requests for assistance should be directed to the implementation group secretariat.

1. Introduction

1.1 Affordable Housing Strategy

The Bega Valley Shire Affordable Housing Strategy was adopted by Council on 18 May 2022 and provides a framework to respond to housing need in the Bega Valley Shire to 2040. It includes 27 strategies including a mix of short term (1 yr), medium term (2-4 yrs) and long term (5-10 yrs). Mechanisms identified include advocacy, brokerage, facilitative strategies, mandatory planning and the direct creation of affordable housing. The strategy calls for regular tracking of progress towards identified KPIs and review of data sources.

An Affordable Housing Project Reference Group was convened to guide the development of the strategy. Members included: Councillor Fitzpatrick (Mayor), Councillor Griff, former Councillor Dodds, representatives from Southern Cross Housing, Social Justice Advocates and Regional NSW, and Council staff.

The Affordable Housing Strategy is available on Council's website at www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/community/affordable-housing-strategy

1.2 Implementation of the ToR

A copy of the ToR will be provided to all implementation group members and will be made available on the Council website once the group is established.

1.3 Key dates

The implementation group will meet quarterly to implement and monitor the progress of the strategy and to discuss issues and share ideas.

2. Group Operations

2.1 The legal position of the group

The Affordable Housing Implementation Group is not a formal Committee of Council within the meaning of Section 355 of the *Local Government Act 1993* and has no executive powers.

2.2 Related Council policies and procedures

Policies and procedures are essential to ensure that legal, fair and consistent decisions are made across Council operations. Policies and procedures support Council in achieving its corporate objectives and provide crucial guidelines for Councillors, staff and other stakeholders.

A copy of all related Council policies and procedures are available from Council or online at www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/council/policies-procedures-delegations#Policies

Council officers are also available to answer questions and assist the group with policies and procedures that are essential to ensure that legal, fair and consistent decisions are made across Council operations.

2.3 Group correspondence and communications

The following guidelines are provided for this Group to use in correspondence and communications to ensure appropriate representation on behalf of Council:

- A group may write to any person, body, organisation or agency in the pursuit of information which, in the group's opinion is an integral part of information and data gathering and collecting to enable the group to be best placed to advise the Council.
- A group may write to or otherwise communicate with any person, body, organisation or agency on any other matters within the group's delegations which are not of a contentious nature. A contentious matter is taken to be a matter which has the potential to be derogatory, unseemly, not in the public interest, or likely to erode public confidence in the Council.
- A group may not represent or imply a representation of the views of Council without express authorisation of Council's Chief Executive Officer or his/her representative.
- All correspondence or other communication in connection with the business of the Group should be authorised by the Group and be distributed by the minute secretary under the signature of the Chair or an alternate member as delegated by the chair

2.4 Group role and responsibility

The role and responsibility of the Affordable Housing Implementation Group, as delegated by resolution of Council, is to implement and monitor progress of the Bega Valley Shire Affordable Housing Strategy.

2.5 Group membership

The Affordable Housing Implementation Group is chaired by the Director Community, Environment and Planning. Membership comprises Council elected representatives and representatives from the community, relevant agencies and community groups with relevant experience in, for example (but not limited to), affordable or social housing development, crisis accommodation, strategic land use planning, governance, advocacy, Aboriginal housing, or other similar areas.

A NSW Government representative will also be invited to participate. Councillors will nominate their membership for the group through a formal Council report.

Other Council staff or relevant experts/professionals may be invited to attend meetings as the need arises.

Council will publicly call for nominations through an open Expression of Interest process to seek nominations from the community and relevant agencies.

Council will provide a secretariat function for the implementation group.

3. Meeting Procedures

3.1 Meeting frequency

As per section 1.3 of these ToR, the implementation group shall meet quarterly.

3.2 Meeting notification

Notification of meetings will be made in writing to implementation group members at least 2 weeks in advance.

3.3 Quorum

The quorum of the Affordable Housing Implementation shall be 50% of the membership plus one.

3.4 Record keeping and public access to information

Draft minutes will be provided to group members within two weeks after the meeting date (where possible), and confirmed at the next meeting of the group. Confirmed minutes will be published on the Council website.

3.5 Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice

Council recognises the importance of being transparent in all its dealings and has adopted a Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice to be observed by groups. These codes detail the appropriate behaviours and obligations of group members should a conflict of interest or pecuniary interest arise.

In order to assist group members, definitions of conflict of interest and pecuniary interest are provided below:

- a) A conflict of interest exists when a person has to deal in a matter in their public capacity, which is also a matter where the person:
- has a private interest arising out of kinship, friendship, membership of an association, society or trade union, or involvement or interest in an activity; or
 - could reasonably be perceived by others as one in which a conflict of interest could possibly exist.
- b) A pecuniary interest is an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person or another person with whom that person is associated.

In the event of a group member feeling they may have a conflict of interest or pecuniary interest, it is their obligation to ensure they comply with the Council Code of Conduct and the Council Code of Meeting Practice.

The appropriate procedure for handling conflicts of interest or pecuniary interests is for that person to declare the interest and take no part in discussion or voting on the matter under discussion. This may include the necessity for the person to leave the meeting while the agenda item is addressed.

Full copies of Council's Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice and are available from Council or online at www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au



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