

# Youth Council

## Terms of Reference – June 2014

### 1. Purpose of Youth Council

- Assist and advise the City Council on how to help grow a great City where young people thrive and contribute to the City Council's priorities.
- Bring extra insight to Council (a youth perspective) to solve problems facing a changing world.
- Develop the capabilities of its members (including leadership and engaging wider youth).

The Youth Council will not be seen as representing all young people in the City.

### 2. Expectations

Members will be accountable for their efforts to provide<sup>1</sup>:

- Constructive advice – on City Council projects and policies, where possible identifying evidence and solutions, whilst taking into account the wider needs, issues and views of young people.
- Communication – engage with the City Council and a range of young people from communities to increase information flow and build knowledge of Council processes to increase involvement of young people in Council decision-making and Civic life. This could include Youth Council-led engagement projects when agreed by the City Council.
- Involvement of communities - work with council staff to help City Council involve more young people in the setting and meeting of city-wide objectives. The City Council is ultimately responsible for full community consultation.

The specific work areas where members will contribute will be set out in the annual work programme. The work programme will be finalised reasonably quickly and in a collaborative way. That annual work programme will be determined jointly between the Youth Council, Council officers, Chair of the appropriate Committee and Councillor representative. This will take into account the Council's priorities as well as the skills, experience, interests and commitments of Youth Council members. This will enable members to have early input into the City Council's work<sup>2</sup>.

Council officers will report back to the Youth Council on how advice was considered, and whether or not officers and councillors chose to act on that advice, with reasons given at the appropriate time through e-mail and at Youth Council meetings.

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<sup>1</sup> Within their capabilities and any legitimate time / resource constraints.

<sup>2</sup> Work of Council includes Council's strategy and policy development, planning and service delivery.

The City Council liaison officer, working with the Chair, will track meeting attendance and contribution to workflows. Issues considered will include:

- Punctuality and attendance of meetings
- Behaviour in relation to the role and Code of Conduct
- Degree of active involvement in the work of the group.

\*See number 8 Terms of Appointment.

### **3. Reporting**

The Youth Council will publicly report to the appropriate City Council Committee within the last four months of each financial year. The report will outline the agreed work plan and progress against this over the previous year, and any issues or initiatives it wishes to raise with Council.

The names of members, their attendance and minutes of the group's meetings will be available on the Council website and annual report.

### **4. Meetings**

There will be up to 20 paid meetings per year of the full Youth Council. A provisional meeting schedule will be agreed once the year's intake of members start their appointments. This schedule can be varied throughout the year.

### **5. Training for members**

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

- An induction explaining the City 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 parties/project teams.

### **6. Secondments and Council roles**

Secondments and City Council roles may be offered for high performing Youth Council members as part of the Youth Council's Youth development role.

### **7. Key membership criteria**

The Youth Council will include up to 20 members. Role descriptions for members are included in **Appendix A**.

#### **7.1 Criteria for membership**

Members need to:

- be between 14-24 years of age
- live within the boundaries of Wellington City Council

- have the ability to work with other people and work in a team.

Subject to the above, Wellington City Council will, during recruitment, have regard for the aims for Youth Council membership to include a broad range of Wellington City's youth population, including diversity of culture, gender, sexual orientation, impairments, interest, subject-matter experience and occupations.

Further details of the roles and accountabilities of members (including the Chair's) and non-members that support the Youth Council are in Appendix A.

## **8. Terms of Appointment**

The standard term of appointment will be one year. Members may request their membership be extended for additional terms. Extended terms of appointment must be approved by both the Chair of the Youth Council and the relevant officer of the City Council. A Youth Council's membership will cease if that member resigns and may cease if that member:

- misses more than three consecutive meetings without apology or 4 meetings within one year
- does not work proactively during any one calendar year review period, or
- behaves in a way that violates the Code of Conduct (Appendix B) or is otherwise seen as detrimental to the effective operation of the Youth Council.

