

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

SPECIAL RATE AND CHARGE SCHEMES

COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approval Date

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Introduction

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 1989* enables Councils to levy a special rate and charge to help pay for any council service or activity that may be of benefit to a particular group of property owners. Special Rate and Charge Schemes enable the City to provide services to the community that would otherwise be impeded by budgets and timing. With the enactment of a Scheme, the City can implement services at a quicker rate that would be of benefit not only to individual properties but also to the greater community.

The current Special Rate and Charge Scheme Policy is due for review and through the assistance of a consultant, we wish to engage with the community in a transparent, consistent and timely manner to assist us with the cost apportionment appendix (1-3) in our procedures [View Link - D23-268385 - DRAFT - 2025 review of Special Rates & Charges Procedure](#).

A consultant will invite community members to a panel meeting to assist council by ensuring our procedures/processes are fair and reasonable and meet the legislative requirements of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

PURPOSE

The community panel is established for the purpose of:

1. Reviewing our drafted Special Rate and Charge (SRC) procedure appendix in relation to how costs are apportioned to ensure a fair and reasonable approach is considered. This procedure will support the SRC Policy.

AUTHORITY

2. The community panel:
 - a. does not have delegated authority.
 - b. may highlight specific issues.
 - c. The consultant appointed will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating each working group's activities against their functions and responsibilities.

OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS

3. The objective and function of the community panel is to review:
 - i. Appendix one – Calculating community benefit – footpaths.
 - ii. Appendix two – Calculating community benefit – roads, shoulders (parking), kerb and channel and streetlighting.
 - iii. Appendix 3 – Calculating community benefit – Drainage; and
 - iv. To support the involvement of the local community
 - v. To advise on and support the revised SRC procedures in line with the needs of the community.
 - vi. To recognise the City's legal and financial responsibility for SRC's.

Definitions

Act

The *Local Government Act 2020*.

CEO

The Chief Executive Officer of the City appointed by Council.

City

The administration of the Greater Geelong City Council, led by the Chief Executive Officer.

Council

The Greater Geelong City Council.

Councillor

Elected officials representing the City of Greater Geelong, including the Mayor.

Council officer

All staff of the City, including all contractors and volunteers engaged by the City, and the Executive Leadership Team.

Conflict of interest

Has the same meaning as defined in the Act.

Delegated Community Panel Committee

Community Panel Committee established by council under section 63 of the Act.

Delegated Authority

Where Council has given its powers to act on behalf of Council. This can be to members of staff or to Delegated Committee's under the Act.

ELT

Executive Leadership Team consisting of the Directors of the City who all report to the Chief Executive Officer.

SRC

Special Rate and Charge Schemes.

Terms of Reference

COMMUNITY PANEL

Expected life of the Community Panel

1. The Community Panel Committee's term starts on 01 July 2024.
2. The Community Panel Committee term ends on the day of 30 September 2025 or a decision to abolish the Community Panel.

MEMBERSHIP

Make-up of the community Panel

3. The community Panel will be made up from the following eligible members:
4. Consultant – paid position
5. Up to three panel engagement sessions of up to 28 community representatives in each. These positions will be voluntary.
6. The City seeks that community representatives are diverse of demographics and are over 18 years of age.

Features of effective members

7. Council officers, consultant and community representatives will demonstrate a commitment to meeting high standards of behaviour and will work together to ensure an effective outcome;
8. The features of an effective member include:
 - a. Shows good judgement and balance in consideration of issues.
 - b. Understands their role.
 - c. Takes the time to understand the SRC procedures use.
 - d. Displays a constructive and positive attitude in dealings with other members.
 - e. Is a good communicator.

Role and responsibilities of members

9. Council officers, consultant and community representatives are expected to perform the following roles:
 - a. Share information with other representatives
 - b. Maintain confidentiality of information designated confidential.
 - c. Be prepared for the meeting, read the documentation in advance, and make every reasonable effort to attend.
 - d. Take reasonable steps to avoid conflict.

Appointment of members

10. The appointment of community representatives will be via a publicly advertised expressions of interest process.
11. The appointment of members would seek to include a diverse and balanced range of community members such as community group personnel, people who have first-hand experience of an SRC, people who may possibly use an SRC in the future, other local community members interested in having their say, as well as diversity in age, ability, gender and culture as appropriate.
12. City officers must be nominated by their respective director having regard to their current role with the City and their knowledge and skills that relate to the community panels objectives and functions.

13. Independent community representatives will be invited onto the community panel by the CEO through a process of seeking expressions of interest.

MEETINGS

Meeting chair

14. Meetings will be chaired by a consultant employed by the City.
15. The Chair may engage the services of an independent consultant to help guide discussion and facilitate the sharing of different ideas and perspectives of members. The consultant will provide a report to the City on the process and findings of the sessions.
16. The chairperson is expected to perform the following roles:
 - a. Ensure the Community Panel functions within the terms of reference.
 - b. Approve the agenda.
 - c. Conduct meetings with the degree of formality appropriate
 - d. Facilitate the flow of information during meetings.
 - e. Ensure each member has an equal opportunity to speak and/or contribute.
 - f. Approve draft minutes after each meeting.

Meeting Procedure

17. Meetings will be held at Wurriki Nyal, Lara Hall and Drysdale Library.
18. If a Community panel member has a conflict of interest in relation to a subject matter, this must be declared, and the member must refrain from participating in recommendations on this item.
19. Meeting visitor (non-members) may be invited to attend meetings to give a presentation or provide information related the panels' business. Any invited guests will be made aware of their responsibilities about conflicts of interest and use and disclosure of information.

Frequency of meetings

20. One meeting will be held per group – maximum of three.
21. Meeting dates, times and broad tasks will be provided once confirmed.

Minimum meeting attendees

22. Each meeting must at all times include at least one representative of the City.

Misuse of information

23. All information received by community representatives during this procedure review is confidential and must not be shared with any party outside Council.

SECRETARIAT

24. The City of Greater Geelong is responsible for directly supporting the community engagement sessions. This involves convening meetings and providing all documentation.

Records

Records shall be retained for at least the periods shown below. *[Delete as necessary]*

Table 1: Record retention and disposal schedule

Record	Retention / Disposal Authority	Retention Period	Location
Records relating to arranging and facilitating committee meetings.	PROS 09/05 VAR 1 Retention and Disposal Authority for Records of Local Government Functions	Temporary	Destroy after administrative use has concluded.
Records of general administrative nature relating to management of committee meetings, including the preparation and circulation of minutes, use of premises where the meetings take place and travel arrangements for attendees.			

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