



Blue Mountains City Council Hatobuilico Friendship Committee

Terms of Reference

Committee established:	25 January 2005, Minute 6
Terms of reference endorsed by the Committee:	30 October 2014
Terms of reference endorsed by the Council:	11 November 2014, Minute 1207

Background and history of the committee

The Blue Mountains East Timor Friendship Committee (the Committee) was established by resolution of the Blue Mountains City Council (the Council) at the Ordinary Meeting held on 25 January 2005, Minute 6. It adopted the sub-district of Hatobuilico as its partner community following a recommendation by the then Consul General of Timor-Leste, Senor Abel Guterres.

Friendship relationships such as the one between the Blue Mountains and Hatobuilico are an extremely important process for providing support for the development efforts of the people of Timor-Leste.

A formal agreement was signed in November 2007, between the Council and the District Administrator for Ainaro, which includes Hatobuilico, which forms the basis of our ongoing relationship.

Council sent a formal delegation to Hatobuilico to sign this agreement that consisted of the Mayor, a Councillor, a council support officer and several Blue Mountains community members, where a community lunch was provided for around four hundred people. This was recognised by the District Administrator as a government to government agreement.

Hatobuilico sub-district is in the district of Ainaro in the mountainous centre of Timor-Leste, 100km south of Dili. Hatobuilico, which is comprised of three villages and twenty-one sub-villages, has a population of approximately 12,000 people, most of whom are subsistence farmers. Hatobuilico is situated at the foot of Mount Ramelau, Timor-Leste's highest mountain.

In July 2007, members of the Committee met with Hatobuilico community members who formed a local committee, (the Hatobuilico Committee). In September 2007, with the assistance of Beba Sequeira, Asia Pacific Support Collective - Timor-Leste, the Hatobuilico Committee developed a Strategic Plan.

In April 2008, the Blue Mountains East Timor Friendship Committee developed its own Strategic Plan in response to the priorities identified in the Hatobuilico Committee Plan. This plan has been updated in response to recommendations from the Hatobuilico Committee and the Committee members who have visited the area. The funding allocation from the Council was increased from \$6,000 to \$11,400 after a formal budget was prepared and endorsed by the Committee and accepted by Council.

In June 2008, Council sent another delegation to Timor-Leste to attend the Friendship Conference that took place over three days in Dili. Council's delegation consisted of the Mayor, a Councillor, several Blue Mountains community representatives, and a council support officer. The other attendees at the conference were representatives of all the friendship groups in Australia, and each area in Timor Leste was represented by local area committees. Hatobuilico was represented by six locals as well as the District Administrator.

The conference was attended by the Timor-Leste President, Jose Ramos Horta, the Prime Minister, Xanana Gusuamo, several government ministers, the Consul General Abel Guterres. Formal functions attended by delegates were held in government buildings as well as the Australian Embassy.

This strategic planning has resulted in numerous successful short and long term projects which have a primary focus on education outcomes. The quantity and degree of these outcomes has been vastly increased by community activities and events, particularly through the Trek for Timor fundraising initiatives in 2010, 2012 and 2014, which raised awareness and funds and which were supported by the members of the committee and the Council. Other examples include hosting VIPs including Kirsty Sword Gusmao and Dulsie Soares Vice Minister for Basic Education.

Committee purpose

The Committee's purpose is to act in an advisory capacity to the Council and to assist the Council to perform its role as contributor to the relationship between the City of the Blue Mountains and its partner community Hatobuilico, Timor-Leste. This will include making recommendations to Council on how to best allocate budgeted funds to assist in supporting the Hatobuilico community.

Committee approach

The Committee has been established in a spirit of partnership between the people of the Blue Mountains and the people of Hatobuilico in Timor-Leste.

The Committee aims to approach its tasks in a co-operative manner encouraging an ongoing relationship with the people of Hatobuilico, that respects self-determination and supports sustainable practices for the local people of Hatobuilico.

