



Terms of Reference

Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve – Committee of Management

1. Introduction

As an ‘environmentally focussed reserve’ (Council resolution 28 March 2018), the current goals of the Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve (EPNR) include:

1. Environment – i.e. growing habitat for wildlife and refuge particularly for rare and endangered flora and fauna
2. Flood mitigation
3. Water quality, water reuse
4. Public amenity – in particular
 - a. To provide a safe, accessible and appealing space for passive recreation
 - b. Volunteer engagement
 - c. Research and education
 - d. Reconciliation with the traditional owners

Council recognises that decision making is enhanced, and services are better delivered when community members are involved in decisions which affect them.

Council will therefore establish the Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve Committee of Management (EPNRCOM), ‘the Committee’, to enable community-wide oversight of the operation of EPNR.

The Terms of Reference have been developed to be consistent with the principles of Council’s Community and Stakeholder Engagement Policy.

2. Purpose of the Committee of Management

Committee members are encouraged to share their thoughts and insights to ensure EPNR is operated in a way that achieves its goals. It is recognised that while Committee members will have personal preferences, their task will be to consider the interests of the community as a whole. This will involve considering the information provided and the perspectives of all stakeholders and users of EPNR.

Council has adopted the Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve Masterplan. The Masterplan provides guidance on how the Reserve should be developed, but also regarding the purpose it should serve.

The Committee has no decision making powers other than operational tasks e.g.: plantings, volunteers, events etc. These operational tasks must be in accordance with the relevant adopted plans, policies, strategies and Council’s values. Specifically, the Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve

Masterplan, the current adopted Council Plan, the Bayside Open Space Strategy, Biodiversity Action Plan and Community Vision 2050.

The Committee will:

- have an active role in seeking and communicating community views to Council
- be respectful of other members' views and sign a code of conduct
- participate in discussions at meetings, listen actively, and encourage others to participate
- be responsible for reading all minutes and material provided
- be able to participate in at least 75% of the meetings held.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the Committee are to support the operation and development of the EPNR in accordance with the Reserve's goals. Therefore, the Committee will:

- develop a Management Plan that details maintenance levels required across the Reserve
- amend the Management Plan as and when required based on the performance of the Reserve and in consideration of relevant data and feedback
- provide guidance on what to plant and where
- provide guidance to the Plant Lab on what species to propagate
- seek advice from the Plant Lab on matters regarding planting throughout the Reserve
- support the EPA to continue their recording of (flora and fauna) present within the Reserve, including pest and domestic species
- develop weed, pest and domestic animal management strategies
- develop habitat enhancement strategies
- develop activities to enhance public amenity, passive recreation and visitor experience
- work with the community to undertake data collection and record keeping to monitor Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as appropriate
- support suitable volunteer events
- collate and provide feedback on observations of the Reserve in general
- recommend changes (operational or capital) to Council that need to be made to ensure the Reserve functions
- identify barriers that impact the Reserve's ability to achieve its goals
- discuss potential solutions (actions) to identified issues
- assist in monitoring implementation.

In addition, Committee members will also be available at, mutually agreeable times, to provide specific advice regarding EPNR to Council and its stakeholders.

The Committee will also provide input as a stakeholder to proposed future works that are required to implement outstanding actions from the EPNR Masterplan.

4. Membership and Terms

Membership will not be more than 10 individuals, made up of Bayside Councillors, community-based appointments and skilled-based appointments as follows:

Position/Role	Number	Term (years)
Bayside City Councillors – ward councillor given preference but not compulsory	2*	2
Community representatives- representing relevant community groups-in particular the Friends of Group for the EPNR, currently known as the Elsternwick Park Association	2	3
Experts – across all Reserve goals including habitat, management and volunteer engagement	2	2
Residents, rate payers or people with strong connections to the reserve	4	3

* One Councillor will be appointed as the Chairperson of the Committee

Membership will aim for a group representing a range of abilities, ages, gender, cultures, geographic locations across the municipality and a range of areas of interest/expertise. Members should demonstrate interest, skills, knowledge and or expertise relevant to the goals of the Reserve and the ability to work in a team.

Priority for some of the positions will be given to nominations from the EPNR 'Friends of Group' currently known as the Elsternwick Park Association.

Recommendations to be made by a selection panel made up of the Chair of the Committee, responsible Director and Council officer.

The membership of the Committee to be appointed by Council.

Council is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for all members and will work with members to consider any supports required.

Relevant Council Officers will attend all meetings and provide advice, assistance and expertise, but do not form part of the Committee of Management. It is expected that the same staff members will attend to provide a level of consistency.

Council resolved that the Committee should not consist of more than 10 persons and those members are to have fixed terms of appointment of up to 3 years. Council Officers do not count towards the number of Committee members and will not have voting powers.

Should a member resign before the expiry of their term, the vacancy will be filled for the remainder of the term via an EOI process. If the vacancy occurs with less than half of the three-year term remaining, the Committee may choose not to fill the vacancy until the end of the remaining Community-based members' term of appointment.

a) Delegations

In line with the Objectives of the Committee (section 3), members have the ability to influence operational matters in line with adopted budgets. This includes decision making abilities for operational tasks that fall under the adopted maintenance schedule.

