

# Terms of Reference

## Community Environment Advisory Committee (CEAC)

Approved: 29/04/2025

Photo: Chelsea Scott Photography

### Purpose

The CEAC Exists to:

- Provide advice to the LHIB on environmental conservation, biodiversity, biosecurity, and emerging environmental threats.
- Assist in the development and review of key management and strategic documents.
- Serve as a forum for communication between the LHIB, community representatives, and external experts.
- Advise on responses to environmental emergencies and emerging threats, including invasive species and climate change.
- Promote environmental stewardship and advocate for sustainable practices within the community.

### 1 Interpretation and Definitions

- 1.1 Act means the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW).
- 1.2 LHIB means the Lord Howe Island Board.
- 1.3 LHIB CEO means Chief Executive Officer of the Lord Howe Island Board and includes their delegate or authorised representative.
- 1.4 Chairperson means a member appointed pursuant to clause 6 and includes Co-Chairperson.
- 1.5 Community Representative means a member appointed to the Committee as in clause 3.
- 1.6 Committee means the elected CEAC, comprising of:
  - 1.6.1 LHIB officers (Senior Manager of Environment Services (Chairperson), Team Leaders of Biosecurity, Weeds and Flora, and World Heritage,
  - 1.6.2 five community members
- 1.7 Term means a fixed term of two (2) years for each Member, which may be extended or renewed by mutual agreement, subject to the approval of the LHIB CEO.
- 1.8 Member means each of the individuals appointed in accordance with clauses 3.
- 1.9 Secretary/Secretariat means a LHIB staff member appointed to fulfil the tasks set out in clause 8.

### 2 Authority

- 2.1 In carrying out its responsibilities, the Committee must always recognise that primary responsibility for management of the Committee rests with the LHIB and the LHIB CEO, as provided in the Act.
- 2.2 The Committee has no executive powers and cannot make decisions on behalf of the LHIB. Furthermore, the Committee is not a committee with delegated authority therefore it cannot exercise powers under s.355 of the Act.



- 2.3 The LHIB CEO (or their delegate) may action resolutions as they deem appropriate in accordance with their individual delegations and authorisations.
- 2.4 Neither the Committee nor any of its members may direct any LHIB staff member in his or her duties.
- 2.5 The Chairperson of the Committee may, if considered reasonably necessary, request external professional advice to allow the Committee to meet its responsibilities.
- 2.6 The LHIB CEO may facilitate, and provide the necessary financial resources, to engage the provision of any such external professional advice required.

### 3 Appointment of Advisory Committee Group Members

- 3.1 The LHIB CEO will call for nominations for Community Committee Members at the commencement of each Committee term.
- 3.2 The LHIB CEO will appoint Committee Members based on responses to evaluation criteria in an Expression of Interest.
- 3.3 Community representatives are volunteers who give their time to the Committee willingly for the common good and without financial gain.
- 3.4 The appointment of Community Representatives to the Committee will:
  - 3.4.1 seek to achieve a mix of skills to facilitate the sound functioning and meet the needs of the Committee; and
  - 3.4.2 seek to represent the diversity and interests of the community.
- 3.5 Community Representatives will be appointed following a public Expressions of Interest (EOI) process each Committee term.
- 3.6 Completed applications must be lodged with the LHIB and address the selection criteria as advertised.
- 3.7 Applications will be assessed by LHIB staff with professional skills relevant to the committee and recommended on merit according to the selection criteria to the LHIB CEO for determination.
- 3.8 If more applications than positions are received, and deemed suitable for appointment as Community Representatives, offers of membership will be made to the most appropriate applicants and the remainder placed on an eligibility list.
- 3.9 The LHIB CEO can amend the Terms of Reference and add additional members to the Committee if suitable applications are received.
- 3.10 Eligible applicants may be considered for other advisory committees that fit their skills and experience.
- 3.11 LHIB Officer members will be appointed based on their position and are not bound by the term of service. The Chairperson or LHIB CEO may reassign LHIB Officer Members as appropriate.

