



Taungurung-Local Government Forum

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Taungurung Local Government Forum (the Forum) is a mechanism to foster and govern a constructive and meaningful operational relationship between Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLaWC) and Local Governments on Taungurung Country.

Functions

The functions of the Taungurung Local Government Forum are to:

1. Develop collaborative working arrangements that enable a meaningful, efficient, and mutually beneficial operational relationship between Local Governments and Taungurung Land and Waters Council.
2. Work collaboratively towards the achievement of outcomes which benefit our organisations and the communities which we represent.
3. Support the delivery of obligations, and implementation of commitments within relevant legislation and agreements, including:
 - a) The Local Government Act 2020,
 - b) The Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006,
 - c) The Taungurung Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA), particularly Schedule 5,
 - d) The Taungurung Land Use Activity Agreement (LUAA), and
 - e) Victorian Aboriginal and Local Government Strategy 2021.
4. Create and delegate activities to a sub-committee or working group, for approval by the Forum.
5. Govern, monitor, and evaluate the effectiveness of the Forum.

Objectives

The Objectives of the Taungurung Local Government Forum are to:

Work together in partnership

- Establish a partnership agreement between TLaWC and Local Government on Taungurung Country, built on mutual respect and a willingness to work as equal partners.
- Activate the partnership through positive and mutually beneficial initiatives.

Respect, Celebrate and Support Taungurung People, Culture and Country

- Build respect and understanding within Local Governments of Taungurung as the Traditional Owners of Country, establish cultural protocols and increase cultural awareness and safety.
- Support the healing and caring for Country on Taungurung Lands.
- Grow the employment and training of Taungurung people and the procurement of Taungurung services.
- Provide local services in a culturally appropriate manner and improve infrastructure for the recognition of Taungurung as the Traditional Owners for the area.

Achieve our responsibilities together

- Build a shared understanding of relevant legislation and agreements, including:
 - The Local Government Act 2020,
 - The Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006,
 - The Taungurung Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA), particularly Schedule 5,
 - The Taungurung Land Use Activity Agreement (LUAA),
 and the responsibilities of each party relating to those documents.
- Develop collaborative processes and programs to facilitate the delivery of responsibilities under these legislation and agreements.

Length of Term

The Taungurung – Local Government Forum is a permanent forum.

Once the Forum is formally established, priorities and measures of success will be designed collaboratively. A program for effectiveness monitoring will be developed with regular review horizons set, and which will include consultation with all member organisations, to ensure that the Forum achieves its purpose. In the first instance, a review of the effectiveness of the Forum will be conducted by Members after two years of becoming operational, to ensure its effectiveness. The appropriate time horizon for review, thereafter, will be determined by the members as part of the development of the effectiveness monitoring program.

Membership

Membership is open to:

- Taungurung Land and Waters Council

- The 15 Local Governments who operate on Taungurung Country
 - Alpine Shire Council
 - Benalla Rural City Council
 - City of Greater Bendigo
 - Campaspe Shire Council
 - Macedon Ranges Shire Council
 - Mansfield Shire Council
 - Mitchell Shire Council
 - Mount Alexander Shire Council
 - Murrindindi Shire Council
 - Greater Shepparton City Council
 - Strathbogie Shire Council
 - The Rural City of Wangaratta
 - Wellington Shire Council
 - Whittlesea City Council
 - Yarra Ranges Council
- Local Government Victoria, Department of Government Services
- First Peoples – State Relations, Department of Premier and Cabinet

As the forum is a governance mechanism, it is expected that decision makers are participating in the forum. For each organisation this means:

- TLaWC – Four members: The Chairperson and Executive Leadership Team.
- Each Local Governments – Two members: Mayor and Chief Executive Officer.
- Each State Government body – Two members: A senior executive (ED level) and a suitable senior officer.
- If one or more of a partner organisation’s representative members are unable to attend a particular meeting of the Forum, they may send a suitably senior proxy in their place. It is expected that this occurrence should be an exception rather than regular.

Membership is achieved by agreeing to these Terms of Reference in writing in the form at the bottom of this document.

Member organisations of the Forum should inform the Secretariat of the names, titles and contact details of their delegated members, including updating these details when changes occur.

It is recognised that, in some circumstances, Members may not be able to make a decision on behalf of their organisation without approval. For example, Local Government Members may need to seek a

resolution of their Council. The Forum will seek to accommodate organisational decision-making processes.

Organisations may cancel their membership at anytime in writing to the co-Chairs.

Co-Chairs

The Forum will have a Co-Chair Model.

