

Child Friendly Cities & Communities Working Group: Terms of Reference

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Councillors

Child Friendly Cities & Communities Working Group

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Introduction

The Child Friendly Cities & Communities (CFCC) Working Group has been established to advise the Chief Executive Officer and Council on the actions of the Victorian Child Friendly Cities & Communities Charter ("The Charter") and other advocacies of children aged birth to 17 years old, as requested by the CEO.

The CFCC Working Group will not be an established Committee of Council, and as such will not provide advice directly to Council. Rather, it will work in an advisory capacity to the CEO on matters that ensure the Victorian Child Friendly Cities & Communities Charter's principles are upheld and advanced. The results of these analyses will then form advice to Council on matters of The Charter and its statement of principles.

Purpose/Scope

The Victorian CFCC Charter is a statement of principles, underpinning actions which support communities to be child friendly. It embraces the universal rights of children from birth to 17 years of age and encompasses three tenets: to act in the best interests of the child, to allow children the freedom to express their individual opinions and the right to have those opinions considered in decisions that affect them, and to create equity for all children based on their needs.

Ararat Rural City Council has become a signatory to the Victorian CFCC Charter and in doing so, has made a commitment to increasing the attention on the best interests of children and further develop strategies to ensure every child has opportunities to thrive in their community.

Membership

The composition of the CFCC Working Group will be as follows:

- Chair (Chief Executive Officer or Nominee)
- A minimum of four community representatives selected through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process; and
- A minimum of four skills-based representatives, with academic/practical/administrative skills and experience in child related health, recreation and/or in education.
- Up to fifteen members are appointed each calendar year that represent the diversity of the communities they serve.

CFCC Working Group Role

The role of the CFCC Working Group is to:

- Share responsibility in planning and convening CFCC Working Group meetings, including planning the agenda, chairing meetings, and taking minutes.
- Hold an annual meeting to develop a work plan, as conveyed by the Chair.
- Provide community comments on child friendly cities and communities strategy development.
- Based on evidence, best practice, and feedback from CFCC Working Group meetings, contribute to the schedule review of Council's policies, standards, and legislative requirements to ensure CFCC Charter alignment.
- Participate in Network meetings each quarter to share how Ararat Rural City Council is embedding the CFCC Charter.

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The role of the Chief Executive Officer or Nominee is to:

- Chair the CFCC Working Group
- Arrange meeting documents
- Report to Council on the outcomes of the CFCC Working Group
- Provide advice to Council on the development of policies, standards, and legislative requirements in alignment with The Charter.

Meetings

The CFCC Working Group will meet 4 times per year, with extra meetings as required at the discretion of the CEO. Half of the current CFCC Working Group members plus one is required to operate the Working Group and make any decisions. In the Chair's absence, a Deputy Chief Executive Officer will chair the meeting.

Changes to the CFCC Working Group can only be made following a formal Expression of Interest process, and at the approval of the majority.

The CFCC Working Group may invite suitably skilled persons to join the CFCC Working Group as a co-opted member for a specified purpose and period. A co-opted member joins the CFCC Working Group in an advisory capacity and does not form part of the quorum.

All CFCC Working Group members are expected to attend each meeting in person or via video conferencing. A meeting agenda will be forwarded to each member prior to the meeting.

Voting

Voting is generally not a requirement for Working Groups, however if a vote is required, the matter will be decided by majority of votes from members who are present at the meeting. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair holds the casting vote.

Review

A review of the CFCC Working Group will be conducted biannually. The review will be conducted by the Chief Executive Officer.

Retiring Members

In the event of a community member resigning from the CFCC Working Group, an EOI for a new community member will be advertised. In the event of a skills-based representative resignation, the Chief Executive Officer will arrange for a replacement representative.