

Whangarei District Council

Youth Policy

***Policy
#0077***

Policy title			
Audience (Primary)	External	Business Owner (Dept)	Community Development
Policy Author	Jacki Cooper and Claire Wilson	Review Date	19/11/2023

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out a range of principles and goals to guide Whangarei District Council (WDC) in making decisions relating to youth.

2. Background

The WDC Youth policy was prepared following a 2012 consultation with young people in the District between 12 and 24 years of age. Feedback was designed, collected and collated by Council's Youth Advisory Group.

Two issues, employment and recreation, stood out as being most important to youth. Increased engagement with youth was also identified as an area that needed to be strengthened.

The Youth Advisory Group first reviewed the policy in 2016 and then again in 2019. In 2019, the Youth Advisory Group agreed that the policy's principles and goals were still important to Whangārei being a vibrant, attractive and thriving district for youth and requested that Council also commit to the use of plain English when engaging with young people.

3. Council's role in youth participation

Whangārei will be an inclusive, resilient and sustainable District where all young people can learn, earn, play and have their say.

Council's key role is to encourage its partners, both private and public, to work together with Council to maximise employment, recreation, and participation opportunities for our young people.

4. Principles

1. Recognising that youth are an important part of the community. Informed consideration should be given to their feedback in order to meet the present and future needs of the Whangārei District.
2. Building and maintaining good relationships with youth. This requires effective communication and consultation, taking youth views and feedback into account and these being visible in decision making.
3. Supporting effective relationships between youth and key community stakeholders.
4. Acknowledging that contributions from youth make the Whangārei District a better place to live.

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5. Goals

Council will enhance consideration of youth views on the District, and in decisions that it makes that affect youth, by:

- communicating and consulting youth effectively and efficiently;
- using plain English to improve communication and information sharing with young people; and
- providing youth with opportunities to have their say in Council processes and decision-making.

Council will improve the recreational opportunities in our District by:

- ensuring that the District has a range of safe and accessible public recreational spaces, places and activities to meet the needs of youth;
- encouraging the development of other non-Council recreational spaces, places and activities in our District.

Council seeks to improve the employability of our District's youth by:

- encouraging greater access to quality tertiary education and training opportunities;
- helping to increase the range of employment opportunities available to youth within the District;
- encouraging the development of a business environment where youth employment is made a high priority and value is placed on youth returning to the District after training.

6. Continuing consultation and review

Every three years, Council will consult with the Youth Advisory Group, and the wider youth community, to review this policy along with actions and decisions made by WDC, to determine:

- the effectiveness of the policy;
- what changes (if any) need to be made to the policy to make it more effective, or to reflect the changing environment and needs of youth;
- any recommendations, steps and actions needed to implement a revised policy.

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Policy Review

This Policy was reviewed in 2019 and this revised Policy was updated as follows:

Date of meeting: 19/11/2020

By: Community Development Committee