



LOCKYER VALLEY REGIONAL  
**YOUTH**  
COUNCIL

**Youth  
COUNCILLOR'S  
HANDBOOK**

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## Terms of Reference

### Purpose

The council is designed to enhance and improve existing communication channels within the Lockyer Valley and to open communication between parties that have previously had little or no contact.

### General Role

The general role of Lockyer Valley Regional Youth Council (LVRYP) is:

- To act as a bridge between the Youth of the Region and the Lockyer Valley Regional Council;
- To advise the council of matters affecting young people and to put forward ideas and suggestions that are considered to benefit all residents of the region, especially youth; and
- To promote community spirit and a sense of belonging amongst young people in an effort to deter alienation.

### Aims

The LVRYP aims:

- To encourage the youth of the Lockyer Valley Region to take an active interest in the affairs of the region;
- To provide a forum for the voicing of the opinions and views of the youth of the region; and
- To provide youth with an understanding of the functions of local government.

### Mission Statement

The Lockyer Valley Regional Youth Council will provide a youth-driven forum for the purpose of suggesting ideas, voicing issues and concerns, and promoting community spirit and sense of belonging for all young people of our region. In addition, the LVRYP exists to secure a link between the youth and the Lockyer Valley Regional Council. The Youth Council is a team of young people who represent youth, communicate and liaise with the community and organise projects and events in order to improve the status of all young people and provide them with greater opportunities.

## Reporting

The outcomes reached as a result of Youth Council meetings and events will be reported at the end of each month by the councillors to the following parties:

- The LVRC Youth Development Officer;
- The Councillor for Youth and Community Engagement

Recommendations and submissions to the LVRC and other levels of government will be received by the Youth Development Officer, who will then send copies to the relevant parties.

## Term of Office

The term of office for a Youth Councillor in the Lockyer Valley Regional Youth Council will be one (1) year. This will follow the financial year and occur from 1 July to 30 June.

## Membership

The Lockyer Valley Regional Youth Council will comprise:

- Fifteen (15) general voting members;
- One (1) Councillor from the Lockyer Valley Regional Council as a non-voting member; and
- The Youth Development Officer as a non-voting member.

## Conditions of Membership

Members must be mindful of their actions within the community and uphold the positive image and reputation of the Lockyer Valley Regional Youth Council.

Membership is for one (1) year unless:

- Resignation is given by the member in writing to the Chairperson;
- Cancelled by failure to attend three (3) consecutive meetings with no justified apology; or
- Cancelled by the Lockyer Valley Regional Council if a member fails to meet the conditions of membership.

## Office Bearers

The executive positions of the LVRYP will include:

- Chairperson
- Vice - Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer

The Chairperson will be elected by the committee at the beginning of each new term to serve for one (1) year, with a thirty (30) day probationary period. This means that if the conditions of membership are not met within that time by the Chairperson he/she will be asked to resign from the position. This period of probation also allows the Chairperson to hand the role to the Vice- Chairperson if he/she feels they will be unable to fulfil the role effectively.

The twelve (12) Youth Councillors who do not take on executive roles will be put into pairs. Each pair will be Chairperson and Secretary of one of six (6) Sub-committees. The members of each committee will be applicants of to the LVRYP who did not receive councillor positions. All of the leadership roles will be nominated for and voted on at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Nomination forms will be given to those interested three (3) days prior to the AGM.

## Meetings

The LVRYP will meet once each month on dates and at times decided by the Youth Council at the Annual General Meeting and at subsequent meetings. Meetings are open to the public and young people will be encouraged to attend. A quorum will comprise 12 (12) members and must include the Chairperson. Sub-committee meetings will be called as required and at the discretion of the members of that sub-committee. The Secretary must be informed of the occurrence of the meetings and the outcomes achieved as a result of the meeting. Meetings will take place at a location voted on by members. Meeting procedures and other relevant information will be explained by Council Officers at an orientation session given at the beginning of each term.

## Minutes

Minutes of all LVRYP meetings will be kept by the secretary and reported to the LVRC at the end of each month. The minutes will be an accurate account of all items addressed & moved in each LVRYP meeting. The minutes will also accurately document the number of people and names of those people in attendance at each meeting.

