

7.3 **Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award Panel - Terms of Reference**

Abstract

The purpose of this report is for Council to endorse the Terms of Reference for the Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award (the Award) Panel (see **Attachment 1**).

The Award acknowledges and highlights the outstanding achievements of volunteers who make a significant contribution to the community as a volunteer with a local community organisation in Boroondara, and is promoted annually by the Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre.

Currently, a Panel comprising two councillors and two community representatives meets to assess and make a recommendation(s) for the Award, however no formal Terms of Reference governs this process. The proposed Terms of Reference outlines the membership, meetings and support provided by Council officers to the Panel.

It is also proposed to broaden the criteria for the Award so it is open to people who volunteer with a Boroondara community organisation but live outside Boroondara.

Currently the Award selection criteria specifies that the volunteer must be an Australian citizen who lives in, and volunteers for, a community organisation in the City of Boroondara. A volunteer is assessed for the:

- benefit and impact of the nominee's volunteering to the community, as well as achievements
- attributes, skills and experience of the nominee
- history and range of volunteering activities undertaken by the nominee
- extent to which the nominees have balanced their volunteering activity in addition to family, work and other commitments
- challenges and complexities associated with their volunteering activities.

Officers' recommendation

That Council resolves to:

1. Endorse the Terms of Reference for the Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award Panel.
2. Endorse the revised criteria for the Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award so that it is open to volunteers who live, work or play in Boroondara and who volunteer with a Boroondara community organisation.

Responsible director: Carolyn McClean
Community Development

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is for Council to endorse the new Terms of Reference for the Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award Panel (see **Attachment 1**) and to endorse revised criteria for the Award enabling nominees who volunteer with a Boroondara community organisation, but live outside Boroondara, to be eligible for the Award.

2. Policy implications and relevance to community plan and council plan

Volunteering is important to residents in the Boroondara community; over a quarter of residents recorded giving their time as volunteers in the twelve months preceding the 2016 Census.

Supporting volunteerism is a key priority in the Boroondara Community Plan 2017-27. Volunteering has strong links to health priorities by contributing to positive mental health and social connection.

The Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award addresses the following strategic objectives in the Boroondara Community Plan 2017-27:

- *Strategy 1.5: Provide, facilitate and advocate for opportunities to increase connections within the community, with a focus on local neighbourhoods.*
- *Strategy 1.9: Facilitate and advocate for opportunities to maximise older people's quality of life and engagement in the community through the provision of programs, volunteering and community sharing projects.*

3. Background

The Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award has been successfully running for many years.

The Award requires Terms of Reference to define the parameters for the Assessment Panel. The Assessment Panel is responsible for reviewing nominations received and recommending a winner(s).

4. Outline of key issues/options

Terms of reference

The Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award Panel is convened annually to consider nominations for the Award.

Prior to 2018, the Award was run in conjunction with the Boroondara Citizen of the Year Awards, which are recognised annually on Australia Day. To distinguish it from the Citizen Awards, the Volunteer of the Year Awards are now announced on International Volunteer Day held on 5 December each year.

Applications open on the first Monday of August and close on the first Friday of October. In 2020, Council received 22 nominations across three categories, 2021 Boroondara Volunteer of the Year, COVID-19 Outstanding Local Hero and COVID-19 Outstanding Innovative Program.

While there is a well-established process to assess and make recommendations for the Award, it is not formally endorsed via Terms of Reference. The Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award Panel Terms of Reference outlines the way in which an Assessment Panel is formed and how nominations will be assessed.

As outlined in the Terms of Reference (**Attachment 1**), the Assessment Panel will comprise of up to three Councillors via Councillor Assignment and two community organisations by an expression of interest process. Panellists will receive nominations for independent assessment, followed by a group assessment to discuss the applications and recommend the winner(s).

Currently the Award selection criteria specifies that the volunteer must be an Australian citizen who lives in, and volunteers for, a community organisation in the City of Boroondara. A volunteer is assessed for the:

- benefit and impact of the nominee's volunteering to the community, as well as achievements
- attributes, skills and experience of the nominee
- history and range of volunteering activities undertaken by the nominee
- extent to which the nominees has balanced their volunteering activity in addition to family, work and other commitments
- challenges and complexities associated with their volunteering activities.

Currently the nomination criteria excludes volunteers who live outside Boroondara. It is proposed that the Award seeks to recognise individuals who 'live, work, study or volunteer' in the City of Boroondara, which is consistent with the nomination criteria for the Boroondara Citizen of the Year Awards.

