

Manawatu District Council

Terms of Reference

Manawatu Youth Council

Adopted: 3 September 2020

Commences: 3 September 2020

Amended: 26 October 2023

Review date: 26 October 2025

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Principles	1
3	Purpose	1
4	Key tasks	1
5	Role expected behaviour	2
6	Membership	2
6.1	Member Criteria	2
6.2	Role Descriptions	2
6.3	Term of Appointment	3
6.4	Recruitment	3
6.5	Electing formal Youth Council roles	4
6.6	Replacement of Vacancies	4
6.7	Alumni Representative	4
6.8	Alumni Liaison	4
6.9	Community Support Liaison	4
7	Operation	5
7.1	Training for members	5
7.2	Frequency of meetings	5
7.3	Communication and ways of working	5
7.4	Council Support	6
7.5	Membership Safety and Wellbeing requirements	6
7.6	Quorum	6
7.7	Decision making	6
7.8	Conflict Resolution	6
8	Scope	7
8.1	Reporting and Accountability	7
9	Review	7
9.1	Youth Council Performance	7
9.2	The Terms of Reference	7

1 Introduction

The Manawātū District Council (MDC) recognises the importance of obtaining the views of young people in Manawātū so that they have a voice. These Terms of Reference provide the MDC Youth Council with guidance on how they should operate as a Council.

2 Principles

The Manawātū 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 Manawātū 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 Manawātū District Council.

3 Purpose

The purpose of the Youth Council is to:

- Represent the voice of young people to strengthen engagement between Manawātū District Council and young people to enable them to participate in Council decision-making processes;
- Develop the skills and capabilities of its members as youth 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.

4 Key tasks

The key tasks and activities of the Youth Council include:

- Advocating on Youth Issues by;
 - Listen to youth in the community and feedback views and ideas to Youth Council;
 - Strengthening the focus on youth advocacy, entrepreneurship and the future for youth in our district;
 - Making submissions to Council and providing input into strategy documents and the Long Term Plan;
 - Sharing ideas for possible solutions for Council consideration through the Youth Engagement Co-ordinator (or their appointee) and;
 - Make submissions to central government and other external bodies.

- Provide youth focussed events either directly or by supporting other organisations to do the same.
- Get involved in youth led/focussed activities within the community.
- Assist with the Young Achievers Awards evening.

In order to achieve the key tasks of the Youth Council, members are required to:

- Set a work plan identifying key events and tasks the Youth Council would like to achieve for the year.
- Attend and actively participate in the twice monthly Youth Council meetings.
- Members are encouraged to attend at least one Council meeting or other Council led meeting/forum where possible during each calendar year.
- Attend annual training days.
- Communicate with Manawatū District Council via Teams, Youth Council Minutes and through the Youth Engagement Officer.

5 Role expected behaviour

All members are expected to behave in accordance with the Youth Council Code of Conduct 2023 (see appendix).

6 Membership

6.1 Member Criteria

The Youth Council will include a minimum of 10 members, with a maximum being flexible dependent upon the needs of the team to deliver the workplan and to ensure diversity is achieved.

This group will embrace diversity, developing a culture of inclusion enabling all members to contribute and thrive. The membership will aspire to 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;
- To collectively have the broad range of skills, experiences and perspectives required for the group to fulfil its purpose.

6.2 Role Descriptions

All members have the responsibilities of Youth Councillor which are outlined in the role descriptions 2023 (see Appendix).

There are formal roles within the Youth Council which are elected each year, these include:

- Chairperson,
- Deputy Chairperson,
- Finance Officer,
- Marketing/Social Media Representatives (x2),
- Alumni Liaison Officer,

- Health and Safety Officer.

Additionally, when the Youth Council is planning and delivering key community events a Lead Planner and Deputy Planner is to be appointed to each event who will work closely with the Youth Engagement Coordinator.

6.3 Term of Appointment

The standard term of appointment will be two years from December. 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 Liaison Councillor. Previous members can reapply.

Criteria to maintain membership:

- A Youth Council membership will cease if:
 - The member resigns or turns 25 during their membership (regardless of completing a two year term);
 - The member does not work proactively during any one calendar year review period; or
 - The member 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 discussion with the Youth Council Member and Youth Engagement Co-ordinator will take place to assess that Member's appointment. The Member's ongoing membership is at the discretion of the Youth Engagement Co-ordinator 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 if the total members drops below the minimum through the process for selecting new members outlined below.

6.4 Recruitment

Manawatū District Council will call for nominations of 13-24 year olds if they attend school, work or reside 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 and be included in an interview process.

After having called for nominations and a given application period, the Youth Council Appointment Panel will meet and make a decision. The panel will be made up of at least two of the following people:

- Current Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson;
- Youth Council Liaison Councillor (if not available then another Elected Member may be included);
- Youth Engagement Co-ordinator;
- Community Wellbeing Manager;

- Community Services Manager.

Through the recruitment process, applicants will be required to demonstrate good group connections, and skills and attributes that will benefit the Youth Council.

6.5 Electing formal Youth Council roles

These formal roles will be appointed annually by ballot vote of the Youth Council members. Nominations will be called for in advance of the meeting.

6.6 Replacement of Vacancies

Should vacancies arise throughout the course of the year and new members be required (total members drops below the minimum), the Youth Council Appointment Panel may reconvene and recruit from previously shortlisted applicants, or a replacement will be sought through the process for selecting new members as per section 6.4.

