



Cultural Heritage Reference Group

Terms of Reference
Version 1, 2025





City of Port Phillip

99a Carlisle Street
St Kilda VIC 3182

Phone: **ASSIST** 03 9209 6777

Email: portphillip.vic.gov.au/contact-us

Website: portphillip.vic.gov.au

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Governance

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Council Contact: Arts and Heritage Programming
& Engagement Officer

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Contents

1. Purpose	1
2. Objectives.....	1
3. Composition.....	1
3.1 Role and selection of Councillor/s.....	2
3.2 Role and selection of Council officer/s	2
3.3 Role and selection of external members	2
3.4 Role and selection of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson	3
4. Committee Operation	4
5. Meetings.....	4
5.1 Meeting schedule.....	4
5.2 Meeting procedure.....	4
5.3 Voting and quorum	5
5.4 Agendas and minutes	5
5.5 Public attendance at meetings	6
6. Budget and Remuneration	6
7. Conduct of Members.....	6
7.1 Conflicts of Interest	7
8. Committee Administration	7
8.1 Reporting to Council	7
8.2 Committee lifecycle.....	7
8.3 Administrative updates.....	7

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Cultural Heritage Reference Group is to assist Council by providing advice and feedback in relation to cultural heritage and local history through:

- input to policies and guidelines which impact on cultural heritage and history
- serving as a resource for Council in relation to built heritage where relevant
- suggestions which improve access to heritage services for residents
- assist in the development of city-wide programs to highlight historical and heritage assets of the city
- improving access to community resources where relevant to support heritage services
- providing feedback regarding memorial and monument conservation priorities
- assessment against selection criteria, and endorsement where appropriate, of applications for new memorials within the Memorials and Monuments Policy and Guidelines 2025
- providing feedback regarding memorial and monument conservation priorities

2. Objectives

The Cultural Heritage Reference Group is intended to provide advice and feedback in relation to cultural heritage and local history in the City of Port Phillip.

3. Composition

The Reference Group shall comprise:

- Up to 1 Councillor (optional):
- Up to 3 Council officers, including:
 - Arts and Heritage Programming and Engagement Officer
 - Local History and Heritage Team Leader
 - Principal Heritage Advisor
- Up to 4 community representatives who have a demonstrable interest in heritage topics or have experience in a heritage services field.
- 1 representative nominated by the Port Melbourne Historical & Preservation Society.
- 1 representative nominated by the St Kilda Historical Society.
- 1 representative nominated by the Middle Park & Albert Park History Group.

Additional Council staff from across the organisation will be involved in the Group as required to ensure a whole-of-organisation approach.

The Group will be convened for an initial term of 4 years (aligned with the end of the Council term). Members are welcome to reapply at the end of their term.

Group members may resign at any time. Notice of resignation is to be provided in writing to Council staff representatives and the Chair.

The Group may determine to remove a member who has failed to attend four meetings without having submitted an apology OR has failed to attend 75% of meetings over the course of a year, even if an apology is provided.

3.1 Role and selection of Councillor/s

Councillor appointments to reference groups is optional. Instead, Reference Groups will have a nominated Councillor sponsor, by resolution, at the beginning of each Council term. By default, Councillors should remain as the Councillor sponsor for the entirety of the term unless Council resolves to reassign appointments throughout the term.

The role of Councillors is to participate in the meetings and listen to stakeholder and community views (as relevant) and act as the spokesperson for the group if there is a requirement to report back to Council.

3.2 Role and selection of Council officer/s

The *Visual Art and Activations* department/service unit will be responsible for this Reference Group.

Council Officers will provide administrative support and advice to the Group. Officers will be nominated by the relevant General Manager as required to provide advice and administrative support to the Group.

3.3 Role and selection of external members

Eligible external community representatives will have an interest in and good working knowledge of:

- cultural heritage principles, including tangible and intangible heritage.
- local historical narratives, significant sites and cultural practices.
- Cultural groups within the community and their contributions.
- Archaeology, architecture, conservation, or First Nations heritage.
- State and national heritage laws, planning schemes and conservation policies.

