

# Terms of Reference

## City of Darwin Youth Advisory Committee

### **Purpose ... why have a Youth Advisory Committee?**

The Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) consists of a group of young people, the Council's Youth Services Team and an elected member of Council who meet to discuss and plan around issues affecting young people. YAC is an official advisory committee which keeps Council informed on issues that are significant and important to young people in the city of Darwin. YAC also assists Council in making sure that both the services and the way Council goes about its business are youth friendly so that all young residents of Darwin can be equally included and are able to participate in their community.

The overall aim of YAC is to give young people a say in voicing their concerns on matters and issues that are important to them and are related to Council. YAC also assists young people involved to develop leadership, communication, teamwork and public speaking skills.

### **Objectives ... what we aim to achieve**

- To build the group's knowledge of issues that affect young people in Darwin so that advice can be given to Council on how to manage these issues.
- To work with Council to help find ways of making City of Darwin and its facilities youth friendly so that young people are comfortable in accessing them.
- To assist Council to action the objectives of the Youth Strategy.
- To provide an avenue for genuine communication between young people and Council.
- To gain an understanding of the responsibilities of City of Darwin and its many roles and to be actively involved in Council's decision making processes when appropriate.
- To report the minutes 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 Committee and its progress, through education and feedback.
- 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?**

- Each year one elected members is selected to attend YAC. An 'alternate', is also chosen to attend in their place when unavailable . The Council's Youth Engagement Coordinator also attends and is responsible for organising and facilitating the meetings. The Officer is also responsible for the secretariat functions of the group.
- Young people will be made aware of nominations for membership through a variety of methods including but not limited to posts on social media and relevant online spaces, public advertisements, posters, flyers and letters/emails sent to interested young people, schools, youth services and libraries.
- The Advisory Committee shall be made up of a maximum of 15 young people.
- Each term of YAC membership is for two years. All members must be appointed by Council, in accordance with the Local Government Act (S.54).
- At the end of their term, retiring members can reapply for membership to YAC, but may not serve more than three terms in a row.
- At times, members may leave YAC before completing their term.
- New members can apply at any time.
- For those members who have reached the age of 25 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 membership is made up of**

- Members of YAC need to be between the ages of 12 and 25 years of age as of 1 March 1<sup>st</sup> each year. Members must either live, study 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 different perspectives will be actively encouraged to apply to become a member.

## **Meetings**

- YAC has a rotating Chairperson.
- The Youth Advisory Committee will meet once per month from February to November each year.
- In accordance with the Local Government Act, the Chairperson may request extra meetings at any time. These meetings will be held at times advised by the Youth Advisory Committee.
- 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 Committee.
- Written records (minutes) of all meetings shall be reported to Council for their information and for particular recommendations that require a formal Council decision.
- Members who miss three or more meetings in a row will be retired from YAC.
- No more than once per year members may take leave from YAC for up to three months provided they give 10 days' notice.