5. Consultation/communication

The Terms of Reference has been drafted to bring the Panel and assessment process into alignment with other reference groups and advisory committees across Council.

6. Financial and resource implications

There are no financial or resource implications as a result of this report.

7. Governance issues

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. The officers responsible for this report have no direct or indirect interests requiring disclosure.

8. Social and environmental issues

The City of Boroondara highly values the role volunteers play in the Boroondara community. The Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award seeks to recognise individuals who go 'above and beyond' through their volunteer efforts for the benefit of the Boroondara community.

9. Evaluation and review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed in in October 2024, in line with Council terms.

Manager: Fiona Brown, Manager Community Planning and Development

Report officer: Laura Lynch, Volunteer Support and Development Lead

Attachment 1

Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award Assessment Panel

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Introduction

The City of Boroondara highly values volunteering in the community. Boroondara has one of the highest rates of volunteering in Metropolitan Melbourne, where 26% of residents recorded that they undertook voluntary work in the 12 months preceding the 2016 Census.

The Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre's (BVRC) is Council's dedicated function to driving volunteerism in Boroondara, ensuring that Boroondara is a vibrant and inclusive city, meeting the needs and aspirations of the community. Each year, the BVRC runs the Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award to recognise the efforts of volunteers who make an outstanding positive contribution in the Boroondara community. Applications open in August and Nominees and Award winners are announced at an International Volunteer Day celebration in December.

An Assessment Panel will review nominations for the Award and Terms of Reference will govern this process.

Role and responsibilities of the Assessment Panel

All nominations will be initially assessed by relevant Council Officers against the Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award criteria.

Nominations that meet the criteria will be presented to the Assessment Panel alongside a criteria to score each nomination. The Assessment Panel will convene to meet, discuss each nomination received and use a consensus model to make a recommendation for the suitable winner(s).

Meetings

The Assessment Panel will be convened annually in October for two hours following the close of applications for the Award. Additional meetings may be required depending on the number of applications received and the need for further information from applicants.

Membership

The Assessment Panel will consist of up to five members and include:

- Up to three (3) Councillor representatives (via Councillor Assignment)
- Up to two (2) representatives from BVRC member organisations (Boroondara-based community organisations)

Community organisations will be invited to express interest in participating in the panel through an expression of interest process.

All positions on the Assessment Panel are voluntary and do not attract remuneration.

Chairperson

The position of the Chairperson will be held by a Councillor, selected by the Assessment Panel. The Chairperson will be supported the Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre's Volunteer Support and Development Lead. The Chairperson is responsible for chairing the Assessment Panel and collating Assessment Panellists' recommendations for the Award.

Conduct and Interest provisions

In their capacity as a member of the Assessment Panel, a member must:

- aim to work in an honest and respectful manner
- respect the confidential nature of the nominations received and not engage in any dialogue with applicants
- not, individually, collectively or via a third party, make any public statement about the Boroondara Volunteer of the Year nominees prior to the announcement of the winner(s) at Council's International Volunteer Day celebration
- not make improper use of their position for personal and professional gain.

Dispute resolution

Should disputes occur between members of the Assessment Panel, which are unresolvable within a process that the Panel could reasonably be expected to undertake, Council may choose to seek the assistance of independent expertise in order to resolve the dispute.

Support to the Assessment Panel

- Council Officers from the Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre are responsible for the organisation and operation of the Assessment Panel meetings, including the provision of all necessary tools for assessment
- Council Officers provide support, advice and background information to Assessment Panel members but do not participate or influence any decision making
- All Assessment Panel members are briefed on the context of the Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award, their role, and the process of making recommendations
- All assessment meetings are minuted, noting the rationale for decisions to ensure accountability. Council Officers from the Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre are responsible for the minutes of each meeting.

Role of Councillor/s

Councillors participating on the Assessment Panel are responsible for reviewing the Boroondara Volunteer of the Year Award nominations and for assessing each application received. Assessment Panellists will also attend a meeting to discuss the nominations received and provide a recommendation for the winner(s).

Role of Council Officer/s

Council Officers are responsible for ensuring the Assessment Panel receive nominations for assessment, preparing the assessment criteria, establishing and facilitating the Assessment Panel meeting, preparing an agenda and recording minutes.

The recommended winner(s) for the award will be presented to the Manager, Community Planning and Development for endorsement.

Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed in in October 2024, in line with Council terms.

Contact details

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