

Youth Policy

2013

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1 Introduction

- 1.0 The purpose of this policy is to set out a range of principles and goals to guide Whangarei District Council (WDC) in making decisions in relation to youth.
- 1.1 This policy was prepared following consultation with the District's youth (those aged between the ages of 12 and 24 years), principally by way of a survey designed and implemented by WDC's Youth Advisory Group (YAG).
- 1.2 This policy both replaces and builds on the current WDC Youth Policy, which was adopted on 21 June 2001.

2 Background and Consultative Findings

- 2.0 In 2012 YAG conducted extensive paper-based and online consultation with youth through the Shape Your City Youth Survey. The survey addressed some issues which YAG felt were important to youth and also asked respondents to provide some feedback on what they would like to see happen in Whangarei. The survey attracted 720 responses over a two month period.
- 2.1 The findings clearly indicate that two issues stand out as being most important to youth: employment and recreation.
- 2.2 These findings, as well as the attitudes and comments expressed on the survey forms, have been taken into consideration in preparing this policy.

3 Principles

- 3.0 WDC recognises that youth are an important element of the population and informed consideration should be given to their interests to meet the present and future needs of the Whangarei District.
- 3.1 WDC continues to foster better relationships between local government and youth, and youth and other community stakeholders.
- 3.2 WDC recognises that the key to building and maintaining good relationships with youth requires real and effective communication and consultation, as well as listening and taking youths' views into consideration and visibly using them in decision making.
- 3.3 It is recognised youth can and should contribute to enhancing the Whangarei District.

4 Goals

- 4.0 WDC will:
- 4.1 Enhance consideration of youth's view on the District, and in decisions that Council make which affect youth, by way of:
 - i) Communicating and consulting youth efficiently and effectively; and
 - ii) Giving youth the opportunity to have greater participation in Council processes and in informing decision-making.
- 4.2 Improve the recreational opportunities in our District by:
 - i) Ensuring that the District has a range of public recreational facilities and activities to meet the needs of youth;
 - ii) Encouraging the development of other non-Council recreational facilities and activities in our District.
- 4.3 Ensure that the youth of our District are employable by:
 - i) Encouraging greater access to quality tertiary education and training opportunities;
 - ii) Helping broaden the scope of employment opportunities available to youth within the District;
 - iii) Encouraging the development of a youth-friendly business environment within the District, where the employment of youth is made a high priority and value is placed on youth returning to the district after training.

5 Continuing consultation and review

- 5.0 As per the principle stated at 3.2 above in relation to effective communication and consultation, WDC will regularly undertake District-wide consultation with youth. This will be at an operational level and a district level. Operational consultation will occur regularly through a Youth Advisory Group. At a District level, consultation will be at least every three years measuring issues which affect them.
- 6.0 WDC will report annually detailing its actions affecting youth, for the preceding 12 months, which advance the principles and goals of this policy.
- 7.0 WDC will initiate a review of this policy, as well as actions and decisions made by WDC in accordance with this policy, at least once every three years for the purposes of:
 - 7.1 Determining the effectiveness of the policy;
 - 7.2 Determining what changes (if any) need to be made to the policy to make it more effective or as a reflection of the changing environment and needs of youth.
 - 7.3 Providing recommendations to WDC as to what steps and actions to take in terms of implementation for a revised policy.