

# COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE



## AFFORDABLE SOCIAL HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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### 1. SUMMARY

- A Council Advisory Committee (Committee) is established to provide strategic advice. Committees are guided by Council priorities outlined in the Council Plan.
- The purpose of a Committee is to draw upon local expertise, experience and networks to inform Council decision making by providing formal pathways for community input and providing regular, formal feedback to Council.
- The Affordable Social Housing Advisory Committee has been formed following the adoption of the *Social Housing Plan 2020-2041* (the Plan) which included a commitment to establish an Affordable Housing Advisory Committee to strengthen the leadership role that Council seeks to take in relation to the growth of social housing supply in the City.

### 2. OBJECTIVES

The Plan is built around five key goals. These are the objectives that will guide the Committee, providing the context for the operation of the Committee:

- Increase the supply of social housing from the current 3 per cent to 7 per cent of total households by 2031, an estimated increase in supply of 6,000 dwellings and to 10 per cent by 2041 (a further 6,000 dwellings);
- Increase the supply of social housing through: the provision of the City's owned land for social housing developments; and a new requirement for all development of the City's owned land to contribute to an increased supply of social housing. There is significant land supply in Geelong and the municipality is not "locked" by adjacent populated municipalities;
- Maximise state and commonwealth investment in new social housing across the City;
- Amend the City of Greater Geelong Planning Scheme to require the inclusion of social and affordable housing in new developments based on identified need; and
- Complete an '*Urban Refreshment*' of areas of high social housing concentration to enhance the utilisation and quality of social housing and increase the liveability and social wellbeing of these areas.

The Plan **also** recommends specific roles for the City in its implementation:

- Leadership – advocating for an increase in social housing in public policy and in the local community;
- Investment – investing in social housing by contributing City land and cash to leverage significant funding from state and commonwealth governments;

- Partnerships – developing partnership agreements with the commonwealth and Victorian state government Department of Health and Human Services to develop and undertake housing projects and access funding to expand the supply of social housing in Greater Geelong;
- Planning – utilising recent amendments to the *Planning & Environment Act* to negotiate the inclusion of new social housing within all new residential developments where development approvals have added value to land;
- Urban revitalisation – contributing to public urban improvements in Corio, Norlane and Whittington; and
- Capacity building – developing the capacity of the City of Greater Geelong to deliver the implementation of the Plan.

### 3. ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE

The role of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee is to:

- Monitor and promote the implementation of Council's Social Housing Plan;
- Advise Council on housing related issues, activities and opportunities within the municipality and broader sector particularly those that are linked to the supply of social and affordable housing;
- Monitor research on housing need, housing demand and housing supply and advise Council on the implications for Council policies, trends to be communicated to the Geelong community and local priorities for research;
- Advise Council on the delivery mechanisms necessary for the implementation of the social housing growth targets in the Plan;
- Advise Council on any future opportunities to expand its role in the delivery of social and affordable housing and assist Council to promote the community benefits of social and affordable housing and best practice in social and affordable housing design and management;
- Assist Council to identify priorities for advocacy to state and commonwealth governments on matters relating to the demand and supply of social and affordable housing;
- Convey the views and interests of the Geelong community and the various housing related networks to Council; and
- Assist Council with event planning, consultation processes and other forms of engagement relating to affordable housing issues.

### 4. DEFINITIONS

<b>Act</b>	The <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
<b>CEO</b>	The Chief Executive Officer of the City appointed by Council.
<b>City</b>	The administration of the City of Greater Geelong, led by the Chief Executive Officer.
<b>Council</b>	The City of Greater Geelong.
<b>Councillor</b>	Elected officials representing the City of Greater Geelong, including the Mayor.
<b>Council officer</b>	All staff of the City, including all contractors and volunteers engaged by the City, and the Executive Leadership Team.
<b>ELT</b>	Executive Leadership Team consisting of the Directors or Executive Managers of the Departments of the City who all report to the Chief Executive Officer.
<b>Mayor</b>	The Councillor elected to be the Mayor of the Council in accordance with the <i>City of Greater Geelong Act 1993</i> .
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	Affordable Housing is defined as housing, including social housing that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low and moderate income households.
<b>Affordability</b>	That household costs should not exceed 30 per cent of income for those households in the Very Low, Low and Moderate incomes categories.
<b>DHHS</b>	Department of Health and Human Services
<b>Social Housing</b>	An umbrella term that refers to public housing, delivered by the state government, and community housing, delivered by community housing providers.
<b>Attachment 1</b>	Key terms: City of Greater Geelong Social Housing Plan 2020–2041.

