



CUMBERLAND
CITY COUNCIL

Terms of Reference

Westmead South Community Voice Panel

AUTHORISATION & VERSION CONTROL

Terms of Reference (TOR) No	TOR-001
TOR Owner	Director Environment and Planning
Date Adopted	09 May 2023
Version No	1
ECM Number	CS-272
Review Date	09 May 2025

1. Purpose

The Westmead South Community Voice Panel (Community Voice Panel) is a representative sample of community members who agree to be consulted about the issues and topics during the preparation of a Master Plan for Westmead South.

The purpose of Community Voice Panel is to:

- Provide representative insights of community views, needs and priorities for Westmead
- Increase community participation and engagement throughout the development of the Westmead South Master Plan
- Provide feedback to Council staff to understand the community's and stakeholders' key priorities, aspirations and values for Westmead South in the future
- Provide representative community engagement for Westmead as an additional avenue for engagement

The Community Voice Panel is a participatory panel through which community members are able to share their feedback, experiences and ideas with Council. This feedback will be taken into account by Council when planning projects and services.

The Community Voice Panel has no decision making authority, with final decisions sitting with Council.

2. Membership

Membership of the Westmead South Community Voice Panel will consist of:

- Up to fifteen (15) community members or representatives from local community. Ideally, the community members will be from the Westmead area within the Cumberland Local Government Area.
- Each member must attend a minimum of one (1) meeting, being the very first meeting.

All community representative nominations for appointment to the Community Voice Panel are to be formally submitted in writing to Council, through an Expressions of Interest Process (EOI). Nominees must complete an Expression of Interest and formally declare in writing to Council any potential conflicts of interest (such as being a member of other committees or other community affiliations) directly relating to the purpose of the Community Voice Panel.

All nominations will be assessed by an internal panel of Council staff against the criteria, with recommendations made to the General Manager and Director of Environment and Planning via an evaluation report.

Council staff will provide administrative support and workshop facilitation to the Community Voice Panel.

3. Selection Criteria

Any eligible community members can complete an Expression of Interest (EOI) to become part of Community Voice at any time.

From the list of EOIs received, those officially invited to join the Community Voice Panel will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Live or work in the Westmead South area of Cumberland LGA
- Familiarity with Westmead South and Cumberland as a resident, business owner or worker
- Representation of a range of perspectives from within the local community

- Proximity of home or workplace to Westmead South
- Ability to express views clearly and respectfully (language/interpreter support is available)
- A demographic mix that reflects the community

The following are ineligible to become panel members:

- An elected Councillor or full-time Council employee of any council,
- A property developer within the meaning of section 96GB of the [Election Funding, Expenditure and Disclosures Act 1981](#),
- A real estate agent within the meaning of the [Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2002](#).

4. Meeting Attendance

Community Voice Panel members are expected to attend all panel meetings where possible. If a member is unable to attend, an apology is to be provided to the Council prior to the meeting. A member who fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without submitting a satisfactory explanation will forfeit their place on the Community Voice Panel.

5. Times and Places for Meetings

The Community Voice Panel will meet at dates and times as determined by Council.

Meetings will normally be held at either the Council Administration Building at 16 Memorial Avenue, Merrylands, or at another accessible venue.

Subject to the Chairperson's discretion and technical capabilities, meetings may be held via Audio/Visual link or a combination of in person and Audio/Visual link.

6. Notification of Vacancies

Community Voice Panel members are appointed for the duration of the early engagement process until Council determines if the Westmead South Master Plan and Planning Proposal should proceed or not. Members can opt out of Community Voice at any time by informing Council they no longer wish to participate.

In the event of a vacancy, Council staff will invite previous EOI applicant's to join the Community Voice Panel.

7. Chairperson

The Chairperson will be nominated by the Community Voice Panel by majority vote. In his/her absence, the Community Voice Panel may elect another Chairperson.

8. Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of the Community Voice Panel is 50% of the appointed community representatives. If a quorum is not present within fifteen minutes after the appointed started time, the meeting will be adjourned to a time fixed by the Chairperson.

Where there is no quorum, the members present can hold an informal meeting to discuss matters. However, any recommendations made by the Community Voice Panel are not recognised until a meeting, where a quorum is present, has considered and ratified them.

In the event that three (3) consecutive Community Voice Panel meetings do not proceed due to a lack of quorum, Council staff may undertake a report to the Director of Environment and Planning and the General Manager about the continuation of the Community Voice Panel.

9. Conflict of Interest & Pecuniary Interest

Community Voice Panel members must declare to Council staff any conflicts of interest or pecuniary interest at the start of each meeting, or before discussion of a relevant agenda item or topic. Details of any conflicts of interest or pecuniary interest will be included in the meeting minutes.

If members or those invited to Community Voice Panel meetings find they do have a real or perceived conflict of interest or pecuniary interest they are not allowed to be a part of Community Voice Panel discussions on the issue.

10. Administration of the Community Voice Panel

The Community Voice Panel will be convened by a Council officer from Council's Environment and Planning Directorate. Other Council staff will attend meetings with the Community Voice Panel as required. This may include consultants invited by Council.

Council staff will provide the following administrative support to the Westmead South Community Voice Panel, as required:

Communication comprising an email to all members:

- Inform members of upcoming workshops
- Provide the results of previous workshops
- Inform the Community Voice Panel members about optional engagement activities currently open and being undertaken outside of the formal Community Voice Panel activities that they may be interested in participating in, relating to Westmead South.

Additional communications may include:

- Email reminders to complete engagement activities
- Progress updates and general surveys for the Master Plan of Westmead South
- Updates about the operation of the Community Voice Panel.

The Community Voice Panel members can communicate with Council staff via the dedicated email or phone number provided.

11. Meeting Notifications, Agenda and Minutes

Council will notify members of the time and place of each workshop at least one week in advance, together with a copy of the agenda and any relevant reports or materials.

All minutes from the workshops of the Community Voice Panel will be summarised, deidentified and placed on Council's Have Your Say webpage.

Members will receive a summary of the results of the workshops they participate in. These summaries may present just the result of that workshop, or any activity undertaken as part of any workshop.

The timeframes for these summaries will vary depending on the level on analysis required and other engagement activities that need to be included in the findings.

12. Expenses of Community Voice Panel Members

Council will not generally authorise payment or provide remuneration to Panel members.

13. Insurance

Community Voice Panel members are covered by Council's public liability and professional indemnity insurance.

14. Media, Representation and Confidentiality

Panel members must not speak to the media on behalf of the **Community Voice Panel** or Council.

Members of the Community Voice Panel are individuals whose anonymity will be maintained when the outcome of a community voice consultation process is discussed:

- Individual members will never be expected to speak as a formal representative of the views of the Community Voice Panel or Cumberland City Council.
- Media interest in community voice engagement activities and results of consultations will be managed by Council at all times.
- Information from Community Voice Panel may be placed on Council's Have Your Say webpage
- Notes from each meeting will be published for all community members to access

15. Induction

The Community Voice Panel operates under Council's corporate governance framework, including the Code of Conduct. New members will receive relevant information and briefings on their appointment to assist them to meet their Community Voice Panel responsibilities.

16. Standard Operating Procedures

All other procedures are to be in accordance with Council's Standard Operating Procedures and Code of Meeting Practice.

17. Decision Making

The Community Voice Panel has no decision-making authority.

18. Review of Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed two (2) years after initial establishment and then every two years or where necessary.