Council Policy Manual

YOUTH POLICY

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Contents

PREAMBLE to the POLICY 3
PURPOSE of the POLICY 3
SCOPE of the POLICY 3
POLICY STATEMENT 3
DEFINITIONS 4
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW 4

PREAMBLE to the POLICY

Young people aged 10 to 25 years form approximately 25% of the Brewarrina LGA population, and are a significant group of our community. Young people face a number of transitions in moving to their futures and experience important social and psychological changes. These transitions can be extremely difficult requiring intensive support from family and the community.

Council believes that the continued, increasing incidence of youth unemployment, homelessness, drug and alcohol, and mental health problems for young people requires a whole of government coordinated and strategic approach. Therefore our focus is to work in collaboration with other government agencies with young people to strengthen their resilience, protect them against risk, and promote their broad social health and wellbeing.

PURPOSE of the POLICY

To consult, plan and lobby for the provision of and access to social, recreational, cultural, economic, and informational services and facilities for young people.

This document is to establish a framework for Brewarrina Shire Council to meet the needs of young people in our community.

SCOPE of the POLICY

Applies to young people living or spending significant time within Brewarrina Shire Council Local
Government Area.

POLICY STATEMENT

Brewarrina Shire Council affirms its respect for all young people and acknowledges their right to be involved in matters which impact on their quality of life and aspirations for the future.

Brewarrina Shire Council will recognise youth needs in existing consultative, planning and service functions to ensure young people's needs are catered for in accordance with the principles of access and equity.

Brewarrina Shire Council acknowledges:
The important role young people play in the social, economic and cultural life of the community – now and into the future;

- Young people's right to participate in local affairs and recognises the need to encourage their involvement as future voters and community leaders;
- The diversity of young people's interests and cultural backgrounds, and their need for cultural and artistic expression;
- The central role education, training, employment, and access to social support play in enabling young people to participate in community life and equip them for the future; and

- Councils' have a leadership role in understanding and responding to the needs of young people, and representing their interests to other spheres of Government and the broader community.

Brewarrina Shire Council supports:

- Participatory structures and membership that reflects the diverse interests and cultural backgrounds of young people locally;
- Partnerships and shared responsibility between Councils, young people, other spheres of government and with community agencies to foster collaborative responses and enhanced access to affordable community services and support;
- The participation of young people in fun activities to learn new skills, develop capacity to participate in community life, and which engender community spirit and pride; and
- Review and monitoring of trends, and responsive and flexible approaches to address emerging youth issues in culturally appropriate ways.

Brewarrina Shire Council commits to:

- Fostering a safe community where young people are respected, have opportunities to belong, and feel they are valued in the community;
- Enhancing communication with young people – listening, responding and providing feedback about matters impact on their quality of life;
- Involving young people in meaningful ways in civic life, such as planning and decision making processes, and in voting and elections;
- Promoting a positive image about the role young people play in the community and celebrating their achievements; and
- Representing the needs of young people to community agencies and other spheres of Government, and advocating for the provision of infrastructure to enable young people to access accommodation, social, educational and employment opportunities, and support services.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy **Young People or Youth** are people 10 to 25 years of age.

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW

January 2018.