The approach and method for appointing external representatives will include the following:

- Recruitment of Reference Group members will be via a public Expression of Interest process (EOI) Where possible, recruitment should support intersectionality by looking to include members with a diverse range of:
 - Age
 - Cultural identity
 - Disability status
 - Gender
 - Geographic location (from across the municipality)
 - Religion
 - Sexual orientation
 - Socio-economic background (education, employment, family makeup and housing status)
- Representatives from organisations based in Port Phillip or serving the Port Phillip community should also be considered during the recruitment process.
- Community members will be recommended by a panel comprising of the relevant level 4 manager and other officers who will assess applicants against selection criteria outlined in the recruitment, ensuring consideration for diversity and intersectionality principles during the selection process.
- Consideration will be given to diversity of membership to promote inclusive representation across various sections of the community, gender balance, and where possible, diversity of ages, backgrounds, social identities and lived experience.
- The proposed group members will be recommended to Council via a report, with Council to provide final endorsement.
- Members may nominate for successive terms without restriction, supporting knowledge continuity and deepening expertise over time.
- Casual vacancies which occur due to external members being unable to complete the full term of their appointments may be filled by co-opting suitable candidates from a previous selection process or by conducting a new process for the remainder of the previous incumbents' terms. The relevant GM will have the authority to appoint a recommended candidate from a shortlist for the remainder of the previous incumbent's term.
- In the event that any Reference Group seeks to appoint group members who are under the age of 18, all Committee members must hold a valid volunteer Working With Children Check.
- External community representatives unable to attend a committee meeting are not able to nominate a proxy.

3.4 Role and selection of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson

- The Council officer responsible for the Reference Group must facilitate the election of the Chair and Deputy Chair
- At the first meeting of the Reference Group, the Council officer will invite nominations for the Chair and Deputy Chair positions
- Voting must be carried out by show of hands with a simple majority of votes for each position.

- In the event the Chair is not present at the commencement of the meeting, the Deputy Chair will assume the responsibility for chairing that meeting. If the Chair and Deputy Chair are both not present for the commencement of the meeting, a Councillor or the most senior Council officer will assume the responsibilities of the chair.
- The positions are to be agreed to by all members and will be for a term of 12 months. The Chair and Deputy Chair positions shall be reviewed annually.

4. Group Operation

New Groups will be briefed by the relevant department manager or delegate on the expected range of work to be undertaken, including discussion of how the group relates to the work of Council, the roles of all parties, and any relevant policy or legislative framework impacting the work.

The Group is to always operate in accordance with this Terms of Reference. The Group has no delegated powers but may provide advice in line with the Terms of Reference. Neither the Group, nor its members, may speak on behalf of Council.

If the group wishes to make a submission, for advocacy purposes, on behalf of Council the respective Councillor Delegate will be required to table the submission, approved by the Group Chair, at a Council meeting. If the group wishes to make an independent submission, they must clearly state that the submission is not an endorsed position of City of Port Phillip Council and cannot use Council letterhead or logo on any submission documentation.

The Group may develop its own meeting protocols and operating practices to deal with any matters in an efficient, effective and collaborative manner.

Groups may establish sub-groups, as they see fit, to achieve better overall outcomes, and must submit any agendas and minute documents back to the respective parent Reference Group. Any sub-groups that are established will not receive Council officer support and will be the responsibility of that sub-group to operate.

5. Meetings

5.1 Meeting schedule

Meetings will be held quarterly and an annual schedule of meetings will be agreed upon at the first meeting of the Advisory Group. Meetings may be held online or in person, or a combination of both.

Additional meetings may be scheduled from time to time as needed. Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Port Phillip Advisory Committee Governance Rules.

5.2 Meeting procedure

Meetings will follow standard meeting procedure protocols, which are in summary:

- Commence on time and conclude by the stated completion time
- Be scheduled and confirmed in advance with all relevant papers distributed (as appropriate) to each member
- Encourage fair and reasonable discussion, participation and respect for each other's views
- Focus on the relevant issues at hand; and
- Provide advice to Council as far as possible on a consensus basis.

5.3 Voting and quorum

While any recommendations should generally be developed through consensus, there may be times when voting is required to settle on a position relating to a particular recommendation. When this occurs, the differing opinions and votes for and against should be clearly expressed in the minutes of the meeting. All members shall have full and equal voting rights unless a member is unable to vote due to a conflict of interest.

