

Youth Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Council's Youth Advisory Group (YAG and 'the Group') is to be a strategic representative voice of young people (12-24 years) in the Northern Beaches Local Government Area on matters important to them and to improve participation of young people in local government planning and processes as well as broader community life.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Group are to:

1. Represent the voices of young people (12-24 years) in the Northern Beaches Local Government Area on important matters for young people.
2. Identify and implement actions to improve the participation of young people and advocacy in local government planning and processes.
3. Empower young people through leadership, training and development opportunities.
4. Contribute to identified actions in Council's Youth Voice Action Plan 2028 and other projects identified by the Group.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership includes a diverse range of young people aged 12-24 with a maximum of 30 youth representatives including 5 young people from each Council Ward and up to 5 young people nominated by the Northern Beaches Youth Interagency.

Membership will seek to reflect the broad interests of young people across the LGA.

Membership is confirmed after an open Expressions of Interest (EOI) that is assessed against set criteria as stated in an Application Form.

4. ELIGIBILITY

The Group is open to young people aged between 12 to 24 years old who live, work, or study in the Northern Beaches LGA.

The following eligibility criteria also apply:

- Be able to support the above stated objectives of the Group, including actively seeking views from a diverse range of young people to feedback to the Group and Council.
- Be able to work in a team, participate in group discussions including listening and being respectful of other people's opinions and ideas.
- Be able to represent a broad range of views that reflect the diversity of the community.
- Have the capacity and motivation to commit to the Group for the required duration.
- Cannot be an elected representative or permanent staff member of Council.

5. TERM OF OFFICE

Appointed group members will participate for a period of two (2) years, aligning with the Calendar Year (January to December). Membership will be established every two years, prior to commencing in January.

Members will meet a minimum of 10 times per annum (February to November) with the schedule of meeting dates and venues will be decided by the members once appointed. A meeting will be limited to a maximum of two hours unless the Group resolves to extend the meeting to a particular time.

Once appointed, members will actively participate and attend meetings unless prior notification has been made to the YAG convenor (excluding emergencies).

No member should be absent for more than two consecutive meetings (including online meetings) unless prior notification has been made (excluding emergencies). Extended absences and apologies may result in removal from the Group.

Members can withdraw from the Group at any time. Should a vacancy occur, a new representative may be selected from eligible applications received from the original application process.

Membership is up to a maximum of two terms.

6. TRAINING & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Training opportunities will be identified by the Group over the first few meetings of the new term. Training often relates to leadership, communication, teamwork, entrepreneurship and appreciative inquiry.

The purpose of the training is not only to upskill members but to provide a platform for other young people to develop relevant knowledge and skills in identified areas of priority, and in areas that assist in addressing actions in Council's Youth Voice Action Plan 2028.

The Group supports several senior leadership pathways for members, typically for those entering their second term or for those aged 21 to 24 to further develop their leadership skills and take on greater responsibilities on the Youth Advisory Group.

Key roles and responsibilities on the Group include Chair and Minute taking for meetings and subgroups, communications, social media, education, and training. These leadership pathways may also include the opportunity to progress to other casual or trainee opportunities within Council.

7. MEETING PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Council's Community Development team will coordinate the Group by providing the venue, communications and administrative support including facilitating meetings, assistance in decision making, and preparation and distribution of the Agenda and recording of Minutes.

Members are expected to attend all meetings where possible, or otherwise send their apologies in advance to the Council Community Development Officer.

The Group may establish sub-working groups towards identified projects, which may include several additional online or in-person meetings.

Decisions will be made by consensus of Group members. Where consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be progressed by democratic voting and involvement of Council staff to assist. Councillors, Council staff, and other guests may attend meetings, act as observers, however, they cannot participate in any voting rights.

The quorum for each meeting will be one more than half the number of current active members. If quorum is not present within 30 minutes of the commencement of the meeting, it will become an informal meeting with no recommendations or decisions made.

8. CODE OF CONDUCT

Members shall act in a professional and responsible manner. Members are encouraged to maintain regular communication through email and social media with other members and their peers.

Members must respect each other, despite differences, and work together to create an open and trusting atmosphere, noting members should feel free to express their opinions and views without fear of recrimination.

Members cannot use membership for political purposes, or communicate with the media in any form, implying to represent the Council or Council’s Youth Advisory Group in any way, unless first approved in writing by Council officers.

A breach of the Terms of Reference may lead to members being removed from the Group.

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 (What is a pecuniary interest?), and 443 (Who has a pecuniary interest?), Local Government Act 1993.

Confidentiality and Privacy: Members may have contact with confidential or personal information retained by Council. Council staff will advise members when something is confidential. 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.

9. 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.

10. NEXT REVIEW DATE

June 2025