Mitchell Shire.
Youth Services
Mitchell Youth Council
Terms of Reference
# Mitchell Shire - MYC Terms of Reference

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Role of Youth Council

Mitchell Youth Council is an advisory committee whose role is to represent the voice of young people aged 10 to 24 who live, work, study or socialise in Mitchell Shire. Mitchell Youth Council is also a Youth Development program under Council’s Sustainable Communities Directorate. The aim of this program with regards to youth development is to increase the capacity of young people to be engaged in their community and participate in decision making.

Primary Function of Youth Council

Consult with young people to provide advice and submit recommendations to Council on a range of issues relevant to young people

1) Act as an advisory committee and respond to inquiries from the Council regarding specific youth issues in Mitchell Shire
2) Identify issues of importance to young people in Mitchell Shire and initiate projects to help address these issues
3) Encourage and support young people to be involved in creating new opportunities and projects for youth
4) Assist Council to better inform and engage with the Mitchell’s youth community, and vice versa
5) Liaise with youth and service agencies within the region to promote youth issues
6) Liaise with Government at all levels to promote youth related issues
7) Advocate and lobby for better outcomes for young people in Mitchell Shire
8) Provide regular feedback to Mitchell Shire Council on the Youth Council’s achievements

Key Responses

Youth Council will be expected to provide responses to the following:

1) The needs and expectations of the young people in Mitchell Shire
2) Enquiries from the Council regarding specific youth issues in Mitchell Shire

Membership

Membership of the Youth Council will be open to ten young people aged between 12 and 24 years who live, work or study in Mitchell Shire. The majority of members must be residents of Mitchell Shire.

Members of the Youth Council volunteer their services as a member. However, Youth Councilors and Youth Council Trainees may receive transport assistance to and from the meetings, or other assistance that supports them in completing their role as committee members.

A financial allowance of $500 is paid to each youth councillor to assist with costs required by youth council members to undertake their role (including travel and attendance at meetings).
Appointments to the Youth Council and Election of Governance Positions

Interested young people between the ages of 12 and 24 years must complete an application form and sit an interview. Applicants are selected according to selection criteria.

Three Youth Councilors are chosen to represent the community at each Ward (South, Central and North).

An additional position is reserved for someone who contributes a diversity of views to the Youth Council. Selection will be governed from where the young people reside and not where they attend school.

All unsuccessful applicants are invited to take on a Youth Council Trainee position which involves optional participation in Youth Council training sessions and meetings.

The Youth Council elects a Youth Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Secretary using a silent ballot. The Youth Council first seeks nominations for each governance position. Nominees for each position are asked to address the Youth Council explaining why he/she would be able to adequately perform this role. A silent ballot is then facilitated by Mitchell Youth Services staff.

Term of Office

Each Youth Council term will be for a period of 4 years, unless decided otherwise in the evaluation of the program. Youth Councilors reserve the right to reconsider their role on Youth Council each financial year according to work, study or personal commitments.

- Any Councillor is eligible for election or re-election to the office of Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Secretary
- Before a Mayor is elected, the Youth Council may resolve to elect a Mayor, Deputy Mayor for a term of 2 years.

The Mayor is to be elected—

(a) after the second Monday in July but not later than 30 August in each year; or
(b) if the Mayor is elected for a term of 2 years, the next election of Mayor is 2 years after the second Monday in July but not later than 30 August in the second year after the election; or
(c) as soon as possible after any vacancy in the office of Mayor occurs.

The office of Mayor becomes vacant—

(a) at 6 a.m. on the day of the election of the Mayor; or
(b) if he or she ceases to be a Youth Councillor; or
(c) if his or her office as a Youth Councillor is suspended for any period under this ToR; or
(d) if he or she resigns in writing which is given at a meeting of the Youth Council or to the Coordinator of Youth Services;

Funds

Mitchell Shire Youth Council will receive financial support from Mitchell Shire Council. The Program's funding will be allocated under the Youth Services budget. The funds will be used to support the facilitation of the meeting, provision of uniform and training expenses. Funds will also be allocated to youth focused initiatives and/or events identified in the Mitchell Shire Youth Strategy.
Resources Provided to Youth Council

Council will provide the following resources to Youth Council:

**Information**

1) Access to proposed youth focused projects
2) Discussion and issue papers that directly deal with youth issues
3) Any other material requested by the Youth Council to the approval of the Coordinator of Youth Services and the Manager of Community Strengthening.

