

Rotorua Lakes Youth Council

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Profile

The Rotorua Lakes Youth Council (RLYC) is a team of diverse young people aged 13-18 yrs, representing various ethnicities, age, geographic location, gender & experience. They provide a youth perspective to what the Rotorua Lakes Council does and other issues affecting young people. The RLYC plays an active role in ensuring that the collective “voice” of the youth population is heard and represented throughout the community. This is achieved by:

- **Volunteering in various community based events and activities**
- **Liaising with Rotorua Lakes Council and other Key decision makers within the community**
- **Networking with various youth based organizations and agencies**
- **Raising awareness of the positive contributions young people make to our community**
- **Engaging in positive and constructive social activism**

The purpose of the Youth Council is to:

- Strengthen engagement between Rotorua Lakes Council and young people and build young people’s knowledge of Community, Council and Central Government processes to enable them to participate in community decision-making processes.
- Build the Community, Council and Central Government’s knowledge of the needs of young people and how these can best be met.
- Work towards greater youth involvement in decision making on boards and committees

Description

RLYC members generally meet every second Tuesday (4pm to 6pm) at the Rotorua Lakes Council. Meetings begin in late February and operate until mid-December. Depending on project workload, additional meetings may take place. The RLYC works under the direction of the Youth Coordinator in order to fulfil their goals and objectives.

Youth Council’s group communication is made primarily on social media, i.e. Facebook.

The Youth Council is also only one means the Council will use to obtain input from young people. The group does not remove or reduce the Council’s responsibilities to obtain input from other young people through other means.

Responsibilities

Members are required to:

- attend formal meetings
- attend training and project meetings
- work on project teams between meetings
- be available to attend any other training/meetings that may occur (not mandatory but strongly advised)
- feedback Youth Council information to their networks, schools, Facebook, boards, committees, etc.
- bring youth issues to the Youth Council
- assist Rotorua Lakes Council to canvas youth views.

In return for their commitment, Rotorua Lakes Council will provide members with:

- training to fulfil their role as a Youth Council member, including leadership training
- opportunities to attend conferences/seminars

- opportunities to be a youth representative on various working parties/project teams/boards/committees when available
- assistance with transport remuneration to and from meetings

Liaison with other advisory/service groups

The Council has other advisory groups – and is seeking increased cooperation between those groups. Youth Council members may occasionally be asked to attend meetings of the other groups to share information. The RLYC will also be encouraged to join and participate in service groups.

Membership

The Youth Council will comprise of a maximum of 16 members. Members need to:

- be between 13-18years of age
- live within the boundaries of Rotorua District
- have the ability to work with other people and work in a team
- be proactive
- **be committed to attending meetings regularly**

It is expected that the membership will provide broad representation, with consideration given to:

- gender
- disability
- geographical location
- education level (not attending school, secondary school, university – including diversity of the three)
- employment (employed and unemployed)
- diverse cultural backgrounds

Positions

A Chair and Deputy Chair will be reviewed in March/April.

The role of the Chair is to:

- work with Council officers to compile the agenda
- run the meeting according to the set agenda
- be the spokesperson for the Youth Council as required (ie at Council committee meetings, to the media).

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair will run the meeting.

There are also other roles on the Youth Council that Youth Councillors can apply for, such as Treasurer & Secretary.

Removal

If a Youth Council member misses two meetings in a row without providing an apology, their membership on the Youth Council will cease.

In the event of gross misconduct by a Youth Council member, dismissal from the Youth Council may be required by the Youth Coordinator .

Selection Process

Rotorua Lakes Council will call for expressions of interest from 13-18year olds from within the city's boundaries via a number of different media (newspapers, approaches to schools and polytechnics, the Council website).

Young people interested in participating will be asked to complete an application and encouraged to attend an interview if shortlisted for the Youth Council.

Shortlisted applicants will be interviewed by key staff members and one or two members of the Youth Council.

Term of Appointment

Any person appointed to the Youth Council shall be appointed for one year. Any person wanting to be a Youth Councillor can only be appointed for a maximum of two years.

Current members of the Youth Council must re-apply for Youth Council, if they wish to be a member for the following year.

If a Youth Council member resigns during the year, the Youth Council is able to co-opt new members for the remainder of the year, with consideration to the time of year. Council officers will encourage local secondary schools and youth service providers to submit the name of one or more persons who it may be appropriate to co-opt.

Those identified will be encouraged to attend a meeting of the Youth Council prior to their appointment being considered.

Reporting

An annual report will be presented to the appropriate Council committee. The report will review the operation and achievements of the Youth Council against its Terms of Reference.

Administration

Council officers will oversee the administration of the Youth Council. Officers will write minutes (when the Youth Council secretary/any other Youth Councillor is unavailable), compile the agenda in collaboration with the Chair and provide general administrative and advisory support.

Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed every three years. All changes to the Terms of Reference will be subject to the approval of the appropriate Rotorua Lakes Council committee and the Council.

Conduct

Members of the Youth Council cannot in any way claim to represent the Rotorua Lakes Council or the views of the Rotorua Lakes Council.