



Youth Strategy 2014-2017



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Executive Summary

Youth Strategy (2014 – 2017)

Melton Youth Services has undertaken an extensive research and community engagement process to create the Youth Strategy.

The Youth Strategy will be used to guide Council's youth related service delivery and community development initiatives between July 2015 and June 2017 inclusive.

This strategy has been written in language that is easier for Young People to read and understand what we are trying to say, and what we are planning to do.

Because Young People aged between 10-25 represented 22.04% of the City of Melton's population at the last (2011) Census, it was important to use the Strategy process to make sure we understand what kind of future Young People want for themselves and the community, and make adjustments to our services to support that vision.

Because Young People represent just over one in five of all residents, Melton Youth Services designed an engagement process that would generate data relevant to service planning across the organisation and community.

To that end, this strategy incorporates youth appropriate planning ideas and considerations for many strategies already contained within the Council Plan.

The diagram below illustrates how the Youth Strategy fits with the Council Plan (2013 – 2017), Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (2013 – 2017) and other supporting Council plans and strategies in which actions relating to Young People already exist.



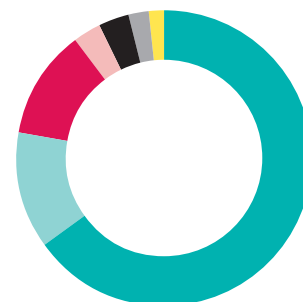
Engagement Data Summary

Melton Youth Services successfully engaged 1751 people throughout the strategy planning process using a variety of methods. Engagement participants responded to the question "How can we create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton?"

Postcards	1141
Youth Forum	223
School Workshops	208
Engagement Expos	57
Sector Workshops	56
Online Survey (Long)	39
Online Survey (Short)	27

1751

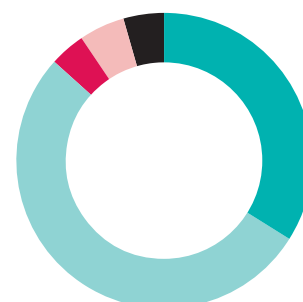
- Online Survey (Short) (1.54%)
- Online Survey (Long) (2.23%)
- Sector Workshops (3.20%)
- Engagement Expos (3.26%)
- School Workshops (11.88%)
- Youth Forum (12.74%)
- Postcard (65.16%)



Young People aged 10-25 comprised the majority of engagement participants at 90.75% (with 33.92% aged 10-13, 53% aged 14 – 17, 3.83% aged 18-25) 5.08% aged 26+, and 4.17% of inputs not recording age.

Age Range	Total Number				1141
	10 – 13	14 – 17	18 – 25	26+	
Postcards	370	694	52	8	17
Youth Forum	15	206	2	0	0
School Workshops	202	6	0	0	0
Expos	3	13	5	36	0
Sector Workshops	0	0	0	0	56
Survey (Long)	3	6	4	26	0
Survey (Short)	3	6	4	26	0
	594	928	67	89	73

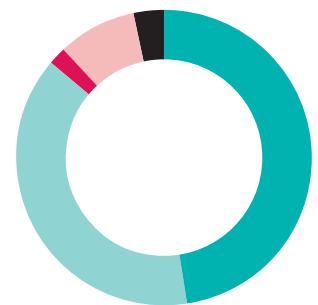
- N/A (4.17%)
- Aged 26+ (5.08%)
- Aged 18 - 25 (3.83%)
- Aged 14 - 17 (53.00%)
- Aged 10 - 13 (33.92%)



Participants were drawn from all areas of the Municipality, and some from outside its borders. Eastern Corridor residents comprised 47.63% of participants, Melton Township 38.66%, Smaller Townships (Including Diggers Rest, Eynesbury, Mount Cottrell, Plumpton, Rockbank and Toolern) 1.83%, and Outside Borders 8.68%.

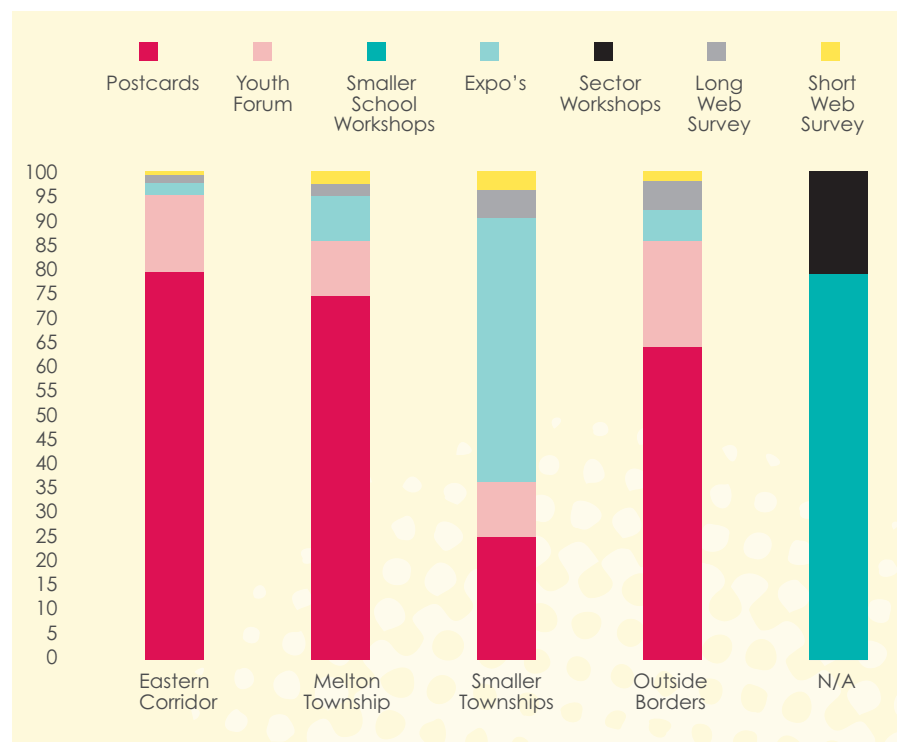
Residence	Total Number				
	EC	MT	SS	OB	N/A
Postcards	600	430	13	98	0
Youth Forum	120	65	6	32	0
School Workshops	79	129	0	0	0
Expos	16	23	8	10	0
Sector Workshops	0	0	0	0	56
Survey (Long)	13	14	3	9	0
Survey (Short)	6	16	2	3	0
	834	677	32	152	56

- N/A (3.20%)
- Outside Borders (8.68%)
- Smaller Townships (1.83%)
- Melton Township (38.66%)
- Eastern Corridor (47.63%)



The chart at right illustrates how successful each method was in engaging people from different parts of the community.