## 5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 5.1 Expected / Definite life of the Committee

- 5.1.1 The life of the Committee as the Social Housing Plan 2020–2041.
- 5.1.2 The term of community membership will be three years.
- 5.1.3 Members may be reappointed for a second term, however no more than 50 per cent of members who have served a full term may be reappointed at the commencement of a new term.

### 5.2 Appointment of members

- 5.2.1 The appointment of community members on the Committee shall follow the following process:
  - Council will publicly advertise seeking applications from qualified community members requiring them to demonstrate how they meet the key selection criteria in the approved Position Description;
  - Council will write to all key stakeholder networks to advise them of the opportunity and to encourage them to promote it amongst their networks and to endorse suitable applications;
  - Following receipt of applications and the reaching the closing date for applications the applications will be assessed against the selection criteria and the requirement for a broad cross section of members involved in the “affordable housing system”. Appointment of community representative will be made in accordance with the Committee Representation Council Policy;
  - Should there be insufficient members appointed by the open process Council may approach individuals considered to meet the selection criteria and request they submit an application for consideration; and
  - Following receipt and assessment of the application they may be appointed to the Committee in accordance with the Committee Representation Council Policy.

### 5.3 Composition of the Committee

- 5.3.1 The number of community members of the Committee shall be no less than eight and no more than 12 and be drawn from those sectors of the community who have a particular participation in the “affordable housing system” including:
  - Consumers of social and / or affordable housing;
  - Representatives of community service agencies that understand the impact of homelessness and unaffordable housing on low income households;
  - Representatives of community housing organisations that provide social housing within Geelong;
  - Representatives of the development industry involved in the delivery of housing;
  - Representatives of the planning industry involved in the planning of housing developments;
  - Representatives of the construction industry involved in the building of residential property;
  - Representatives of the finance industry involved in the financing of the housing sector;
  - Representatives of the philanthropic sector involved in the funding of social housing;
  - Representatives of the Director of Housing within the Victorian State Government; and
  - An academic/researcher with knowledge and experience in the housing system and preferably the social/affordable housing system.
- 5.3.2 The DHHHs will appoint two (2) members in a non-voting capacity. One (1) representing the Divisional Office One (1) representing the Central Office.
- 5.3.3 The Committee will be chaired by a Councillor appointed by the Mayor and is expected to be the Councillor holding the relevant portfolio.
- 5.3.4 A second Council representative will be nominated by Council.
- 5.3.5 Other City of Greater Geelong Councillors are welcome to participate as non-voting members.
- 5.3.6 The Committee will also be attended by the following Council Officers:
  - Director – Community Life;
  - Senior officers from Healthy Communities and Planning and Growth; and
  - Additional staff may be invited to attend when their area of work is relevant to the work of the Committee.

### 5.4 The role of community members is to

- 5.4.1 Commit themselves to the Terms of Reference of the Committee.
- 5.4.2 Attend meetings of the Committee personally (no proxy allowed) and attend at least 80 per cent of all meetings.

- 5.4.3 Abide by best practice in the conduct of Advisory Committees by declaring any real or perceived personal conflicts of interest as soon as such becomes known.
- 5.4.4 Bring their knowledge, skills and experience of housing matters to the Committee and contribute to the development of collective wisdom.
- 5.4.5 Represent the views and ideas of their network to the Committee and communicate the collective wisdom of the Committee to their network.
- 5.4.6 Actively contribute by participating in discussions and offer opinions and knowledge.
- 5.4.7 Treat others with respect and have due regard to the opinions, rights and responsibilities of others.
- 5.4.8 Maintain the confidentiality of all information provided unless otherwise advised.
- 5.4.9 Act in a voluntary capacity.
- 5.4.10 A “representative” of an organisation is expected to be able to represent the views and ideas of that organisation while participating in the Committee as an individual with their own views, ideas and experience to be contributed for the benefit of the Committee.

## **5.5 Authority of the Committee**

- 5.5.1 The Committee is an Advisory Committee for the purposes of the Local Government Act, therefore does not have delegated authority, and reports to Council as required.
- 5.5.2 The Committee has no financial delegation authority.
- 5.5.3 The Mayor and the Director are the designated media spokespeople for Council in accordance with Council’s Media Policy.
- 5.5.4 Advisory Committee, Working Group and Business Forum members may speak to the media about their own views but must not purport to represent Council.

## **5.6 Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality**

- 5.6.1 If a Committee member determines that they have a Conflict of Interest in any matter which is to be considered at a meeting of the Committee then that person must:
  - If he or she intends to be present at the meeting, disclose the nature of the interest immediately before the consideration or discussion; or
  - If he or she does not intend to be present at the meeting, disclose the nature of the interest to the Chairperson of the Committee at any time before the meeting is held.
- 5.6.2 While any vote or discussion is taken on the subject matter the member must:
  - Leave the room and notify the Chairperson that he or she is doing so; and
  - Remain outside the room and any gallery or other area in view or hearing of the room.
- 5.6.3 The Chairperson of the Committee must record the declaration and the nature of the interest in the minutes of the meeting.

