

# **Darebin Libraries Strategy Reference Group**

## **Terms of Reference**

April 2013

## **Introduction**

Darebin Libraries provides public library services to the City of Darebin at its four branches and via online services through the Darebin Libraries websites located at [www.darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au](http://www.darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au), [www.dhe.darebin-libraries.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhe.darebin-libraries.vic.gov.au), and [www.spongeclub.com.au](http://www.spongeclub.com.au). As one of the City of Darebin's most valued services, Darebin Libraries enjoys a high level of community satisfaction and support.

The library's goal is to deliver responsive, flexible services that cater for all members of the Darebin community, achieved through the provision of quality resources, programs and facilities that meet their diverse recreational, educational and cultural needs. The service aims to instil lifelong learning principles and encourage opportunities for active participation.

Darebin Council supports the delivery of all aspects of the service through the provision of an estimated 80% of the funding required to maintain operations, programs and collections.

The current library strategy *Connecting Community - Darebin Libraries Strategy 2007-2012* was developed within the context of the continuous improvement commitment made within the Best Value review process in 2003. The strategy set out a framework to guide the library service to ensure the service was relevant, accessible, addressed diversity and was focussed on the changing needs of customers. To achieve this, the strategy focused on the three interlinked and interdependent areas of collections, customer service and infrastructure (buildings and ICT).

In the development of a new library strategy Darebin Libraries will build on this approach, considering the changing community requirements and expectations of public libraries and the services and resources they offer and where they will need to be in 2019.

Critical to the strategy delivering an outcome that the community embraces will be community consultation. The consultation process for the strategy will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Framework, with the establishment of a Darebin Libraries Strategy Reference Group that includes Councillor and community representation a key component.

## **Clarification of Title**

While this collective is referred to as a 'Group', its functions will be those of an advisory committee to Council (with a limited life span), without being formed into a legal entity or incorporated as a Council board.

## **Purpose**

### **Mission Statement**

To provide advice on the development of the Darebin Libraries Strategy 2014-2019.

### **Objectives of the Darebin Libraries Strategy Reference Group**

The Darebin Libraries Strategy Reference Group will inform and support the development of the Darebin Libraries Strategy 2014-2019. This will be achieved through the following:

- Inform and assist Council in understanding issues, policies and drivers that impact on library services delivered to City of Darebin residents.

- Provide advice and input on processes during the development stage of the Darebin Libraries Strategy.
- Provide strategic thinking for effective planning.
- Ensure alignment with relevant Council policy including but not limited to: the Darebin Social Inclusion Agenda; the Darebin *Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2009- 2013 and the Equity and Inclusion Policy 2012-2015*.
- Advise Council on the delivery of actions that arise from the strategy.

### **Role and Responsibilities of the Darebin Libraries Strategy Reference Group**

The reference group will inform Council planning, policy and decision making. The Darebin Libraries Strategy and services are the responsibility of the Manager Libraries, Learning and Youth. Recommendations for Council decision will be presented by the Manager Libraries, Learning and Youth and the Group Manager Community Services.

The reference group has no formal Council delegated authority.

Responsibilities of the Group are to:

- Provide effective and timely advice
- Promote consultation and representation of community views on the direction, planning and development of the Darebin Libraries Strategy 2014-2019.
- Provide an additional avenue for dissemination of information relating to the development of the strategy
- Propose and participate in relevant working parties, forums and workshops in relation to the planning and development of the Darebin Libraries Strategy. 2014-2019.

In support of the Reference Group, the Manager Libraries, Learning and Youth will:

- Prepare, source and distribute papers and background information required by Reference Group members prior to any meeting at which they will be discussed.
- Provide professional advice and expertise to Reference Group members.
- Prepare and distribute agendas and papers to Reference Group members and Councillors
- Provide draft minutes promptly after each meeting.
- Brief the reference group as issues arise.
- Disseminate the minutes and recommendations arising from the work of the Reference Group.

### **Recruitment and Membership**

Members will be recruited through an Expressions of Interest (EOI) with communication of the EOI to include advertisement in the local press, Council and Library websites, notices in the libraries and notification to Council's Advisory Committees.

Reference Group Membership will be open to all those who are interested in the future of Darebin Libraries who live, work or study within the City of Darebin.

The Reference Group will consist of:

- Councillor/s (number to be determined by Council). A Councillor will chair the Reference Group.
- Up to ten (10) community members whose appointment will be made based on their responses to the selection criteria. Community representation will be approved by the Group Manager Community Services.

The criteria for selection to the Reference Group will include:

- Interest in and experience and understanding of public library services and issues;
- A commitment to make a positive and constructive contribution to the objectives of the Reference Group and Darebin Libraries;
- A commitment to consider and value a wide cross section of community views;
- Availability for regular meetings, which will be set on a bi-monthly basis.

Council will seek to ensure a balance in terms of gender, age, socio-economic and cultural background and library representation.

Community representatives will be appointed for the duration of the planning and development stages of the library strategy.

### **Meetings**

Meetings will be chaired by a nominated Councillor/s, or in their absence, a senior Darebin City Council officer, or as determined by the group. The Manager Libraries, Learning and Youth will be the convenor and will report to the Reference Group as required. The Manager Libraries, Learning and Youth will attend all meetings of the group or in his/her absence a nominee or delegate. The Reference Group will meet bi monthly and the meetings will be of one to two hours duration.

### **Resourcing**

Darebin Libraries Strategy Reference Group expenses will be covered and administered from the resources of the Libraries, Learning & Youth Unit.

Any support required to enable participation in the Darebin Libraries Strategy Reference Group will be provide by Council. This includes reimbursement of cost for travel, attendant care, respite care, language interpreters (including Auslan) and other reasonable costs.

### **Financial and Conflict of Interest**

The Local Government Act requires 'conflicts of interest' to be disclosed by Councillors attending an 'Assembly of Councillors', and requires the Chief Executive Officer to ensure that a written record is kept of each Assembly of Councillors. The Darebin Libraries Strategy Reference Group is an Advisory Group to Council involving Councillors. This 'Assembly of Councillors' will be recorded and presented to Council.

Darebin Libraries Strategy Reference Group contact details:  
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