Engagement Expos and online surveys were far more successful in engaging community members from the Smaller Township areas of Diggers Rest, Eynesbury, Plumpton, Mount Cottrell, Rockbank, Truganina and Toolern.



Summary of Recommended Actions

Because Young People aged 10-25 represent over 1 in 5 of all City of Melton residents, it's important to consider how Council's work through Youth Services can contribute to both community and economic development overall.

The planning and engagement process used to create the Youth Strategy has been designed to make sure we understand what Young People want for their future and how we can act on those aspirations through the framework of the Council Plan (2013 – 2017).

The diagram below shows how the four key themes from the Youth Strategy fit with the four key themes from the Council Plan. The table over the page is designed as a quick summary and introduction to the recommended actions that make up Council's Youth Strategy.

In simple terms, we want to make it easier for Young People to participate in our programs, and for that participation to be more valuable. We also want to focus on improving educational, employment and health wherever we can.

The key actions that comprise the strategy are listed in the table overleaf >

Council Plan	Youth Strategy
Managing Our Growth	Safe, Vibrant & Connected Communities
A Well Governed & Leading Organisation	Engaging, Accessible & Youth-driven Services
Diverse, Confident & Inclusive Communities	Developing Education & Employment Services
Community Health & Wellbeing	Healthy & Thriving Young People

1.1	Safe, Vibrant and Connected Communities
1.1	Plan and provide facilities and services for future growth according to evidence based need.
1.2	Further develop youth leadership programs that build the skills, confidence and capacity of participants and their peer networks.
1.3	Develop youth engagement policies and processes to enhance council services, planning and decision making
1.4	Work with schools and youth governance group to develop inter-school arts and event projects to strengthen local identity and community connectedness.
1.5	Advocate with and for Young People to achieve improved community safety, services, sustainability and amenity.
1.6	Work with Young People, businesses, and education providers to develop innovative engagement initiatives, campaigns and events.
2.1	Engaging Accessible and Youth-Driven Services
2.1	Develop, resource and implement ongoing engagement initiatives to promote our services through strong and sustainable networks.
2.2	Enhance the skills, confidence and capacity of young program participants through contemporary Youth Development practice.
2.3	Develop policies and processes to improve program accessibility for transport disadvantaged participants.
2.4	Work in partnership with community groups to identify and address barriers to participation through co-created programs, services and projects.
2.5	Provide programs and services at the locations, times and duration of evidence based need.
2.6	Further enhance and promote programs, services and events as 'Access All Abilities.'
3.0	Developing Education and Employment Services
3.1	Work in partnership with schools and training providers to design and deliver future programs as education and employment pathways.
3.2	Further develop social enterprise programs and projects that improve the skills, confidence and capacity of Young People.
3.3	Further develop the vocational hospitality program to a youth cafe model.
3.4	Work with partners at a local and regional level for improved learning and employment outcomes.
4.0	Healthy and Thriving Young People
4.1	Work in partnership with relevant stakeholders to enhance and promote existing services.
4.2	Work with networks of Young People, agencies and service providers to identify and develop targeted wellbeing initiatives.
4.3	Attract and support the development of services to improve the health and wellbeing of Young People according to evidence based needs.
4.4	Engage Young People in the development and delivery of health promotion campaigns and initiatives.

1

Introduction

1.1 Our Community

Who are 'Young People?'

The City of Melton Youth Services currently deliver programs and services for Young People between the ages of 12 - 25.

There is some evidence from the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria that supports adding Young People between the ages of 10 and 12 because of the special difficulties experienced when transitioning from Primary to Secondary school, and the many other issues people have when growing up.

Because many Young People in the City of Melton share these difficulties, this Strategy will include the age ranges of 10-25 in the definition of Young People.

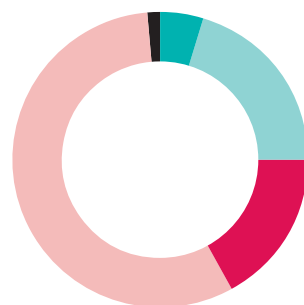
Young people aged 10 – 25 represent 22.04% of total resident population.

- Ages 0 - 9 (17.42%)
- Ages 10 - 17 (11.43%)
- Ages 18 - 25 (10.61%)
- Ages 26 - 64 (54.00%)
- Ages 65+ (6.55%)



Family Households represent 57.40% of all households in the City of Melton.

- Other Families (1.38%)
- Couples with Children (56.56%)
- One Parent Family (16.88%)
- Lone Person (20.43%)
- A Group and Other (4.75%)



Why are Young People so important to the City of Melton?

The City of Melton attracts many people that believe it's a good place to raise a family.

When the Australian Government measured the population in the last Census of 2011, the total population of the City of Melton was estimated to be 109,259 people - with over half all total households (57.40%) having Children and Young People under 18. In April 2014, the population had increased to an estimated 126,680 – a total of 14,510 new people.

At the last Census, there were 24, 071 Young People aged 10-25 – or 22.04% of the total city population. This means that just over one in every five people in the City of Melton were defined as 'Young People.'

Population forecasts from 'profile.id' project the growth trend will continue, with the total number of 10-25 year old people living in the City of Melton estimated to be 33,573 (20.3%) in 2021, and 47,746 (19.8%) in 2031.

Lastly, it is now more common for Young People to continue to live with parents long after they turn 18 while they pursue further study or gain financial independence. This means that the number of 18-25 year old residents remaining is also likely to grow steadily over time, with many of those Young People possibly choosing to raise young families in the area themselves.

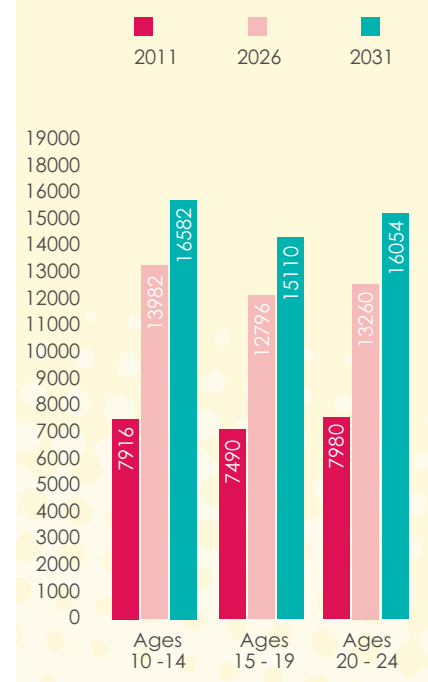
Because Young People are such an important part of the City of Melton, it is essential that we work together to make sure that the journey from childhood to adulthood is as healthy and happy as possible.