### 4 Termination of Membership

- 4.1 Each member shall remain a member of the Committee until:
  - 4.1.1 the member resigns, or
  - 4.1.2 the membership is terminated at the end of the Advisory Committee Group term.
- 4.2 Membership of any member of the Committee may be terminated by the Chairperson due to:
  - 4.2.1 the Member's non-attendance at three consecutive Committee meetings without appropriate reason and notification; or
  - 4.2.2 the Member's conduct being inconsistent with the committee terms of reference.

- 4.3 Advisor membership terminates immediately upon an Advisory Member ceasing to be an Advisor.
- 4.4 If the terminated Member was a:
  - 4.4.1 Community Representative, the LHIB CEO in consultation with the CEAC Chair=, will determine a replacement Member from the eligibility list where applicable. If not applicable, the CEO will consider a new selection process.
  - 4.4.2 LHIB Representative, the Chairperson should nominate a replacement Member to the Committee.

## 5 Responsibility of Members

- 5.1 Members are expected to:
  - 5.1.1 Be familiar with the legislative and regulatory requirements relevant to the LHIB;
  - 5.1.2 Understand the overall purpose and objectives of the Committee, including reviewing strategic documents such as the Permanent Park Preserve Plan of Management, Biodiversity Management Plan, and Strategic Plan for the Lord Howe Island Group World Heritage Property;
  - 5.1.3 Dedicate sufficient time to review business papers and attend meetings, including quarterly meetings to provide strategic advice;
  - 5.1.4 Provide advice and feedback on Committee matters, including strategic documents and engagement in environmental initiatives;
  - 5.1.5 Promote communication between the community, LHIB, and stakeholders, including scientific advisors, on environmental and biosecurity matters;
  - 5.1.6 Support the community's understanding of biosecurity and environmental regulations relevant to Lord Howe Island and advocate for sustainable practices;
  - 5.1.7 Offer recommendations on biosecurity strategies and assist with response measures during biosecurity incidents or environmental emergencies;
  - 5.1.8 Monitor and discuss environmental trends, challenges, and opportunities to support conservation and sustainable management;
  - 5.1.9 Foster collaboration with government agencies, researchers, community groups, and other stakeholders to protect World Heritage values;
  - 5.1.10 Encourage the integration of cultural values in conservation efforts and support community education on environmental issues;
  - 5.1.11 Monitor and provide advice on responses to environmental emergencies, including biosecurity threats and incursions, pest outbreaks, and natural disasters, to support the protection of Lord Howe Island's ecosystems. Engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure coordinated action and contribute to the development of strategies for effective mitigation and recovery.
- 5.2 Members are encouraged to conduct themselves in accordance with the NSW Government Code of Ethics and Conduct. In instances of misconduct the Chairperson has the right to terminate a Committee Member.
- 5.3 Conflicts of Interest must be declared and managed in accordance with the Code of Conduct. A record of a declared conflict of interest will be made in the minutes.
- 5.4 Pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflicts of interest must be managed by the Member excluding themselves from the meeting during the discussion of the relevant agenda item. Such exclusion should be recorded in the minutes.
- 5.5 LHIB is committed to protecting personal information in accordance with the Privacy and Personal Information Protect Act (Privacy Act), and the Privacy Code of Practice for Local Government. Members, both

Community Representatives and LHIB staff, must not disclose personal information held by LHIB to anyone outside of LHIB. This includes any information that is not publicly available.

- 5.6 The information obtained or received by each Committee member as a result of the member's involvement in the Committee is confidential in nature and may not be disclosed except in the following circumstances:
  - 5.6.1 if required by law
  - 5.6.2 if the written consent of LHIB to the proposed disclosure is obtained prior to the disclosure being made. LHIB may give or withhold its consent to such a discussion in its absolute discretion; or
  - 5.6.3 after the information is in the public domain due to a disclosure by LHIB.
- 5.7 The Committee are not to speak to the media without approval from LHIB CEO.
- 5.8 The Committee are not to make Public Comment on Committee matters without approval from LHIB CEO.

