



Terms Of Reference Darwin City Council Youth Advisory Group



PURPOSE (Why have the Youth Advisory Group)

The Youth Advisory Group (YAG) is a group of young people, the Council Youth Officer, an elected member of Council and two youth workers who get together to discuss and plan around issues and needs affecting young people. YAG is an official advisory committee which keeps Council informed on issues that are significant and important to young people in the city of Darwin. YAG also assists Council in making sure that both the services and the way Council goes about its business are as youth friendly and as fair as possible, so that **all** young residents of Darwin can be equally included and are able to participate in their community.

The overall aim of YAG is to give young people and youth service workers a say in voicing their concerns on matters and issues that are important to them and are related to Council. In order to do this it needs to have a wide cross section of the youth community. The YAG will also aim at helping the young people involve, develop leadership, communication, teamwork and public speaking skills.

OBJECTIVES (What we aim to achieve)

- To build up the group's knowledge of real issues that affect young people in Darwin so that advice can be given to Council on how to tackle these issues.
- To work with Council to help find ways of making Darwin City Council and its facilities as youth friendly as possible so that young people are comfortable in accessing them.
- To help Council make the Youth Strategy come to life and to check on its progress annually.
- To provide a tool for genuine and regular talks between young people and Council.
- To gain a good understanding of the responsibilities of Darwin City Council and its many roles and also to be actively involved in Council's decision making processes when appropriate.
- To report the information and recommendations of each meeting to Council.
- To help the local community better understand and be informed about youth issues, the work of the Youth Advisory Group and its progress, through education and feedback. Part of this information sharing will include consulting with young people using as many ways as possible, like, public meetings, forums, networks and the youth newspaper.
- To provide an opportunity for young people to build on and expand their skills in leadership, communication, public speaking, solving problems, teamwork and civic affairs.

MEMBERSHIP (WHO CAN BE INVOLVED?)

- Darwin City Council selects an Alderman each year to regularly attend the meetings. The Council's Youth Services Project Officer also goes along and is responsible for bringing the group together, making sure the group has what it needs to do its business and helps keep

the group on track. The Project Officer is also responsible for the secretariat functions of the group (like typing minutes, preparing agendas...)

- Young people will be made aware of nominations for membership through public advertisements in the newspapers, posters, flyers and letters sent to interested young people, schools, youth services and libraries.
- The Advisory Group shall be made up of a maximum of 15 young people. There are also two places reserved for members of DARWWYN. (A network of Darwin & Rural Workers With Youth Network). The DARWWYN members are included to make sure that young people from different backgrounds are represented and so that professional youth workers are involved.
- Each period or term of YAG membership is for one year, beginning in March and finishing in February the following year. All members must be appointed by Council, in accordance with the Local Government Act (S.63).
- Each February, retiring members can reapply for membership to YAG, but may not serve more than three terms in a row.
- At times, members may leave YAG before completing their year's term. Replacement members can be appointed by Council when this is needed.
- For those members who have reached the age of 21 during the year, they may still remain a member for the current term, but must retire at the end of the term.

CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP (What the group needs to be made up of)

- Members of YAG need to be between the ages of 12 and 20 years of age as of March 1st each year. Members must either live, attend school or work within the Darwin municipality.
- Membership will be organised so that there is equal and fair representation of young people from across the age range and the various cultural groups within Darwin.
- Young people whose life experience and knowledge will make the group rich in understanding youth issues from lots of different angles will be actively encouraged to apply to become a member.

MEETINGS

- At its first meeting, each new Advisory Group will recommend to Council one of its members to take on the role of Chairperson.
- The Youth Advisory Group shall meet at minimum once per month.
- In accordance with the Local Government Act, the Chairperson may request extra meetings at any time. These meetings will be held at times worked out by the Youth Advisory Group.
- Smaller groups or sub-committees will be formed as needed. Members of sub committees can come from youth forums and other interested people so that a broad representation of the community is included. The Sub-committees will report to the Youth Advisory Group.
- Written records (minutes) of all meetings shall be reported to Council for information and also for the Committee to make particular recommendations that require a formal Council decision.