By listening to the voices and choices of Young People, the City of Melton can help other levels of Government to better understand how to get it right for local communities - or make local changes to help fix local problems.

The Youth Strategy contains important information that the community shared with us so we can work together to create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton.

The strategy explains how we asked the community for information, what information the community shared with us, how research on issues and evidence-based actions has informed our suggested directions, and what actions we recommend that the City of Melton and Youth Services take over the next few years to help create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton.

Between 2011 and 2031, young residents aged between 10 and 24 years old are forecast to increase by 24,360 – a total of 19.8%.



2

Methodology

2.1 Theory

Asset Based Community Development

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) is "Characterised by efforts to strengthen civil society. These efforts have focussed on how to engage people as citizens – rather than clients – in development." ABCD also stresses the importance of "[a]ppreciating and mobilising individual and community talents, skills and assets rather than focussing on problems or needs." (Cunningham 2002). The process and actions that comprise the Youth Strategy are informed by ABCD methodology.

Collective Impact

"The concept of collective impact hinges on the idea that in order for organisations to create lasting solutions to social problems on a large-scale, they need to coordinate their efforts and work together around a clearly defined goal" (Kania 2011) In designing the engagement process, consideration was given to capacity building and partnership brokering processes that would contribute to the sustainable implementation of the Youth Strategy and recommended actions.

IAP2 Engagement Spectrum

"Effective public participation acknowledges the desire for humans to participate in decisions that affect them. Public participation provides a means for incorporating the public's values, interests, needs and desires into decisions that affect their lives [and] encourages the public to provide meaningful input into the decision process" (IAP2 2006) The Youth Strategy process was informed by the 'International Association of Public Participation' engagement spectrum and associated methodology.

Strategic Foresight

Strategic Foresight is the process of "creat[ing] and sustain[ing] a variety of high quality forward views, and to apply the emerging insights in useful ways" (Hines 2006). The methodology of Framing, Scanning, Forecasting, Visioning, Planning and Acting has informed the Youth Strategy research and engagement process. Strategic Foresight has also informed the recommended actions so as to meet the challenges of today with a high quality, community-generated vision of tomorrow's better future.

2.2 Practice

April	17	Project commences	The Youth Strategy process begins with research about the current issues, and the planning of an engagement process using IAP2 methodology. As the strategy process is driven by tight deadlines, the 'Involve' level was selected for the project, with several 'Collaborate' opportunities embedded in project design.
May	1	Sector Workshop One	Workshop conducted at MYAN meeting to help frame the issues for further research and engagement. Begin drafting the Youth Strategy Discussion Paper as an engagement tool to aid public participation in the Strategy process.
June	26	Sector Workshop Two	Issues framework reported back to MYAN and used to design further research and engagement questions.
July	8	Present Discussion Paper	Attend Pre-Council meeting to present content of Youth Strategy Discussion Paper and outline strategy engagement process.
	26	ATSI Engagement	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Expo
August	1	Launch campaign	Advertising of online surveys, forums, expos and reply paid postcard campaign.
	2	Diggers Rest Expo	Diggers Rest Engagement Expo.
	5	Melton and CALD Expo	Melton and CALD Engagement Expo
	7	Disability World Cafe	Disability network meeting workshop
	9	Caroline Springs Expo	Caroline Springs Engagement Expo
	14	Youth Forum	Secondary School Student Youth Forum at Melton Youth Centre.
	16	Eynesbury Expo	Eynesbury Engagement Expo
	17	Rockbank Expo	Rockbank Engagement Expo
	19	Kororoit Primary	School based workshops with Year Six level at Kororoit Primary
	25	Melton Secondary	School based workshops with Year Seven level at Melton SC
	26	Melton Secondary	School based workshops with Year Seven level at Melton SC
September	1	Campaign Closed	Submissions via postcard, survey closed
	5	Working Paper Released	Draft actions released to public for comment.
	18	Sector Workshop Three	Final MYAN Workshop to review draft actions
	18	Comments closed	Public comments on draft actions and Working Paper closed.
October	10	Youth Strategy Submitted	Youth Strategy submitted
	26	Council Meeting	Council to consider endorsing the Youth Strategy

3

Engagement Data

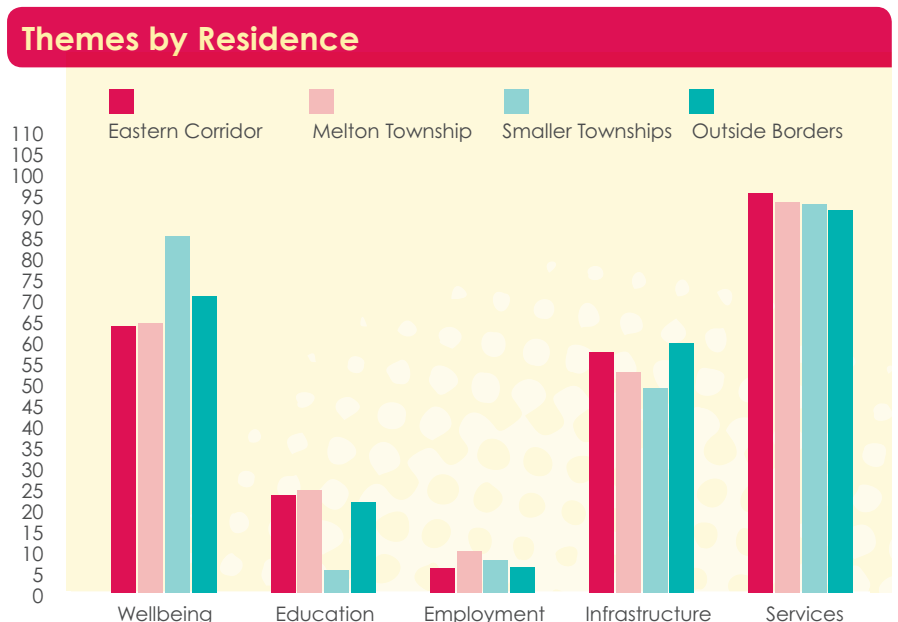
3.1 Postcards and Themes

Postcard and survey submissions were coded into five key themes: Wellbeing, Education, Employment, Infrastructure and Services. Submission content commonly referenced multiple themes. A full and comprehensive presentation of the engagement data is available online through Council's website at melton.vic.gov.au. The table below illustrates how submissions were codified:

Wellbeing	Education	Employment	Infrastructure	Services
Submissions including references to health or support services, requesting more community involvement, active recreation and social connection – or expressing safety concerns were coded under Wellbeing.	Submissions requesting new or improved schools or education, learning opportunities, more facilities or assistance with study were coded under Education.	Submissions requesting more job opportunities, assistance with gaining employment, career development or advice were coded under Employment.	Submissions requesting construction of new buildings or facilities, improvement to existing facilities, streetscapes, public transport infrastructure, entertainment venues, schools or other built environments were coded under Infrastructure.	Submissions requesting improved or increased public transport services, health or wellbeing initiatives, commercial or Council services were coded under Services.

