

TERMS OF REFERENCE – FLOODPLAIN ADVISORY PANEL

Purpose

The Floodplain Advisory Panel (the Panel) has been established to provide advice on the development and implementation of Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans throughout Port Stephens Council.

Objectives

The objectives of the Panel include, but are not limited to:

- Provide a link between Council and the local Community for flooding issues
- Assist in the collection of necessary information
- Identify objectives and strategies related to the improvement of the management of the floodplain
- Provide input into known flood behaviour as part of the flood study process
- Co-ordinate with water management boards, emergency management boards and other advisory bodies.
- Provide a forum for discussion of issues (technical, social, environmental and cultural) relevant to the development and implementation of Flood Studies and Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans.
- Ensure that Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans are undertaken in accordance with the State Government's Floodplain Development Manual.

Terms of Reference

The Panel provides advice as requested by Council to assist the Floodplain Risk Management Process. The Panel has an advisory role and will not have a formal role in decision making, policy direction or delegating additional work to be carried out by Council as part of the Floodplain Risk Management Process.

Structure

The Floodplain Advisory Panel will consist of the Core Members and Local Representatives. The Core Members will provide an advisory role for all flood studies and floodplain risk management studies (and plans) conducted across PSC LGA. The Local Representatives are additional members who have specific knowledge of the subject catchment.

Figure 1 depicts the proposed composition of the Floodplain Advisory Panel.

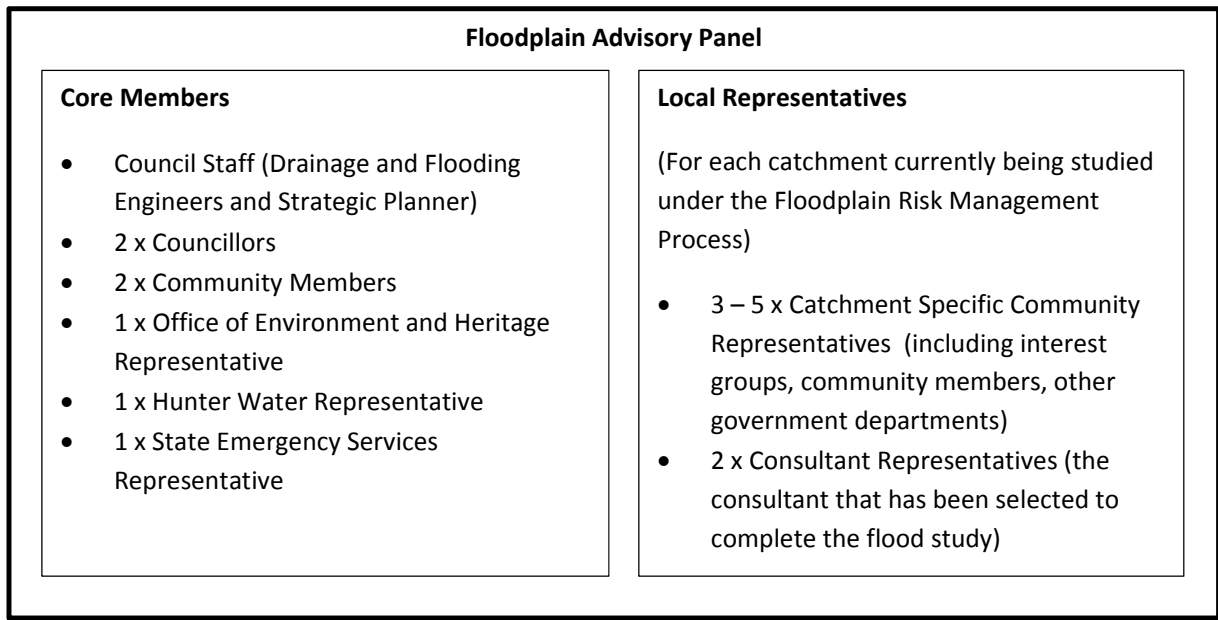


Figure 1 - Composition of the Floodplain Advisory Panel

The number of Catchment Specific Community Representatives will be determined on an 'as needs' basis by Council Staff at the commencement of each floodplain management study.

Administration

Council staff will administer the panel. Minutes will be taken of each meeting.

Council staff (i.e. Assets Section Manager or their delegate) will chair the meetings.

Formation of the Panels

The Core Floodplain Advisory Panel will be formed once the terms of reference have been adopted. Expressions of interest will be advertised in the local newspaper for the nomination of Community Members. Advisory bodies included in the Core Floodplain Advisory Panel will nominate their respective representatives.

Local Representatives will be determined at the commencement of the floodplain risk management process for each catchment. Catchment Specific Community Representatives will be selected following the advertisement of expressions of interest in the local newspaper. It is intended that Catchment Specific Community Representatives will be consistent throughout all stages of the floodplain risk management process (i.e. flood study and floodplain risk management study and plan) for the catchment they have nominated to represent.

For catchments in which the floodplain risk management process has begun, Local Representatives will be selected at the commencement of the next stage of the floodplain risk management process.

Following determination of the Local Representatives, the Floodplain Advisory Panel for the relating catchment will be formed.

Terms

The Core Floodplain Advisory Panel will be reformed every four years (in line with Council general elections).

Selection of Panel Members

Selection of community representatives will be based on the following:

- A broad interest and knowledge of floodplain management issues across the LGA (for Core Panel members);
- A specific interest and knowledge of floodplain management of the subject catchment (for Catchment Specific Community Representatives);
- Demonstrated ability to represent broad community interests; and
- Demonstrated commitment /availability to attend meetings.

Community Members of the Core Panel and the Catchment Specific Community Representatives will be determined following review of the received nominations. The Assets Section Manager (or their delegate) will review the submissions and recommend the most appropriate Panel members to the General Manager.

Frequency

Floodplain Advisory Panels will meet twice a year. Additional meetings may be called to discuss catchment specific issues in which the Core Floodplain Advisory Panel and the relevant Local Floodplain Advisory Representatives will attend.

Technical Sub-Panel

A Technical Sub-Panel will be established in parallel with the Floodplain Advisory Panel for each studies catchment. The purpose of the Technical Sub-Panel is to provide technical assistance to enable the panel to fulfil its advisory role to council efficiently, confident that studies and option assessments are technically adequate and the options proposed are practical and feasible. Members of the Technical Sub-Panel include Council Staff, an OEH Representative and Consultant Representatives.

The Technical Sub-Panel will meet independent of the Floodplain Advisory Panel to discuss technical aspects of the studies.

Responsibilities

Reports to the Group Manager of Facilities and Services

Conflicts of Interest

Panel members must declare any conflicts of interest at the start of each meeting or before discussion of a relevant agenda item or topic. Details of any conflicts of interest should be appropriately minuted