Taungurung Land and Waters Council will nominate one of its members to hold one of the Co-Chair positions, with the nomination to be reviewed by TLaWC every two years.

The other Co-Chair position will be held by a nominated Local Government member.

Once membership of the Forum has been established, a call for self-nominations for the Local Government Co-Chair will be circulated. If more than one person nominates, then Local Government members will be asked to vote. The Local Government Co-Chair appointment will be for a period of two years.

Co-chairs will participate equally, along with any other committee member, in the discussions and decisions of the Forum.

Observers

Observers may be invited to attend meetings with the permission of the Co-chairs.

Meeting Schedule and Quorum

It is expected the group will meet twice a year.

The Chairs may schedule extraordinary meetings as required (this may be required in the establishment phase).

A quorum requires the presence of:

- Taungurung Land and Waters Council, and
- At least half or more of the relevant Local Governments, represented by at least one delegate each.

Meeting Procedure

1. A meeting schedule will be drawn up, forecasting meetings 12 months in advance.
2. The meeting schedule and venue may be adjusted by the Co-Chairs. Where possible, members will be notified of any changes at least two weeks prior to the meeting date.
3. The Co-Chairs may invite guests to attend the Forum meetings. Members may also request the Chairs invite other participants.

4. A record of meeting proceedings will be kept by the secretariat. Circulation of such records is restricted to members.
5. Any presentations provided by forum members may be circulated to the broader local government members at the discretion of the Chairs.

Agenda

1. The Chairs set the agenda for each meeting in collaboration with the TLaWC Executive Leadership Team. Members of the forum can propose agenda items to the Chairs for inclusion, and agenda items will be called for from all members prior to the agenda being finalised.
2. Meeting agendas and associated documents will be circulated to all members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
3. Meeting agendas will aim to include at least one presentation by a forum member on a pre-determined topic.
4. Members can choose to present together on a shared topic but are not required to do so. The Secretariat can facilitate collaborative presentations.
5. The Secretariat will coordinate members' preferences for topics to present to the forum.

Media

Members of the Forum will be respectful of the Forum and of fellow Members in public and in the media. Members of the Forum will take care not to purport to represent other members and note that Forum membership does not represent a formal partnership, though it may be a step towards partnership. Tags on social media highlighting and celebrating Member's involvement in the collaboration are encouraged. If at anytime Members are unsure about media content they should contact the Forum Secretariat (below) who will be happy to assist.

The following media guidelines will be observed:

- Any media or comment on behalf of the Forum must be approved by the Co-chairs prior to publication. If any media representatives make contact with a Member for the purposes of a story about the Forum, the Member should forward the enquiry to the Forum Secretariat (below) for co-Chair consideration.
- Individual members may make social or other media posts and/or comments about their membership of the Forum on their own behalf, respecting content confidentiality (below).
- Any comment about or on behalf of a specific organisation, or using branding, imagery or information of that organisation, including the organisation's logo, flag or quotes, must be approved by the organisation prior to publication.
- Members will be aware of the difference between acknowledging Taungurung Country and citing the Taungurung Local Government Forum in communication to stakeholders, the media or the public:

Once an organisation has signed onto the Forum they can acknowledge: "... [org name] is proud to be a member of the Taungurung Local Government Forum..." compared to any person or organisation acknowledging Country, such as 'we acknowledge that we are on Taungurung Country'. Any specific media enquiries relating to Taungurung Land and Waters Council, including if a member has general questions, can be forward to TLaWC's media representative at communications@tlawc.com.au.

Confidentiality

In order that the Forum fosters open discussion Members agree to keep information discussed and shared within the Forum, written and aural, confidential. From time to time, guided by the co-Chairs, Members may jointly agree to make particular content developed by the forum public.

Secretariat

Taungurung Land and Waters Council will provide secretariat support to the Forum. The Secretariat responsibilities will include assisting the Chairs with meeting arrangements, correspondence, and information management related to the operations of the forum.

The Secretariat can be contacted by email at TLGF@tlawc.com.au.

Formal Membership Acceptance

Organisation Name	
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On behalf of the above named organisation, I _____ **[insert name of authorising person]** agree to join the Taungurung Local Government Forum as a member organisation and accept to these Terms of Reference.

Signed	
Date	

The following individuals will be the current representatives for our organisation, noting that any representative changes will be forwarded to the Forum Secretariat.

	Representative 1	Representative 2
Local Government Position [delete row if not relevant]	Mayor	CEO
State Government body Position [delete row if not relevant]	Executive Director	Senior Officer or above

Name		
Contact email		
Contact telephone		
Executive Assistant name and details, if applicable		