

**Palmerston North City Council**

# **Community Reference Groups**

**Terms of Reference**

**PALMY**<sup>®</sup>  
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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background, Scope and purpose

Palmerston North City Council (Council) has resolved to establish several Reference Groups to ensure that engagement takes place with specific sectors of the Palmerston North community.

Reference Groups provide Council with a direct channel to hear the voices of those with lived experience in a community or demographic, with the Groups having opportunity to provide feedback on Council activities, including what should be considered in planning, developing or implementing activities.

Reference Groups facilitate stronger relationships between Council and community, providing Council with a better understanding of community needs and perspectives, and providing communities with a dedicated forum to have their views and ideas heard by Council.

Part of the scope and purpose of each Reference Group is to report to Council annually and provide submissions on Council decision-making processes.

## 1.2 Document purpose

The purpose of these Terms of Reference is to guide the operation of each Reference Group.

To have a common Terms of Reference for all included Community Reference Groups provides clarity to Council, council officers and the community as to how the groups will operate and sets clear expectations for Council and Reference Group members.

## 1.3 Groups covered by these Terms of Reference

Groups covered by these Terms of Reference include the following standing groups:

- Disability Reference Group
- Pasifika Reference Group
- Seniors Reference Group
- Heritage Reference Group

New reference groups may be covered by these Terms of Reference over time.

It is noted that there are many other reference, engagement or advisory mechanisms of Council which have different structures and scopes, including working groups stood up for specific projects, which are not covered by these Terms of Reference.

## 1.4 Process for establishment or disestablishment of Reference Groups

Community Reference Groups of Council will be established via a resolution of Council in response to community consultation or identification of community need.

Reference Groups may be disestablished via a resolution of Council.

## 1.5 Document review or amendments

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed biennially. Amendments may also be made as and when Reference Groups are established or disestablished.

## 2 Disability Reference Group

At the Community Development Committee meeting on 12 June 2017, it was recommended that Council supports the formation of a Disability Reference Group to advise Council on disability issues. The Disability Reference Group was then formed in 2018.

In November 2020, the Community Development Committee recommended that Council acknowledges the Enabling Good Lives principles and seeks to integrate them into the way Council goes about its work.

The Palmerston North disability community is unique, due to a range of historical and contextual factors, and this is reflected in the special character of the Palmerston North Disability Reference Group.

The Disability Reference Group is also guided by the New Zealand Disability Strategy, which was adopted by central government in 2016:

The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016 vision is for the Country "to be a nondisabling society – a place where disabled people have an equal opportunity to achieve their goals and aspirations, and all of New Zealand works together to make this happen".

The purpose of the Disability Reference Group is to ensure that the needs of disabled people are appropriately taken into account in the context of Council's roles and priorities. This includes:

- Representing in relation to PNCC's activities the interests, perspectives and expertise of people within our community living with impairments.
- Building strong relationships and establishing channels of communication between PNCC and disabled people living in our community.
- Providing guidance, advice, and support to inform the PNCC's planning and decision-making processes at a strategic level as well as identifying actual and potential on the operational gaps in PNCC's activities.

## 3 Pasifika Reference Group

In the 10 Year Plan 2021 – 2031, as a result of community consultation, Council resolved to establish a Pasifika Reference Group and a Seniors Reference Group commencing 2021/2022.

Palmerston North has growing number of Pasifika people and communities, with 5.3% of the population identifying as Pasifika at the 2018 census. 1.8% of the city were born in the Pacific Islands. At least eleven Pacific Island origin languages are spoken, with Samoan being the fourth most spoken language in the city.

Council and the Pasifika community organisations of the city have longstanding relationships, and Council is one of the only Councils in New Zealand with a dedicated officer for Pasifika community development. In 2020, Council demonstrated its dedication to supporting and empowering the Pasifika communities of the city by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples.

The Pasifika Reference Group is a significant opportunity to build on these foundations, further strengthening relationships and enhancing Council's strategic and operational activities towards a shared goal of thriving Pacific peoples.

## 4 Seniors Reference Group

In the 10 Year Plan 2021 – 2031, as a result of community consultation, Council resolved to establish a Pasifika Reference Group and a Seniors Reference Group commencing 2021/2022.

The over 60 population in Palmerston North is approximately 19% according to the 2018 census. In line with global trends, long term projections for the city show this cohort is expected to increase in terms of proportion of population faster than all other age groups. This demographic shift will have wide ranging implications, including for housing, health, employment, financial and social issues.

While Council has worked alongside organisations who work for or with seniors for many years, a Seniors Reference Group provides a dedicated regular platform for older people's voices to be heard and considered by PNCC. This Group will assist Council in responding to current and future opportunities to create a city that is fit-for-purpose for all community members.

