

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 affects 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?

- City of Darwin selects an Alderman each year to regularly attend the meetings. The Council's Youth Services Officer also attends and is responsible for organizing 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 public advertisements in the newspapers, posters, flyers and letters sent to interested young people, schools, youth services and libraries.
- The Advisory Committee 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 term of YAC membership is for three years. All members must be appointed by Council, in accordance with the Local Government Act (S.54).
- Each February, 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. Council can appoint replacement members 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 membership is made up of

- Members of YAC need to be between the ages of 12 and 25 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 different perspectives will be actively encouraged to apply to become a member.

Meetings

- At its first meeting, each new Advisory Committee will recommend to Council one of its members to take on the role of Chairperson.
- The Youth Advisory Committee 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 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.