**Facilities and Service**

1) Meeting facilities
2) Secretarial support
3) Developmental opportunities

**Portfolios**

The Youth Council will allocate members to participate in specific portfolios. Youth Councillors can nominate which portfolios they would like to participate in. The objectives of each portfolio are to be approved by the Youth Council and should be consistent with the Mitchell Youth Strategy. Councillors will report back to the Youth Council on progress at each meeting.

**Officer’s Role**

The Youth Council is facilitated by Council’s Youth Services Staff who will be responsible for:

1) Convening Youth Council meetings, organising a meeting venue and providing refreshments
2) Attending meetings as a resource person
3) Prepare and distribute the agenda
4) Supporting the Youth Council Secretary to prepare and distribute the minutes
5) Support the Youth Council to complete their set tasks
6) Support the Youth Mayor, Deputy Youth Mayor and Secretary to meet the requirements of their positions

**Youth Council Uniform and public image**

**Public image**

The Youth Council will present their public image under the guidance and support of the Youth Services and Community Strengthening Unit.
Uniform and Name Badges
Uniforms, name badges and business cards are given to Youth Councillors on commencement of their term in office. The Youth Council uniform, name badge business card is consistent with Council’s uniform policy and style guide. The Youth Council uniform may be worn to all Youth Council meetings and functions. The Youth Councillors will dress in neat and tidy attire when they represent the Youth Council. School uniform is also considered appropriate dress when representing the Youth Council.

Dates and Times of Meetings
Ordinary Youth Council meetings are to be held fortnightly on Monday from 5 pm to 7 pm at the Broadford Library Boardroom, between each financial calendar year. Youth Council may alter Ordinary Meeting dates, time and place. An attendance register will be kept for all Youth Council meetings.

Meetings scheduled on school and public holidays will be held subject to availability of Youth Councillors.

Attendance by members of the public
Members of the public can observe Youth Council meetings if they submit a request to attend to the Coordinator of Youth Services at least 5 hours before the scheduled meeting start time.

Special Meetings
At least two Youth Councilors or the Coordinator of Youth Services may by a written notice call a Special Meeting.

The notice must:

1) Specify the date and time of the Special Meeting and the business to be transacted

2) Be delivered or sent electronically to the Coordinator of Youth Services in sufficient time to enable reasonable notice of the Special Meeting to be given to all Youth Councillors

Youth Service Staff must convene the Special Meeting as specified in the notice. Unless all Youth Councillors are present and unanimously agree to deal with any other matter, only the business specified in the notice is to be transacted.

Notice of Meeting and agendas
A notice of meeting and an outline of the business to be dealt with are to be sent electronically to every Youth Councillor for all Ordinary Meetings at least two business days before the meeting.

A notice of meeting and an outline of the business to be dealt with must be delivered or sent electronically to every Youth Councillor for any Special Meeting within a reasonable time of the Special meeting being called.

Youth Councillors may include any matter on an agenda of a Youth Council meeting which he or she considers should be dealt with at that following Youth Council meeting. Items for the Agenda should be submitted to the Coordinator of Youth Services within 5 working days of the next Youth Council meeting.

The Coordinator of Youth Services may include any matter on an agenda of a Youth Council meeting which he or she considers should be dealt with at that following Youth Council meeting.
Meeting Protocol

Duties of the Governance positions

Youth Mayor

With assistance from the Coordinator of Youth Services:

1) Chairs meetings
2) Keeps the meeting on track
3) Ensures that the agenda items have been addressed
4) Ensures that everyone’s voice is heard
5) Encourages full participation of all representatives
6) Ensures that all tasks are evenly distributed
7) Clarifies points that have been made
8) Supports the Youth Council Secretary in making sure all minute information is accurate
9) Represents Youth Council at special community meetings/events functions when requested by Mitchell Shire Council staff
10) Is impartial and unbiased when making decisions

Deputy Youth Mayor

1) Supports the Youth Mayor as required
2) Assumes all Youth Mayor responsibilities in the absence of the Youth Mayor
3) Represents Youth Council at special community meetings/events functions when requested by Mitchell Shire Council staff

Youth Council Secretary

With assistance from the Youth Resource officer

1) Prepares and distributes all minutes
2) Keeps an attendance register for all Youth Council meetings
3) Represents Youth Council at special community meetings/events functions when requested by Mitchell Shire Council staff
4) Distributes any other correspondence as necessary
5) Informs the Youth Council of any incoming correspondence and where required prepares a timely response
6) Administers and monitors the Youth Council Facebook page
Minutes
At every Youth Council meeting the minutes of the preceding meeting(s) must be dealt with as follows:

