

Manawatu District Council

Terms of Reference

Manawatu Youth Council

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1 Introduction

The Manawatū District Council (MDC) recognises the importance of obtaining the views of young people in Manawatū and providing a forum for obtaining advice about matters that impact youth. These Terms of Reference provide the MDC Youth Council with the terms for its operation.

2 Purpose Reason Youth Council exists / intended result aim/goal

The purpose of the Youth Council is to:

- Strengthen engagement between Manawatū District Council and young people and build young people's knowledge of Community, Council and Central Government processes to enable them to participate in community decision-making processes;
- Assist and advise the Manawatū District Council on how it can be: a District full of opportunities that empower young people; a District that inspires young people; and a District that uses meaningful engagement to gain insight into the needs of young people;
- Develop the skills and capabilities of its members as leaders within our community;
- Encourage youth participation in civic affairs and provide a youth perspective into District issues, policies and future planning;
- Create tangible positive outcomes for our youth and wider community.

3 Key tasks

The Youth Council and its members are expected to:

- Attend the training day or weekend;
- Attend as many monthly Youth Council formal meetings as possible along with the monthly informal zoom meeting. Members are also expected to attend at least one Committee meeting and one full Council meeting;
- Actively participate in Youth Council meetings and get involved in activities outside of the meeting;
- Share information, learnings with other young people in the community;
- Listen to youth in the community and feedback views and ideas to Youth Council;
- Advocate on Youth Issues, putting forward positive solutions for Council consideration and, when delegated make submissions to central government and other external bodies;
- Help plan, promote and run Young Achievers Awards evening and the annual Colour Run;
- Organise, plan and facilitate any additional events that may arise within our community.

4 Role expected behaviour

The Youth Council and its members are expected to provide:

- Constructive advice on Manawatū District Council policies, strategies and services from a youth perspective and where possible identifying evidence and solutions,

whilst taking into account the wider needs, issues and views of young people in Manawatū;

- Clear communication with Manawatū District Council and a broad range of young people from the community to increase information flow and build both Council and youth knowledge;
- Proactive engagement in Council decision-making and civic life through existing and innovative means.

5 Membership

5.1 Member Criteria

The Youth Council will include up to 10 members, including one Chairperson and one Deputy Chair. This group will embrace diversity and will ideally be broadly representative of the different cultures, genders, geographical residents and other various groups within the Manawatū youth population.

Criteria for the Youth Council are as follows:

- To be between the ages of 13-24;
- To affiliate to the Manawatū District;
- To be committed to making a contribution of consequence;
- To collectively have the broad range of skills, experiences and perspectives required for the group to fulfil its purpose.

5.2 Role Descriptions

The role of Members, Chair, Deputy, Alumni and Elected Members/Councillors are outlined in the 'Role Description' document.

5.3 Term of Appointment

The standard term of appointment will be two years from date of appointment. Members may have their membership extended for additional terms if requested by the member. Extended terms of appointment must be approved by both the Chair and the Deputy of the Youth Council in consultation with the Elected Member in Charge. Previous members can reapply, for a maximum of two terms. The Youth Council is not discharged at each triennial election for local government.

- A Youth Council membership will cease if that Member resigns or turns 25 during their membership (regardless of completing a two year term);
- does not work proactively during any one calendar year review period; or
- behaves in a way that violates the Code of Conduct or is otherwise seen, in the opinion of the Youth Council or Manawatū District Council, as detrimental to the effective operation of the Youth Council.

A Youth Council membership will be re-evaluated if the Member:

- moves out of Manawatū District boundaries;
- misses more than three consecutive meetings without apology or three meetings within one year.

A performance meeting of the Chair, and/or Deputy, and the Elected Member in Charge with the Youth Council Member will take place to assess that Member's appointment. The

Member's ongoing membership is at the discretion of the Chair and Deputy and will be reviewed annually – accounting for the Member's two year term, age, work over a calendar year and behaviour. If a Youth Council Member resigns a replacement will be sought through the process for selecting new members outlined below.

5.4 Selection Process

Manawatū District Council will call for nominations of 13-24 year olds from within the District's boundaries via a number of different media and networks. Young people interested in being a Youth Council member will complete an application form. Youth councillors will be selected, not elected.

Nominations may also be received from the Manawatū District Mayor and Councillors.

Youth Councillors are to demonstrate good group connections, and skills and qualities that will benefit the Youth Council.

5.5 Initial Establishment

After having called for nominations and a given application period, the Youth Council Appointment Panel will meet and make a decision. The panel will consist of members from the Community Development Committee, Alumni and Elected Members.

5.6 Selecting Chair and Deputy

The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson will be appointed annually by ballot vote of the Youth Council members.