## **Media**

Members are expected to direct all media coverage through the Chairperson. If individual members are asked for an interview or media release concerning the activities of the Youth Council, permission must be sought by the Chairperson and the Lockyer Valley Regional Council Public Relations Manager. All LVRVC media releases and requests for interviews will be processed through the LVRC Public Relations Manager.

## **Insurance**

Personal Accident Insurance, where commercially available, will be provided by the Lockyer Valley Regional Council to all declared members of the Lockyer Valley Regional Youth Council.

## **Support Services**

Secretarial and budgetary support, including assistance in the preparation of Agendas and Minutes, will be provided by the LVRVC mentors. Formation of the LVRVC will be initiated, supervised and monitored by Lockyer Valley Regional Council. Youth Councillors will be inducted for their one (1) year term of office by Lockyer Valley Regional Council. Cancellation of membership can only be made by Lockyer Valley Regional Council.

## **Application Process**

Application forms will be made available on the first business day of May each year. These will be available from Lockyer Valley Regional Council, the Gatton and Laidley Community Centres, and will be distributed throughout high schools and primary schools. Applicants will be sought from schools, organisations which have contact with youth and from the general community. Applicants must provide the names of two (2) references. If a resignation or cancellation of membership occurs the position will be filled by a suitable candidate from a standby list.

## Application Criteria

To be eligible for membership in Lockyer Valley Regional Youth Council an applicant must:

- Be turning 12 – 21 years old;
- Living in the Lockyer Valley Region;
- Have a good personal record and reputation;
- Have a keen interest in community issues and youth issues; and
- Provide two (2) references.

Membership is encouraged regardless of gender, race, religion or socio-economic background.

## Application Information

The following information must be provided on the application form:

- Name;
- Date of birth;
- Address;
- Telephone number;
- Personal history and background (summarised);
- Interests and hobbies;
- Answers to three (3) application questions concerning youth issues; and
- The names and contact details of two (2) references.

## Selection process

The selection process will adhere to the following steps:

- Applications will be considered by a panel comprising the Youth Member for Lockyer, the LVRC Youth Development Officer and the LVRC Councillor for Youth and Community Engagement;
- A short list of twenty (20) applicants will be interviewed by the panel;
- Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified; and
- Suitable unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a standby list.

This process will be strictly adhered to and will occur in the time from the first day of May to the tenth day of June. Final dates will be decided by the panel at the beginning of April and advertised each year.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Youth Councillors

Within a meeting as a Youth Councillor you will be expected to:

- Read the minutes of the last meeting to ensure that they are correct and raise any issues or ask any questions concerning the minutes that you feel are important;
- Attend all meetings or apologise prior to the meeting if you cannot attend. Do this by notifying the secretary as soon as you know you will be unable to attend;
- Arrive on time. This ensures that the meeting can start and finish when expected and ensures that you do not miss any important information. If you cannot arrive on time on a specific occasion, let the secretary know prior to the meeting;
- Bring your copy of the minutes of the last meeting and any notes you made. Copies of the minutes will be emailed to you by the secretary no more than two (2) days after the meeting;
- You will be given a folder for all your notes. Please bring it to every meeting and look after it;
- Take your own notes at the meeting so that you remember what was discussed;
- Speak up and ask question. Do not be scared;
- Be aware of the rules and procedure of the meeting. If you do not understand ask for it to be explained;
- Listen carefully to others. Do not interrupt them, but do ask questions so that you understand their point of view;
- Be respectful. Do not whisper or talk to others while another Youth Councillor is voicing their opinion;
- Speak your own mind freely. If your ideas are debated. Listen to the suggestions and consider whether or not it makes sense. Further explain your idea if you feel that others are not understanding the concept;
- When debating another person's ideas, be constructive. Tell them the benefits you can see in their idea before expressing your suggestions;
- Do not monopolise the discussion. Keep your contributions short and encourage others to comment;
- Be aware of where you sit. Try to sit in a different place or next to a different person at each meeting. This ensures that all Youth Councillors are communicating and befriending one another. Sit where you can see and hear easily;
- Help other's develop their ideas;

- 🌐 Help the Chairperson and secretary by politely pointing out anything they may have missed;
- 🌐 Continue the flow of the conversation. Do not change the subject during the meeting. If a conflict arises as a result of the discussion of a certain topic, it is better to negotiate the conflict and talk through it rather than avoid it by changing the subject. Please keep this in mind during all meetings.

