

COUNCIL ON THE AGEING POLICY COUNCIL

COTA (Tas) POLICY COUNCIL- a vehicle for older Tasmanians and representatives of older persons organisations and relevant bodies to come together to give voice to older Tasmanians concerns and issues

TERMS OF REFERENCE

December 2009

Council appointment process

- COTA (Tas) Board Executive shall be responsible for implementing the selection process for membership to the Policy Council.
- Policy Council members shall sit on the Council for a maximum of 3 years and not be eligible to stand for election until a further 12 mths.
- Membership to the Policy Council will be determined on skills and attributes deemed necessary by the COTA (Tas) Executive and members will be selected via public advertisement.
- COTA (Tas) will actively seek older Tasmanian to nominate for the Council.

The following principles underpin the development of COTA (Tas) policies:

Principles

- COTA (Tas) believes that all older people have the right to equal participation in the community regardless of income, status, background, location, frailty, or any other social, cultural or economic factor. As a result, COTA (Tas) has a strong focus on older people who are most vulnerable or disadvantaged in terms of these criteria.
- COTA (Tas) will develop policies and provide advice on maintaining and improving services and programs which older people and the general community value. These include primary health care, hospitals, pharmaceuticals, employment, utilities, public transport, residential care, housing and community care.
- COTA (Tas) will be committed to the development of fair and sustainable policies for older Tasmanians that take into account the needs of the entire community. Its policy development will be fiscally and economically responsible which fairly balances the needs of all interest groups.

The key objectives and functions of the COTA (Tas) Policy Council are as follows:

Objectives

- Identify issues for COTA (Tas) policy focus (local, state and national).
- Make recommendations on priority of proposed policy and program responses.

- Ensure COTA (Tas) policies are based on stakeholder input, research and dialogue, and where possible, encourage the development of evidence based data, in accordance with COTA (Tas) Mission and Goals and agreed policy principles.
- Provide support in the advocacy of COTA (Tas) policy, through leadership and expertise on ageing issues.
- Recommend main strategies for developing and advancing COTA (Tas) policy agendas.

Functions

- Provide the COTA (Tas) channel through which members and stakeholders contribute to the identification of issues and development of policy.
- Facilitate consultation, research and dialogue, and where possible, encourage the development of evidence based data.
- Support the Board and CEO in liaison with politicians, key public servants, representative bodies and other sectors, academic and research institutions and other appropriate bodies and where approved by the COTA Board and/or COTA policies, use the credible reputation of Council members to influence relevant sectors, organisations and individuals to educate and inform on issues concerning older Tasmanians.
- Review policy recommendations put forward by COTA's National Policy Council.
- Advise COTA (Tas) Board on policy directions and provide recommendations on strategies to achieve policy acceptance by relevant stakeholders.

Activities

- The policy Council shall meet at least quarterly.
- It shall communicate via teleconference, email and other means in between each meeting.
- The Policy Council shall be chaired by a member of the COTA (Tas) Board.
- The Council shall convene working parties from time to time to research and develop recommendations for the Policy Council. Working parties may comprise both Council members and co-opted experts and shall have a clearly defined time limit to their involvement on the Council.
- The Policy Council shall receive administrative support from the COTA (Tas) operational staff/volunteers.

Procedures

- Operational staff shall in collaboration with the policy council chair develop and distribute an agenda for each meeting in advance together with minutes and relevant papers supporting the agenda.
- Reports shall be presented (written or oral) by working parties and relevant operational staff at each meeting.
- Normal meeting procedures shall apply.

- Meetings shall determine the need for out of session communication and the establishment of additional working parties.