1) A copy of the minutes must be delivered to each Youth Councillor no later than two days before the next meeting
2) Minutes are not to be made public and must not be discussed with the public until they are adopted by the Youth Council, unless otherwise specified
3) If no Youth Councillor indicates opposition, the minutes must be declared to be confirmed

Introducing A Motion
The procedure for moving any Motion is:

1) The mover must state the Motion without speaking to it
2) The Motion must be seconded. If a Motion is not seconded, the Motion lapses
3) The Chair asks if anyone opposes the Motion
4) If anyone opposes the Motion then the Chair must call on the mover to speak FOR the motion. If no one opposes the motion then it is put to vote
5) After the mover has addressed the meeting, the seconder can choose whether to speak FOR the Motion or ‘reserve his or her right to address the meeting’
6) After the mover and seconder (if desired) has spoken the Chair must invite debate from anyone who wishes to speak to the Motion
7) Speakers must alternate between those wishing to speak FOR and AGAINST
8) Each Youth Councillor is only allowed to speak once
9) If there is no one else to speak FOR a motion then the mover must speak to close the debate
10) Then the Chair must put the Motion to the vote
11) The Motion is declared carried or lost

Debate Must Be Relevant To The Motion

1) Debate must always be relevant to the Motion
2) If someone debates a matter that is irrelevant to the Motion the Chair must ask the speaker to confine the debate
3) If after being requested to confine the debate the speaker continues to debate irrelevant matters, the Chair may direct the speaker to be seated and not speak further in respect of the Motion
Voting Rights and quorum

1) All Youth Councillors and Youth Council Trainees will have equal voting rights
2) Voting must take place in silence
3) Voting on any matter is by show of hands
4) Councillors and Council staff can attend Youth Council meetings as observers or can participate in meetings if they are invited to do so by the Youth Council
5) Councillors and Council staff will not have voting right
6) Youth Council will allow a proxy voting, that is, if a Youth Councillor cannot attend the Youth Council meeting they can send their vote via another Youth Councillor, Youth Council Trainee, or the Coordinator of Youth Services
7) A quorum will be fifty percent of the membership plus one

In the event of a tied vote
In the event of a tied vote:

1) The debate will be continued and a request for additional information can be made if needed
2) If additional information is not available on hand the motion may be deferred until next meeting
3) After re-debate the motion is put to vote again
4) If there is still a tied vote the Youth Mayor will have an additional deciding vote

Inability to Obtain a Quorum
If after 30 minutes from the scheduled starting time of any Ordinary or Special meeting, a quorum cannot be obtained those Youth Councillors present can decide whether to:

1) Continue the meeting without presenting any motions until the next meeting
2) Adjourn the meeting to a date to be determined.

Conflicts of Interest
A Youth Councillor must disclose any conflict of interest which that Youth Councillor has in an item of business before the item is address.

Reporting Relationships
The Youth Council’s primary relationship will be to Council’s Coordinator of Youth Services.

Reports by Council Officers to Youth Council
Reports from Council officers should go through the Coordinator of Youth Services. The Coordinator of Youth Services will schedule a time to address a report at the next available Youth Council meeting. Council officers should present reports to Youth Council. Presentations should be no more than 20 minutes in length excluding question time. The presentation should be concise and clearly outline the level of involvement being sort from Youth Council. Youth Council respond to Council officer’s reports verbally at the Youth Council meeting.

All Council officers presenting a report to Youth Council should provide timely feedback on the input given by Youth Council.
Matters put to Youth Council by the Community or Organisations

Matters put to Youth Council by a community member/group or organisations should be submitted to the Youth Council via the Coordinator of Youth Services. This should be in the form of a brief report which clearly outlines:

1) The name and contact details of the person/group/organisation seeking input from the Youth Council
2) The issue/project/event/service etc
3) The information or actions that are being sort from Youth Council
4) The time frame for the request

The Youth Council will review the report at the next meeting and decide whether they require further information in the form of a presentation. If the Youth Council does not wish to have a presentation, a letter of response will be prepared by the Secretary.

The Youth Council may request a presentation to be made at the next meeting. If this is the case:

1) Those seeking input will be contacted by the Coordinator of Youth Services to arrange a time
2) Presentations should be no more that 20 minutes in length including question time
3) The presentation should be concise and clearly outline the level of involvement being sort from Youth Council
4) Youth Council will respond verbally to matters being presented
5) Feedback on the input given by Youth Council must be provided in a timely manner

Expected Behaviour

Purpose

The purpose of this clause is to outline the behaviours expected of Youth Council members and the process by which the Youth Council will respond to poor behaviour or misconduct by a member.