## Roles of the Youth councillors

### Chairperson

The Chairperson is the person who runs the meeting and has the responsibility of helping the meeting to move along and ensure that everything on the agenda is discussed.

Prior to the meeting the chairperson is responsible for:

- 🌐 Appropriate spacing and seating;
- 🌐 Making sure there are no interruptions;
- 🌐 Ensuring that all Youth Councillors were given adequate notice of the meeting Time and date;
- 🌐 Preparing the agenda by –
  1. going through the minutes of the last meeting;
  2. reading the correspondence and reports;
  3. allocating time to each item; and
  4. carefully choosing the order of items;
- 🌐 Ensuring that he/she has the background information on each item/issue;
- 🌐 Prepare people who are to report;
- 🌐 Photocopy any handouts; and
- 🌐 Organise minutes, etc.

At the meeting the chairperson:

- 🌐 Chairs and leads the meeting;
- 🌐 Encourages everyone to participate;
- 🌐 Keeps the discussion to the point;
- 🌐 Keeps track of time;
- 🌐 Clarifies and summarises and decisions made by the meeting; and
- 🌐 Looks and listens.

## Advice for the Chairperson:

- Give people time to settle down at the beginning of the meeting and introduce new people.
- Read through the agenda. Make sure each item is understood. Agree on necessary changes.
- Check the time and keep an eye on it through the meeting.
- As each item on the agenda is brought up for discussion:
  1. check if a particular person is presenting the item;
  2. clarify the item, if necessary, so that everyone understands;
  3. give everyone a chance to voice their thoughts;
  4. if it seems there is general agreement, summarise the decision and ask for a response as silence does not always mean agreement;
  5. if there is not general agreement, ask for those who disagree to explain their view. the meeting could then:
    - have a break so everyone can think;
    - change the proposal;
    - put forward a new solution;
    - postpone the decision and have opposing views work on a compromise;
    - take a majority vote.
- If tasks are to be delegated, ensure that people are certain about taking them on and that they are clear about what they are being asked to do.
- Make sure that everyone is clear on the time, date and place for the next meeting;
- The chairperson is also responsible for speaking on behalf of the group to other organisations and groups. Therefore, the chairperson needs to be aware of all the issues that the Youth Council has responsibility for.

## Secretary

The secretary is responsible for:

- Letters being sent and received;
- Reporting on correspondence at the meeting;
- Taking minutes at the meeting and distributing the minutes after the meeting;
- Assisting the Chairperson in organising the meeting – the venue, agenda, time, notification of councillors and community, etc.

Organising the meeting:

Venue:

Ensure the venue is large enough to accommodate the group. Aim for an easily accessible venue. Book the venue well in advance.

Agenda:

The agenda should be put together in conjunction with the Chairperson and every councillor should have an opportunity to add items to the agenda.

Time:

Ensure that the date and the time of the meeting is suitable for the majority of the council. Discuss this at the end of each meeting.

Notification:

Members should be given adequate notification of the meeting – one or two weeks if possible. If the meetings are regular, everyone should be reminded at the end of the meeting about the time, date and place of the next meeting.

Correspondence:

Letters being sent and received should be recorded and tabled at the meeting for everyone to look at. Time needs to be allocated on the agenda to discuss correspondence.

Minutes:

The Secretary is responsible for taking the minutes. The Secretary should be as neutral as possible and record what is said as accurately as possible.

Advice for the Minutes:

- 🌐 Do not be afraid to ask the group to pause for a moment if it is important that you write down the key points;
- 🌐 Listen for key words and phrases;
- 🌐 Do not write down every word. Try to capture the basic idea;
- 🌐 Abbreviate and use initials to save time;
- 🌐 Circle key ideas, statements and/or decisions;
- 🌐 Underline important points, use stars, arrows and numbers and number the pages.

