

MAYORAL MINUTE

Congratulations to our Council Team

Council has been successful with a number of Awards over the past month, and I would like to acknowledge Council's hard-working staff.

We have won the Tidy Town Resource Recovery Award – Landfill to Circular Hub for Moss Vale Resource Recovery Centre.

Our Customer Service Team have taken out Customer Service Team of the Year for 2024 at the National Local Government Customer Service Network for their amazing work and in particular their development and implementation of the Customer Experience Charter and Standards.

Council has also won the Master Plumbers Association of NSW Awarded WSC Best-Tasting Tap Water in ACT & NSW 2024. The award, presented by the Water Industry Operations Association of Australia (WIOA), recognises the exceptional quality of our drinking water. Water samples from across the state were blind-tasted and judged on factors such as taste, clarity, and odour.

In addition, Council has won the LGNSW Excellence in the Environment Awards in the category of Natural Environment Protection and Enhancement: On-Ground Works for Future-Proofing Southern Highlands Koalas.

Establishment of a Youth Council

For far too long the youth in our community have been spoken for by adults in positions of authority, assuming we know what they want. Moving forward, I am committed to hearing from them directly and giving their voices the platform they deserve.

I consider the establishment of a Youth Council to be a powerful way to engage young people in civic life, foster leadership, and ensure that youth perspectives are considered in decision-making processes.

The Council can play an important role in creating a way for young people to have a say in decisions about their community. Piloting a Youth Council gives us a chance to connect with young people, shows them that their ideas matter, and helps them get involved in community life.

A Youth Council would represent the views of young people on local issues, advise on youth programs, or advocate for policies that affect youth. It aims to foster civic engagement, build leadership skills and create a more inclusive and youth-friendly community.

Attached is the proposed Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Youth Council. Once the Youth Council is set up, it will be important to gather more input from young people to make sure their voices are heard.

The plan is to launch the Youth Council in April 2025. This gives enough time for staff to consult with schools and make sure that young people are fully involved in the process.

The administrative support and help from the Community Development team during meetings and the Youth Forum will be provided using the current staff and resources.

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Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Note the recent successes of the Council Team in the Tidy Town Resource Recovery Award, National Local Government Customer Service Network and Master Plumbers Association of NSW Awards.**
- 2. Pilot a Youth Council for a 12-month period launching in Youth Week in April 2025.**
- 3. Adopt the proposed Terms of Reference (ToR) as included in Attachment 1 to this Minute.**
- 4. Note the Mayor is a non-voting member of the Youth Council.**
- 5. Appoint Councillor Champion as a non-voting member to the Youth Council for the period April 2025 - April 2026.**
- 6. Request the General Manager undertake review of the Youth Council following conclusion of the pilot in April 2026 and report outcomes back to Council by June 2026.**