



South Gippsland Youth Council

Terms of Reference

(adopted by Council 25 July 2018)

1. Goal

To advocate the needs and aspirations of young people within South Gippsland to the South Gippsland Shire Council.

1.1 *Mission Statement*

The Youth Council will provide an opportunity for young people to express their ideas and views, and encourage youth development and participation throughout the Shire.

The group will advocate on behalf of young people in the wider community with the goal of improving the lifestyle for young people in South Gippsland.

2. Role of Committee

Youth Council is an advisory committee of the South Gippsland Shire Council.

Youth Council aims to listen to and represent young people and their views and to communicate these views to Council and the wider community.

Youth Council will maintain a strong commitment to the following:

- a) To provide a forum for young people to regularly meet and express their views on issues affecting them and their peers;
- b) To develop a strong positive image and profile of young people within the community and increase young people's participation within the community;
- c) To increase opportunities for young people to have input into South Gippsland Shire Council planning, strategies, policy and program decisions and provide an opportunity for Council representatives to liaise with young people;



- d) To develop a partnership between the South Gippsland Shire Council and the Youth Council;
- e) To encourage Youth Council members to represent other local young people as they attend youth events and Regional, State and National Youth Forums;
- f) To develop Youth Council members' confidence, communication and leadership skills and experience; and
- g) To provide input, advice and support within the boundaries of these terms of reference to bodies and individuals external to the South Gippsland Shire Council.

From time to time issues and opportunities outside these Terms of Reference may arise and Youth Council may refer these to other appropriate organisations.

3. Role of Council

South Gippsland Shire Council will:

- a) Provide resources allowing Youth Council to carry out their role;
- b) Actively engage Youth Council when seeking community input to planning, strategies, policy and program decisions;
- c) Provide Youth Council with the information required to fulfil its role;
- d) Work collaboratively with Youth Council to pursue relevant grant funding opportunities through its Grants Officer; and
- e) Acknowledge and respond to formal recommendations made by Youth Council.

4. Membership

- a) Youth Council will have up to 20 people including:
 - i. 18 community representatives between the ages of 12-25 years; and
 - ii. One Councillor;
- b) Application for Membership of Youth Council by a community representative (as defined in point 4 a i) is made by self-nomination. Nominees will require endorsement from two other members of the South Gippsland community;
- c) Council may call for a review of the membership of the Youth Council where it does not appear to equitably represent the overall spread of the youth population or the interests of the young people in the South Gippsland Shire;
- d) Members can serve for a term of two years after which they will need to reapply;



- e) In the case of casual vacancies at a particular time being less than the number required for full membership, new members shall be appointed, by the Chief Executive Officer for a term not exceeding the date set down for the expiry of the term of office of the retiring member;
- f) Where the number of applicants at a particular time is greater than the number of vacancies the Chief Executive Officer will determine the most suitable applicants for appointment and appoint;
- g) Councillor Representatives will be appointed / reappointed as soon as practicable after Council elections and on an annual basis at the Special (Statutory) Council Meeting;
- h) Members may be granted Leave of Absence and replaced by secondment for the period of absence with the agreement of the Chairperson;
- i) If an appointed member of the Youth Council is absent for four consecutive meetings without leave (apology) of the Youth Council given prior to the meeting, that member may forfeit his/her membership;
- j) A member may have his or her term of office revoked by Council upon request by the Youth Council following a resolution carried by a two thirds majority vote of members of the Youth Council;
- k) Council may at its discretion, revoke the membership of any member or the entire Youth Council at any time;
- l) Council has the power to terminate the services of the Youth Council at any time; and
- m) Copies of resignations are to be submitted to the Governance & Corporate Planning Department at the Council.

5. Committee Operations

- a) The Youth Council will appoint a Chairperson and Minute Taker at each meeting; the role of Minute Taker will normally be undertaken by the responsible Council Officer present, with the opportunity for Youth Council members to undertake this task if desired;
- b) A Council officer will be present at each meeting; and
- c) The Youth Council does not have the power to direct any Council officer to undertake any work but may make recommendations to Council, which may be the body of Councillors or the Chief Executive Officer as delegate.

