

NARRABRI SHIRE YOUTH COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE

Objective

The objective of the Narrabri Shire Youth Council (Youth Council) is to provide an opportunity for young people to have input into Narrabri Shire Council (Council) decision and assist in the development and implementation of the Narrabri Shire Youth Strategy (the Strategy).

Introduction

The Youth Council is an Advisory Committee required to make recommendations to Council. The Youth Council does not have the delegated authority to commit Council or management to the implementation of its recommendations, without Council Resolution.

The key responsibilities of the Youth Council are:

- (a) Monitor the implementation of the Youth Strategy and provide recommendations for any updates to the document.
- (b) Provide advice and recommendations on Council policies, procedures and processes that impact on access and inclusion matters.
- (c) Provide advice and recommendations on major projects, and community events undertaken by Council to ensure issues that affect young persons are identified and resolved.
- (d) Assist in seeking funding for to aid the implementation of actions and projects identified in the Youth Strategy and other initiatives of benefit to the Shire's youth.
- (e) To assist Council in identifying opportunities to educate our community and raise awareness on youth matters.

1. Composition and Tenure

1.1. Members shall be appointed by a resolution of Council and demonstrate an enthusiastic approach to working collaboratively, and to achieving objectives on behalf of the whole community.

1.2. Membership Term:

- (a) Members shall be appointed for a maximum term of two (2) years, commencing 31 October 2023 unless specified otherwise by the Council Resolution for the initial appointment.
- (b) Members may vacate their position on the Youth Council prior to the conclusion of the Membership Term, as per Clause 1.9.

1.3. Members (voting):

- (a) A minimum of six (6) to twelve (12) individuals that are aged between 14 to 24 years (Youth Councillors).

1.4. Ex-Officio members (non-voting)

- (a) Two (2) Council Officers being the Director of Planning and Sustainability (or their delegate) and the Manager Tourism and Cultural Services (or their delegate);
- (b) The Mayor; and
- (c) The General Manager.

1.5. Guests (non-voting)

- (a) Voting Members of the Youth Council are invited to bring along one (1) Guest to each meeting, so long as the Guests is:
 - (i) Aged between 14 to 24 years; or
 - (ii) Is invited by a Council Officer to speak on a matter on the Agenda for that meeting; or
 - (iii) Other Council Officers as required.
- (b) Any Guest in attendance at a meeting must have their name noted as in attendance on the minutes for that meeting.

1.6. Youth Mayor (Chairperson)

- (a) The Youth Mayor is to be the Chairperson of each meeting.
- (b) The Youth Mayor is elected to the position the Youth Mayor is to be determined by way of Ordinary Ballot in accordance with Clause 4.8.
- (c) The Youth Mayor's role is to provide leadership and develop a cohesive team ensuring the objectives of the Youth Council are achieved whilst operating in compliance with statutory requirements and Council policy.

1.7. Youth Deputy Mayor:

- (a) The Youth Deputy Mayor is to be determined by way of Ordinary Ballot in accordance with Clause 4.8.
- (b) The Youth Deputy Mayor's role is to assist the Youth Mayor in ensuring the objectives of the Youth Council are achieved whilst operating in compliance with statutory requirements and Council policy.
- (c) The Youth Deputy Mayor may act as the Chairperson in meetings where the Youth Mayor is absent.

1.8. Youth Secretary:

- (a) The Youth Secretary is to be determined by way of Ordinary Ballot in accordance with Clause 4.8.

(b) The Youth Secretary's responsibilities include:

- (i) Calling for Agenda Items;
- (ii) Preparing the Agenda for each meeting;
- (iii) Recording the Minutes of each meeting;
- (iv) Distributing the Minutes to the Youth Councillors within fourteen (14) days of each Meeting.

1.9. Vacancies:

- (a) A Member of the Youth Council may vacate their seat by written resignation submitted to the Youth Mayor or designated Council Officer.
- (b) A Member of the Youth Council automatically vacates their membership to the Youth Council if the Member is absent from three (3) consecutive meetings without a written apology submitted to the Youth Mayor or designated Council Officer.
- (c) Clause 1.7(b) does not extend to person's who hold the Membership position as Council Officers as defined by Clause 1.4(a).
- (d) If a vacancy arises, nominations shall be called for through an Expressions of Interest (EOI) and tabled at the next available Ordinary Council Meeting.