## **5.7 Timing, Place and Regularity of Meetings**

- 5.7.1 The Committee will meet at least every quarter and for no more than three hours.
- 5.7.2 The Committee may decide to meet more often to consider specific issues in a workshop format.
- 5.7.3 The Committee will be hosted by Council in an appropriate venue.
- 5.7.4 A meeting of the Committee will not be called with less than two weeks’ notice to all members, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- 5.7.5 The Committee may form Working Groups on particular issues as it sees fit.

## **5.8 Meeting Agenda**

- 5.8.1 The Standing Agenda will include:
  - Acknowledgement of Country;
  - Attendance and apologies;
  - Declaration of any conflicts of interest;
  - Minutes of the previous meeting;
  - Business arising from previous meeting;
  - Council Report on Implementation of the Social Housing Plan;

- Questions and discussion arising from the Council Report;
- Matters identified by community members in writing for discussion and action; and
- Summary of matters to be reported on at the next meeting.

### 5.9 Meeting Procedure

- 5.9.1 The Chairperson shall chair the meetings, taking account of both the need for efficiency and the importance of accountability.
- 5.9.2 If the Chairperson is not present the meeting will be chaired by one of the members present.

### 5.10 Meeting Quorum

- 5.10.1 A quorum is six (6) members, not including Council officers or Councillors.
- 5.10.2 If less than six members attend, the meeting may proceed but no decisions can be made.

### 5.11 Reporting Requirements

- 5.11.1 The Committee shall report to Council providing an update of committee activities as required but at least annually.
- 5.11.2 Distribution time for agendas is one week prior to the scheduled meeting date.
- 5.11.3 Minutes from the Committee meeting will be circulated one week after the meeting has been held.

### 5.12 Secretariat

- 5.12.1 A Council officer will support the Committee.
- 5.12.2 The Council officer will prepare the agenda for every Committee meeting in consultation with the chair and circulate the agenda and any meeting papers to Committee members before the meeting.
- 5.12.3 Access to information and request for support from Council departments will be led through the department holding the housing portfolio.
- 5.12.4 Minutes of actions and decisions will be recorded and distributed to Committee members.
- 5.12.5 Minutes, reports and correspondence of the Committee will be registered in Council's record keeping software.

### 5.13 Facilities & Resources

- 5.13.1 The Committee will not have a budget for approved activities but will advise Council annually on budget requirements in relation to research, advocacy, promotions and community engagement for inclusion in respective program budgets.

## 6. QUALITY RECORDS

**QUALITY RECORDS SHALL BE RETAINED FOR AT LEAST THE PERIOD SHOWN BELOW.**

Record	Retention/Disposal Responsibility	Retention Period	Location

## 7. ATTACHMENTS

- Key terms: City of Greater Geelong Social Housing Plan 2020 - 2041

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<b>Affordable housing</b>	A dwelling available through a housing assistance program that provides for a specified level of below market rent price (e.g. public housing, community housing, National Rental Affordability Scheme, shared equity scheme for home ownership).
<b>Community housing</b>	Community housing is secure, affordable, long term rental housing managed by not-for-profit organisations for people on low incomes or with special needs.
<b>Community housing provider</b>	A not-for-profit organisation that delivers and/or manages community housing.
<b>Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA)</b>	A non-taxable Commonwealth Government supplementary payment added on to the benefit or family payment of people who rent in the private rental market above applicable rent thresholds.
<b>Crisis accommodation</b>	Crisis and emergency accommodation includes a range of specialist services for people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, escaping family violence, or in other emergencies. These services are available 24-hours a day, however they are temporary and designed to immediately assist people in crisis to stabilise and move on to something more permanent.
<b>Department of Health and Human Services</b>	The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is an agency of the Victorian State Government. DHHS delivers policies, programs and services for children and families, women, gender and equality, sport and recreation health and wellbeing, ambulance services, public health, ageing, disability, mental health, alcohol and other drugs and housing and homelessness.
<b>Director of Housing (DoH)</b>	The Director of Housing is the body corporate established under section 9(2) of the Housing Act 1983. The Director of Housing sits within DHHS and is the landlord of Victoria's public housing. The Director has powers to purchase, develop, lease and sell property.
<b>Homelessness</b>	The Australian Bureau of Statistics definition states that when a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives, they are considered homeless if their current living arrangement: is in a dwelling that is inadequate has no tenure, or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations.
<b>Household</b>	One or more persons, at least one of whom is at least 15 years of age, usually resident in the same private dwelling. The people in a household may or may not be related. They must live wholly within one dwelling.
<b>Housing need</b>	A household is in housing need if its housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability, standards and it would have to spend 30 per cent or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable. Adequate is reported by residents as not requiring any major repairs. Affordable housing costs less than 30 per cent of total before-tax household income. Suitable housing has enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements.
<b>Low-income household</b>	A household with income in the bottom 20 per cent of all household income distribution
<b>Moderate income household</b>	A household with income in the second income quintile (21–40%) of all household income distribution
<b>National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA)</b>	From 1 January 2009, government response to homelessness is administered under the NAHA and the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH).
<b>National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH)</b>	The National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) commenced in January 2009. Under the current agreement the Australian and state and territory governments have committed to provide \$1.1 billion in funding. It contributes to the National Affordable Housing Agreement outcome, to help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness achieve sustainable housing and social inclusion.