An example of this would be the Committee's influence of the day-to-day operation and maintenance of the Reserve. Council, via its operational budget, is likely to enter a contractual agreement with a service provider to maintain the Reserve. The Committee will have input into how that adopted operational budget is used. It will not be able to approve additional operational expenditure. It has no ability to expend on behalf of Council. An example of this is that a Committee member can request that resources are moved from one task to another as and when required. A majority vote would be required to approve the decision.

The Committee can make recommendations to Council on matters such as strategic policy direction and required capital works in relation to EPNR. These recommendations will be made to Council via the Council Meeting process and the recommendation will be endorsed or rejected.

The Committee can provide its support to third parties who may want to apply for grant funding for works that benefit EPNR. Support is likely to be the form of a letter that endorses any application that will be completed the third party the benefits EPNR.

5. Appointment Process

The two Councillors will be appointed at Council's Annual Meeting.

The Chair of the Committee will be appointed at a future Ordinary Meeting of Council.

Positions contributing to the community-based roles will be recruited via a publicly advertised Expression of Interest (EOI) process. Priority will be given to nominations from the EPNR 'Friends of group', currently known as the Elsternwick Park Association.

a) Membership Selection Criteria

Selection criteria will consider nominees who:

- are residents of the City of Bayside or have strong links to Bayside (work, play, study, or own property in Bayside)
- are active volunteers in the EPNR 'Friends of group', regularly working on the site
- can demonstrate active and broad connections in the community
- can demonstrate interest, skills, knowledge and or expertise relevant to the goals of the Reserve
- demonstrate ability to work as a member of a team; and
- are nominated by the Bayside community directly.

Recommendations for membership to be made by a selection panel made up of the Chair of the Committee, responsible Director and Council officer. The membership of the Committee to be appointed by Council.

Council will advertise for nominations from community members through Council's website, and key communication channels such as social media and e-newsletters. Information on nominating will also be shared with local and relevant stakeholder groups.

6. Accountability

Members will:

- be respectful of other member's views and sign a code of conduct contract
- participate in discussions at meeting(s), listen actively, and encourage others to participate
- be responsible for reading all information provided prior to the Committee meetings and other activities.

7. Committee Meetings

a) Meetings

An inception meeting will be arranged when the roles have been filled. Feedback and input from members may be sourced through means other than meetings. The structure of the meetings shall be flexible and determined by the makeup and needs of the committee, to ensure equal participation. The Committee must meet at least four times per year.

b) Meeting Agenda and Minutes

Agendas and associated material will be prepared and provided to members one week prior to the meeting. Committee members may propose agenda items for consideration. Agenda items should be submitted to the relevant Council officer two weeks before the next scheduled meeting, to allow time to prepare information for the meeting.

Minutes of Committee meetings will be considered by Council at the next Council Meeting after clearance by the Committee Chairperson following each Committee meeting.

c) Conflict of Interest

A member with a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest, must declare their interest prior to discussion of the item on the agenda.

d) Code of Conduct

A code of conduct will be enforced to ensure safe participation and enable a respectful and equitable sharing of ideas. All members will be required to sign the code of conduct.

Any breaches of the Code of Conduct will be addressed by the Chair. Severe breaches may result in removal from the Committee.

8. Chairperson

a) Role of the Chairperson

The role of the Chairperson includes, but is not limited to:

- chairing of meetings of the Committee in accordance with the meeting agenda distributed to Committee Members
- conducting meetings in a manner that promotes full participation, communication, involvement, consensus, mutual respect and listening

- providing time during meetings for any member to raise any issue they believe is relevant
- provide a casting vote on occasions where there is an equal number of votes on a matter
- the Chairperson (or Deputy Chairperson) will be part of the interview panel for the recruitment of new members of the Committee.

b) Deputy Chair

- The Deputy Chairperson of the Committee must be elected from the Council appointed Councillor representatives on the Committee of Management.
- The Deputy Chairperson of the Committee shall be appointed by resolution of Council at its Annual Meeting (or, at another Meeting of Council if an appointment at an Annual Meeting is not possible)
- The Deputy Chairperson is appointed annually.
- The Deputy Chairperson of the Committee will undertake the duties of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson.

9. Performance Measures

Key indicators will allow the Committee to reflect on its work and make changes as required. Performance measures are likely to alter as the Reserve develops and will be agreed upon by the Committee at the time. Indicators are likely to include, but not be limited to:

- monthly volunteer hours
- fauna survey results
- visitor numbers (if possible)
- visitor satisfaction (if possible)

Once established, the Committee will be evaluated following the 12-month period with outcomes of the evaluation and recommendations, or amendments presented at a future Council meeting.

10. Financial Aspects

The Committee will not have its own budget. Through its output, it will be able to make suggestions that will be covered by the Open Space Operational Budget assigned to support the operation and improvement of the Reserve.

The Committee will be able to apply for suitable grants, and the Committee will be able to offer support to groups who would like to apply for grants to implement works that benefit the Reserve. These groups would be responsible for completing the grant application, support would be in the form of Council endorsement.

The Committee will receive assistance from Council in the form of:

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- equipment to undertake tasks required as per the Terms of Reference and Management Model
- Training

The Committee will support groups who are able to generate money to reinvest in the Reserve.

11. Reporting

The minutes of the Committee will be presented for adoption at the subsequent Council Meeting.