6.7 Alumni Representative

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 Representative.

Alumni may continue to support the Youth Council and attend meetings as an Alumni Representative for a period of two years. Alumni representatives 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 member:

- Have been a proactive member of the Youth Council;
- Has the support of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson and Youth Engagement Co-ordinator to participate.

6.8 Alumni Liaison

Alumni Representatives who have served the length of their term may choose to continue supporting the Youth Council as an Alumni Liaison.

Alumni may continue to support the Youth Council as an Alumni Liaison by being in regular communication with the Youth Council Alumni Liaison Officer. Alumni Liaisons do not attend meetings unless invited to attend a specific meeting to share support for a set task/activity associated with achieving the work plan for the year. Alumni Liaison 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 member:

- Have been a proactive Alumni Representative of the Youth Council;
- Has the support of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson and Youth Engagement Co-ordinator to participate.

6.9 Community Support Liaison

The Council will allow for up to two Community Support Liaisons to support the Youth Council for a period of two years. Community Support Liaisons are not members of the

Youth Council and cannot vote or set agenda items or tasks for the Youth Council. Community Support Liaisons are there to help mentor and support the Youth Councillors not to speak on their behalf.

Criteria to serve as a Community Support Liaison member:

- Is a proactive member of the Manawatū community that has worked in a youth sector or environment that displays a strong advocacy for Youth or has a skillset required to support the Youth Council to achieve the work plan.
- Has the support of the Chairperson, Youth Engagement Co-ordinator and Liaison Councillor to participate.

7 Operation

7.1 Training for members

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

- An annual training programme that covers topics including:
 - Self-awareness;
 - Leadership;
 - Team Building;
 - Networking;
 - And other topics in support of delivering the workplan.
- An induction explaining the Youth Council's functions, meeting protocols and processes, and the role of the Youth Council.
- An explanation of what conflicts of interest are, why they are used, and how these are implemented within the local government environment.
- 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 (subject to availability of budget).

7.2 Frequency of meetings

The Youth Council will meet in person from February to December, the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month, on occasion attending via *Teams* (virtually) is available when required. Meetings may include training. Additional meetings may be added as required.

7.3 Communication and ways of working

- Members will join *MDC Teams*, where minutes, agendas, the annual work plan including meeting schedule, and all event information will be posted. Teams will also be used as a communication and virtual online meeting tool.
- Meeting minutes to be taken and distributed electronically to all members within one week of the meeting.
- Members to receive meeting agenda on the Friday prior to the regular Monday meeting.

- Agenda items to be received by the Chair for inclusion on the Wednesday prior to the regular Monday meeting.
- Members will also be invited to join and expected to use the private Youth Council Facebook group.

7.4 Council Support

- Council will provide secretarial services and the meeting venue.
- Council will provide catering (when appropriate).
- All members will receive an induction package and information explaining the Council's function and the role of the Youth Council at their first meeting.
- 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.
- Council's Youth Engagement Coordinator will provide lead support for the Youth Council.
- Youth Council will be appointed at least one MDC Liaison Councillor, to provide support for the group.

7.5 Membership Safety and Wellbeing requirements

- Every member of the MDC Youth Council will complete a Youth Council information form, to be held on file for emergency purposes.
- All members over the age of 18 must hold a current police check and where applicable, will complete a Police check form, supplying ID, which will be processed through MDC People and Culture. The Youth Engagement Co-ordinator will hold the result on file.
- All members to have the opportunity to meet individually with the Liaison Councillor and Youth Engagement Co-ordinator as a check-in on individual member's wellbeing and progression (as required).

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, a Council Officer and an Elected Member of the Council must be present. Any less than half the group, the meeting will not go ahead.

Every three years, during the post-election period, until a Liaison Councillor is appointed to the Youth Council, the General Manager Community or their appointee will preside over meetings and events.

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 Youth Engagement Co-ordinator and/or the Liaison Councillor to resolve the conflict. If there are any concerns, members should raise them with the Chair of Youth Council, the Youth

Engagement Co-ordinator or the Liaison Councillor, whoever the member is the most comfortable approaching about their conflict.

8 Scope

8.1 Reporting and Accountability

- The Youth Engagement Co-ordinator supported by the Chair, Youth Council Finance Officer and relevant Youth Council Event Lead Planners will prepare a monthly report to be presented in the second meeting of the month including a financial update, progress against the annual work plan and any achievements to celebrate.
- The Youth Council Chair in conjunction with the Deputy Chair, will complete a ½ year review outlining the groups progress against their annual work plan, the group's achievements and any issues it wishes the Council to consider further. This report will be tabled at a Youth Council meeting, then submitted to the Council.
- 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 Youth Council Performance

The Chair, Deputy Chair, Youth Engagement Co-ordinator and Liaison Councillor will review the performance of the Youth Council annually in November. The review will evaluate the Youth Council's performance against its purpose and agreed annual work plan. The Chair, Youth Engagement Co-ordinator and Liaison Councillor will feed this report back to the Youth Council at their last meeting in December and submit to the District Development Committee for review.

- The Chair, at the end of their term, will provide a short report for their last meeting on the highs and lows during their term, welcoming the new chair.

9.2 The Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed every 2-years. 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 General Manager - Community, and as necessary/appropriate reported to the Council.