<b>National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS)</b>	A Commonwealth Government scheme that commenced on 1 July 2008, providing annual incentives (tax credits—if paying tax, grants—if not paying tax) to investors for 10 years to create 50 000 new affordable rental properties rented to low-income and moderate-income households at 20 per cent below local area market rents. The scheme was stopped for new property incentives in 2014, and as a result 37142 dwellings will be built
<b>Not-for-profit sector</b>	Community organisations providing a broad range of social services, including in relation to homelessness, housing, education, health, conservation and recreation.
<b>Public housing</b>	A form of long-term rental housing managed by the State Government and targeted at people on low incomes or with special needs
<b>Quintile</b>	A proportion of a set of data that has been ranked and divided into five groups, each of which contains an equal number of data items. For example, Housing Affordability Stress is assessed for households in the bottom two quintiles (i.e. the bottom 40%) of the income distribution. Q1 households are those earning in the bottom quintile (0–20%) of Australia's income distribution. Q2 households are those earning in the second quintile (21–40%) of Australia's income distribution.
<b>Renewal</b>	The process whereby existing, ageing public housing estates or buildings are redeveloped to improve both housing outcomes for public housing tenants and the neighbourhood's amenity
<b>Social housing</b>	An umbrella term that refers to public housing, delivered by the State Government, and community housing, delivered by community housing providers.
<b>Shared equity</b>	An umbrella term that refers to a range of initiatives which 'enable the division of the value of a dwelling between more than one legal entity' (Whitehead and Yates 2007 p16)
<b>Social inclusion</b>	In the Australian policy context, social inclusion is conceptualised as the opportunity to participate in society through employment and access to services, connect with family, friends and the local community, deal with personal crises and be heard.
<b>Social mix</b>	Defined as a 'combination of diverse shares of social groups in a neighbourhood'. A social group has one or more factors in common, such as having similar economic resources (i.e. having low- or high-income), the same ethnic background or nativity (i.e. born in the same country), the same household structure (e.g. families with children or households of young singles) or the same tenure (i.e. being tenants or home owners/buyers).
<b>Supply side assistance</b>	Forms of housing assistance given to providers, not consumers, of housing to help increase the quantity or quality of housing (e.g. National Rental Affordability Scheme).
<b>Supported Housing</b>	Supported Housing is a type of Community Housing targeted to households in high need, including people who are often homeless or at-risk. It is coupled with other support services and owned and managed by the government and/or a non-government housing provider.
<b>Tenancy support services</b>	Services provided to assist those at risk of homelessness with existing tenancies in the public and private rental sectors. These are early intervention services that aim to stop homelessness from occurring.
<b>Tenure</b>	The nature of a person's or household's legal right to occupy a dwelling. These legal rights range across rights of use, control and disposal. Tenure types include home owners (outright owners, <b>purchaser owners</b> , <b>shared equity</b> ), renters (private, public, community, social), rent free.
<b>Transitional Housing</b>	Transitional Housing is a supported short-term accommodation program. It acts as a stepping stone to more permanent housing in public housing, community housing or the private rental market. People moving into transitional housing have often been victims of a change in circumstance. For example, a lost job has meant the rent can't be paid, a marriage break-up leaves one partner with no money or support, or a person may lose the

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support of – or can no longer live with – other family members. A key element of transitional housing is that it's a temporary option, and tenants must be actively working with their support provider to apply for long-term housing.

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**Victorian Housing Register**

The Victorian Housing Register manages applications for long-term social housing in Victoria. The waitlist now combines public and community housing applications for housing so that people only need to apply once and can be considered for both types of housing. Priority Access is given to those people who are homeless and receiving support, are escaping or have escaped family violence, living with a disability or have significant support needs and with special housing needs.

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*Source:* Adapted from <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/policy/glossary>