A quorum of any meeting will be at least two independent members (which may include the Chairperson) and at least one Councillor. If more than 50 percent of active group members are absent, the Chair or Deputy Chair may elect to reschedule the meeting or conduct the meeting with present members, recording absences in the minutes.

5.4 Agendas and minutes

Compiling the agenda for a meeting of a Reference Group will be undertaken by the Council officers providing administrative support to that Group, with final approval of the agenda by the Chairperson of that Group.

- Any member of the Group may submit an item for inclusion on the agenda of a Group meeting through the Council officer providing administrative support to the Group.
- The item must be submitted in writing (in hard copy or e-mail), at least 5 business days prior to the date of the scheduled meeting.
- Advisory Group agendas and supporting documents will be circulated to all Group members 5 business days prior to the date of the scheduled meeting.

Minutes of the meetings will be taken by a Council officer. The draft minutes must be:

- Submitted to the Chairperson for confirmation within 10 working days of the meeting;
- Distributed to all Group members following confirmation from the Chair

The minutes must:

- Contain details of the proceedings and recommendations made
- Be clearly expressed
- Be self-explanatory

- Incorporate relevant reports or a summary of the relevant reports considered by the group; and
- Be provided to group members as soon as practicable after the meeting.
- Minutes of Reference Group meetings can be tabled at any Council Meeting during agenda item 'Reports by Councillor delegates'

The minutes will be endorsed by the Reference Group at the subsequent meeting or by email in the event the minutes are to be tabled at a Council meeting prior to the next scheduled Reference Group meeting.

5.5 Public attendance at meetings

The Reference Group is not required to give public notice of its meetings and its meetings are not open to the public. The Group may invite observers to meetings from time to time. This is at the discretion of the Chairperson. Guests may also be invited to attend and participate at meetings; this would generally be for a specific purpose and/or specified period of time. This is at the discretion of the Chair.

6. Budget and Remuneration

The Reference Group has no budgetary allocation from Council (this includes budget for the payment of fees for external members or presenters). Any budgetary allocation is at the absolute discretion of the relevant General Manager who is responsible for the Reference Group.

No remuneration will be paid to Group members. Councillors appointed to Reference Groups are entitled to claim expenses in line with the Councillor Expenses and Support Policy.

7. Conduct of Members

Councillors' Code of Conduct and Employee Code of Conduct applies to respective Councillor and Council Staff Committee members. The conflict of interest and confidentiality provisions in the Local Government Act 2020 apply to all members.

In performing the role of Advisory Committee member, a person must:

- Act with integrity
- Impartially exercise their responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- Not improperly seek to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person
- Treat all persons with respect and have due regard to the opinions, beliefs, rights and responsibilities of other persons
- Commit to regular attendance at meetings; and

- Not make improper use of information acquired because of their position or release information that the member knows, or should reasonably know, is confidential information

7.1 Conflicts of Interest

Councillors and Council officers are required to disclose conflicts of interest in accordance with Part 6, Division 2 of the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) and Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules. Where an external community member has a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in relation to a matter before the committee, the community member must disclose the matter to the group before the matter is considered or discussed. The external community member must then leave the meeting until the matter is dealt with. Disclosure must include the nature of the interest and be recorded in the meeting minutes.

8. Committee Administration

8.1 Reporting to Council

Officers supporting reference groups are encouraged to submit Counsellor Notes to make Councillors aware of any group activities or highlights. Reference Groups may also invite their nominated Councillor sponsor to a group meeting to present on a particular topic, or to report back to council.

8.2 Committee lifecycle

- A review of each of Council's Reference Groups will take place at the start of each new Council term to determine its relevance for the proceeding four-years.
- Councillors will be appointed to as Councillor Delegates
- Where Council determines to appoint a Councillor Delegate to a group annually, that group will have, in effect, be endorsed to continue operating.
- Council may resolve to dis-establish a group at any time if it is deemed to no longer have a relevant function.

8.3 Administrative updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Terms of Reference. Where an update does not materially alter this Terms of Reference, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of departments or a Council Officer's position title. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Terms of Reference, it must be considered by Council.