2. Child Safety Requirements

2.1. At any event where members of the Youth Council are meeting, within their capacity as Youth Councillors, one (1) Council Officer, who holds a current Working With Children's Check (WWCC), must be present, as per the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* (NSW).

3. Youth Councillor Responsibilities

3.1. Members of the Youth Council are expected to:

- (a) Make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the Youth Council;
- (b) Understand the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements appropriate to Council;
- (c) Contribute the time needed to study and understand the business papers provided;
- (d) Apply good analytical skills, objectivity, and judgment; and
- (e) Express honest opinions, ask questions that go to the fundamental core of issues, and pursue independent lines of enquiry.

4. Operating Procedures

4.1. Quorum:

- (a) A quorum of the Youth Council shall be constituted by the majority of the current membership

of the Youth Council (half plus one (1)) being present at the meeting and must include at least one (1) Council Officer.

- (b) Ex-officio members are not included for the purposes of calculating a quorum.

4.2. Meetings and Agendas:

- (a) The Youth Council will meet on a monthly basis, or at the discretion of the Youth Mayor or Council's General Manager (or their delegate).
- (b) A meeting schedule including meeting dates and times will be developed and distributed to the Youth Councillors annually.
- (c) No meeting of the Youth Council shall be held unless five (5) days' notice has been given to all members.
- (d) Where practicable, the agenda together with reports, documents and a list of invitees will be prepared and distributed to all members at least five (5) days prior to the meeting.
- (e) Except as otherwise provided for herein the rules governing meetings and the procedures of the Youth Council shall, so far as they apply, be those covered by Council (Council's Code of Meeting Practice).
- (f) Agendas will include an item for general business.

4.3. Attendance:

- (a) A Member of the Youth Council cannot participate in a meeting unless either:
 - (i) personally present at the meeting; or
 - (ii) permitted to attend the meeting by audio-visual link in accordance with Clause 4.3(b).
- (b) A Member of the Youth Council may attend and participate in a meeting by audio-visual link only with the approval of the Youth Council or designated Council Officer. However, the Youth Council is under no obligation to approve the request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link. If the Youth Council refuses a request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link, their link to the meeting is to be terminated.
- (c) A decision to approve a request by a Member of the Youth Council to attend a Youth Council Meeting by audio-visual link must be noted in the minutes.
- (d) A Member attending a Youth Council meeting by audio-visual link will have to notify either the Youth Mayor, Youth Secretary or designated Council Officer prior to the meeting in question.
- (e) A meeting of the Youth Council may be held by audio-visual link where the Youth Mayor or designated Council Officer determines that the meeting should be held by audiovisual link because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency. The Youth Mayor or designated Council Officer may only make a determination under this clause where they are satisfied that attendance at the meeting may put the health and safety of the members at risk. The Youth Mayor or designated Council Officer must make a determination under this clause in consultation with Council's General Manager (or their delegate) and, as far as is practicable, with each Member.

- (f) Where the Youth Mayor or designated Council Officer determines under Clause 4.3(e) that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, a Council Officer must give written notice to all Members that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link.
- (g) Where the Youth Mayor or designated Council Officer determines under Clause 4.3(e) that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, it is the individual Members' responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure they can participate in the meeting by audio-visual link.
- (h) This Terms of Reference applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link under Clause 4.3(e) in the same way it would if the meeting was held in person.

4.4. Recoding of Meetings

- (a) A person must not live stream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone or any other device to make a recording of the meeting without the prior authorisation of the Youth Council.
- (b) A decision to approve a request to record a meeting, as described in Clause 4.4(a) must be noted in the minutes.
- (c) If the Youth Council has approved for a meeting to be recorded, Council will comply with all Privacy Principles as prescribed under the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW) and all requirements of the *State Records Act 1998* (NSW).

