



## INVERCARGILL CITY YOUTH COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE 2021

The Invercargill City Youth Council has existed since 1998. The Youth Council acts as an advocate for young people aged between 12 and 24, ensuring that young people's voices get heard by the Council. The Youth Council is one of the ways the Council gains input from young people. This document outlines the purpose, roles and responsibilities of the Youth Council.

### 1. Youth Council's Purpose:

- To engage young people in Invercargill City Council decision-making processes.
- To increase the Council's understanding of young people's perspectives and needs.

*Specifically the Youth Council will:*

- Engage young people in Invercargill City to have a voice in decision making.
- Ensure young people know the Youth Council exists for them to have a voice.
- Facilitate and promote events and projects to involve young people.

*Aims:*

- Find, create and push for engaging activities for young people to do.
- Look at ways to improve the social and physical local environment
- To promote sustainability within the local environment
- Recognise and celebrate the fact that everyone is different.
- Create an environment which reduces discrimination, prejudice and the marginalisation of youth.
- To recognise and develop an understanding of the lessons and values of Te Tiriti O Waitangi.
- Facilitate forums for other young people to have a strong public voice.

### 2. Responsibilities:

*Members Are Required To:*

- Attend Youth Council meetings which are held monthly on a Wednesday from 4.00 pm to 5.30 pm. Project committees may meet outside of this time, usually on a Wednesday, but not after 6.00pm. As a general rule, Youth Council meetings will not be held during school holidays but specific committees may be held during the holidays.
- Read the Youth Council agenda including the minutes before each youth council meeting.
- Be available and commit to working on committees and project teams.
- Be available to attend other trainings and meetings that may occur.
- To act responsibly in the public arena including the use of the media and social media.
- Pass Youth Council information onto their networks, such as schools and interest groups etc.
- Assist the Invercargill City Council to canvas youth views.
- Engage and contribute to local and or national consultation discussion when it arises
- All members are responsible for gathering opinion/issues etc. from their peer group and bringing these to the youth council. All members are encouraged to report key staff at their school about their role and consultation projects.

*In Return For Your Commitment, Invercargill City Council Will Provide Members With:*

- Training to fulfil your role as a youth councillor.
- Information on youth focused conferences and seminars.
- Opportunities to be a youth representative on various working parties and project teams.
- Some assistance with parking to attend meetings and light refreshments prior to meetings.
- Training on the local government political system.

### 3. **Membership:**

*The Youth Council Will Consist of a Maximum of 25 Members. Members Must:*

- Be between 12 – 24 years of age.
- Live with-in the boundaries of Invercargill City Council or attend school/training or be employed within the Invercargill City Council boundaries.
- Have the ability to work with other people and work in a team.
- Demonstrate leadership, governance, advocacy and service skills.
- Be proactive.
- Be committed to attending meetings regularly.
- Be nominated by peers at their school, or by a youth organisation or network, or youth/community group, or volunteer to be a member.

*It Is expected that the Membership will provide Broad Representation, with Consideration Given to:*

- Gender.
- Ethnicity.
- Socio-economic background.
- Schools/vocational and tertiary institutions.
- Communities and geographic areas (wards).
- Education and employment.
- Tangata Whenua.

### 4. **Selection Process:**

- The call for nominations/applications for Youth Council members will be made in August/September each year for the following year.
- Secondary schools within the city will be invited to nominate two members to apply from each school. This includes the following list of Invercargill Secondary Schools;
  - Southland Boys' High School
  - Southland Girls' High School
  - James Hargest College
  - Aurora College
  - Verdon College
  - Te Whare Kura o Arowhenua
- If school nominees are not put forward, these places will become available to applicants from the community.
- A panel comprised of two former youth council members and a Council officer will be established after nominations close. Up to 13 Youth Councillors will be selected from the applications received. Young people nominated to the Youth Council from the six secondary schools will be appointed without going through the selection process.
- Youth councillors will be selected on their experience and/or interest in civic leadership, advocacy, governance and community service.
- A reserve list will be compiled during the selection process for the purpose of filling any vacancies occurring during the year. Young people not selected for membership will be advised of their placement on a reserve list.