5.7 Replacement of Vacancies

Should vacancies arise throughout the course of the year, the Youth Council Appointment Committee may reconvene and recruit from previously shortlisted applicants to bring the full number of Youth Councillors on the Youth Council to 10.

5.8 Alumni

Members who have served the length of their term or have ceased to be members of the Youth Council may choose to continue supporting the Youth Council as an Alumni member. Alumni are not members of the Youth Council and cannot vote or set agenda items or tasks for the Youth Council. Criteria to serve as an Alumni:

- Have been a proactive member of the Youth Council;
- Has the support of the Chair and Deputy to participate.

6 Principles

The Manawatū District Council and the Youth Council will embrace the principles of positive youth development:

- Strengths-based approach: Recognition of the strengths and assets of the Youth Council.
- Respectful relationship: Quality relationships between members and Manawatū District Council that are supportive, respectful and challenging.

- Meaningful contribution: The Youth Council is empowered to give authentic advice and develop meaningful actions.
- Informed decisions: Effective research, evaluation, information gathering and sharing is important for good decision making for the Youth Council and Manawatū District Council.

7 Operation

7.1 Training for members

In return for their commitment, Manawatū District Council will provide members with:

- A training and team building day or weekend.
- An induction explaining the Council's functions and processes and the role of the Youth Council.
- Training or resources as necessary to fulfil their roles as a Youth Council member. For example, Chairing, contributing at meetings, understanding the role of local government, and presentation skills as needed or on request.
- Opportunities to attend conferences/seminars and be a youth representative on various working groups/project teams.

7.2 Frequency of meetings

The Youth Council will meet formally in person once every 4 weeks with informal meetings to be held in the fortnight following. Additional meetings may be required.

7.3 Communication

- Meeting minutes to be taken and distributed.
- Members to receive meeting agenda at least 2 days prior to the meeting.
- Agenda items to be received by the Chair for inclusion 4 days prior to the meeting.
- Minutes to be distributed electronically to all members within two weeks of the meeting.

7.4 Council Support

- Council will provide secretarial services and a meeting venue.
- All members will receive an induction package and information explaining the Council's function and the role of the Youth Council.
- The Youth Council may invite Elected Members and Council staff to provide information at meetings.
- There is no remuneration payable to members of the Youth Council.
- There is to be one Elected Member to provide lead support for the group.
- Youth Council will be appointed one MDC Councillor.

7.5 Police Checks

All members over the age of 18 must hold a current police check.

7.6 Quorum

Half of the current number of members, not including vacancies, must be present for the group to have a quorum, which is the minimum number of members necessary to conduct

the business on that group or for the meeting to go ahead. In addition, an elected member of the Council must be present. Any less than half the group, the meeting will not go ahead.

7.7 Decision making

Decisions will be made by a simple majority vote (a majority of those present and voting).

7.8 Conflict Resolution

Should conflict occur, the Chair/Deputy Chair and group will work with the Elected Member in Charge to resolve the conflict. If there are any concerns, members should raise them:

- with the Chair of Youth Council, if concerns are about other members;
- with the Elected Member in Charge, if concerns are about the Chair of Youth Council.

7.9 Conflict of Interest

Members will be asked to complete a conflict of interest form when they join the Youth Council and at the beginning of each year they sit on the group. The Elected Member in Charge will be responsible for providing members with a conflict of interest form as part of new member induction packs and to all members at the beginning of each year.

Members are also expected to notify the Elected Member in Charge of any new or emerging conflicts of interest at the start of each meeting.

For the purpose of the Youth Council, conflicts of interest are deemed to occur where a member advises on work-streams that impact on:

- money or other resources the member has invested outside Council;
- the member's family; or
- official positions the member holds on groups or bodies outside of Council.

8 Scope

8.1 Reporting and Accountability

The Youth Council will report to the appropriate Council committee every six months (or as the need arises), outlining work undertaken with Council staff, the group's achievements and any issues it wishes the Council to consider further.

The names and details of all members of the group and minutes of the groups meeting will be available on the MDC Council website.

Success stories/updates will be promoted as appropriate through a range of media, including but not limited to: Feilding Herald, MDC Council website and social media platforms.

9 Review

9.1 The Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually. Any suggestions for changes will need to be an agenda item for a Youth Council meeting. All changes to the Terms of Reference will be subject to the approval of the Strategic and Community Planning Manager, and if necessary/appropriate the Policy/Planning Committee.

9.2 Youth Council Performance

The Chair, Deputy Chair and Elected Member in Charge will review the performance of the Youth Council annually. The review will evaluate the Youth Council's performance against its purpose and agreed work plan. The Chair and Elected Member in Charge will feed this back to the Youth Council and MDC.