

YARRA YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

July 2016



1. BACKGROUND

The Yarra Youth Advisory Committee (YYAC) was established in 2012 as an advisory committee to Yarra City Council to provide strategic and specialist advice regarding current and emerging issues for young people, and the planning and delivery of youth programs and services in Yarra. It comprises Councilors, council officers, and young people. Until 2016, it also included key youth service representatives, but was changed following a decision of the former committee (in June 2016).

2. PURPOSE

The Committee provides a formal mechanism for Council to consult with and seek strategic advice from young people in matters affecting them, and to provide an opportunity for genuine youth participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the City of Yarra's youth programs and services.

The YYAC is also a crucial element in achieving the goal of the *Yarra Youth Policy 2013 – 2016* that “all young people are happy, safe, healthy and engaged citizens [who are] heard and have equal opportunities and the freedom to lead and contribute to their communities”. Specifically, Goal 3 of the *Yarra Youth Policy 2013 – 2016* states that: “young people are heard, their rights are respected, and they are included in their communities”, with an action (3.1) to “ensure that the rights of the child and young people informs council policies, and future service planning and delivery”. Increased participation of young people on the YYAC will help ensure greater youth voice and informed input to Council.

The key role of the committee is to:

- a) Provide specialist advice on the implementation and evaluation of the *Yarra Youth Policy 2013 – 2016*, and the development of the next youth plan;
- b) Provide comment and strategic input on relevant Council policies and strategies as required, not just limited to “youth issues”;
- c) Provide strategic advice to Council on current issues and emerging trends for young people and implications for the service sector in Yarra;
- d) Share information and experience on local services and programs for young people in Yarra; and
- e) Enhance the personal development, leadership skills and opportunities for young people

Young people will also be encouraged to represent on other Council committees and local reference groups (e.g. Yarra Multicultural Advisory Group, 433 Smith Street Community Reference Group), and to develop council and budget submissions as appropriate.

3. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The committee has a core membership that consists of:

- a) Two Councilors (co-Chairs);
- b) A maximum of 15 youth representatives, selected through a public EOI process, comprising a diverse mix of young people with respect to age, gender, cultural background and location within the municipality; and
- c) Relevant council officers, including the Manager, Family, Youth & Children's Services and Coordinator, Youth and Middle Years.

Youth service providers will be regularly offered the opportunity to present to the YYAC on an as-needs basis, at the request of the committee.

4. TERM OF OFFICE

Committee members are selected through an expression of interest process, and must either live, work or study in the City of Yarra.

The term of office for members will be for two years. When vacancies arise, new members will be invited to apply. Potential members must make a written application.

Membership will be ratified by the Chief Executive Officer.

Councilor representatives are appointed by Council on an annual basis.

In the event of a member/s resigning during their term, the vacant position/s will be advertised through an expression of interest process and a replacement/s appointed in accordance with the procedures for appointing new members, ratified by the Chief Executive Officer.

5. CO-OPTED MEMBERS

The committee may invite sector representatives and/or young people to attend a meeting in an advisory capacity, for a specified purpose and for a specified period of time.

Youth and Middle Years staff may attend meetings at the discretion of the Coordinator, Youth and Middle Years or at the request of YYAC members.

6. MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to fulfill the requirements of the committee members are required to:

- a) Have experience and understanding of the youth programs and services in Yarra;
- b) Keep informed of current issues and emerging themes in relation to young people;
- c) Be aware of the activities, interests and concerns of youth services, community agencies and groups in the municipality;
- d) Be conversant with relevant Council plans, policies and strategies relating to young people, particularly the *Yarra Youth Policy 2013 – 2016*; and
- e) Prepare for and participate in regular committee meetings.

7. REPORTING PROCEDURES

The Yarra Youth Advisory Committee is not a formal standing Committee of Council, but rather a committee that is established by Council. Reports and recommendations made by such a committee must seek Council approval at scheduled Council meetings before being fully endorsed and acted upon.

8. MANAGEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

- a) *The Chairperson*: The Chairperson shall be appointed by the City of Yarra;
- b) *Meetings*: Meetings will be held bi-monthly at a time agreed upon by the Committee;
- c) *Venue*: Meetings will be held at council venues across the City of Yarra;
- d) *Committee Support*: The Yarra Youth Advisory Committee will be resourced by the Coordinator, Youth and Middle Years who will be responsible for meeting agendas, minutes, reports and other administrative functions.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- a) Definition:

A Committee member is considered to have a conflict of interest if the member:

- i) has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the matter; or
- ii) is of the opinion that their interest in the matter may conflict with their proper performance of duties in respect to the matter.

- b) Disclosure:

If a member has a conflict of interest with a matter that is to be, or is likely to be, discussed at a Committee meeting, the member must:

- i) disclose the nature of the conflict of interest immediately before the discussion; or
- ii) if not intending to be present at the meeting, disclose the nature of the conflict of interest to the Coordinator, Youth and Middle Years before the meeting is held.

While any discussion or vote is taken relating to the matter, the member must:

- i) leave the room and notify the Chairperson that they are doing so; and
- ii) remain outside the room or other area in view or hearing of the room.

After the discussion, the Chairperson must notify the member that they may return to the room.

The declaration and nature of the conflict of interest must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

10. PUBLIC STATEMENTS

Ordinary members of the Committee cannot make public statements on behalf of Council as an independent group without prior approval of the Coordinator, Youth and Middle Years.

11. REVIEW

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years.