Expected Behaviour

1) Be mindful of your actions within the community and uphold the positive image and reputation of Mitchell Youth Council
2) Behave in a professional manner
3) Show respect to other Youth Council and Council members and their views
4) Refrain from making personal comments about other youth councillors, officers or other people
5) Actively listen to other’s point of view
6) Only one Youth Councillor will speak at any one time.
7) Youth Councillors should indicate if they would like to speak
8) The Chairperson should monitor the flow of the conversation.
9) Youth Councillor’s comments are directed to the whole council and should be relevant to the agenda item being discussed.
10) All members of the Youth Council will endeavour to make the Youth Council meetings a comfortable and friendly environment.

Youth Council's Response to Poor Behaviour

Behaviour is defined as poor when a member of the Youth Council does not comply with the expectations outlined above. If a Youth Councillor is behaving poorly they will be given a warning by either the Coordinator of Youth Services or the Youth Mayor. The Coordinator of Youth Services, with the support of the majority of the Youth Council and the Manager of Community Strengthening, reserve the right to ask participants to leave the program if they continue to behave poorly or if they do not meet the expectations of their role.

Problem Solving and Dispute Resolution

In the first instance any complaint, unresolved problem or serious dispute is to be brought to The Coordinator of Youth Services for resolution. If appropriate and with the agreement of all parties, the matter may involve a mediation process.

Any complaint, unresolved problem or serious dispute that involves Council’s Youth Officer(s) is to be brought to Council’s Manager of Community Strengthening for resolution. If appropriate and with the agreement of all parties, the matter may involve a mediation process.

Smoking, Alcohol and other Drugs

Youth Councillors will refrain from consuming alcohol or illegal drugs while they are fulfilling their role on Youth Council.

Smoking is not permitted in Council buildings or in Council vehicles or in close proximity to Council buildings. Youth Councillors will ensure that they do not smoke while wearing the Youth Council uniform/badge. They will also refrain from smoking in front of young people or children when they are fulfilling their role as Youth Councillors. Youth Councillors will abide by state government regulations around smoking in public places.

Gifts

We will not accept gifts either in their role as Youth Councillor or where it could be perceived to influence them in their role as a Youth Councillor except:

Where the gift would generally be regarded as only having a token value and could not be perceived to influence our actions as a councillor

Where refusal may cause offence or embarrassment, in which case we will accept the gift on behalf of the Youth Council and the gift becomes the property of the Youth Council

Youth Councillor Duties and Expectations

As a Youth Councillors you are expected to:

1) Attend the induction day
2) Attend and participate in meetings
3) Contribute your ideas and enthusiasm
4) Carry out any tasks that you volunteer for
5) Be willing to work as part of a team
6) Represent Youth Council by attending some official events
Participant Level of Commitment

Youth Councillors will:

1) Attend Youth Council meetings twice per month from 5pm – 7pm on the every second week. An 80% attendance is required
2) Attend extra meetings/events/functions (on occasion) including Council meetings when required
3) Attend the Councillor Dinner twice a year, prior to Council meeting

Communication with the Media

All communication with the media will be done under the guidance and support of the Community Strengthening and Communications unit.

Members are expected to direct all media coverage through the Youth Mayor. If individual members are asked for an interview or media release concerning the activities of the Youth Council, permission must be sought by the Youth Council.

All Youth Council media releases must be passed by the Youth Council and will then follow Council procedures for preparing and distributing media releases.

All requests for interviews with Youth Council will be processed through the Youth Mayor and the Coordinator of Youth Services.

Youth Councillors are responsible for informing media representatives that Youth Councillors views and opinions are not necessarily those of Council.

Referring enquiries to the Youth Council

A Youth Councillor shall refer an issue/enquiry to the Youth Council when:

1) They are unsure of their individual point of view on the issue and/or uninformed about the issue
2) They do not feel comfortable commenting on an issue
3) They have been asked to provide a statement on Youth Council’s position on an issue

Youth Council Tasks

Youth Council tasks include:

1) Consult with local young people and advocate for their needs;
2) Assist in the development of an Mitchell Youth Strategy
3) Implement actions in the Mitchell Youth Strategy
4) Administer Youth Development Grants
5) Assist in the evaluation of the Mitchell Youth Council Program
6) Assist with the content management of the Mitchell Youth website
Mitchell Youth Strategy


Amendments and Review of the Youth Council Terms of Reference

Any amendments to the Youth Council Terms of Reference must be approved by the Youth Council and endorsed by Council. Amendments can be made at any time, however a Report must be submitted to Council outlining the amendment(s). The Terms of Reference will be formally reviewed where appropriate.