



Mildura Rural City Council Ngiwa Yarna Committee

Terms of Reference

Purpose:

To improve and enhance the wellbeing of the Aboriginal community in the Mildura Rural City Council municipality by providing advice, recommendations and support to Council.

Principles:

Partnership – The committee will only be successful if it is based on true partnership between Mildura Rural City Council and the Aboriginal community with active participation and commitment from all members. The partnership will be built on goodwill, equality, honesty, transparency and respect.

Culture – All aspects of the committee will include strengthening of Aboriginal culture by recognising and acknowledging connection to culture and country. An essential function of the committee will work with the whole community in rebuilding culture, identity and connection for the community.

Human Rights – The committee embraces the goals and values of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2008.

Inclusion – The voice and opinion of all committee members will be respected and responded to at all times in participating as equal partners.

Timeframe – This is an ongoing committee of council.

Respect – All members will treat each other with respect and compassion. The committee and related initiatives must contribute to a safer, healthier and prosperous community with respect for the Elders and every community member.

Transparency – In developing and implementing the committee, there shall be honest, open and regular communication between all parties and transparency in decision-making.

Resources – Resources need to be provided for the committee to operate successfully.

Dispute Resolution – If a dispute arises all parties must follow dispute resolution process as documented in the Code of Conduct.

Accountability – All members of the committee will ensure that they are responsible to the terms of reference

Engagement – The Committee and Mildura Rural City Council will support the right of the Aboriginal community to participate as equal partners and be open to input and views of the community.

Action Plan – The committee will support the development and implementation of Council's Reconciliation Action Plan.

Membership:

The Committee will include representatives from:

- Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG) – Chairperson or representative
- Local Aboriginal Justice Action Committee (LAJAC) – Chairperson or representative
- Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group (IFVRAG) – Chair or representative
- Local Aboriginal Network (LAN) – Chairperson or representative
- Mallee District Aboriginal Services– Chairperson or representative
- 5 Community Members (3-year memberships)
- 2 Elders
- 2 Councillors

A public process will be held to advertise vacant positions on the committee to the wider Aboriginal community within the Mildura LGA. The selection of committee member will occur through the AAC selection process.

The Elders will become members of the committee by invitation from the committee

The committee is the core group, however there is opportunity to invite others to be involved in Working Groups - wider participation and representation is positive.

Resignation of Community Members:

Within three months of the resignation of a community member an advertisement will be placed to fill the vacancy, unless the vacancy coincides with the regular election of community members.

Representatives of Organisations:

Where an organisation is represented on the committee, the organisation will have a designated representative, and a proxy selected by the organisation.

Roles and responsibilities of members:

The role of the Ngiwa Yarna Committee is to provide support, guidance, recommendations and advice to Council.

The role of Mildura Rural City Council is to fairly consider those recommendations and advice from the Ngiwa Yarna Committee in good faith.

Chair and Deputy Chair

The Chair and Deputy Chair roles will be determined by the group through a nomination and voting process. The role of Chair and Deputy Chair has a 12-month tenure.

Role of Committee members:

The role of the committee members is to work with Council around issues that affect the local Aboriginal community. Committee members will attend bi-monthly meetings and smaller Working Groups as required.

The committee members will make recommendations as a group and will be responsible for ensuring that decisions and recommendations that are made are in the best interest of the community. Committee members will work with Council on identifying priority issues and areas of work that will be focused on within a council and community context.

Role of Councillors:

The role of Councillors within the committee is to represent Council, to listen to and work with the committee members and advocate to Council on issues raised by the committee. Councillors have no voting rights.

Role of Council Officers:

The role of Council Officers is to provide support and advice to the committee. The Aboriginal Liaison Officer will work with the committee to assist it to carry out its function (administration and coordination) and the role reports to the Manager of Community Partnerships and General Manager Healthy Communities. Officers have no voting rights.

Frequency of meetings:

The committee will meet bi-monthly. Working groups meet more frequently in between formal AAC meetings.

Expenses:

Financial support will be available to community members who volunteer their time to enable participation and attendance at the meetings. E.g transport

Voting and Decision making:

If there is a discussion or decision item that requires a vote, those committee members in attendance will vote on the matter. A quorum of five committee members in attendance is required in order to hold a vote.

Accountability to Council:

The main role of the Ngiwa Yarna Committee is to provide support, guidance, recommendations and advice to Council.

This will occur through:

- Aboriginal Liaison Officer, Manager of Community Partnerships and the General Manager Community; with
- Presentations at Councillor Forums; and Council Reports where required

Code of Conduct:

An agreed **Code of Conduct** is in place for the Ngiwa Yarna Committee. The Code of Conduct is to be signed off by all Ngiwa Yarna Committee members, Council Officers and Councillors.

The Terms of Reference were developed in consultation with representatives from the local Aboriginal Community.