

**✠ Appendix II: Christchurch City Council
Youth Policy (1992)**

Principles

The following are the principles guiding the implementation of this policy for young people. The age definition of this policy refers to the 11-24 years age group. This has been influenced by the Children Young Persons and their Families Act and the age parameters applicable to the Unemployment Benefit for youth.

1. A Youth Policy provides an opportunity for the Council to be responsive to the needs of young people. This responsiveness is in accordance with the Council's Mission Statement which refers to:

(a) reflect responsiveness to local needs:

(b) provide advocacy for the total community, and an expression of local identity;
and

(c) enhance the local environment

2. In addressing the needs of young people, the Council will act in a manner sensitive to the aspirations of young people of all ethnic and cultural groups, and those with special needs.

3. In addressing and identifying youth needs, the Council should work with the community, those working with young people and young people themselves.

Policy objectives

1. To ensure the views and opinions of youth from a diversity of cultural, social and economic backgrounds are sought on a regular basis, and in particular on major issues of joint interest.

Explanation

Young people make up almost 25% of the city's population. As a group, their needs and expectations are different from other sectors of the population. Ensuring that Council services address the needs of youth requires a conscious effort to identify concerns and issues.

Current and Possible Future Involvement

Consultation with young people presently takes place through:

- ◇ The Council's involvement with and support of the Christchurch Youth Council
- ◇ Council staff liaising with youth organisations
- ◇ Youth Council representatives on the Council's Cultural and Social Services Committee
- ◇ Liaison with those working with youth at risk

Future means for increasing youth consultation could include such possibilities as:

- ◇ Youth representatives or consultative groups working with Community Boards
- ◇ The encouragement of youth representatives on to Community Centre Management Committees

2. Where possible to provide facilities and resources to encourage the development of positive programmes and activities which meet the current social, cultural and recreational needs of young people.

Explanation

The Council is a major provider of facilities, and services which contribute towards meeting the recreational, social and cultural needs of residents. It also contributes

resources to community initiatives which complement the Council's own activities. This objective is to ensure youth needs are taken into account when starting new programmes or assessing funding priorities. Providing positive opportunities for young people will benefit the country as a whole.

Current and Possible Future Involvement

Current involvement includes such things as:

- ◇ Advisory services provided by Council staff
- ◇ Various Council parks, stadiums, swimming complexes and community centres
- ◇ Grants to young people by Community Boards to attend Outward Bound type courses
- ◇ Grants through community funding schemes and Community Board discretionary funds
- ◇ Funding and administering of school holiday programmes
- ◇ Providing rent free accommodation for the Youth Resource Centre
- ◇ The community van
- ◇ Council support of Youth Council initiatives

Future possibilities could include such things as:

- ◇ Working with schools to increase the use of school facilities by the community outside school hours
- ◇ Encouraging the development of youth programmes by reducing fees charged for facility hire to youth organisations
- ◇ Making available low cost rental housing to groups working with youth with special needs eg. at risk youth trapped by economic circumstances in alternative care accommodation

3. To make every endeavour to provide Council services and facilities which are accessible to young people regardless of their circumstances.

Explanation

In the provision of services, facilities and resources, the Council must be mindful that some young people are often excluded because of their personal or social circumstances. Young people, because of a disability, their economic situation or ethnic group, may find themselves excluded from the mainstream of existing opportunities. This objective requires the Council to take these, and other factors, into consideration when establishing programmes and expenditure priorities.

Current and Possible Future Involvement

Accessibility to Council services and facilities is presently encouraged by:

- ◇ Greater standardised youth discounts
- ◇ The inclusion of young people who are unemployed, full time students or unwaged in youth discounts to ensure accessibility to facilities and activities

4. To encourage co-ordination in the development and provision of programmes and services for youth.

Explanation

Many agencies, including statutory, non-statutory, voluntary and private are involved in providing and resourcing youth activities and services.

While the Council is also a provider, it is also well placed to encourage and facilitate the efficient and effective use of existing resources. This objective suggests that the Council should act to ensure that any duplication in services and funding to youth is reduced and that such services and funding is equitably distributed across the city.

Current and Possible Future Involvement

Current co-ordination taken place through such things as:

- ◇ Council staff liaising and supporting the Canterbury Youth Work Training Forum
- ◇ Council Staff liaising with Youth Organisations and sharing information with such groups
- ◇ The development of a Youth Resource Booklet

Future possibilities for co-ordination could include:

- ◇ A one-off Youth Worker Forum. Follow up reports could then be sent to participants and to Council. An evaluation by participants could determine the need for ongoing forums
- ◇ A newsletter to youth organisations in Christchurch

Conclusion

A Youth Policy is a commitment by the Council to the young people of the city. It is an acknowledgment that young people are a significant and valuable part of the community with specific and identifiable needs.

Research reveals that as a group, the needs of young people are significant and have future implications for the well-being of the city. A Youth Policy provides a framework for future work in attempting to address these needs.

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