## 5. **Conduct:**

- Members of the Youth Council cannot in any way claim to represent the views of the Invercargill City Council and must remain politically neutral in relation to Invercargill City Council business.
- Youth Councillors will be expected to conduct themselves appropriately when representing the Invercargill City Youth Council. This includes when speaking personally, on social media platforms and with written material. They must not be seen to bring the Invercargill City Council or the Invercargill City Youth Council into disrepute.

Appropriate conduct is defined as demonstrating personal behaviours and ways of acting which are suitable for that occasion or opportunity.

## 6. **Removal:**

- If a Youth Council member misses three meetings in a row without providing an apology, their membership on the Youth Council will cease.
- If a Youth Councillor repeatedly misses meetings but does apologise they may be asked to reconsider their ability to undertake the roles required of them as a youth councillor.
- In the event of gross misconduct the Youth Council Coordinators may require a Youth Council member to leave the Youth Council.
- Members of the Youth Council may at a full Youth Council meeting, following a robust discussion, pass a vote of no confidence in one or more of the Co-chairpersons. The co-chairperson/s may remain a youth council member but will relinquish the role of co-chairperson.

## 7. **Term of Appointment:**

Any young person appointed to the Youth Council shall be appointed for that year and be expected to reapply, if they wish, at the end of that year. Reappointment to the Youth Council will be considered along with all other applications for membership.

If a Youth Council member resigns during the year, the Youth Council is able to co-opt new members to the Youth Council for the remainder of the year from applications previously received.

The role of Co-Chairperson can be held by a member for two years. Only one of the Co-Chairpersons, in any year, can have held the position previously.

In the years when two youth councils are formed representing younger and older members those who hold the role of Chairperson on the younger age council will be able to also hold the role of Chairperson on the older age group council in a following year.

## 8. **Community Board Meetings:**

Community Boards can invite Youth Council representatives to attend meetings.

## 9. **Relationships with Community Services and Organisations**

From time to time community organisations may request the opportunity to have members of the Youth Council work with their organisation on a project. These requests will be presented to the Youth Council who may agree to form a subgroup committee to work with this organisation.

**10. Invercargill City Council Representative**

At the start of each year an Invercargill City Councillor will be appointed by His Worship the Mayor to the Youth Council. The Councillor representative's role will be to provide support and guidance to the Youth Council, as well as being a direct link for the Youth Council to the Invercargill City Council, and vice versa. Due to the schedule of demands of Councillors it may on occasion be appropriate that the appointed Councillor may request another Councillor to attend the Youth Council meeting on their behalf. This will be arranged prior to the Youth Council meeting with Community Engagement staff.

**11. Reporting:**

- Youth Council Coordinators will report on the progress of the Invercargill City Youth Council through the Community Engagement reports to Council.
- The Youth Council will report directly to the Performance, Policy & Partnerships Committee meetings.

**12. Splitting of the Youth Council in to age appropriate groups**

Depending on mix and age of candidates the Youth Council Coordinators have the authority to decide that it is appropriate to facilitate equal opportunities to two Youth Council groups during a Youth Council year. The two Youth Council groups will be delineated by age. This delineation could be for example, a year 11 and under and year 12 and over or a suitable mix of ages to make the two Youth Councils close to equal numbers of the 25 members selected.

**13. Chairpersons**

The Youth Council will select a chairperson/chairpersons at the start of each youth council year. Each returning youth council will select how many chairpersons they wish to share in the role and then vote throughout the year. If at any point a chair person vacates their position a process will be decided upon by the Community Development staff. In the case that a chairperson/chairpersons are absent, members who were nominated at the chairperson election process would have the opportunity to stand in on their behalf. This would be coordinated by the Community Engagement staff.

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