Comments on each postcard often included more than one theme, and where this occurred, each theme was counted individually – resulting in a combined total of 2784 inputs.

Themes	
Wellbeing	734
Education	267
Employment	84
Infrastructure	630
Services	1069
Total	2784



3.2 Youth Forum

The Youth Forum was held at Melton Youth Centre - with a total of 9 schools represented and 223 students participating.

A total of seven questions were asked and 6 voted on by participants with special coded stickers to link votes back to age, school and location. Groups brainstormed answers to each question, and reached consensus as to the top two or three answers they wanted to submit to voting by the entire 223 students. Answers were then voted on by each individual student participant with coded stickers.

At the event's conclusion, both group answers and individual stickers were then tallied by staff and used to directly influence the recommendations in this Strategy.

Q7 How Can We Create a Better Future for Young People in the City of Melton?



4

Issues and Analysis

4.1 Employment

What do we know?

The number of unemployed Young People in the City of Melton is much higher than most other parts of Melbourne. In the 2011 Census, there were a total of 1,197 unemployed Young People living in the City of Melton. 13.7% of the City of Melton's labour force aged 15 to 24 years was classed as unemployed compared to 12.3% in Greater Melbourne.

The youth unemployment rate in the City of Melton was also greater than the rest of the Western Suburbs region, and was close to 20% in Melton Township. There were 12 suburbs in the City of Melton that were above the Melbourne average for youth unemployment.

In 2011, there were roughly 16,139 jobs and 53,930 employed people living in the City of Melton. Because there are far more people than jobs in the municipality, many people have to travel outside its boundaries to work. This is harder for Young People because of the cost and distance of travelling to find and keep jobs.

According to Federal data, since 2011 there has been a rise in the number of unemployed Young People in Australia, and youth unemployment is much higher than unemployment across all ages.

At the time of writing, the Federal Government had moved away from an earlier decision to make Young People wait six months before being eligible for Centrelink payments – however, 'Work for the Dole' programs are still being planned, and there are still many changes that could make life more difficult for unemployed Young People.

What did the community tell us?

In the Sector Workshops, participants suggested investing in employment opportunities, a vocational focus in youth programs, celebrating positive success stories, linking to volunteer opportunities, social enterprise and links to BACE, exploring 'Works for Me' and 'Building Melton Together' styled programs, explore job agencies, and participation in 'Work for the Dole' programs.

In online surveys, 21 participants felt that lack of local employment was a big issue that needed urgent attention, 16 felt that it was 'necessary' and 19 'essential' for Youth Services to help Young People gain employment.

When asked how we can create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton, survey and expo participants suggested improved employment or assistance – as did participants in Disability Support, ATSI and CALD workshops.

At the Youth Forum, 58 said they did not like the lack of local employment opportunities, 19 suggested Youth Services explore job assistance programs, 14 employment and future ready programs, and 14 requested opportunities for volunteer work.

"More volunteer opportunities so young people can get experience that all employers are looking for."

24 - Brookfield

"By creating more ample opportunities for young people to interact within the community by giving them more job opportunities and community activities to be productive."

17 - West Melton

"We can help create a better future by having little workshops about the future jobs that young people want to be involved in."

13 - West Melton

"More youth getting employed and open courses such as hospitality courses for school students. This will keep youth occupied."

17 - Melton

“We can help create a better future by giving more opportunities to children who need help to reach their goal or dream.”

12 - Burnside

“More job opportunities.”

14 - Hillside

When asked how we could create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton, 57 requested more job opportunities, 12 requested more work experience, 14 requested career assistance, and 19 requested better education and opportunities for work.

At school workshops, “more jobs for school leavers, work experience, better job opportunities, more jobs, employment, and better jobs” were suggested to help create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton.

What can we do?

Employment and career assistance is important to Young People and the community that supports them.

For the Youth Strategy, it is recommended that Youth Services undertake several actions to assist Young People gain valuable skills and experience, assist with finding and keeping work, and assist with long term career development.

It is recommended that we review and enhance current programs – embedding vocational skills, pathways and job readiness components, and further enhancing Melton Youth Centre as a facility offering training and enterprise programs.

By establishing youth cafe social enterprise projects, Young People can gain hands-on experience in hospitality settings that can lead to entry-level employment opportunities, and further enhance drop-in programs with access to affordable and healthy food options.

By enhancing youth enterprise programs and projects for school aged and 18-25 year old Young People with an enterprise focus, we can equip Young People with skills, confidence and capacity to contribute to the development of the local economy – creating alternative pathways to financial independence in a community context with comparatively low local employment opportunities for Young People.

4.2 Education and Training

What do we know?

According to 2011 Census data, there was a higher percentage of Young People studying in primary and secondary school in the City of Melton than the Victorian average, however there was almost half the percentage of people studying at university or TAFE level than there was in Greater Melbourne.

City of Melton residents were almost 50% less likely to have a university qualification than the Greater Melbourne average. All suburbs within the City of Melton were below the average of 23.6% degree qualified residents in Greater Melbourne.

“Council provided tuition opportunities for young people.”

46 - Hillside

4 Issues and Analysis

Research on 'Stereotype Threat' was conducted during the strategy process in an attempt to understand why residents and Young People living in the City of Melton were less likely to pursue higher education.

Stereotype Threat "refers to being at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one's group" (Steele 1995), and research has shown that Young People are less likely to aspire to higher education if they lack role models in their family or peer networks. However, it can be effectively addressed by providing students with clear and open pathways into university, and supportive role models.

What did the community tell us?

In the Sector Workshops, 9 participants suggested Youth Services extend post-secondary education opportunities, 22 suggested alternative school settings, 9 tertiary education options, and 8 specialist schooling.

When long survey participants were asked if we have enough local education opportunities for Young People 13 selected 'somewhat disagree', 10 selected 'somewhat agree' and 9 selected 'disagree completely.' 14 participants named a lack of local training opportunities 'a big issue that needs urgent attention,' and 17 participants identified alternative education settings for secondary school aged students as 'essential.'