## 5 Heritage Reference Group

As a result of submissions to the 10 Year Plan 2024 – 2034, Council resolved to establish a Heritage Reference Group to assist with preparing the 2027 Heritage Plan and advise on programmes in the 10 Year Plan 2027 – 2037.

Drawing on guidelines from The International Council on Monuments and Sites, heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation. This includes customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions, and values. Heritage can be categorised into two main types:

1. Tangible Heritage: This includes physical artifacts such as buildings, monuments, landscapes, books, works of art, and artifacts.
2. Intangible Heritage: This encompasses non-physical aspects such as traditions, oral history, performing arts, social practices, rituals, and festive events

The purpose of the Heritage Reference Group is to provide expert heritage advice on local projects. This group will act as a conduit between the Council and the heritage community, ensuring that heritage considerations are integrated into planning and development processes.

The Heritage Reference Group will:

- connect projects with knowledge holders and existing groups in the sector
- provide guidance on which stories to tell through local projects
- advocate to Council on strategies and plans that may have heritage implications

The outcome of the group will be enhanced visibility and appreciation of our shared histories and an improved community relationship to place.

## 6 Membership

### 6.1 Group composition

Each group will have between eight and fifteen members.

Members of the Seniors Reference Group will be at least 60 years of age at the time they are appointed.

The Disability Reference Group will include disabled people and may include family members of disabled people and others from the disability sector. Disabled people must make up at least 60% of membership.

The Pasifika Reference Group will include members with a variety of backgrounds and experiences, including members from each Pacific nation. Members will have connection to and experience working with Pasifika families and communities.

The Heritage Reference Group will include members with expertise, knowledge, and representation across a variety of heritage themes related to Palmerston North city and surrounds.

Groups will have at least one member representing Māori. The representation of Māori members may not be applicable to the Pasifika Reference Group. The representation of Māori members on the Heritage Reference Group will be endorsed or delegated through the Te Whiri Koko Rangitāne o Manawatū-Palmerston North City Council Liaison Group, with a preference toward members that whakapapa to Rangitāne o Manawatū.

Groups may be attended by one nominated liaison Councillor for communication purposes. The Councillor is not a member of the group.

### 6.2 Selection process

Membership selection will be guided by the following process.

The selection process of group members will commence with a call for expressions of interest. Expressions of interest will be called for publicly via Council's communication channels, which will include promotion via relevant community networks.

Selection decisions will be made by a panel, including: a member of the current group as nominated by the group, the Councillor liaison and the council officer liaison. For new groups with no existing members, the panel will include the Councillor liaison and the council officer liaison only; the panel may consult relevant community representatives to assist in selection decisions for new groups.

Group members need to:

- live within the boundaries of Palmerston North City Council at the time of selection
- be available to regularly attend (either online or in person) and contribute to meetings as scheduled

Group members need to have:

- lived experience as relevant to the purpose and/or demographic of the group
- a broad knowledge of issues relevant to the group
- good relationships and networks with relevant communities
- the ability to work effectively in a team
- an understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Subject to the above criteria, during selection the panel will have regard to maintaining an appropriate balance of people, including consideration of gender mix, cultural background, lived experiences, and age.

After the initial establishment of the Reference Group, new members will only be sought if a group drops below minimum numbers. The exception to this is if, as a result of a member exiting, the representative balance of the Group is negatively impacted.

### **6.3 Rotation of Membership**

A member is selected onto their respective Reference Group for a period of three years. At the conclusion of a member's three-year term, a member is to stand down but can opt to re-apply for their role, should they wish to participate for another term.

One-third of the membership from each group will be rotated each year.

In the initial years, to initiate the rotation, members will be selected randomly for their respective rotation.

Selection for the membership rotation will occur in February 2024, with the first year of the new rotation commencing February 2025.

The recruitment process will begin in December 2024 and will be conducted as outlined in Clause 6.2.

### **6.4 Process for exiting members**

Members may resign from the Group at any time via written notification to the council officer liaison for the Reference Group. Advance notice of one month from the resignation date is preferred.

## **7 Meetings**

### **7.1 Frequency**

Each group will meet at least four times per year. A provisional meeting schedule will be agreed annually. This schedule can be varied throughout the year.

### **6.2 Resourcing**

PNCC will support each Reference Group with a designated council officer from the Community Development Team, who will provide administrative support and act as liaison for other council officers. The Heritage Reference Group will be supported by a designated council officer from the City Shaping Team.

PNCC is responsible for providing Group members with an induction explaining the Council's function and processes, and the role of the Reference Group.

PNCC will provide each new Reference Group member a copy of these Terms of Reference, including the Code of Conduct.

PNCC will provide an appropriate venue for meetings.

With the exception of the Heritage Reference Group, each group member will receive \$200 net per annum to recognise their contributions of time and knowledge throughout the year. With the exception of the Heritage Reference Group, each Chair will receive \$400 net per annum. Annual payments will begin in December 2024, in arrears for the 2024 calendar year.