PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE—TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of the Public Policy Committee is to assist the Commission in the areas of advocacy and representation on behalf of Catholic schools, including Government financial support.

OBJECTIVES

2. The objectives of the Public Policy Committee are to advise the Commission on key aspects of education policy, advocacy and representation from a State wide perspective by:

2.1. undertaking/identifying research on school funding and other public policy issues to further the support of funding of Catholic schools;

2.2. identifying options on which the Commission may develop a public position for Catholic schools with governments, politicians and the community generally and how to implement the options;

2.3. monitoring support for Catholic schools and social, political and education developments in the community, which impact on both the level of support to and effectiveness of Catholic schools;

2.4. identifying, evaluating and monitoring social, political and other trends, issues and concerns affecting education and Catholic schools in particular;

2.5. determining how public policy trends could impact on the Commission’s business and activities;

2.6. determining how the CEC can anticipate and adjust to public policy trends in order to more effectively achieve its goals and/or to be an important contributor to the policy dialogue around education;

2.7. developing recommendations to the Commission with regard to formulating and adopting basic policies, programs and practices concerning broad public policy issues affecting education;

2.8. developing educative strategies for the Catholic community and the wider community about the ongoing needs and social benefits of Catholic schools and their political support;

2.9. making recommendations about collectively building sector, diocesan and community capacity for local advocacy;
2.10. working collaboratively, as required, with other Commission committees on key aspects of its work, particularly in relation to the monitoring of education policy and legislative requirements, preparing submissions and responses to calls for involvement emanating from Commonwealth, State and other bodies, and undertaking research on education issues;

2.11. making recommendations about the strategic positioning of Catholic schools as a major provider of high quality education in NSW.

**APPOINTMENT, COMPOSITION AND TENURE**

3. The Commission is responsible for the appointment of Committee members.

4. The Committee shall consist of up to eight members, comprising Non Executive Commissioners, the Executive Director, and/or Other Persons.

5. The Commission will appoint a Chairperson of the Committee.

6. The Committee may elect an Acting Chairperson, so the nominated member can act as Chairperson on an ad-hoc basis, if the Chairperson is unable to attend meetings or to carry out his/her responsibilities between meetings, such as clearance of Committee agendas, signing of correspondence, and so on.

7. All Committee members will have a broad range of skills and experience and commitment to the delivery of Catholic school education. They will have contemporary knowledge of Catholic schools resource and funding requirements and the ability to bring to the Committee the broad views of the educating community, including views of teachers, administrators, principals, parents and the clergy.

8. All Committee members shall have knowledge of CEC’s governance arrangements, its statutory requirements and its contractual obligations to governments.

9. Committee members shall be appointed for an initial period of three years. The Commission may consider an extension or re–appointment after the initial term.

10. The term of appointment of a Commissioner to the Committee concludes upon his/her ceasing to be a Commissioner.

11. Committee members may resign at any time in writing to the Commission Chairman.

12. The Commission at any time and for any reason may withdraw the appointment of a member of the Committee. There is no right of appeal against a Commission decision under this clause.

13. Committee members must act only within the scope of the Committee’s specified functions and responsibilities.

14. Committee members must exercise their powers and perform their functions with due care, skill and diligence. They must also act in good faith in the best interests of CEC and for a proper purpose.
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

15. The Committee has no executive powers or decision-making authority in relation to the operations of CEC, unless specifically delegated by the Commission. The Committee functions in an advisory role.

16. When considering matters pertaining to the resource and funding needs of Catholic schools, the Committee will liaise and consult with the Education Policy and Resources Policy Committees.

17. The members of the Committee are responsible for ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the Committee and taking appropriate steps to ensure they have the requisite knowledge and training to undertake their role.

REPORTING

18. After the minutes of the meetings have been accepted as a correct account by the Committee members, the minutes shall be signed by the Committee Chairperson, and circulated promptly to the Committee members.

19. The Chairperson of the Committee may give a verbal update, as necessary, to the next Commission meeting and the Committee minutes will follow as an item for information for the Commission.

20. The Committee shall, at least once annually, provide a report to the Commission on its operation and activities during the year. This report shall occur at the February Commission meeting in respect of the previous calendar year and at other times as requested by the Commission.

21. The Committee shall report any other matters it deems of sufficient importance to the Commission, as required.

ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

22. Meetings

22.1. The Committee will meet at least four times per annum. In addition, the Chairperson will be required to call a meeting of the Committee if requested to do so by the Commission or any two Committee members.

22.2. A forward meeting plan, including meeting dates and agenda items, will be agreed by the Committee each year. The forward meeting plan will cover all of the Committee’s responsibilities.

22.3. Commission approved meetings procedures shall apply to the Committee.
23. Attendance at Meetings

23.1. The Committee may invite Other Persons to attend meetings on an ad hoc basis to provide specialist advice.

23.2. The Commission may overturn such arrangements or appointments.

24. Executive Officer

24.1. The Executive Officer will be provided by CEC and will be responsible for keeping Committee minutes and for managing Committee administrative arrangements.

24.2. The Executive Officer will be responsible for research and writing tasks as directed, including media and parliamentary monitoring of relevant issues.

24.3. The Executive Officer shall formulate the Committee meeting agenda, in conjunction with the Chairperson.

24.4. The Executive Officer shall ensure that agenda material is circulated, at least one week before the meeting.

25. Conflict of Interest

25.1. Before appointment, proposed Committee Members must confirm to the Commission Chairman that they do not have a conflict of interest in accepting the role.

25.2. Where members or observers at Committee meetings are deemed to have a real or perceived conflict of interest, they may be excused from Committee deliberations on the issue where a conflict of interest exists. This is a decision for the Chairperson and the situation will be minuted.

25.3. These arrangements also apply to co-opted Committee members.

26. Induction

26.1. The Executive Officer shall ensure that new Committee members receive relevant information and briefings on their appointment to assist them to meet their Committee responsibilities.

27. Assessment Arrangements

27.1. The Chairperson of the Committee, in consultation with the Chairman of the Commission, will initiate a self assessment of the performance of the Committee at least once every two years.

28. Review of Mandate

28.1. The Committee shall review the continuing relevance of the Committee’s Terms of Reference on an annual basis or otherwise as required. Where changes are deemed necessary, they will be submitted to the Commission for approval.