

# Northern Beaches Youth Advisory Group

## Terms of Reference

### 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Northern Beaches Youth Advisory Group (YAG) is for young people to have an opportunity to participate, engage and be heard in their local community by actively participating in decisions that affect them.

### 2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Youth Advisory Group are to:

- Represent the voice of young people in the Northern Beaches Local Government Area
- Enhance opportunities for young people to become pro-active through the preparation of community-based initiatives
- Improved avenues for young people to develop skills in teamwork, peer consultation, organisational development, media and communications, marketing and events management and provide a pathway into volunteering in the wider community
- Being empowered and educated to run their own community activities and programs
- Increased opportunities for advocacy and promotion of challenges confronting young people through developing community involvement
- Enhanced sense of community pride, encouraging the acceptance of young people regardless of their identity, social economic standing, intellectual or physical ability
- Improved participation of young people in local government decision making processes through improved relationships and collaboration

### 3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership is through invitation after completion of a Youth Advisory Group Application Form, which will be assessed under set criteria.

Membership shall aim to include a broad range of young people from a range of ages, genders, cultural backgrounds and locations in the LGA with a maximum of 30 youth representatives – 5 from each ward and 5 nominated by the Youth Interagency.

Membership will seek to reflect the broad interests of young people in the region and to draw membership from a broad geographic area across the LGA.

Members will objectively consider and actively participate in group deliberations by:

- attending all meetings and facilitated workshops scheduled for the YAG
- make a positive contribution on behalf of the community and actively engage members of the community about YAG deliberations, and
- participate as youth representatives in other workshops that may be attended by the broader community

### 4. ELIGIBILITY

The YAG is open to young people aged between 12 to 21 years old who live, work, or study in the Northern Beaches LGA.

The following eligibility criteria also apply:

- Applicants have an interest and passion around issues for young people in the Northern Beaches community
- Applicants have the willingness to work in a team and participate in group discussions as well as working independently

- Applicants demonstrate the ability to listen to others in the group, be respectful of others opinions and be open to others ideas
- Applicants have a passion for planning and facilitating youth events and programs
- Applicants have an ability to represent a broad range of views that reflect the diversity of the community
- Applicants possess the ability and willingness to encourage participation from, and provide feedback to the community regarding, young people and provide a positive image to the wider community
- Applicants have the capacity and motivation to commit to the Youth Advisory Group for the required duration

## **5. SELECTION PROCESS**

The selection of the membership will involve calling for applications. Public advertisements will be placed as well as nominations from local youth service providers and schools.

Applications will be assessed against the eligibility criteria. If no suitable representatives can be found from the original application process, vacancies would be filled via a further call out. Should a vacancy occur during the terms of appointment, a new representative will be selected from eligible applications received from the original application process, or a new application process.

## **6. TERM OF OFFICE**

- Appointed group members will participate for a period of one (1) year, aligning with the Financial Year (July to June).
- Membership will cease on turning 22 years of age
- Once appointed, members will actively participate and commit to attending meetings unless prior notification has been made to the YAG convenor (excluding emergencies)
- Members of the YAG are able to take a leave of absence if agreed to by the other members of the group at a meeting. A maximum of 3 months leave of absence is permitted
- Membership will be established annually in July through a call out for members. Existing members are welcome to re-apply annually however cannot serve more than two consecutive terms. This rule comes into effect commencing July 2021 and will not affect previous YAG members wanting to reapply

## **7. SUPPORT PROVIDED**

Council will provide necessary resources and training available to the group. This will include the venue and administrative support such as facilitating and running the meeting, preparation and distribution of the notice of meeting, agenda and the recording of the minutes.

Council's Youth Development Team is responsible for managing the YAG and will be the main point of contact for members on group related matters. The Youth Development Team will provide support, guidance and training to the members.

The group will be provided with accurate information in a timely manner and reasonable time to make decisions as well as opportunities for volunteering at events and activities

planned by the group.

Membership is voluntary but members may be reimbursed for expenses or sponsored to attend workshops and training.

## **8. TIMETABLE FOR MEETINGS**

- The Group is to meet a minimum of ten (10) times per annum, at approximate one month intervals. Members may elect to meet more often than this
- A meeting will be limited to a maximum of two hours duration unless the Group resolves to extend the meeting to a particular time or until the completion of business
- The schedule of meeting dates and venues will be decided by the members once appointed
- As well as the face to face monthly meetings, members are encouraged to maintain regular communication through email and social media
- Working groups around specific topics/events will be held throughout the year. These groups may occur via face to face, email and web based discussion. Participation in these focus groups is in a voluntary capacity

## **9. ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

- Members are expected to attend all meetings where possible, or otherwise send their apologies in advance to the Youth Development Officer
- No member should be absent for more than two consecutive meetings (including online meetings) unless prior notification has been made (excluding emergencies)

## **10. MEETING PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES**

These are to be established at the first YAG meeting, empowering the group by allowing them to set the style of meeting practice.

## **11. MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUP**

- Members shall act in a professional and responsible manner with the information they obtain
- Members must respect each other (despite differences) and work together to create an open and trusting atmosphere. The group requires openness and honesty in order to function well and members should feel free to express their opinions and views without fear of recrimination
- A breach of the Terms of Reference may lead to the member being removed from the Group by the Youth Development Officer
- Conflicts of Interest: Council recognises that community representatives join such Groups because of special interests they may have, and Council welcomes their expertise. Nevertheless, it is important that Council understands the basis of advice it receives from the Group, so members will be requested to declare any organisation they may represent. Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest, particularly pecuniary interests need to be made by members of the Group and recorded in the minutes in accordance with section 442 and 443 Local Government Act 1993
- Confidentiality and Privacy: Members may have contact with confidential or personal information retained by Council. If so, members are required to maintain the security of

any confidential or personal information and not access, use or remove any information, unless the member is authorised to do so

## **12. COUNCIL VALUES**

All members of the Group and all meeting attendees are expected to observe Northern Beaches Council Values outlined below:

- Trust: Because being open brings out our best.
- Integrity: Because we are proud of doing what we say.
- Teamwork: Because working together delivers.
- Service: Because we care as custodians for the community.
- Respect: Because valuing everyone is how we make a difference.
- Leadership: Because everyone has a leading role.