## 6 Appointment and Responsibility of Chairperson

- 6.1 The Chairperson will be ECS Manager unless required by the nature or topics of the particular meeting, or by direction of the LHIB CEO.
- 6.2 In the absence of the Chairperson, an LHIB Officer member present at the meeting will assume the role of Chairperson.
- 6.3 The Chairperson will remain until the dissolution date, unless the Chairperson resigns and, in this case, a new Chairperson should be appointed in accordance with this clause.
- 6.4 The Chairperson will officiate and conduct each meeting as follows:
  - 6.4.1 open and close the meeting;
  - 6.4.2 facilitate the discussion;
  - 6.4.3 ensure the observance of these rules;
  - 6.4.4 confirm any decisions and actions and advise the secretariat to record minutes; and
  - 6.4.5 rule on misconduct and maintain order.

## 7 Attendance at Meetings

- 7.1 In addition to Members, the following may attend any meeting of the Committee by invitation of the CEO or Chair:
  - 7.1.1 The LHIB CEO;
  - 7.1.2 Advisors not appointed as Members of the Committee;
  - 7.1.3 LHIB staff; and
  - 7.1.4 External personnel / subject matter experts by invitation of the Committee.
- 7.3 The attendees in 7.1.2 to 7.1.4 attend as observers only and must seek the Chairpersons permission before speaking.

## 8 Responsibility and Requirements of Secretariat

- 8.1 The Secretariat will be a suitably qualified LHIB officer/s who undertakes the following functions:
  - 8.1.1 prepare agendas in consultation with the Chair;



- 8.1.2 take minutes at Committee meetings and prepare them for circulation to Committee and LHIB (once approved by the Chair);
- 8.1.3 collate Committee business papers prepared or submitted by LHIB officers, Committee Members, working parties and stakeholders;
- 8.1.4 publish agendas, minutes and Committee business papers for distribution electronically;
- 8.1.5 book meeting venues and organise the provision of any necessary equipment; and
- 8.1.6 provide administrative assistance to the Chair.
- 8.2 This position may be shared among several suitably qualified LHIB officers or be the same person.

## 9 Meeting Schedule

- 9.1 The Committee will meet at four times per calendar year.
- 9.2 The Committee shall aim to set meeting dates well before the scheduled Board Meetings so that items from the Committee can be brought to the Board.
- 9.3 Meeting dates will be agreed by the Committee by no later than December each year for the following calendar year.
- 9.4 Additional meetings may be scheduled if required, including but not limited to key phases of reviewing planning documents or in the event of an environmental emergency. These additional meetings may be scheduled by:
  - 9.4.1 Chairperson;
  - 9.4.2 Committee by resolution;
  - 9.4.3 LHIB; or
  - 9.4.4 LHIB CEO.
- 9.5 Unless otherwise resolved by the LHIB, all meetings of the Committee will be closed to the general public.

## 10 Administration and Record Keeping

- 10.1 The Secretariat will ensure that notice of meetings, including the agenda and business papers, are provided to the Committee at least five business days prior to the day of the meeting. These will be transmitted electronically via email.
- 10.2 All Committee business will be properly recorded by the Secretariat. The minutes will be:
  - 10.2.1 approved by the Chair in draft;
  - 10.2.2 distributed to the Committee no later than 10 business days after the meeting;
  - 10.2.3 approved by the Committee as final by resolution at the next meeting;
  - 10.2.4 prepared in accordance with *Chatham House Rules*, with no attribution of individual comments unless explicitly agreed;
  - 10.2.5 reflective of consensus-based decision-making wherever possible, with differing views recorded respectfully and without attribution where full agreement is not reached;
  - 10.2.6 supportive of open and constructive discussion, ensuring members can participate freely;
  - 10.2.7 managed in accordance with LHIB's Records Management Policy.
- 10.3 It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to report to the LHIB:

- 10.3.1 at least bi-annually, which will include attendance records, performance review and a summary of key items of business; and
  - 10.3.2 where a LHIB resolution is required to enact a recommendation of the Committee, or where the Committee otherwise wishes to report information to the LHIB.
  - 10.4 Electronic updates will be circulated at least quarterly in between meetings.
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**For further information, please contact:**

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