Over the longer term, a role of the Committee will be to assist Council in building the relationships that may provide support to Timor-Leste when it establishes a local government structure. It is noted that the development of Local Government structures in Timor-Leste is a complex process which will take time to be implemented through regional and isolated areas of the country.

Establishment and dissolution of the committee

The Council may, through resolution of the Council, establish advisory committees for the purposes it sees fit. Recommendations made by the Committee must be endorsed by Council resolution. The Council retains the right to dissolve a committee at any time by resolution of the Council.

The terms of reference

These terms of reference are to be reviewed every four (4) years. The terms of reference are expected to provide a full overview of the management of all aspects of the committee administration and other functions. Any member of the committee can request an amendment to these terms of reference, however such a request should be tabled as a committee agenda item and any agreed changes recorded in the

meeting minutes. To become effective, any amendment to the terms of reference must be endorsed by the Council.

Conduct and governance

Councillors, council officers and committee members must comply with the Council's Code of Conduct. Committee members will be issued with a copy of the Council's Code of Conduct on endorsement to the committee's membership by the Council and at such times as the Code of Conduct is reviewed.

The committee's governance processes are set out by the terms of reference.

Membership

Excluding the Council Support Officer, the Committee will have a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 12 members, two (2) of whom are Councillor Representatives and the remainder are community representatives. The Council Support Officer is not considered a committee member.

Committee membership is reported to Council at the commencement of a new term of the Council. Any changes in the community representative membership during the term, are to be voted upon by the committee and endorsed by Council resolution. Membership is terminated by resignation or non-attendance for two consecutive meetings without prior leave of absence. Membership may also be terminated due to a breach of the Code of Conduct.

Register of committee members

The Council will maintain a register of members. The register of members will contain the following information for each committee member:

- Name and contact details (contact details for committee purposes only and not for public release); and
- Dates of commencing and vacating membership.

Formal nomination process

A member of the public who is interested in becoming a committee member may register their interest in writing to the Council. At any meeting the committee may vote to recommend that the new member is accepted into the committee and it be included in the next report to the Council.

Leave of absence

Committee members may apply for a leave of absence to the committee Chair. This leave of absence will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Committee members will continue to receive communications relating to the committee during a leave of absence unless they express otherwise.

Attendance of non-members

There is an open invitation to all elected Councillors, who are not members of the committee, to attend and to speak at a meeting of the committee. Other community representatives or guests may be invited to attend meetings from time to time when a specific purpose is nominated.

However, a Councillor or invited guest who is not a member of the Committee is not entitled to:

- (a) Give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting;
- (b) Move or second a motion at the meeting; or
- (c) Vote at the meeting.

Committee Structure

Office bearer positions of Chair and Deputy Chair will be reviewed by the Council every four (4) years to coincide with the Local Government election.

The following positions are considered standing committee positions:

Chair

The Mayor, or their delegate, will Chair the committee for the term of the Council. The role of the Chair is to manage committee meetings by:

- Directing debates;
- Ensuring that the meeting follows the prepared agenda and progresses in a timely manner;
- Ensuring that members are afforded the opportunity to address the meeting equally; and
- Ensuring that resolutions are understood by the committee members.

Additional functions of the Chair include:

- Taking a lead role in focusing and maintaining the committee aims are followed;
- Ensuring that the committee terms of reference are maintained and followed;
- Assisting the staff representative in preparing meeting agendas and reports;
- Welcoming and inducting new members;
- Mediating disputes between members;
- Representing the committee at official functions; and
- Calling special meetings when required to address time critical matters.

Deputy Chair

The Mayor's Councillor representative, or as required, the committee's nominee present at the meeting, shall act in the role of committee Deputy Chair. The role of the Deputy Chair is to support the Chair in their functions and to act as Chair during periods of absence. It is expected that the Deputy Chair will have a sound understanding of the functions of the committee and the role of Chair.