When asked how we can create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton, both survey and expo participants mentioned improved educational initiatives or opportunities – as did participants in Disability Support, ATSI and CALD workshops.

At the Youth Forum, 32 said they did not like the lack of senior schools, 16 the lack of local universities, and 28 disliked school zoning. 12 suggested Youth Services introduce more courses, 25 study and tutoring assistance, and 18 mentoring from university students.

When asked how we could create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton, 108 Young People - the highest of any category at 17.30% - suggested improved education initiatives or opportunities, with 14 requesting 'education and skill development,' 19 a 'better education system,' 16 'better education standards and university with better career opportunities,' 15 'school partnerships with universities,' 14 'more senior schools in Caroline Springs,' 15 'more funding for universities,' and 12 'equality in schools.' Education was the top response scoring 16.34% of total votes for the question.

At school workshops, "more and better unis, places to do courses locally, better education, better schooling, university, and education" were suggested to help create a better future for Young People in City of Melton.

"A direct route to all the major universities. More opportunities and scholarships to enter a rewarding university. We are an underprivileged area. Make us privileged! Let us have the same opportunities as someone from the city."

14 – Kurunjang

"Create more schools or learning environments for kids to get extra learning."

13 – Hillside

"Build a university or TAFE in Melton - or have a partnering university or TAFE somewhere."

15 – Caroline Springs

"We could start making some courses free for those who don't have much money to pay for their courses."

12 – Caroline Springs

"Make things more accessible by placing learning areas such as libraries in many different places. After all, knowledge is power."

14 - Melton

"Wider range of courses in community centres."

18 – Taylors Hill

What can we do?

Improved access to quality education and learning experiences was a strong theme throughout the Youth Strategy engagement process.

For the Youth Strategy, it is recommended that Youth Services review and enhance current programs, creating clearly articulated pathways from program and project participation into higher education - designed in partnership with registered training organisations, higher education institutions and local schools.

Youth Services can explore delivery of certified course qualifications in current youth facilities, and work with the Local Learning Board to increase accessibility to local learning and employment opportunities.

By working with local schools to enhance and promote programs as pathway opportunities, Young People will have the support, knowledge and encouragement to pursue the post-secondary education opportunities needed to secure skilled and stable employment in the future labour market.

Many Young People who participated in the strategy engagement process also expressed a wish for more study and tutoring assistance to help them achieve academic goals.

It is also recommended that Youth Services explore and develop opportunities for study and tutoring assistance at various locations throughout the municipality.

4.3 Transport

What do we know?

There are a lot less public transport options for Young People in the City of Melton than there are in other parts of Melbourne.

A 2010 report from the Victorian Council of Social Services shows that outer suburban areas like the City of Melton have poor public transport services compared to inner areas. Trains were found to be a more frequent and reliable type of public transport, but because most people in the City of Melton do not live close to a station, they still rely on cars or buses to get to the station. This is a problem because many bus routes run at less than two services per hour – even at peak times.

According to the 2011 census, there were 1445 households in the City of Melton that did not have a car, and 108,571 residents aged between 18-25 living in the City of Melton. Although we don't know exactly how many Young People find it hard to get around, or how many don't have access to a car, we know that transport is more time-consuming and costly for Young People in the Municipality than in other parts of Melbourne.

“Have buses running more frequently and at night to make it safer for young travellers.”

15 - Kurunjang

“More frequent transport through Rockbank and through freeway.”

19 - Rockbank

4 Issues and Analysis

What did the community tell us?

In the Sector Workshops, Public Transport was identified as most needed with 17 votes. In the long survey, 14 participants strongly disagreed with the statement “The City of Melton has enough public transport for Young People to get around when they need to,” making it the top issue in the section. Improved public transport was also a strongly identified need in surveys and postcards, with transport spread across both infrastructure and services categories.

At the Youth Forum, 211 (24.22%) identified Transport as the top answer to the question “what don't you like about the City of Melton,” with 77 identifying late transport, 12 identifying “crap” transport, 14 identifying a lack of transport, 12 identifying bus stops, 18 identifying a lack of bus routes and 9 identifying the train station as an issue. Safety of Public transport safety was also a concern, with 19 identifying the train station as dangerous.

When asked how Youth Services could improve what we do, 38 participants voted for transport initiatives, with 11 identifying transport to venues, 12 identifying transport to and from venues, and 15 identifying the need for a Melton Youth Services bus.

When asked how we can create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton, 102 Young People identified transport initiatives, making it the second-highest category after education, at 16.34% of total votes. Answers included “more transport”, “make a metro system”, “train station – security”, “clean up and renovate”, “longer hours for buses and trains”, and “More buses more often – bus between Woodgrove and Watergardens (pick up/ drop off).”

At school workshops, transport was again a strong theme, with “money instead of MYKI, more transport, buses 24/7, buses should be free, trains should be cheaper, better transport, and rebuild the station” suggested when asked how we can create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton.

What can we do?

Transport safety and accessibility issues were a strong theme throughout the Youth Strategy engagement process.

Although public transport planning and provision is a State Government issue, and Local Government is not sufficiently resourced to make the necessary changes, transport and accessibility issues need to be considered in the Youth Strategy.

It is recommended that transport options be embedded into programs for Young People, and that options for service provision at other facilities be explored when transport is not available or sufficiently resourced.

It is also recommended, that Youth Services further enhance and develop programs and services for transport disadvantaged areas pending the establishment of new and more accessible facilities, and organisational capacity to deliver and manage them.

“More buses so young people can get around.”

17 – Melton

“More colours and bigger bike lanes around the streets”

13 – West Melton

“Free bus travel to teenagers as it is a burden topping up your card all the time.”

15 – Caroline Springs

“More bus stops and better protection on buses.”

16 – Hillside

“Train station in the area.”

17 – Caroline Springs

“I believe that we should have a bike path as there is none in the area and it will keep future generations healthy.”

17 – Caroline Springs

“Myki machines on buses. We need trams, they are faster and less traffic. Pedestrian crossings on High Street.”

20 – Melton

“More housing for the homeless youths.”

20 - Melton

“Giving young children a chance to be educated and living and learning in a safer and clean environment. Free passes to houses for homeless, and food given also.”

14 – South Melton

“Spend more money on helping young families in need - such as homeless, hospital bills and poverty.”

14 – West Melton

“Shelter and food for the homeless. A school for homeless children.”

13 – Melton

“A facility for youth homelessness. A place where young people can get help to build a better future for themselves.”

14 - Melton

“To give a kid a family to stay with to give them warm clothes.”

