

Kirwans Bridge Community Panel

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Community Panel is to:

- Ensure the community is at the heart of the decision making on the future use of Kirwans Bridge
- Capture local knowledge, issues, concerns and opportunities.
- Coordinate responses from the Shire in relation to concerns and requests.
- Plan a draft future for Kirwans Bridge.

2. Objectives

The panel will:

- Provide an opportunity for the community and stakeholders to ask questions, seek clarification and provide input to future plans, strategies, development and funding proposals affecting Kirwans Bridge.
- Ensure that when plans or strategies are developed that they can be implemented with consent of the community.
- Share local knowledge between key community stakeholders and local authorities.
- Test ideas and approaches and act as a sounding board in relation to the *'future life'* of Kirwans Bridge.
- Enable members to act as advocates or ambassadors for their community groups and to share perspectives and points of view.
- Provide independent, honest and constructive comment in relation to ideas and plans for Kirwans Bridge.
- Encourage the development of a collegiate and cooperative relationship between Council and stakeholders to resolve the *'future life'* of Kirwans Bridge.

3. Membership

The panel will comprise of a maximum of 15 people who represent a range of community perspectives from different sectors or interest groups within the Nagambie and Kirwans Bridge area including (but not limited to) the following:

- Residents
- Environmental groups
- Heritage groups
- Emergency service personnel
- Indigenous community
- Cultural groups
- People with a disability
- Older adults

Terms of Reference



4. Quorum

A meeting can only take place with a minimum of 75 per cent of panel members.

5. Member responsibilities

The Community Panel will work through the many ideas and options, which have previously been raised in relation to the future usage of Kirwans Bridge and bring other ideas to the table. Community Panel members are accountable for:

- fostering collaboration
- removing obstacles to the successful adoption of a future plan
- maintaining focus on the agreed scope, outcomes and benefits, and
- all participants in the Kirwans Bridge Community Panel must declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest and have read and acknowledged the Terms of Reference for the panel.

To fulfil the panel's objectives, members are expected to:

- prepare for, attend and actively participate in regular panel meetings
- consult with, and report back to, their community and relevant groups.
- have a strong familiarity with Nagambie and the Kirwans Bridge area.
- membership will lapse for a member not attending three monthly/bi-monthly meetings in a row, and
- a leave of absence may be granted for an extended period at the discretion of the panel.

6. Role of Council

The Strathbogie Shire will:

- provide a comfortable forum for discussion
- take advice from the panel with respect and confidence
- recognise the efforts of group members in the development of any future plans
- ensure the effective transfer of information between the panel and the community, and
- the Strathbogie Shire Council will have final decision-making authority in terms of the formation of the Community Panel and the adoption of any strategies or plans considered by the panel.

Members of the panel can expect:

- that each member will be provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner
- to be given reasonable time to make key decisions
- to be alerted to potential risks and issues that could impact the project, as they arise, and
- open and honest discussions, without resorting to any misleading assertions.

Terms of Reference



7. Meeting frequency

The Community Panel meeting frequency will be determined at its first meeting. Meetings will likely be held on a monthly/bi-monthly basis, with more frequent meetings as required. In the first six months, meetings will be held to establish and induct members to the panel and introduce everyone to the Kirwans Bridge *'future life'*.

8. Management of the Panel

The Executive Manager, Communications and Engagement, or other members of the Executive Management Team will resource the panel and attend all meetings. The Executive Manager, Communications and Engagement, will be responsible for the preparation of meeting agendas, minutes, reports and other administrative functions.

Panel members will be notified of the meeting dates not less than one week prior to each meeting. Notes from each meeting will be kept and distributed to all members not more than one week after each meeting.

9. Reporting Procedure

The panel is not a formal committee of the Council but rather a collaborative group that is established by Council. It is not a decision-making body and does not require voting protocols or other decision-making mechanisms. Notes from each meeting will be published for all community members to access.

10. Public Statements

Any public statements made by the Chair or ordinary members of the panel must be in accordance with Council's media protocol and the prior approval of the Executive Manager, Communications and Engagement or the Chief Executive Officer.

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