## **9. Payment**

Members will be paid \$30 per meeting for up to 20 meetings per year they attend of the full Youth Council.

The City Council will also support the group by providing refreshments and assistance with travel to or from the paid meetings of the group.

The City Council at its discretion will consider providing extra resources to Youth Council on a case-by-case basis (including for planning) and where those extra resources to enable the group to meaningfully contribute to the Council's goals.

## **10. Budget**

The Youth Council is an advisory group set up to inform the work and activities of the City Council. The group will not be given an independent budget to commission work or undertake activities outside of work that is agreed with the City Council.

## **11. Conflict Resolution**

Should conflict occur, the Chair/Co-Chairs and group will work with Council Officers to resolve the conflict.

If there are any concerns, members should raise them:

- with the Chair of the group if concerns are about other members
- with the responsible Councillor and/or senior Council officer if concerns are about the Chair of the group

- with the Chair of the group (who will decide whether to raise them with an appropriate senior Council officer) if concerns are about employees.

## **12. 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. WCC's Council liaison officer 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 liaison officer 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.

## **13. Review of Terms of Reference**

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed as required. Youth Council will be involved in any review. All changes to the Terms of Reference will need approval by the appropriate Council committee and Council.

## Appendix A: Role descriptions for the Youth Council Chair, members, Liaison Officers, Responsible City Council Manager and Appointed Councillor

### Members

Member position	Roles and accountabilities
<b>Chair</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourage open communication where all members can effectively contribute</li> <li>• work with Youth Council members and City Council officers to compile meeting agendas</li> <li>• work with Youth Council members and City Council officers to develop, complete and implement the group's annual work programme referred to in section 2</li> <li>• be the spokesperson for Youth Council and represent the views and recommendations of the group</li> <li>• work with the Council liaison officer to review the contribution of Youth Council members at the yearly review and raise any concerns with the appropriate Council Officer</li> </ul> <p>Members of the Youth Council will elect a Chair and Deputy Chair. The Chair and Deputy Chair will hold their position for a maximum of twelve months.</p>
<b>Deputy Chair</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the Deputy Chair in their role.</li> <li>• act in place of the other Chair if the other Chair is unavailable or has a conflict of interest.</li> </ul>
<b>All Youth Council Members (including Chair and Deputy Chair)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be prepared for meetings and consider issues with an open mind</li> <li>• actively participate in Youth Council meetings and contribute to the actions agreed in the annual work programme</li> <li>• pass minutes at meetings</li> <li>• arrive at meetings on time</li> <li>• establish, maintain and make the most of existing relationships with other groups around the City</li> <li>• provide Youth Council &amp; City Council information to their networks</li> <li>• bring youth issues and opportunities to the Youth Council and assist the City Council to canvass youth views</li> <li>• not take individual issues to Youth Council that can be dealt with via general enquiries to the City Council's information Centre</li> <li>• comply with the Code of Conduct in Appendix B</li> <li>• have their contributions reviewed annually against the current "Terms of Appointment".</li> </ul>

## Non-Members who will work with the Youth Council

Member position	Roles
<b>City Council liaison officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• administration, support and promotion of the group. This will include the induction of new members, development of agendas, recording meeting minutes and following up on action points to report back to the group</li> <li>• work with the Chair/Deputy Chair to set the meeting agenda</li> <li>• work with the Chair to track attendance and review the contribution of Youth Council members at the yearly review</li> <li>• work across Council business units to help them effectively engage the Youth Council in the development and implementation of policy, strategy, planning and service delivery in the city</li> <li>• Progress projects agreed between Youth Council and officers, including ensuring officers across Council's business units engage with Youth Council in the right ways and at the right stages of a work-stream</li> <li>• liaise with other Council officers around presentations and the development of projects, plans, etc</li> <li>• liaise with families for minors</li> <li>• ensure safety of minors.</li> </ul>
<b>Responsible City Council Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• approve the Youth Council's annual work programme</li> <li>• help the City Council liaison officer ensure officers work with Youth Council in the right ways and stages.</li> </ul>
<b>Councillor/s</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• act as a communication link between the City Council (councillors and officers) and the Youth Council by attending <b>meetings on a regular basis.</b></li> <li>• provide with officers, information, advice and explanation of the Council's political process and agreed City Council policy when required and facilitate feedback from the Youth Council to the City Council.</li> </ul>