12 – West Melton

“Try your hardest to get homeless people off the streets because it’s not fair on the homeless”

15 – Kurunjang

“Build more shelters for runaway teens.”

13 – Melton

“By supporting them through rough times. Help them out.”

12 – Caroline Springs

“Develop a housing strategy for young people in the region”

51 – Kurunjang

4.4 Housing

What do we know?

In the 2011 census, there was a total of 20,451 households with children and Young People.

In 2011, there was 13.4% of households in housing stress compared to the Melbourne average of 10.7%. Housing stress is defined as households in the lowest 40% of income who are paying more than 30% of their usual gross weekly income on rent or mortgage repayments. This is important because many families and households living with housing stress found it difficult to pay for all the things that they needed because of high housing expenses.

A 2013 report from the Victorian Council of Social Services and the Youth Advisory Council of Victoria found that crisis accommodation and transitional housing or support were the two largest service gaps for Young People in Victoria.

What did the community tell us?

In the Sector Workshops, housing affordability was identified as an issue, and a youth refuge and crisis accommodation identified as a need, with an overall of 15 votes.

In the Long Survey, 13.24% of participants considered housing as one of the top of the ten issues presented, making it the second most important issue behind education (14.08%). 9 identified lack of affordable housing for Young People as ‘a big issue that needs urgent attention,’ 14 identified it as ‘somewhat an issue – but it’s under control,’ 8 as ‘an issue – but not very important,’ and 4 as ‘not an issue at all.’ 13 participants identified high cost of living for families as a ‘big issue that needs urgent attention.’

In postcards and surveys, housing issues, homelessness and crisis accommodation were identified across the wellbeing, infrastructure and services themes. “More housing” was an identified need at the ATSI workshop.

What can we do?

The Youth Strategy engagement process revealed a community aspiration to provide more housing assistance to Young People and families in crisis – however, the evidence based need for services or infrastructure must be established before further action.

For the Youth Strategy, It is recommended that research into the issues, needs and possible solutions for Young People be taken. This will provide an evidence base for advocacy work to other levels of Government on behalf of Young People.

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4.5 Wellbeing

What do we know?

Perceptions of community safety are an issue for local Young People. In 2009, 27.3% of Young People surveyed in the City of Melton for the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for the Adolescent Community Profile felt safe walking in the local area alone after dark, 25.7% felt safe, travelling on public transport after dark, 67.8% felt safe walking alone during the day, and 59.8% felt safe travelling on public transport during the day. There is a clear difference between feeling safe in the day time compared to night time.

In the same survey, 54.2% of City of Melton adolescents surveyed were recently bullied – higher than the Victorian figure of 44.6%.

17.1% of adolescent residents in the City of Melton were also found to have a social health care need – meaning a physical, developmental, behavioural or emotional condition that requires health or related services beyond that required generally.

What did the community tell us?

Some factors that impact on wellbeing include perceptions of community safety, racism, and bullying. Mental health issues and other disabilities also impact on wellbeing, so it was important to ask the community about these issues.

Wellbeing was of particular concern to the community, with 27.61% of long survey participants, 30.67% of short survey participants, and 26.36% of postcard participants identifying issues and opportunities to improve wellbeing.

Safety

16 long survey participants identified crime and safety as ‘a big issue that needs urgent attention.’ At the Youth Forum, 57 voted lack of safety as something they didn’t like about the City of Melton, 53 voted crime as an issue, 20 voted violent people, and 20 identified disrespectful people as an issue. 71 identified vandalism and graffiti as a problem. When asked how we can create a better future, 76 (12.17%) identified improved safety initiatives as a priority. In school workshops, “crime, gangs”, “no safety”, “need more police”, “angry neighbours”, “domestic violence”, and “vandalism” were identified as things participants did not like about the City of Melton.

Racism

In the Youth Forum, 11.31% of participants identified cultural diversity as a positive – with more participants from Eastern Corridor (12.7%) than Melton Township (8.5%) doing so. However, 28 participants identified

“Make the streets cleaner and safer so they can go out without being worried about what will happen.”

15 - Melton

“Stop discrimination and racism to ensure a better future also so young people in the future feel safe.”

12 – Caroline Springs

“We could help young people in the future by having more groups to support people through depression and other mental issues.”

17 – Melton

“Better options for individuals with disabilities that are transitioning from school out into the big wide world. There is not much support I can think of in the Melton municipality.”

20 – Burnside Heights

“Stop bad behaviour or remarks to others, and teach us about the effects of bullying.”

13 – Caroline Springs

“Safe spaces for GLBTI youth.”

17 – Deer Park

“Make the streets safer for young people at night.”

16 – Hillside

racism as an issue, with 7.4% from Melton Township, and just less than 1% from Eastern Corridor voting it as something they did not like about the City of Melton. In school workshops, racism was voted the top answer to the question about what participants didn't like about the City of Melton.

Bullying

23 long survey participants identified bullying as 'a big issue that needs urgent attention', 12 as 'an issue – but it's under control,' and 1 as 'not an issue at all.' Bullying was also identified in the disability support workshop, postcards and surveys. In School Workshops, bullying was identified as an issue in four of six workshops.

Disability

In sector workshops, a need for a specialist school for autism (under 15) was identified. 12 Long Survey participants identified lack of disability services as 'a big issue that needs urgent attention,' and 17 as 'somewhat an issue – but it's under control.' The disability support workshop identified access and service issues and areas for improvement.

In the Youth Forum, 15 participants identified 'not enough facilities for disability' as an issue they didn't like about the City of Melton.

Mental Health

In sector workshops, mental health partnerships with schools was an identified opportunity. In the long survey, 23 participants identified mental illness as 'a big issue that needs urgent attention,' 7 as 'an issue – but it's under control,' and 3 as 'not an issue at all.' Support services for mental illness was identified by 25 participants as the most essential service with 10 identifying them as 'necessary,' and only one as 'not necessary.' In the Youth Forum, 16 participants voted for 'mental health for youth' when asked what Youth Services should introduce.

What can we do?

Wellbeing was identified as an important issue throughout the Youth Strategy engagement process.

In practical terms, Youth Services can work together with local police and the community safety committee to improve the safety of Young People in the City of Melton. We can also assist with the implementation of the Council Disability Action Plan, and the Diversity Strategy. Furthermore, we can host services for Young People needing health support at both of our youth centres.

By enhancing and promoting available services through stakeholder networks, continuing to advocate and broker increased services in the region, and facilitating improved service delivery and coordination through MYAN, Youth Services can improve access to and quality of support services for families and Young People in the municipality.

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4.6 Risk and Protective Factors

What do we know?