4.5. Minutes:

- (a) Accurate minutes including attendance records will be kept of each meeting of the Youth Council.
- (b) The minutes of the meeting shall be submitted to members for ratification at the next subsequent meeting of the Youth Council.
- (c) The minutes will be recorded by the Youth Secretary for the purposes of recording the Minutes of the meetings and for the distribution of Minutes following meetings of the Youth Council.
- (d) Formal minutes of the meeting are to be kept in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998* (NSW) and made available to Council.
- (e) Minutes of meetings are to be distributed within fourteen (14) days of the meeting.

4.6. Reports:

- (a) The Director Planning and Sustainability (or their delegate) will be responsible for specialist reports and all correspondence associated with the Youth Council.
- (b) Recommendations of the Youth Council to Council will be by a majority of votes.
- (c) Any recommendations of the Youth Council that require a Council resolution will be reported to Council for consideration. Any recommendations of the Youth Council shall not be considered as resolutions of the Council, unless specifically adopted by Council Resolution.

4.7. Media:

- (a) In accordance with the Youth Council being an operational function of Council, the spokesperson for the Youth Council is Council's General Manager (or their delegate).

- (b) Individual Members may not issue a media release on behalf of the Youth Council.
- (c) Individual members are not to make public or media comment; if the media approaches a member of the Youth Council for comment, the member should refer them to Council's Communications Section.

4.8. Ordinary Ballot:

- (a) The Youth Mayor, Youth Deputy Mayor and the Youth Secretary are to be determined by Ordinary Ballot.
- (b) An Ordinary Ballot is a secret ballot where ballot papers are distributed to each Councillor and Councillors will vote for only one (1) candidate.
- (c) If there are more than two (2) candidates, more than one (1) ballot will be required if there is no majority arising from the first ballot.

4.9. Unless specified otherwise in the Terms of Reference, all meetings are to be conducted in accordance with Council's adopted Code of Meeting Practice.

5. Code of Conduct

5.1. Councillors, Council Officers, and Members of the Youth Council must comply with Council's Code of Conduct whilst carrying out functions as Council Officials.

5.2. Exception for Members:

- (a) Members of the Youth Council must declare any conflict of interests at the start of each meeting or before discussion of a relevant agenda item or topic. Details of any conflicts of interest should be appropriately minuted (including the type of interest: pecuniary, non-pecuniary but significant, or non- pecuniary and less than significant).
- (b) Council acknowledges that this is an Advisory Committee and as such members may from time to time have conflicts of interest in matters before the Youth Council.
- (c) Members (excluding Councillors and Council staff) will be required to declare conflicts of interest as per Clause 5.2(b); but will not be required to excuse themselves from deliberations. This is to ensure that comprehensive and inclusive stakeholder consultation is undertaken through the Youth Council and reflects that the Youth Council is advisory in nature and not a decision-making entity of Council.

5.3. For the removal of any doubt, Councillors and Council staff must strictly adhere to the requirements to declare any conflicts of interest as outlined in Council's Code of Conduct.

6. Review Terms of Reference

6.1. These Terms of Reference will be reviewed as a minimum in the first twelve (12) months after an ordinary election of Council. Council must adopt any changes to the Terms of Reference.

7. Reporting Requirements/Council Support

7.1. The Youth Council will be supported by the Narrabri Shire Council by the designated Council Officer.

7.2. The Youth Council will prepare an Annual Report to be tabled to the November Ordinary Council Meeting each year.

8. Payment

8.1. Membership of the Youth Council is a voluntary position and offers no remuneration.

9. Dictionary

Term	Definition
Youth Council	Narrabri Shire Youth Council
Youth Councillors	Voting members of the Narrabri Shire Youth Council (who are individuals aged 14-24 years) who are appointed to the Youth Council by resolution of Council.
Meeting	A meeting scheduled and held in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the Narrabri Shire Youth Council.
Council	Narrabri Shire Council
Days	Calendar days, not business days
Members	Those persons appointed to be a member of the Narrabri Shire Youth Council by a Resolution of Council

History

Minute Number	Meeting Date	Description of Change
		Reviewed
247/2023	26 September 2023	Endorsed