



CHARTER – RURAL FIRE SERVICE LIAISON COMMITTEE

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CHARTER OF THE NARROMINE SHIRE COUNCIL RURAL FIRE SERVICE LIAISON COMMITTEE

1. NAME

The committee, as appointed under the provision of Section 355(b) of the Local Government Act 1993 and Part 9 of the Narromine Rural Fire District Service Level Agreement 1 July 2012, shall be known as the **Narromine Shire Council Rural Fire Service Liaison Committee.**

2. INTERPRETATION

For the purpose of this charter:-

"The Committee" means the Narromine Shire Council Rural Fire Service Liaison Committee

"Council" means Narromine Shire Council

"Member" means a member of the committee

"FCO" means Fire Control Officer

3. STATUS OF COMMITTEE

Statutory Committee

4. PURPOSE

The Committee has been established to review the following documents prepared by the Fire Control Officer prior to submission to and consideration by the Council:

- (a) The annual budget and business plan, and
- (b) The quarterly financial and performance reports.

5. FUNCTIONS

- 5.1 The Committee is to advise and assist Council in monitoring and reviewing the performance of the Narromine Rural Fire District Service Level Agreement by the Council and the Rural Fire Service.

6. COMMITTEE DELEGATIONS

- 6.1 The Committee does not have the power to incur expenditure.
- 6.2 The Committee does not have the power to bind Council.
- 6.3 The Committee can make recommendations to the Council on all business presented before it. Recommendations of the Committee will be presented to Council in written form, accompanied by a report from relevant Council officers. Recommendations made by the Committee may or may not be adopted by Council.
- 6.4 To operate in accordance with the provisions of any Regulations, as adopted by Council.

7. MEMBERSHIP

The Committee does not have the authority to co-opt anyone to its membership.

Council Representation

- Two Councillors from the Council appointed by resolution of the Council
- One Alternate Councillor from the Council appointed by resolution of the Council
- General Manager or his/her delegate

Rural Fire Service Representation

- One volunteer rural fire fighter from the District appointed by the local branch of the NSW Rural Fire Service Association Inc (the RFSA), or, in the absence of a local branch of the RFSA, elected in accordance with the applicable Service Standard
- One member of the Service staff assigned to the District of Team nominated by the FCO and approved by the Commissioner
- FCO who will be the Committee's Executive Officer.

The Commissioner, the Council and the groups or entities which appoint or elect members of the Liaison Committee pursuant of sub-clause 9.1(a) to (b) may appoint another person to attend any meeting of the Liaison Committee in the event that the person they have elected is unable, for any reason, to attend that meeting.

Support Staff

Staff from Council will attend meetings to provide administrative support to the Committee. Council staff send meeting requests and record the minutes of the meetings. Rural Fire Service staff set the meeting dates and prepare meeting agendas and business papers.

Chairperson

The Chairperson of this Committee shall be a Councillor. At the first Committee meeting after the annual nomination of Councillor Representatives to the Committee (usually conducted in September), the Chairperson shall be elected by the members present at the meeting.

The role of the Chairperson is to preside at a meeting of the Committee. The Chairperson requires the skills to be able to facilitate the effective functioning of the Committee.

If the Chairperson of the Committee is unable to preside at a meeting of the Committee, the other Councillor will preside.

Other Office Bearers

There are no office bearers on the Committee.

9. TERM OF OFFICE

The Rural Fire Service representatives continue on the Committee on an ongoing basis.

Councillors and designated staff remain on the Committee for the duration of the Council term (usually 1 year).

10. QUORUM & RECOMMENDATION MAKING

The quorum required to enable business to be transacted at meetings is a minimum of four and must include a delegated Councillor representative and one ranking Rural Fire Service Staff Member.

In the absence of a quorum, 15 minutes after the advertised start of the meeting the meeting is to be adjourned and reconvened for another date.

Wherever possible, decisions of the Committee will be made on the basis of consensus. Where consensus cannot be reached, the matter will be decided by a simple majority of those members present at the meeting, provided a quorum is present. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson or person acting in the position of Chairperson shall in addition to their ordinary vote, have the casting vote.

11. GENERAL PUBLIC

The Committee will not usually be open to members of the general public. However, the Committee can decide to open the meeting to the public, subject to the agreement of the Chairperson in consultation with the General Manager. Voting does not extend to members of the general public and is restricted to only elected committee members.

Representatives of organisations or the general community may be invited to address the Committee on matters on the agenda.

12. TIMETABLE FOR MEETINGS

The meeting will occur every three months or more often as determined by the Committee.

The meeting will be limited to a maximum of two hours duration unless the committee resolves to extend the length of the meeting to a particular time or the completion of business.

Extraordinary meetings may be called by the Chairperson of the Committee.

The location, date and starting time for meetings will be advised on the agenda.

Committee meetings can only be held if three (3) working days notice has been given to all members.

13. MEETING PRACTICES & PROCEDURES

The administrative provisions of Council's adopted Code of Meeting Practice shall apply.

The Committee will observe any other relevant Council protocols.

The minutes of the Committee will be included in Council's Business papers for Council ratification, at the following Council Meeting.

14. INSURANCE

Committee members are covered by Council's personal accident insurance only for attendance at meetings and other activities formally endorsed by the Committee, and reported to Council via the minutes.

15. CODE OF CONDUCT

All members of Council committees are required to observe the provisions of Council's Code of Conduct and any other policy applicable to the proper functioning of the Committee. All new members will be provided with a copy of Council's Code of Conduct and will sign to indicate that they have read and understood their obligations. A breach of the Code of Conduct may lead to the member being excluded from the Committee and may include disciplinary action.

In particular, if a committee member has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the Committee is concerned, and who is present at a meeting of the committee at which the matter is being considered, they must disclose the interest to the meeting and must not be present during any discussion or decision making relating to that matter. Leaving the room is necessary because to remain in the presence of the meeting but refrain from voting is taken to be a vote against the motion (see Clause 251 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005).

A person does not breach the above clause if he or she did not know and could not reasonably be expected to have known that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which he or she had a pecuniary interest.

A member of a committee who has a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in any matter with which the committee is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the Committee at which the matter is being considered will disclose the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable. If a member of the committee has declared a non-pecuniary conflict of interest there are a range of options for managing the conflict. The option chosen will depend on an evaluation of the circumstances of the matter, the nature of the interest and the importance of the issue being dealt with.

Committee members must act in a professional and conscientious manner with any information they obtain as a committee member, especially as committees need openness and honesty to operate efficiently. Committee members should feel free to express their opinions and views without fear of recrimination. It is therefore important that committee members respect each other, despite differences, and work together to create an open and trusting atmosphere.

16. CONFIDENTIALITY & PRIVACY

Members, through their involvement on the Committee, may come in contact with confidential or personal information retained by Council. Committee members are required to maintain the security and confidentiality of any such information and not access, use or remove that information, unless authorised to do so.

Privacy legislation governs the collection, holding, use, correction, disclosure and transfer of personal information. More information about the legislation can be obtained by contacting Council's Public Officer.

Should a committee member become aware of any breach of the security, or misuse of Council's confidential or personal information they are asked to contact the Public Officer.

17. MEDIA PROTOCOL

Council's media relations policy states that all media relations shall be conducted through the Mayor for policy matters and through the General Manager for procedural matters.

No other member of the committee is permitted to speak to the media in his or her capacity as a committee member.

18. REVIEW

Amendments to this charter may be proposed to the Council by the Committee at any time, and change will not take effect until such time as Council has resolved to make any required amendments.