'Risk factors' are issues or circumstances that impact negatively on Young People and increase the likelihood of mental health issues, alcohol and other drug use, criminal and anti-social behaviour. Protective factors are the things that help prevent negative outcomes for Young People in the community.

In 2009, 62.5% of Young People in the City of Melton surveyed for the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for the Adolescent Community Profile felt they did not have a trusted adult in their life. This was less than the Victorian average of 70.8%. 19% of Young People felt they did not have someone to turn to for advice when they needed it – higher than the state average of 13.9%.

These figures are important because they tell us that Young People in the City of Melton have higher risk factors.

Protective factors include opportunities and rewards for pro-social involvement in the community, school, family and peer group.

What did the community tell us?

When asking the community what they liked and didn't like about the City of Melton and how we could create a better future for Young People, a number of responses indicated risk factor issues, and a need for more positive community development opportunities that can act as protective factors to improve wellbeing.

Risk Factors

In sector workshops, several risk factors were identified, including drugs, bottle shops, unemployment, welfare dependency and negative community stigma.

In long surveys, 21 selected 'somewhat disagree' to the statement 'Young People have enough access to safe, fun and affordable entertainment in the local area' with 4 selecting 'disagree completely.' 22 selected 'lack of local adult role models' as a big issue that needs urgent attention.

In the Youth Forum, 16 participants identified drug use as an issue they didn't like in the City of Melton. In school workshops, a number of risk factors were identified – such as Drugs (32), and smoking and drinking (6), drugs and smoking (17), suicide (2), domestic violence, violence, and rude people.

Identified needs for Protective Factors

In sector workshops, a need for pro-social activity and other protective factors were identified. Suggestions included social cohesion projects,

“Reducing the amount of shops selling alcohol, and replace them with things that’ll further our knowledge on the world and what our place is within it.”

15 – Melton

“We should get bowling back instead of the alcohol store so kids and families can have fun.”

13 – Melton

“By giving us Young People more options, make more activities at the community centre, try and get everyone involved. Get their mind off grog and struggles.”

15 – Melton

“To create a better future for the Young People in the City of Melton is to communicate with us more. Fix all the negative problems and stop bullying.”

14 – Caroline Springs

“Implement better education towards Young People who go looking for trouble and who put other people s lives in danger. Educate them.”

17 – Toolern Downs

arts based interskills projects, supports (family, mentoring), social connectedness, re-engagement programs, early intervention in primary school, community events and celebrations, arts programs, story-telling and leadership projects.

In the Long survey, 19 participants saw programs or activities for 18-25s as essential, and 13 'necessary,' and 19 saw mentoring programs as 'essential.'

In the Youth Forum, 67 votes were recorded for 'Youth Service could improve what we do by organising more youth friendly events.' 183 of total votes (24.46%) expressed a wish for Youth Services to organise more social and community events, and 53 identified a need for more activities.

When asked how we could create a better future for Young People, 22 requested a place to express art, and 9 requested music festivals. In School workshops, participants "identified a need for more sports clubs", "less bottle shops and more fun places", "more festivals", "more sports teams and clubs", and "more indoor entertainment".

What can we do?

Concerns about Young People's risk taking behaviour, drug and alcohol abuse were a strong theme throughout the Youth Strategy engagement process. The need for more protective options for positive peer and community development activities was also a strongly identified need.

It is recommended that Youth Services work in partnership to enhance protective factors and wellbeing outcomes through the continued provision of programs, support services and mentoring initiatives.

It is also recommended that Youth Services work in partnership with a wide range of community stakeholders and Young People to develop youth-led and youth-driven health promotion initiatives through peer and community networks.

4.7 Civic Engagement

What do we know?

In 2009, 27.3% of Young People surveyed for the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for the Adolescent community profile found that Young People surveyed in the City of Melton were less likely to be able to make decisions in the home - with 52.7% reporting they could make decisions in the home compared to Victorian average of 61.5%.

The trend continues with 53.6% of Young People from the City of Melton compared to 61.0% of Victorian Young People, feeling that adults in the neighbourhood pay attention to what they say.

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Finally, only 40.2% of Young People surveyed in the City of Melton felt they could make decisions regarding activities in the neighbourhood compared to the Victorian average of 47.1%.

The figures are significant because feelings of community connectedness and being able to speak up and make change contribute to overall wellbeing, and act as a protective factor – improving life outcomes for Young People.

What did the community tell us?

In the Sector Workshops, participants suggested youth consultation and more youth engagement.

In the long survey, 24 participants selected 'somewhat agree' to the statement 'The City of Melton gives me plenty of opportunities to have a say on local issues,' 7 selected 'somewhat agree,' and 2 selected 'disagree completely.' 17 participants felt that 'lack of decision making opportunities for youth' was 'somewhat an issue – but it's under control,' with 9 selecting 'big issue that needs urgent attention,' and 5 selecting 'it's an issue, but not very important.' 16 participants identified leadership programs as 'essential' or 'necessary,' with only 3 selecting 'nice but not necessary.'

In the Youth Forum, 12 participants identified 'opportunities for youth involvement' and 12 'community involvement' as things they like. When asked what new things should Youth Services introduce, 13 participants identified the need to "have a say."

When asked how can we create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton, 45 participants identified the need for Young People to be 'involved in Council's decision-making' and 15 as 'opportunities for 'more community involvement,'

At school workshops, when asked how we can create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton, participants identified the need for "freedom of choice for youth" and to "listen to kids."

Throughout the strategy engagement process, Young People expressed a strong wish to participate in local decision-making and civic development opportunities.

What can we do?

Young People of varying ages, location and circumstance expressed an interest in participating in the planning processes that help shape their community, and it is recommended that Youth Services further enhance and develop youth leadership programs to facilitate ongoing youth collaboration in urban renewal, community and economic development.

For the Youth Strategy, it is recommended that Youth Services work with local schools to develop a municipal-wide youth leadership and governance program with representatives and ambassadors from schools in the local area.

"Give us a say."

14 - Melton

"You can help by creating a club after school where people can come and share their ideas and opinions about our towns and work together to help fix these problems."

13 - Melton

"Let kids have a say in their opinions and let them speak instead of other people talking for them."

14 - Kurunjang

"Speaking to the youth about ideas and what they would like, and taking it on board."

15 - Caroline Springs

"Cooperation between the citizens of Melton and their Local Government."

16 - Caroline Springs

"Create a youth council which works with Melton Council for votes and ideas for young children."

15 - Melton

“Provide volunteering opportunities for youth to participate in as a form of citizenship experience. This can then go on resumes.”