Council Support Officer

The Council Support Officer is an employee of the Council, who provides the secretariat support to the committee by the Council. The Council Support Officer will support the committee to meet the administrative, reporting and financial requirements of the committee and the Council. Furthermore, the Council Support Officer will provide advice and support to the Committee to comply with the Council's policy and procedures. In particular, the Council Support Officer will act as the committee secretary, to ensure:

- Meeting agendas are prepared and distributed via email;
- Meeting minutes are taken and distributed;
- Reporting obligations are met, including the preparation of reports to Council;
- Committee minutes, documentation, correspondence and reports are saved to the Council record;
- The register of members is maintained; and
- Committee and public access to information is actioned, in consultation with the Council Information Officer, as required under the *Government Information Public Access Act (NSW) 2009*.

Committee meetings

The Committee will meet at least three times per year. The meetings will be structured around the annual reporting requirements.

As considered best practice, at the commencement of each meeting the committee Chair shall ask for declarations of interest. Declarations will form part of the meeting minutes.

Attendance and quorum for meetings

Meeting quorum will be half the committee members plus one. The Council Support Officer is not a voting member for the purposes of the committee and will not be counted in quorum.

Committee members are expected to advise of their apology to the Council Support Officer to ensure that there is likely to be a quorum at the meeting. If there will not be quorum at the meeting, the meeting will be cancelled. The Council Support Officer will contact all members to notify them of the cancellation.

Agenda

On the Chair endorsement, the Council Support Officer will distribute a meeting agenda by email at least five (5) working days prior to each meeting.

Committee members may request the Council Support Officer include additional items on the agenda.

The meeting agenda will commence with standing items for attendance, apologies, confirmation of previous meeting minutes and declarations of interest. Following this, the committee will address items for action and finally, items for noting will be allocated time on the agenda.

Minutes

The Council Support Officer will take minutes at committee meetings and distribute the draft minutes to committee members and other persons who attended the meeting.

Minutes will be limited to actions and key outcomes.

Corrections or additions may be suggested by any person who attended the meeting. Revised minutes will be distributed to all committee members with the agenda and will be ratified as true and correct on or before the subsequent meeting.

Minutes of the committee will be reported to the Council and publicly available on the Council website.

Meeting venue

The Council Support Officer will arrange an appropriate venue for the meeting. This will usually be at the Blue Mountains City Council office in Katoomba however other locations may be used from time to time.

Special Meetings

Additional meetings may be added the meeting schedule when required to ensure that time-critical decisions can be properly considered. A quorum of attendees must be established prior to the meeting being held. Notice to members of no less than five (5) working days is required.

Annual report and budget recommendations to Council

Based on the recommendations of the committee, the staff representative will prepare reports to be presented for endorsement by the Council.

There are two main reports that the committee will present to the Council for endorsement annually, being: i) the activities and budget recommendations for inclusion in the Council's annual operational plan; and ii) the annual report of activities conducted throughout the previous year.

The Council Operational Plan and Budget is prepared in March for endorsement by Council by June. As such, the committee will prepare a report to the Council by the end of February each year to ensure the Council has resolved the committee budget allocation for alignment to the Council's Operational Plan and Budget. The committee's report will include detailed recommendations and rationale on how the proposed budget will be spent in the upcoming financial year.

The committee's annual report of activities conducted throughout the previous year will be presented to Council within 3 months of the end of the financial year. The report will include a reconciliation of expenses and report on achievements in alignment to the previous activities and budget recommendations report.

The Committee may also make other recommendations to be reported to the Council for resolution, including changing the name of the committee, changes to details of the committee future focus and reporting on socio-economic development in Hatobuilico. Ideally, these recommendations will coincide with the annual reports.

Media and committee public relations

The advisory committee as a Council function operates within the provisions of Council's media policy. In the first instance all media representation, press contact and publications shall be directed through the Council's Communications Officer via the Council Support Officer. Wherever feasible, the Committee will have discussed the content and reason for media representation prior to the event.