



Rates Structure Review Community Reference Panel

Purpose

This Community Reference Panel will provide feedback and advice to Council for its rates structure review.

QPRC must ensure that its rates structure is fair for ratepayers across the whole local government area. Council seeks to collaborate with a group of ratepayers who will provide feedback and advice to Council in the review.

Council will inform and involve the Panel, providing detailed information about the fundamental principles that underpin the rating strategy, information about the decisions and changes that Council can make within the legislation, and rates modelling and analysis on options. The Panel will ultimately recommend a preferred rating structure for consideration by Council and the broader community.

Accountability

The Community Reference Panel will have an advisory role to Council. The Panel recommendations will be provided to a Council workshop (preliminary feedback) and to a subsequent Council meeting. The recommendation will inform Council's decision for the preferred rating structure.

Membership

The Community Reference Panel will ideally have at least 10 - 12 members who express an interest. Panel members should be ratepayers, however also could be business owners or residents of QPRC. The Panel will represent a range of ratepayer groups, including:

- Business ratepayers
- Residential ratepayers
- Farmland ratepayers
- From Braidwood, Bungendore, Queanbeyan, Googong, Jerrabomberra and rural areas.

Resources

Community Reference Panel members will be supported by Council staff who will provide background briefings, analysis and reporting of rate structure options. Staff will facilitate the panel workshops and record the Panel recommendations report.

Panel Meetings and Workshops

Council staff will facilitate at least two workshops with Panel members between 4-15 March 2024. Meetings will be held on weekday evenings in Bungendore; however this will be guided by the panel members.

Workshops are the preferred format for panel members to listen to the views of other members and provide their input; however, the engagement strategy will be adapted to meet the availability of panel members.

Panelist responsibilities

- Adopt a constructive and cooperative approach and respect views of all Panel members.
- Commit to attending workshops and actively participate in all discussions. If unable to attend, inform Council staff as early as possible so workshop times can be adjusted if possible.
- Review and consider material provided as pre-reading for the Panel meetings. Staff will provide assistance and briefings, answer questions and provide additional information as requested by panel members to assist this process.
- Respect the position they hold with regard to access to information, and not use this position in any way for individual personal gain.
- Maintain a level of confidentiality in regards to information provided and ideas discussed by other Panel members.
- Comply with the minimum standards set out in the QPRC Code of Conduct.

Council responsibilities

- Listen to the views and recommendations of the panel members.
- Ensure a high level of organisational support for community panel activities and fairly report panel outcomes
- Provide feedback to the panel on how their contributions have been incorporated or used to inform Council's decisions.

Rates Structure Review Community Engagement Plan

Timeframes	Responsibility	Community Engagement Activity
24 Jan 2024	Council	Resolve community engagement strategy and terms of reference for community reference panel
25 Jan 2024 to 26 Feb 2024	Council	Open expressions of interests for participation as a member of the community reference panel
4 to 15 Mar 2024	Community Reference Panel	Community Reference Panel activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group workshops: consult and collaborate
26 Feb 2024 to 15 Mar 2024	Council	Community engagement activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website: background information
24 Apr 2024	Community Reference Panel	Report to Council – Community Reference Panel recommendations
24 Apr 2024	Council	Resolve preferred rate structure for community consultation
26 Apr 2024 to 3 Jun 2024	Council	5 weeks community engagement activity through Your Voice website (survey – comments sought)
26 Jun 2024	Council	Adopt Revenue Policy
27 Jun 2024 to 12 Jul 2024	Council	Close the loop activity – Your Voice website: provide update on adopted policy