



TERMS OF REFERENCE

RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee

*Updated to align with 2023-2028 Strategic Plan
Submitted for Adoption by Resolution of Council on 20 September 2022
For Review by September 2025 (or prior if required)*

Background

Rivers and waterways are the arteries of our landscape. They bring life to our regions, nourishing ecosystems that in turn provide communities with everything they need to sustain themselves. In the past, the Shepparton - Mooroopna communities' appreciation of, and engagement with, the Goulburn and Broken Rivers have varied, famously "turning our back to the river". The river systems were largely managed by agencies in isolation, with little connection between these managers or with the community.

Since its inception in 2005, RiverConnect has been pivotal in building the appreciation for the significance of our river environment. The success of the program is attributed wholeheartedly to the strength of its partnerships and their dedication to achieving its aspirations.

RiverConnect's partnership model has enabled local government, land management agencies, Traditional Owners, educational organisations, stakeholders and community members to come together to identify and action shared priorities. By facilitating effective, high levels of collaboration and co-operation, RiverConnect has positively contributed to notable environmental, economic and social outcomes for the river and our communities.

Together, through the RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee, RiverConnect partners have come a long way to addressing barriers in an environment with evolving complexities, and have an ongoing commitment to further enhancing the value of our rivers.

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1. Purpose

The RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee has been established to provide advice to Council in relation to the implementation of the RiverConnect Strategic Plan and associated initiatives of the RiverConnect project.

This process incorporates high level community involvement and participation and includes overseeing the activities and function of several RiverConnect Working Groups.

The RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee is representative of all key stakeholders with an interest in the management and development of the Goulburn – Broken floodplain between Shepparton and Mooroopna and within the broader community.

2. RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee Representative Role

The RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee is appointed in an advisory capacity to the Greater Shepparton City Council.

It has no executive authority, but it does:

- Provide advice on the implementation of the RiverConnect Strategic Plan;
- Engage and foster participation of the community in the RiverConnect program;
- Promote and advocate on behalf of the broader community;
- Facilitate two-way communication between the community and RiverConnect partner agencies;
- Identify and recommend appropriate sources of funding for RiverConnect initiatives;
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the endorsed strategic plan and RiverConnect initiatives; and
- Provide expert advice and expertise on RiverConnect related issues.

3. Committee Membership

3.1 Representative Organisations and Membership

Organisation	Number of Representatives	Voting Rights
Greater Shepparton City Council	up to 2 Councillors	Nil
Greater Shepparton City Council	1 Senior Staff Member	1
Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority	1 Board Member, or 1 delegate	1
Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority	1 Senior Staff Member	1
Parks Victoria	1 Representative	1

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Department of Environment Land Water and Planning	1 Representative	1
Goulburn Murray Landcare Network	1 Representative	1
Department of Education and Training	1 Representative	1
Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation	1 Representative	1
Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-Operative Ltd	1 Representative	1
Goulburn Valley Water	1 Representative	1
Goulburn Valley Environment Group	1 Representative	1
Community – Other	5 Representatives	5 (1 each)
TOTAL	18	16

3.2 Proxies at Meetings

Members of the RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee may nominate a proxy from the appropriate partner organisation to attend a meeting if the regular representative is unable to attend.

Proxies must be forwarded to the RiverConnect Project Officer within 2 days of the meeting. Members will be informed of the substitution by the chair at the beginning of the meeting.

A member of the RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee may not nominate a proxy to attend more than 3 meetings within a 12 month time frame.

3.3 Organisation Representatives

The representatives of organisational bodies are appointed by that representative organisation, after a letter seeking membership from that organisation has been received from the RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee.

Appointments on the RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee for organisational representatives are for a three year term.

3.4 Community Representatives

The community representatives will be sourced by an advertised Expression of Interest, of which a panel consisting of one of each of the program funders (Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority and Greater Shepparton City Council) and Council staff will review. The panel will then make recommendations to Council that these selected community representatives be appointed.

The community representatives will have a Memorandum of Understanding that they remain for three years beginning the month of November.

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Community members who wish to remain on the committee after their term can reapply through the Expression of Interest application process.

4. Committee Meeting Procedure

4.1 Meeting Coordination

RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee meetings will be coordinated by the RiverConnect Project Officer.

- A schedule of meetings will be established at the beginning of each year and circulated to all committee members;
- The Implementation Advisory Committee anticipates meeting every 8 weeks or as required;
- Agenda items and associated papers will be circulated during the week prior to the next scheduled meeting; and
- Minutes will be recorded and meeting papers circulated within two weeks of the last meeting.

4.2 Convenor/Chair

Meeting Chair:

The Chair is an appointed Greater Shepparton City Council Councillor.

The Deputy Chair is an appointed Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority Board member representative.

Acting Chair:

In the case of the Chair's or Deputy Chair's absence or inability to attend or perform their duties, an Acting Chair may be elected by a majority vote of members present in the meeting.

The Acting Chair will be responsible for informing the Chair as to the salient points/decisions raised or agreed to at any meeting where the Chair was not in attendance.

4.3 Quorum Requirements

A minimum of half the membership plus one (10 members) of the RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee members is required for the meeting to be recognised as an authorised meeting and for the recommendations or resolutions to be valid.

In addition, representation must include a member from both of the funding bodies, Greater Shepparton City Council and the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority.

5. Committee Conduct Principles

Committee members are expected to:

- Actively participate in Committee discussions and offer their opinions and views;
- Treat all persons with respect and have due regard to the opinions, rights and responsibilities of others;

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- Act with integrity;
- Attend each meeting where practical; and
- Maintain confidentiality of designated information provided to Committee Members

If a member does not attend a scheduled meeting for more than 3 consecutive meetings, membership may be reviewed by the committee and may prompt a vacancy on the committee.

6. Informal Meetings of Council

In accordance with Chapter 6 of Councils Governance Rules, a record of an Informal Meeting of Council must be prepared at any Advisory Committee Meeting where a Councillor is in attendance.

The Informal Meeting of Council record must include:

- the names of all Councillors and members of Council staff in attendance
- the matters considered
- any conflicts of interest disclosures made by a Councillor attending, and
- whether the Councillor who has disclosed the conflict of interest left the meeting while the matter was discussed.

The Record of Informal Meetings of Council should be completed within 7 days of the date of the committee meeting so that it can be included in the next available Council Meeting agenda.

These records must also be recorded in the Informal Meetings of Council Register (M09/3170).

7. Terms of Reference Review

The terms of reference for the RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee will be reviewed three yearly, or earlier if required, prior to recruitment of community members.

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Appendix 1:

RiverConnect Implementation Advisory Committee Membership at April 2022.

Position	Organisation	Role
Councillor	Greater Shepparton City Council	Chair person
Advisory Representative	Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority	Deputy Chair person
Shepparton Irrigation Region Executive Officer	Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority	
Manager Sustainability and Environment	Greater Shepparton City Council	
Officer	Goulburn Murray Landcare Network	
Area Chief Ranger	Parks Victoria	
Elders Council Representative	Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation	
Youth Development Officer	Greater Shepparton Young Champions	
Elders Council Representative	Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative	
Manager, Communications and Engagement	Goulburn Valley Water	
Senior Adviser, Regional Performance and Planning	Department of Education and Training Victoria	
Program Manager Biodiversity, Hume Region	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning	
Member	Goulburn Valley Environment Group	
5x Community Member	Community Representatives	