

## **2023 Gladstone Region Youth Council Advisory Committee Annual Report:**

### **Youth Council Onboarding**

The Gladstone Regional Council Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February actioned the endorsement of 11 new Youth Council members. The endorsed members are as follows:

1. Tayla Bullen
2. Jakob Humphries
3. Jiexi Zang
4. Rommiel Malig
5. Jessica Toms
6. Chloe Sydes
7. Rachel Smith
8. Daniel Trainer
9. Emma Roulston
10. Alahnie Rozycki
11. Georgia Mossman

The Youth Council began their journey in early February 2023 with training on Youth Council Governance Procedures. This training was conducted by Council's governance team at the Council Chambers and gave the newly appointed Youth Council an overview of the various responsibilities of being a Youth Councillor and an introduction to the governing laws relevant to operating in the Local Government field.

On February 20, Council hosted a meet and greet function at the Council Chambers to welcome the newly endorsed members where they had the opportunity to introduce themselves, meet the CEO and General Managers and the Mayor and Councillors and receive their Youth Council resource packs and shirts. The Mayor and Councillors with the Executive Leadership Team gave the Youth Council an overview of their role in council, and this has been very helpful for the committee in understanding how Council operates and its various functions.

The call was put out in March to members who were interested in nominating for the Youth Council Chairperson and Vice Chairperson role with members stepping up to take the lead and to give a speech as to why they were seeking nomination. After a vote was taken, and overseen by Mayor Burnett, the Youth Council officially welcomed the newly elected Chairperson Tayla Bullen and Vice Chairperson Jakob Humphries.

The onboarding, meet and greet event, training and election process plays a key role in welcoming the new members to Council and creating a safe learning environment to pave the way for a successful and productive year.

### **Youth Council Meetings**

On April 17<sup>th</sup> the first official Youth Council meeting was held and overseen by the newly elected Chairperson and Vice chairperson. Throughout the year, the Mayor and Councillors also attended the meetings for Q and A sessions to gain insight and information on their experience working in the Local Government sector. This allowed for the Youth Council to build relationships, be provided with mentoring opportunities and gain industry insight from seasoned professionals.

The Youth Council meetings in 2023 also saw attendance from external guests including the team from Gladstone Festival and Events, YMCA and Queensland Youth Parliament member Bianca Duong. These

attendances at council meetings gave the opportunity for the Youth Council to hear about other local and state organisations doing their bit for the community, exchange information and ideas, and offer feedback from a youth perspective.

The Youth Council meetings give an opportunity to experience firsthand what it is like to participate as a Formal Advisory Committee member, learn about Local Government Legislation in relation to advisory committees, undertake the responsibilities of upholding the Terms of Reference, adhering to meeting procedures and formal documentation of meeting minutes and agendas.

## **2023 Projects and Events**

The 2023 Youth Council have consistently demonstrated their commitment to their community by actively being involved in training, meetings, workshops and events to better their understanding of local government operations, to actively represent young people in the region and to contribute positively to the community. Several major events and projects were on the Youth Council calendar during 2023 which gave the opportunity for the team to be challenged, develop skills and experience and demonstrate their commitment to the community.

### **1. The Youth Council Action Plan**

Throughout 2023, The Youth Council Action Plan project saw skills and passions come to life as the team worked with various stakeholders and strengthened their team relationships to build the Gladstone Region Youth Council 2024 – 2025 Action Plan. In May, the team undertook training conducted by the Jeder Institute on Community Building and learned how they can turn community ideas into action. This session was interactive, informative, and highly valued by the team in giving them the tools required to move forward with the Action Plan project.

Following the training, each Youth Council member was appointed as project leads of the six Key Priority Areas of Environment, Education, Employment, Health, Equity & Discrimination and Social Issues and in the following months worked hard to develop the final 10 action items.

In November, the Action Plan draft was shared among relevant stakeholders for feedback and finalised in December. The Youth Council worked individually and as a collective throughout the year to create a cohesive action plan and the skills and experience gained by the Youth Council during this period instilled confidence, citizenship and a can-do attitude that will keep them in good stead for their future endeavours.

### **2. Mayor's Youth Breakfast**

In August, the Youth Council hosted the Mayors Youth Breakfast at the Gladstone Entertainment and Convention Centre to coincide with International Youth Day. This year saw a record number of 250 nominations for young people across the Gladstone Region and was attended by young people from Agnes Water through to Mount Larcom and everywhere in between. Young people in the region were recognised for their sporting, cultural or community achievements as nominated by members of the community.

Guests were provided with a personalised certificate of recognition from Mayor Burnett on stage and were treated to a full buffet breakfast and special gift cookie. This year's event allowed for young people to bring a loved one with them to help celebrate their achievements.

Tayla Bullen and Jakob Humphries did a fabulous job hosting the event while Chloe Sydes, Jiexi Zang, Emma Roulston and Alahnie Rozycki provided attendees insight on what it is like to be a Youth Council member via an entertaining and informative Q and A style panel.

Overall, the whole team contributed to the planning and management of the event gaining the opportunity to learn about creating community events, run sheets, budgets, and risk management plans as well as honing their skills in public speaking. The result was a highly enjoyable and meaningful event recognising the wonderful achievements of our young people in the region.

### **3. Sunset Cinema @ the Precinct**

October 11 saw the Youth Council host their second major event of the year for young people, the aptly named Sunset Cinema @ the Precinct. The team collaborated with the Community Partnerships team and our Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct Partners, the Salvation Army to create a safe and welcoming space for young people to have a good time at Precinct parklands. Representatives from Headspace and Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) were on hand to provide professional advice and to help raise awareness and support for Mental Health Week. Approximately 60 attendees were entertained with the Australian coming of age movie, 'Sweet As', while they were treated to a free sausage sizzle, slushies and popcorn in the beautiful Precinct amphitheatre. This event was planned in conjunction with Queensland Mental Health Week campaign focusing on 'Awareness, Belonging and Connection' and was a wonderful example of young people creating spaces and events for their peers to enjoy.

### **4. Community Events**

The Youth Council attended several community functions and meetings throughout the year including the Coordinated Community Response to Domestic and Family Violence Remembrance Day for victims of Domestic Violence, Volunteers Week Recognition Events, Sport and Active Living Expo, National Tree Day at Cashin Park and Welcoming Week event held at the Philip Street Precinct. These activities have given the Youth Council valuable exposure to working in partnerships with community organisations across the region as well as providing a youth perspective on community issues.

### **5. 2024 Youth Council Campaign**

In October, applications for the 2024 Youth Council commenced with the current cohort of members playing a major role in the promotions of this activity by conducting talks at school assemblies, sharing social media, submitting news stories and promotional items to school newsletters as well as participating in video clips promoting the Youth Council advertised on social media.

In December, interviews for new Youth Council members were held with members of the current Youth Council on the interview panel with a representative from Council's Community Partnerships team. Council received 12 new applications and two current Youth Council members will be returning for another term in 2024.

### **Conclusion**

The 2023 Youth Council have had an active year which has seen a continued focus on what's strong in our youth community, identifying and mobilising youth assets, building young community leaders and focussing on what Youth Council can do to create the conditions for young people in the Gladstone region to thrive. The Youth Council will continue to advocate on behalf of young people, actively engage with young people and the broader community and collaborate with others to create

awareness and opportunities to participate and to build the confidence and capability of young people in the region.