6. Proceedings

6.1 Meetings

- a) The Youth Council will meet once a quarter. The Youth Council may meet more frequently as the need arises. From



time to time issues may arise in between meetings that require attention by Youth Council, in this instance the Youth Council Facebook page may be used for information transfer and decisions;

- b) Because of the distances involved in attending meetings, Youth Council members will be assisted where possible to attend meetings and other activities;
- c) Youth Council meetings will normally be held between 4pm and 6pm;
- d) Whilst the Council offices will be the base for Youth Council meetings, Youth Council meetings may occasionally be held in other areas of the Shire;
- e) Meetings will follow standard meeting procedures. Council's Meeting Procedure Local Law No 3. will be used as a basis for determining these standards;
- f) The responsible Council Officer will prepare and distribute an Agenda at least five days prior to the meeting. All Youth Council members will have the opportunity to contribute matters for consideration via the Youth Council Facebook page or through direct discussion with the Council Officer; and
- g) Minutes from each meeting will be recorded by the responsible Council Officer or if he / she is unavailable for a meeting then the Chairperson shall arrange for the minutes to be recorded by another member. Minutes will be distributed to all members and appropriate staff within the following fortnight and will be stored in a minute folder maintained by the responsible Council Officer. A copy of all minutes should be formally provided to Council via its Governance Services Department.

6.2 Quorum

- a) A majority (is a half of the formal Youth Council members plus one) of members constitutes a quorum; and
- b) If at any meeting of the Youth Council a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the time appointed for the meeting, the meeting will not be able to make any binding decisions. The notes from this meeting can be ratified at the next meeting, provided of course a quorum is present at that meeting.

6.3 Voting

- a) The Youth Council will make every effort to arrive at its decisions by consensus; and



- b) If consensus is not possible matters can be resolved by a majority of the votes of members present. In the event members may not be physically present at the Youth Council meeting, an opportunity to vote via the Youth Council Facebook page will be available for a period of two days post meeting. The Chairperson shall have the casting vote if the votes are equal.

7. Reporting

- a) In reporting to Council, recommendations should, where possible, reflect a consensus view. Where a consensus cannot be reached, reports will clearly outline differing points of view;
- b) Technical reports to Council will be co-ordinated through the relevant Council Officer;
- c) Minutes of all Youth Council meetings will be reported by attending Councillors as a Council report at the next appropriate Council meeting;
- d) The Youth Council will disseminate information about its activities to the broader community on a regular basis; and
- e) The Youth Council can expect a response from Council to recommendations made by the Youth Council to the Council within 45 days of the making of the recommendations.

8. Evaluation

In order to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Youth Council there will be an annual evaluation process undertaken by the Youth Council members with assistance from Council Officers. The results of the evaluation will be reported to Council.

9. Council Review

Council will undertake a review of the operations and Terms of Reference of the Youth Council every two years.

10. Conflicts of Interest

Youth Council members are to disclose any conflict of interest to the Chairperson (or nominated Councillor in the case of the Chairperson). The conflict of interest may be of a direct or indirect nature.

The disclosure must be made at the beginning of the meeting and the Youth Council member should leave the meeting when the matter is being considered. The Youth Council member may return to the meeting immediately after the matter is decided.



Youth Council members should be guided by the Conflict of Interest legislation and guidelines as they apply to Councillors. A copy of this legislation and guidelines can be obtained from Council's Governance Officer.

11. Confidentiality

On some occasions the Youth Council may deal with items of a confidential nature. Youth Council members are to deal with all such items and issues with confidentiality, discretion and sensitivity. If there are members of the public in attendance (that are not official members of the Youth Council), they should be asked to leave during such discussions.

12. Misconduct

Council retains the right to withdraw the membership of any person found to be acting outside the interests of the South Gippsland Shire Council.

13. Dispute Resolution

Should a dispute or grievance arise in the operation of the Youth Council the Youth Council in the first instance should attempt to resolve the matter. If the Youth Council is unable to resolve the matter it should refer the matter to Council's Director Corporate and Community Services who will arrange guidance and an appropriate dispute resolution process if necessary.

14. Assembly of Councillors

If one Councillor or more is present at the meeting the meeting is deemed an Assembly of Councillors. Council will provide the Committee with a template for, and advice about reporting back to Council that will enable the Chief Executive Officer to keep a written record of the meeting if it is an Assembly of Councillors.