EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the achievements of the MYPRG; endorse a change in membership number in the Terms of Reference and endorse the appointment of young people to the MYPRG.

The report also recommends Council to acknowledge Jeremy Yam for his commitment to the MYPRG.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS/ISSUES

The MYPRG functions as a consultation panel of young people that provides input into the development of Council policy and planning frameworks and acts as a conduit for the positive promotion of young people’s ideas and achievements. This report details some of the 2013 key achievements and issues discussed including mental health, homelessness, race based discrimination and environmental sustainability.

The contributions of all resigning members are acknowledged and appreciated. This report highlights Jeremy Yam who was a founding member of the MYPRG and who was an especially involved and committed member of the group.

To fill vacancies the MYPRG continually seek membership from young people aged 14 –25 who live, go to school, or work in the City of Monash. Ms Lizzy Kouth, Mr Kamran Shad, Mr Jacob Kotaridis and Ms Tienyi Long were interviewed by a panel consisting of Cr Lo, Council Officers and MYPRG members. After 2 years of membership, Mr Nick Kong, Ms Mizna Shahbaz and Mr Sebastian Purcell seeks reappointment to the MYPRG, consistent with the Terms of Reference.

CONCLUSION

The MYPRG continues to represent young people’s views and provides the opportunity to include young people in Council’s consultation processes. In addition, it enables Council to raise the profile of the positive achievements and contributions made by young people within the Monash community.
RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1) Acknowledges the resignation of the following members from the Monash Young Persons Reference Group and acknowledges their contributions to the City of Monash: Ms Eileen Liu, Mr Cadell Sanderson, Mr Jeremy Yam, Ms Gabby Fowler and Mr Daniel Crowe;

2) Accepts the appointment of Ms Lizzy Kouth, Mr Kamran Shad, Mr Jacob Kotaridis and Ms Tienyi Long to the Monash Young Persons Reference Group;

3) Accepts the reappointment of Mr Nick Kong, Ms Mizna Shahbaz and Mr Sebastian Purcell to the Monash Young Persons Reference Group;

4) Acknowledges Jeremy Yam for his commitment to the MYPRG since the group was founded in early 2007;

5) Endorses an amendment to the Terms of Reference in relation to membership from one Councillor representative to two Councillor representatives; and

6) Notes the achievements of the MYPRG for 2013.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the achievements of the MYPRG; endorse a change in membership number in the Terms of Reference and endorse the appointment of young people to the MYPRG.

The report also recommends Council to acknowledge Jeremy Yam for his commitment to the MYPRG.

BACKGROUND

In 2006, a proposal was put forward by one of Monash’s young people, Sankaran Kasynathan to enhance Council’s official recognition of young people’s views. On 18 July 2006, Council endorsed the recommendation that Council “Establishes a young person’s advisory committee, to be called the Young Persons Reference Group.” The MYPRG has met monthly since March 2007.
The advisory committee has two broad objectives. Firstly, it functions as a consultation panel of young people that provides input into the development of Council policy and planning frameworks and secondly it acts as a conduit for the positive promotion of young people’s ideas and achievements.

**DISCUSSION**

**Achievements for 2013**

The MYPRG provides an opportunity for Council and other organisations to consult with them on various topics as well as an opportunity for the members to have a voice about the issues important to the young people in Monash. In 2013 the MYPRG have undertaken the following:

- a) Provided input into a range of Council policies including: the Monash Youth Plan (and youth friendly version of this plan) and the Monash Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan;
- b) Provided input into a range of Council services including: Monash Youth and Family Service and Monash Public Library Service delivery;
- c) Collaborated with a number of projects for young people including: filming a documentary about youth homelessness and hosting a sleep-out during youth week, supporting the ‘A Window into Your Faith’ photography project and Glen Waverley street art/graffiti project;
- d) Presented as leaders at the primary school leadership day, Sports Without Boarders youth sports day, International Women’s Day panel discussion, International Student Welcome Event and at the All Schools Leadership Program;
- e) Discussed harm from gambling amongst young people, including youth led consultation and participation as a youth leader on a panel discussion; and

Recently the MYPRG identified current key issues for young people Monash as being: reducing race based discrimination and discrimination against asylum seekers, environmental sustainability and mental health amongst young people. The MYPRG will now build their understanding and determine how best they can raise awareness or make an impact about these issues.

**Change of Terms of Reference**

It is proposed that the Terms of Reference be amended in relation to its membership from one to two councillor representatives. The number of young people involved will remain with 19 young people. Please refer to a copy of the proposed Terms of Reference (attached).
**Members for endorsement or reappointment**

To fill vacancies the MYPRG continually seek membership from young people aged 14 –25 who live, go to school, or work in the City of Monash. Ms Lizzy Kouth, Mr Kamran Shad, Mr Jacob Kotaridis and Ms Tienyi Long were interviewed by a panel consisting of Cr Lo, Council Officers and MYPRG members. After 2 years of membership, Mr Nick Kong, Ms Mizna Shahbaz and Mr Sebastian Purcell seek reappointment to the MYPRG, consistent with the Terms of Reference.

As a result of the resignations and appointments in this report the group will have 15 of the maximum 20 endorsed members as per the Terms of Reference. A further five young people will be interviewed for membership early 2014.

**Acknowledgment of a founding member**

Jeremy Yam resigned from the MYPRG as one of the 2006 founding members of the MYPRG and has been a committed member of the group. Jeremy’s contributions have included:

a) designing the MYPRG logo;

b) producing the graphic designs for Natural Confidence positive body image projects; and

c) producing professional quality photos of the group that are now used in Council’s publications; and

d) providing regular input into the MYPRG as an advisory committee.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This report is consistent with the Council Plan, Council’s Access and Equity Framework 2013 – 2017 and the Monash Youth Plan 2013-2016.

**SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Monash Young Person’s Reference Group provides Council with the opportunity to directly engage and communicate with representatives from a cross section of the Monash community who provide advice to Council on issues relevant to young people; have broader input into the development of other Council policies and strategies; and support and advise Council with the implementation of the Monash Youth Plan.

**HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

This report is consistent with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 and in particular it relates to the following rights: (viii) freedom of expression and (xi) taking part in public life.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications resulting from this recommendation.

CONCLUSION

The MYPRG continues to represent young people’s views and provides the opportunity to include young people in Council’s consultation processes. In addition, it enables Council to raise the profile of the positive achievements and contributions made by young people within the Monash community.