## **Treasurer**

The Treasurer is required to keep a record of all money being received and spent by the Youth Council. The Treasurer will give a report at each meeting as to the financial status of the Youth Council. Mentors will be available to give the Treasurer advice on the accounting process. The Treasurer should be a person who is good with numbers and has a basic understanding of accounting books and tables.

The Treasurer is responsible for all finance matters relating to the function of the Youth Council.

Reports should include:

- Income and expenditure
- Balance
- Budgeting
- Accounts for payment

## **Youth Councillors**

Each Youth Councillor has the responsibility of being an active and supportive participant and to be prepared for each meeting and event they participate in.

## **Special Guests and Observers**

The Youth Council can invite a special guest to speak at each meeting. Observers of the meeting may attend, with the agreement of the Youth Council, but will not be allowed to vote.

## **Mentors**

Mentors will be invited to attend meetings and assist with procedural concerns and help with the discussion of issues and concerns. Mentors can also be invited to the sub-committee meetings to help with the running of these. Permanent Mentors are the Youth Member for Lockyer, the LVRC Community & Youth Engagement Officer and the LVRC Councillor for Community & Youth Engagement.

## Meeting Procedures

### *How do I raise an idea?*

If you would like to raise an idea or suggestion you should bring it up in the General Business section of the meeting. The agenda will tell you when General Business is to be discussed. After some free discussion the Youth Council will suggest that a member propose a motion.

### *How do I propose a motion?*

To propose a motion you should raise one hand and wait for the Chairperson to ask you to speak. After the Chairperson has given permission to speak, you should stand and say:

“Mister/Madam Chairperson, I move that ...”

An example would be:

“Madam Chairperson, I move that we hold a Youth Festival during Youth Week to promote youth communication in the Lockyer Valley and to raise money for subsequent Youth Council projects.”

If the motion is important you can write it up beforehand and give copies to all the meeting members. After you have stated the motion and explain why you think it is a good idea, the chairperson will ask, “Does anyone wish to second the motion?” The motion must be seconded before the meeting can talk about it anymore. If no one will second the motion the issue is no longer discussed.

### *Who can second a motion?*

Any Youth Councillor in the meeting can second a motion. You cannot second a motion that you proposed yourself. To second a motion you simply stand and say, “I will Mister/Madam Chairperson” when he or she asks if anyone will second the motion. You can second a motion because you agree with what has been said or if you would like to hear more about topic. Seconding a motion does not mean you must support it when it is discussed or goes to a vote.

### *What happens after a motion has been seconded?*

After a motion has been seconded the Councillor who moved the motion can then speak further on the topic. The person who seconded the motion may then

stand and speak in support of the motion if they wish. Alternatively, the seconder can reserve their right to speak until later. The motion can then be discussed further.

### ***What is the right way to discuss a motion?***

The chairperson can save time by asking the meeting if anyone wishes to speak against the motion. If no one wishes to speak against it, the Chairperson will put the motion to a vote immediately.

However, if there is a Councillor who would like to speak against the motion, they can stand and speak. The Chairperson will then ask for a Councillor to speak in support of the motion. The councillor must stand and tell the meeting new reasons to support the motion that have not previously been discussed. Speakers can then be alternated between those that are for the motion and those that are against it. Each speaker must present new points or challenge the opposition.

### ***Can I withdraw the motion?***

If the mover, seconder and all Councillors agree that the motion should be withdrawn then the motion can be withdrawn. If one person disagrees, and believes that the motion should not be withdrawn, then the motion must be put to a vote.

### ***What if the discussion continues for too long?***

If the discussion is no longer progressive, the Chairperson will say, "I believe there has been sufficient discussion and I will put the motion to a vote." If no consensus can be reached, the matter be deferred to a later date.

### ***What are my rights as the mover of the motion?***

As mover of the motion you have the right to reply to arguments against the motion. You can also be the final speaker on the motion.

### ***How is a motion put to a vote?***

After all discussion the motion is put to a vote. The Chairperson will ask the Secretary to read out the motion. This is to make sure that everyone knows what they are voting for. Any disputes as to how the motion is worded are discussed now.

### ***How do we vote?***

The Chairperson will say, "All those in favour raise one hand." These people will be counted. The Chairperson will then say, "Those against raise one hand." These people are counted. The result will then be announced.

### ***Can the Chairperson Vote?***

The Chairperson can vote and has the casting/deciding vote if there is a tie.

## **Amended motions**

### ***What is an amendment?***

An amendment is a change to the detail of the original motion. It cannot, however, alter the main aim of the original motion. An amendment takes place before the motion goes to the vote. If a proposed amendment changes the main aim of the original motion, the Chairperson will not accept it.

### ***Who can move an amendment?***

Any Youth councillor, except the mover and seconder of the original motion, can move an amendment.

### ***Does an amendment have to be seconded?***

An amendment must be seconded; otherwise the amended motion must no longer be discussed.

### ***How is an amendment discussed?***

An amendment is discussed in the same way that a motion is discussed. Councillors who spoke about the motion may also speak about the amendment. However, the Chairperson must remind them that they are speaking for and against the amendment not the original motion.

### ***Can the mover of the original motion speak?***

The mover of the original motion can speak for or against the amendment. They have the right of reply and will be the final speaker. The mover of the amendment has no right of reply.

### ***Is the amendment put to a vote?***

The amendment is put to the vote and all Councillors will be reminded that they are voting for or against the amendment not the original motion. Voting occurs in the same way as it does for a motion.

## **General Meeting Procedures**

Most Youth Council meetings will follow the same format. Some things will change if there are guest speakers. Before each meeting, the Secretary will send an agenda to all Youth Councillors. The agenda will outline the way in which the meeting will run.

### **EXAMPLE AGENDA**

#### **1. Open the meeting**

The Chairperson will say, "I declare this monthly meeting of the Lockyer Valley Regional Youth Council open at (insert time)."

#### **2. Welcome visitors**

If there are any visitors at the meeting, the Chairperson will introduce them and welcome them to the meeting.

#### **3. Apologies**

The Chairperson will ask if there are any apologies from people who could not come to the meeting. The Chairperson will then ask, "Will someone move that the apologies are accepted?" The Secretary will record in the minutes that the apologies were accepted. The Chairperson will then ask, "Who will second this motion?" It will be recorded in the minutes who seconded the motion.

#### **4. Minutes of the last meeting**

Copies of the minutes from the last meeting will be sent to the Youth Councillors to read before the meeting. The Chairperson will ask the Secretary to read the minutes of the last meeting to the group. The Chairperson will ask if there are any corrections to be made. Changes will then be made. The Chairperson then asks, "Is it the wish of the meeting that I sign these minutes as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting on (add date here)?" The Chairperson then says, "Will someone move that the minutes be accepted?" The Secretary will record, in the minutes, the person who moved that motion. The Chairperson

will then ask, "Who will second this motion?" This person's name will also be recorded in the minutes.

## **5. Business arising from the minutes**

The chairperson will ask the group, "Is there any business arising from the minutes?" Councillors should now ask any questions that they have about the minutes from the last meeting. Questions may include whether or not any progress has been made on a topic talked about at the last meeting. Councillors should bring up topics by raising one hand and waiting for the Chairperson to ask them to speak.

## **6. Correspondence**

The Chairperson asks the Secretary to read out the list of all the letters the Youth Council has sent and received since the last meeting. The Secretary should read out the date on the letter, what the letter is about and who sent it. If a Youth Councillor would like the whole letter read out then he/she should ask the Secretary to do so. The Chairperson then asks the meeting, "Will someone move that the inward and outward correspondence be approved?" The Chairperson will then ask, "Who will second the motion?" The names of the two Councillors are then written down in the minutes.

## **7. Committee Reports**

The Chairperson asks the spokespersons for the various committees to stand and give their reports. The reports should be kept short and to the point. Councillors can then ask questions and make suggestions. After discussion is finished, the Chairperson asks if one Councillor will move that the report be received. The Chairperson then asks if another Councillor will second the motion. Their names are recorded in the minutes.

## **8. General business**

The Chairperson asks if there is any general business to discuss.

## **9. Close the meeting**

The Chairperson will set the date, time and place for the next meeting, close the meeting and record the time. The Chairperson will say, "I declare this meeting of the Lockyer Valley Regional Youth Council closed at (insert time)."