

Youth Council Terms of Reference

7 June 2007

1. Purpose and role

The purpose of the Youth Council is to:

strengthen engagement between Wellington City Council and young people and build young people's knowledge of Council processes to enable them to participate in the Council's decision-making processes
build the Council's knowledge of the needs of young people and how these can best be met.

Specifically it will:

- ensure a youth perspective is provided to the Council on a range of issues covered by the Council, as well as issues relating directly to youth and promoting and encouraging youth involvement in the planning and development of Council services
- ensure that the views of youth are canvassed and conveyed to the Council, including providing advice on or assistance with formal consultations being undertaken
- provide advice to the Council on matters of planning and infrastructure (especially if they have a direct impact on young people); and provide input on matters relating to policy and strategic development.

The group is an advisory group that can make recommendations to the Council. The group will not be given an independent budget to commission work or undertake activities outside of this advisory role.

The Youth Council is also only one means the Council will use to obtain input from young people. The group does not remove or reduce the Council's responsibilities to obtain input from other young people through other means.

2. Responsibilities

Members are required to:

- attend formal meetings
- attend training and project meetings
- work on project teams between meetings
- be available to attend any other training/meetings that may occur
- feedback Youth Council information to their networks
- bring youth issues to the Youth Council
- assist Wellington City Council to canvas youth views.

In return for their commitment, Wellington City Council will provide members with:

- training to fulfil their role as a Youth Council member, including leadership training
- opportunities to attend conferences/seminars
- opportunities to be a youth representative on various working parties/project teams
- assistance with transport to and from meetings
- training on and exposure to the local government political system.

Portfolio responsibilities

Youth Council members will be expected to identify portfolio areas they are interested in finding out more about. The possible areas include:

- transport
- environment
- culture and arts
- social and recreation
- economic development
- governance
- urban development.

Liaison with other advisory groups

The Council has other advisory groups – and is seeking increased cooperation between those groups. Youth Council members may occasionally be asked to attend meetings of the other groups to share information.

3. Membership

The Youth Council will comprise of a maximum of 20 members.

Members need to:

- be between 12–24 years of age
- live within the boundaries of Wellington City Council
- have the ability to work with other people and work in a team
- be proactive
- be committed to attending meetings regularly.

It is expected that the membership will provide broad representation, with consideration given to:

- gender
- disability
- geographical location
- education level (secondary school, university – including diversity of the school/university)
- employment (employed and unemployed)
- diverse cultural backgrounds

Positions

A Chair and Deputy Chair will be appointed every six months.

The role of the Chair is to:

- work with Council officers to compile the agenda
- run the meeting according to the set agenda
- be the spokesperson for the Youth Council as required (ie at Council committee meetings, to the media).

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair will run the meeting.

Removal

If a Youth Council member misses more than two meetings in a row without providing an apology, their membership on the Youth Council will cease.

In the event of gross misconduct by a Youth Council member, dismissal from the Youth Council may be required by the Youth Team of the City Communities business unit.

4. Selection Process

Wellington City Council will call for expressions of interest from 12–24 year olds from within the city's boundaries via a number of different media (newspapers, approaches to schools and universities, the Council website).

Young people interested in participating will be asked to complete an application and encouraged to attend a meeting of the Youth Council.

Applicants will be interviewed by key staff members and one or two members of the Youth Council.

5. Term of Appointment

Any person appointed to the Youth Council shall be appointed for one year. Current members can ask for their membership to be rolled over and new members will be advertised for at this time.

If a Youth Council member resigns during the year, the Youth Council is able to co-opt new members for the remainder of the year. Council officers will encourage local secondary schools and youth service providers to submit the name of one or more people who it may be appropriate to co-opt. Those identified will be encouraged to attend a meeting of the Youth Council prior to their appointment being considered.

6. Reporting

An annual report will be presented to the appropriate Council committee. The report will review the operation and achievements of the Youth Council against its Terms of Reference.

7. Quorum

Half of the current number of members, not including vacancies, must be present for the group to have a quorum.

8. Administration

Council officers will oversee the administration of the Youth Council. Officers will write minutes, compile the agenda in collaboration with the Chair and provide general administrative and advisory support.

9. Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed every three years. All changes to the Terms of Reference will be subject to the approval of the appropriate Wellington City Council committee and the Council.

10. Conduct

Members of the Youth Council cannot in any way claim to represent the Wellington City Council or the views of the Wellington City Council.