



## **DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT**

8<sup>th</sup> March 2005

**DCS5      REVIEW OF COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS  
FILE: \*      PJH**

### **SUMMARY:**

Reporting on the conduct of a six monthly review of the effectiveness of Council's committees.



Council at its meeting on 22 June 2004, when appointing community members to its various committees, resolved as follows: -

- 1 *That a formal process of selection of members of committees be developed based on assessment of previous attendance, qualifications and areas of interest and expertise.*
- 2 *That the first meeting of all committees be held prior to the August Council meeting and incorporate development of aims and objectives, terms of reference and membership, timeframes and standing orders and that the first item of each meeting be objectives of that committee and also an evaluation be conducted at the conclusion of each meeting.*
- 3 *That formal review of the effectiveness of committees be conducted six monthly.*

To conduct the formal review under part 3 of the above resolution, a survey was prepared for each committee and distributed in early January. The survey sought information and comment from each committee in the following areas: -

Aims and objectives  
Membership  
Items on agenda for long periods  
Evaluations of each meeting

Agenda format & minutes  
Overall effectiveness rating  
Meeting attendance

The survey information was sought from the Chairpersons & secretaries of the committees rather than the committees themselves as some committees do not meet on monthly basis.

The information returned in response to the survey questions has been compiled in the attached document at [\(Appendix C\)](#).

The meeting attendance lists provided with the surveys has been compiled in a separate document attached at [\(Appendix D\)](#).

## **Summary of Survey results**

The survey results show that the majority of the committees have been assessed as having appropriate aims and objectives. Having these included in each agenda is seen of benefit in assisting the focus of the committees.

The majority of the committees have been assessed as effective. The survey shows a couple of committees that could be more effective and the Chairpersons in these instances should liaise with the appropriate Director on ways to improve the committee processes.

The attendance results will assist in the review of the committee membership which is to be undertaken each September. The next six monthly review can be reported to Council in August 2005 prior to the re-appointment of committee members at the September 2005 Council meeting.

## **Committee reporting process**

It is felt appropriate in reviewing the committees to also clarify, for Councillors and committee members, the reporting process of these committees. The majority of these committees report to the Director of the relevant Department not to the full Council at a Council meeting. This means the recommendations from the committees need to be approved by the Director responsible. Where the Director determines that a particular recommendation needs Council approval e.g. allocation of extra funding, the Director will submit a report for Council's decision. Alternatively the Director may refer it back to the committee or reject a recommendation of a committee.

Council has previously determined that only the following committees are to report directly to Council:-

Works Committee (unless a quorum 7 members is present at meetings allowing the committee itself to determine matters)

Aboriginal Liaison Committee  
Traffic Committee  
Saleyards Committee  
Caravan Park Committee

## REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

### ▪ *Environmental*

*Council's committee system allows for particular committees to focus on the environmental areas of Council's responsibility.*

### ▪ *Social*

*A number of Council's committees deal with the social areas, particularly the Community Service, Aboriginal Liaison and Kempsey Assistance Patrol committees.*

### ▪ *Economic (Financial)*

*Each Committee cannot commit Council to expenditure outside that provided in the Council budget. The major hidden cost is the time of staff to service the committees and implement the recommendations. To review the effectiveness of each committee is important in the light of this factor.*

### ▪ *Policy or Statutory*

*Council's policy C24:13 – Committee Meeting Arrangements, provides local standing orders or rules for the conduct of committee meetings for all committees that include members who are not councillors. The policy covers preparing Standing Orders, declaring all positions vacant each four (4) years. Council has also resolved that a review of the membership shall occur each September in conjunction with the appointment of Councillor delegates.*

### ▪ *Directors Review*

*The review highlights the difficulties encountered in developing effective Council Committees in the area of community services. In the case of the Aboriginal Liaison Committee with 36 members, one-half of which have not attended any of the 4 meetings held, and, excluding Councillors and staff, the average meeting attendance is 1.56 persons.*

*The Community Services Committee comprises 12 members, of which 6 are Councillors and Staff. The 6 community members attended approximate 30% of the possible meetings.*

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That the information be noted.
2. That the chairpersons of the Community Services Committee and the Kempsey Assistance Patrol liaise with the Director Shire Services regarding the membership of their respective Committees.
3. That the next six monthly reviews of committees be submitted to the August 2005 Council meeting.

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**G B Snape**  
**DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES**