

## **STRUCTURE OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE YARRA DRUG & HEALTH FORUM**

### **Background**

The Yarra Drug & Health Forum (YDHF) has been operating in the City of Yarra since 1996. YDHF was established to provide a voice for those that live, work or are connected to the City of Yarra and engage with them to address the alcohol and other drug issues impacting their lives.

YDHF engages the Yarra community on many levels. Over the past two decades YDHF has welcomed as participants: local residents and traders, representatives of local health and welfare agencies, the City of Yarra, local parliamentary representatives and representatives of government departments.

Most importantly, YDHF has a history of open and honest discussion with an emphasis on accepting the diversity of views presented. It has been responsive to local issues as they have arisen and has undertaken many different activities in order to meet expressed needs. YDHF does not represent nor endorse a particularly agency's point of view, it works in a 'neutral' capacity and promotes rigorous debate on issues.

### **Purpose of YDF Executive Committee**

As a function of YDHF, an Executive Committee (EC) was formed to:

Provide direction, guidance and support for the Executive Officer (EO) to ensure that he or she is working toward the goals of the YDHF membership and is involved in appropriate activities to meet the needs of the Forum, including:

- work with the EO to develop goals and recommend the allocation of tasks
- ensure that all reporting requirements are met, especially to funding bodies
- provide an opportunity for the EO to discuss strategies or concerns
- ensure that the Executive Officer is not working in isolation

The EC members will, when available, and unless there is a conflict of interest:

- represent the YDHF in delegations to government and at other times as required
- regularly attend activities and functions of YDHF including Community Forums and YDHF Monthly Meetings
- respond to local issues in the media if required. If no EC member is available or lack the expertise on that issue they may nominate another person with the best expertise on the particular issue to speak. However that person will not speak on behalf of YDHF.
- as appropriate, non-EC YDHF participants may be co-opted from time to time to take up a position on the EC to fill a temporary vacancy

In addition to the above matters outlined above, the EC will:

- encourage YDHF participants/members to contribute to discussions
- encourage the participation of YDHF members in decision making about the activities of YDHF
- encourage the establishment of subgroups to address specific interest areas/issues

- meet at short notice, if required, to address urgent local issues and respond appropriately.

### **Membership of the Executive Committee**

The EC will have six members, with a quorum of three. The Chairperson of the YDHF and a representative of the Auspice Agency will be standing members. The Chairperson will be elected by the participants of the Forum independently of the election of the other three members of the Executive Committee. The EO will be an ex officio member of the Executive Committee.

Nominations for EC:

- Where a vacancy becomes available on the EC, other than the Chair and the Auspice Agency, the EO, in consultation with the Chair and the Auspice Agency representative, will seek nomination/s for that vacancy from the YDHF membership
- Where there is more than one nomination, the Chair will consult with the Auspice and EO to determine the most suitable applicant, this will include referee checks, interview and other supportive information
- To be suitable for membership of the EC, an individual must have a demonstrated a consistent and active commitment to YDHF including attending YDHF meetings, forums and other events
- Persons nominated to sit on the EC will be required to meet with the Chair, EO and representative of the Auspice Agency to discuss their reasons for wanting to be nominated and determine their suitability
- The Dept Health and Human Services and the City of Yarra as the funding bodies are excluded from membership of the EC
- The EC may co-opt other members to the EC on a short term basis when required for particular activities/actions

### **Decision making processes**

It is not intended that the EC become the sole decision making body of the YDHF. The actions of the EC will rather reflect the decisions made at the YDHF meetings and broader membership. Where possible, the EC will defer decisions and actions to the next YDHF meeting for further consideration and advice.

If it is necessary for the EC to make a decision between YDHF meetings, they may choose to consult YDHF in the most convenient/expeditious method. When the EC acts on an issue between meetings, the issues and the actions will be reported to the YDHF membership at the next meeting.

### **Conflict resolution**

If there is a dispute between members of the EC, they must attempt to resolve the dispute in good faith. If they are unable to resolve the dispute after making reasonable efforts to do so, the dispute must be referred to the Chair.

If the Chair is a party to the dispute, the auspice will support a resolution process which may include mediation.

### **EC Member Resignation**

A member of the EC may resign at any time, however it's encouraged that reasonable notice be given of this decision.

Where either the EC as a group or an individual on the EC believes that they themselves are unable to fulfil their EC responsibilities, the Chair, along with the Auspice and the Executive Officer, will seek to resolve the issue. Where it cannot be resolved the member will be asked to resign.