



## MINUTES

### YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

held on 25 August at 4.00pm via Microsoft Teams Meeting.

**Present:** Kristie Lawson, Coordinator Young Communities, Melton City Council  
Katriona Gauci, Team Leader Engagement and Activation, Melton City Council  
Leanne Getson-Ballan, Engagement and Activation, Melton City Council  
Cr Bob Turner, Councillor, Melton City Council  
Rene de Sant'Anna, Odyssey House Victoria  
Brandon Rogers, Young Person  
Kiara Churchman, Young Person  
Imarsha Pathirana, Young Person  
Binusha Pathirana, Young Person  
Marie-Claire Kasukulu, Young Person  
Jayden Erol, Young Person

**Chairperson:** Marie-Claire Kasukulu, Young Person

**1. Welcome and acknowledgement to Country.**

Marie-Claire welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the three guest speakers (Rene de Sant'Anna, Frank Newah-Jarfoi and Yvette Medina).

**2. Apologies**

Cr Yvonne Sebire, Councillor, Melton City Council  
Cr Steve Abboushi, Councillor, Melton City Council  
Makaile Mirabelli, Young Person

**3. Declaration of interests and/or conflict of interests**

Nil

**4. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting**

**Youth Forum**

Cr Bob Turner mentioned that the speakers at this years' forum were top class and one of the best youth events he has ever attended.

Marie-Claire was impressed with the amount of young people who were interested and passionate about making a change. One of the things that really stood out was that even though students are being affected by mental health that teachers are doing a great job during the Pandemic.

**Discussion of Youth Initiatives ; EYTS program and Good Stories initiative**

The previous minutes were confirmed by the participants.

## 5. General Business

### 6.1 Area of Interest

- Youth Forum Update

YC is currently contacting the schools to engage the young people who participated in the forum on the night. Expressions of interest are currently open for young people to join YAC and to participate in the upcoming projects. This has been sent to the schools and also to the young people who participated in the recent Whitten project.

Katriona mentioned that the following ideas came out of the forum - Public transport, facilities for young people to study, a youth hub for young people and a transition program into high schools. The YAC were encouraged to show interest in exploring any of the ideas for potential areas of growth, personal development and leadership opportunities. Katriona mentioned that the group will receive leadership training in the near future.

Kristie asked the YAC if they enjoyed the forum and if they had any feedback from the night. Imarsha mentioned that during the group discussions there was not enough time, which Kristie agreed with Imarsha.

Kristie mentioned from a Young Communities perspective, she agreed with Cr Turner that the event was top class as the team has received lots of feedback with rich discussions with young people and what people perceive to be issues for the community.

Young Communities will be working with schools and identifying participants to join YAC. Kristie mentioned that all of the information that came out the forum goes into forward planning of the MACFAP action plan. This document is currently in draft format to be signed off by the Council Executive. The thing for the group to keep in mind is that Council is always looking at ways to keep the conversations and opportunities open for future collaboration through new plans, actions and initiatives into the next year.

### Areas of Interest and Growth

Marie-Claire mentioned that it would be a good idea to get the YAC involved in the actual running of the forum next year with more hands on would show its more youth based. This would be good to empower the YAC members to get leadership opportunities. Katriona fully supported these comments. Katriona mentioned that there are new members that have currently come on board, with six spots available now moving forward with leadership opportunities on offer.

### 6.3 Upcoming projects/events

Group discussion and brainstorm session

Katriona opened the discussion with the outcomes from the forum being (Mental Health, Multi-cultural and Indigenous programs)

Mental health – improve mental health services out of school hours. Improving communication links between different support services or creating new initiatives. Kiara has expressed interest in working in this area.

Katriona asked when we talk about mental health, what are the areas or point of interest or area of challenge for our community?

Rene mentioned that the second lock down of COVID, with the curfews and masks have produced much anxiety for young people. When young people get bored they may turn to alcohol and other drugs and the challenges around sourcing and being discreet when using as Parents, friends, school and support networks may not be aware of the level of dependence.

Rene spoke about his levels of anxiety around wearing a mask in the supermarket. Katriona mentioned that these are all new challenges for the community.



## MINUTES

The service that Rene represents, Odyssey House Victoria, is trying to service clients as usual, through telehealth, zoom meetings, being more private and the successful use of technology.

Odyssey House used to have 5 beds in detox, however it is now down to only 2 beds and down from 10 days to 7 days. The new protocols of PPE for services and clients is a big change.

Local services still operating, Headspace, counselling services and an increase via GP's with 20 free sessions to a Psychologist.

There is a lack of awareness for young people and how to inform them about these changes.

Kristie asked the group what might be the first step for Young Communities on how to provide information to young people and how they access it?

Yvette indicated from a schools perspective if Council could filter down information to relevant contacts in schools. Each school would be accountable to inform students via tools and information sharing platforms.

Jayden mentioned a secondary YAC committee in the schools where information sharing can occur between both committees would be worth exploring.

Yvette runs a youth empowerment program – young leaders that can work with the YAC and the Staughton community, Melton CRC and all of the other schools in the municipality.

Rene mentioned that Facebook and other social media platforms could be utilised for young people in partnership with service providers and Council. All you would do is ask a generic question and a set of answers to those questions. Mini commercials of services in the area through generic questions via Facebook maybe another option. YAC said that it would be helpful but dependant on what platform is used and the audience that it is reaching.

Brendan and other YAC members advised that the most popular platform is Instagram and Tik-Toc to reach young people. Kristie indicated that it would be a good idea to have a multi-prong approach over a number of different platforms.

Katriona is going to get the Council officer who runs the Instagram platform will attend the next meeting to talk about mental health. Kiara and Imarsha offered to work on this project.

Katriona indicated that YAC could see what services would be interested in participating and start thinking about what topics the group could offer on a quarterly basis.

Multicultural and indigenous programs - Yvette has a background in CALD being an engagement leader at Staughton College. The school has 8 young people who are cultural ambassadors. COVID has put all of the plans for 2020 on hold. There was discussion amongst the group with an initiative that Wyndham City Council has "Faces of Wyndham through 100 portraits".

There are too many services in the community that young people do not know where to go for help and need guidance and support.

Rene mentioned that he has seen first-hand in Coburg a human library concept from Denmark.

Instead of borrowing a book, you can book a session with an actual person and sit down and talk to them for 10 minutes. These are everyday people, retired people and refugees.

Rene mentioned a great initiative for harmony day is where students travel around the world via a passport and then visit stalls to hear a story about their country, Great initiative for harmony day. Sharing of information from other countries and nationalities.

Kristie asked the group if students are feeling burnt out from learning online through school, plus with friends and online forums. Kiara said that each school is handling the online learning differently, however for those that are learning for six hours per day it is exhausting and challenging.

MINUTES

Katriona asked about the level of aboriginal culture education in primary schools during the transition from year 6 to 7. Yvette mentioned that aboriginal culture lacks during the transitional period and it's just more a tick box for most students. Yvette – mentioned that the aboriginal kids and culture lacks during the transition.

Katriona thanked Yvette, Frank and Rene for attending the meeting.

**Action**

Katriona to continue discussions with the YAC members on what projects they are interested in participating in moving forward.

**6. Other Business**

Nil

**7. Next Meeting**

YAC Members – Tuesday 1 Sept, 2020

YAC Members & Councillors Tuesday 27 October, 2020

**8. Close of Business**

The meeting closed at 5:10pm