## **Appendix B: Code of Conduct**

### **1. Objective**

The objective of the code is to enhance:

- mutual trust, respect and tolerance between members as a group and with Councillors and Council staff
- the credibility and accountability of the Council within its communities.

The following is the standard of behaviour that is expected from members of Wellington City Council reference and advisory groups.

### **2. Relationships with others**

Members will conduct their dealings with each other, and elected members, in ways that:

- are open, honest and maintain integrity
- focus on issues rather than personalities
- avoid aggressive, offensive and abusive conduct
- maintain confidence in their group.

### **3. Relationships with Council staff**

The effective performance of the group also requires a high level of cooperation and mutual respect between members and Council staff. To ensure this is maintained, members will:

- treat all employees with courtesy and respect (including the avoidance of aggressive, offensive or abusive conduct towards employees)
- observe any guidelines that the Chief Executive puts in place regarding contact with employees
- not do anything which compromises, or could be seen as compromising, the impartiality of an employee
- avoid publicly criticising any employee in any way, but especially in ways that reflect on the competence and integrity of the employee
- raise concerns about employees only with the Chair of the group, who will then decide whether to raise the issue with an appropriate senior Council officer
- not seek to improperly influence staff in the normal undertaking of their duties.

### **4. Contact with the media**

Groups may have the opportunity to input into a number of different initiatives and for consistency, it is important that a single point of contact is established to respond to any media enquiries.

- All media enquiries shall be redirected to Council staff.
- If it is agreed with Council staff that it is appropriate for a view to be expressed by the group, only the Chair, or the Chair's proxy, can represent the group to the media. The Chair will work with the Council's External Relations team in relation to any public comments.
- Views expressed to the media on behalf of the group must have been previously agreed on by the group as a whole.

- If a member is contacted by a journalist for a view from their group, they must refer the journalist to the Chair or Co-Chair.
- Members are free to express a personal view in the media or the view of other organisations of which they are a member, at any time. However, they must make clear that these represent their private views as an individual, or the view of their organisation.

## **5. Confidential Information**

In the course of their duties members will receive information that they need to treat as confidential. This will often be information that is either commercially sensitive or is personal to a particular individual or organisation.

Members should be aware that failure to observe confidentiality will impede the performance of Council and could expose the Council to prosecution under the Privacy Act 1993 and/or civil litigation.

## **6. Individual queries**

Members will not bring individual issues to their advisory groups that can best be dealt with by going through the Council's Service Centre.

## **7. Honesty and Integrity**

Members have a duty to act honestly. They must declare any private interests relating to their duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts of interest in such a way that protects the public interest. They must not act in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their families, friends or business interests.

## **8. Complaints**

Any complaints about other group members, officers or Councillors should be addressed confidentially to the Chair who can then raise the issue with relevant Council officers.



## **Appendix C: Recruitment and Selection Process**

Wellington City Council will call for expressions of interest from 14-24 year olds from within the city's boundaries via a number of different media. Young people interested in being a Youth Council member will complete an application.

### **Annual Intake**

After having called for expressions of interest and a given application period, the Youth Council can shortlist applicants for interviewing, when agreed by the Chair and Council officer who will select shortlisted applicants. Interviews will be conducted based upon a shortlist of applicants, who will be interviewed by the Youth Council Chair, Deputy Chair and one Council officer.

### **Replacement of Vacancies**

Should vacancies arise, the Youth Council may recruit from previously shortlisted applicants to bring the full number of members back to 20.