

Information Pack

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

Overview

The Warrumbungle Shire Council area in the central west of NSW is placed mid-way between Melbourne and Brisbane. The area is traversed by a number of highways and main roads providing links to surrounding regional areas. Covering 12,380 km² with a population of around 9,000, the area includes the towns of Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Mendooran together with several smaller villages.

Council manages an operating budget of approximately \$52 million per year and an asset base of over \$600 million. About 195 staff provide a diverse range of services to the community that extends across our region.

Role of the Committee

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) is established to provide the elected Council with advisory assurance in respect of Warrumbungle Shire Council's risk profile, management controls and compliance frameworks.

The role of the ARIC is to:

- Report to Council and provide appropriate advice and recommendations on matters relevant to the Charter.
- Assist by providing independent advice to Council on it fulfilling its responsibilities by ensuring that management has an appropriate governance and business framework in place across the organisation.
- Specifically, the ARIC should advise Council on the following matters:
 - Effectiveness of the Enterprise Risk Management Framework in terms of identifying and managing Council's financial and business risks.
 - Effectiveness of key controls including policy, procedure and governance processes.
 - Legislative compliance by the organisation.
 - Effectiveness of external accountability mechanisms.
- At all times recognise that the primary responsibility for the management of Council rests with the Council and General Manager as defined by the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- Assist Council to ensure that the services and facilities provided by the Council are managed efficiently and effectively.
- Identify strategies to assist with the continuous improvement of the provision of services and facilities to the community.
- Promote continuous improvement across business processes with a focus on efficiencies and savings.
- The focus of the committee should only be on matters of significance and materiality.

As part of this objective, the ARIC will ensure that there are adequate and effective systems of internal control in place throughout Council and will assist in the implementation of the internal and external audit plans.

Charter

The ARIC will operate in accordance with the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Charter. The Charter is based on the guidelines issued by the Office of Local Government.

Membership

The ARIC membership (voting) comprises one elected councillor and two independent external members, one of whom is the Chairperson.

The General Manager and other staff participate in ARIC meetings as required.

Appointment of ARIC Members

Councillors and independent members will be appointed for the term of the Council or as otherwise determined by resolution of Council.

All appointees are to be made based upon a demonstrated ability to meet the selection criteria.

Vacancies shall be filled by public advertising followed by an evaluation and interview of shortlisted candidates and a recommendation to Council.

Any person/company or organisation (or their clients) contracting services to Warrumbungle Shire Council may be ineligible from being a member of the ARIC on the grounds of a conflict of interest.

Selection Criteria

The independent external members of the ARIC, taken collectively, will have a broad range of personal qualities, skills and experience relevant to the operations of Warrumbungle Shire Council.

A least one member of the ARIC will have a strong financial management and/or audit background, with an understanding of accounting and auditing standards in a public sector environment. Legal, governance, risk management, information and communications technology (ICT) and business management skills and experience are desirable.

The following criteria will be considered in relation to skills and experience when assessing applications:

- Relevant professional qualifications.
- Relevant professional knowledge and expertise.
- Accounting or related financial management.
- Current and prior experience on similar committees in local government, broader public and private sector.
- Performance improvement.
- Governance, risk and compliance.
- Knowledge of the local government environment.
- The broad range of activities and services that Council provides.

Role and Responsibilities

The role and responsibilities of the ARIC is in accordance with the Charter, which may be revised or expanded by Council from time to time.

Members of the Committee are expected to:

- Have a high level of personal integrity and ethics, as well as acting honestly and in good faith.
- Attend and actively participate in meetings of the ARIC and contribute the time needed to understand the reports provided.

- Broadly be aware of and understand the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements appropriate to Warrumbungle Shire Council.
- Work collaboratively with other members of the ARIC in achieving the Committee's objectives.
- Express opinions frankly and ask questions that go to the fundamental core of issues.
- Review the risks, progress, controls, finances and performance surrounding major projects.
- Have an understanding of management principles required, recognising and evaluating the materiality and significance of deviations from good business practices.
- Have strong interpersonal skills, oral and written communication skills, analytical skills, and ability to apply objectivity with sound judgment.
- Comply with the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Charter.
- Comply with Council's Code of Conduct.

Committee Meetings

The ARIC shall meet at least twice per year. It is expected that the meetings will be for approximately two hours. If necessary, any additional meeting will be approved by the Chair of the Committee. Preparation will involve review and analysis of the agenda reports.

Induction and Training

Committee members will receive information and briefings on their appointment to assist them to meet their responsibilities.

Remuneration for Meetings

Remuneration for independent external membership of the ARIC is \$800 per meeting (excluding GST) with an additional \$200 per meeting (excluding GST) paid to the Chairperson. This rate is inclusive of time spent on preparation for the meeting. Reasonable travel will be reimbursed in accordance with Council's policy.

Attachments

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Charter, adopted by Council 6 January 2022.

Evaluation

The evaluation of external members will be undertaken by the Director Corporate and Community Services and the elected councillor who forms part of the ARIC, and will involve a review of the Expression of Interest applications. The appointment to the ARIC will be made by Council.

Applicants should provide the following information as part of their Expression of Interest:

- A resume.
- A document addressing the selection criteria including:
 - Outline of professional and/or formal qualifications.
 - Current (and prior) experience on similar committees in local government, public or private sector.
 - Knowledge of broad range of activities and services that Council provides and is aware of relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.
 - Outline of relevant skills and experience in each of the following:
 - Strong financial management and/or audit background, with an understanding of accounting and auditing standards in a public sector environment.

- Legal, governance and/or risk management.
- Information and communications technology (ICT).
- Business management.
- At least two referees contact details.

Expression of Interest

Council invites interested persons to submit an Expression of Interest by 4.30pm Friday 31 March 2023.

Expressions of Interest can be submitted electronically by emailing the application to the Director Corporate and Community Services at info@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au.

Enquiries

All enquiries or requests for information should be directed to Council's Director Corporate and Community Services on (02) 6849 2000 or via email to info@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au