14 – Hillside

“I think that changing the voting age to a lower group level will help because we the children are the future.”

12 – West Melton

“Have specific programs geared towards current interests, issues and future pathways with a very inclusive and community feel.”

16 – Caroline Springs

“We as a close spider web like community need to have more notable community services that are easily accessible for everyone.”

13 – Kurunjang

“Have a broad range of programs available for all different people and their interests on at times that are suitable.”

16 – Melton

The program aims to develop place-based networks of Young People with which to develop ongoing engagement initiatives, programs and projects that increase overall community wellbeing by strengthening local identity and community connectedness.

It is recommended that Youth Services partner with a Registered Training Organisation to develop and deliver these ongoing initiatives so that the young leaders participating also benefit by receiving a course qualification earned through participation in the program.

In an effort to increase opportunities for civic participation, it is also recommended that youth leaders provide Council with regular reports on local issues and youth-driven solutions.

Furthermore, Council staff will use the data gathered in the strategy engagement process to shape and support the work of Council in other areas – such as infrastructure and service planning.

4.8 Working With Young People

What do we know?

We know that civic participation is a protective factor that improves wellbeing outcomes for Young People. When working with Young People, it is important to create places and spaces where Young People can make informed decisions, and drive project, program and activity outcomes. Youth participation in decision-making has the added benefit of ensuring that programs and services are relevant, engaging, and responsive to Young People's needs.

Youth Development theory and practice is a method of making sure this happens. Youth Development principles and practice informed the Youth Strategy process, and much time and effort was taken to ensure we understood what Young People wanted from their Council and Council's youth service, and how to create those opportunities.

A 'Generic Youth Development Framework' (Wierenga 2011) was developed by the Melbourne Graduate School of Education for the Australian Department of Defence, and this document has been used to define Youth Development principles and practice for the Youth Strategy.

What did the community tell us?

In the Sector Workshops, participants suggested improved services for the ATSI and CALD communities, early intervention, building pride, social connectedness and mentoring.

In the long survey, when asked "what do you think of Melton Youth Services" 13 participants agreed with the statement 'Youth Services runs a broad range of support and development programs,' with 15

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selecting 'somewhat agree,' and 7 selecting 'somewhat disagree.' To the statement 'Youth Services are only for Young People experiencing difficulties or issues they need help with,' 15 selected 'disagree,' 10 selected 'somewhat agree,' 5 selected 'agree,' and 5 selected 'somewhat disagree.' To the statement 'Youth Services run enough programs for and with culturally diverse community groups,' 4 selected agree, 13 selected somewhat agree, 14 selected somewhat disagree, and 8 selected disagree. To the statement 'Youth Services run programs and events that appeal to Young People generally,' 12 selected 'agree,' 14 selected 'somewhat agree' 6 selected 'somewhat disagree,' and 2 selected 'disagree.'

In the ATSI workshop, participants requested "culturally specific programs, develop programs with Aboriginal youth", and to "start by finding out what youth want."

At the Youth Forum, when asked "how can Youth Services improve what we do?" 296 participants (43.40%) requested improved promotion, and 52 requested improvements to programs - with 11 requesting 'make more relevant for teens,' 12 requesting more programs, 14 requesting 'more engaging with more participants' and 15 requesting 'motivation, empowerment and sports speakers.'

When asked 'how would you like us to engage you in future?', 271 participants (38.33%) suggested social media, 27 via phone, 51 with advertising, 126 (17.82%) requesting school engagement, and 126 (15.98%) suggesting engagement through events. At school workshops, participants requested more Youth Development programs.

What can we do?

We know that increased opportunities for participation and decision making improves social connectedness and other protective factors.

For the Youth Strategy (2014 – 2017) it is recommended that Youth Services programs and projects be reviewed and enhanced by using contemporary best-practice, including retraining Youth Services staff in Youth Development design principles, delivery and evaluation.

It is especially important to use Youth Development principles and practice when working with CALD, ATSI, and 'at-risk' or disengaged Young People, so that co-generated programs and projects are a better fit for communities and community members with different cultures, needs and preferred ways of working.

Youth Development principles and practice fit well with the recommended action to improve education and employment outcomes through program participation, as Youth Development practice places great emphasis on equipping participants with the skills, confidence and capacity to drive their own projects in a supportive and encouraging environment, facilitated by youth and community development workers.

"I think that we can have more activities in the community organised by kids."

13 – Caroline Springs

"By running more community engaging activities centred around young people providing more outings for them to enjoy together."

16 – Caroline Springs

"Involve the community in more communal events to be able to meet new people around the community and make some new friends."

14 – Caroline Springs

"Involve teenagers and community members with more activities and programs to make teenagers better people and better leaders."

14 – Caroline Springs

Finally, it is recommended that we further develop Youth Development programs for 18-25 year old Young People so that Youth Services caters to all ages between 10-25. By doing so, we will create a council-delivered service continuum spanning all life stages – from infancy right through to aged care.

“Create more user friendly services for young people e.g. set up youth groups and youth centres in areas outside of Melton township e.g. Eastern Corridors.”

11 – Burnside Heights

“To ensure that the young people have resources for major problems so that they feel safe and comfortable to communicate these problems.”

15 - Caroline Springs

“More local area network social area to keep kids engaged in social activities in a closed environment to keep them off the streets.”

17 – Burnside

“By providing more youth services shire wide, particularly in the not so accessible locations and those not serviced by public transport e.g. Eynesbury.”

33 – Eynesbury

“I believe that Melton could become better by giving us the opportunity to enjoy more events that would allow us to become a better relationship city.”

15 – West Melton

4.9 Youth Services Growth

What do we know?

We know that civic participation is a protective factor that improves wellbeing outcomes for Young People. When working with Young People, it is important to create places and spaces where participants can make informed decisions and drive project, program and activity outcomes. Youth participation in decision making has the added benefit of ensuring that programs and services are relevant, engaging, and responsive to Young People's needs.

The City of Melton Youth Services is one of several agencies that work in the municipality, delivering an extensive range of programs, events and support services for Young People aged 10-25 years and their families.

The aim for the future is that services be readily accessible, relevant and meet both the generic and specific needs of Young People, regardless of status, country of birth or geographic location.

Youth Services consists of a Program and Events team and a Youth Support team. The Youth Facilities operate as service incubators, providing youth agencies with affordable accommodation from which to outreach local services.

The service is mostly used by Young People in the 12-18 years age group. However, the service offers several programs that cater for Young People outside that age range. Young People who utilise the services do so for a range of reasons including recreation, social, civic leadership, education, entertainment, personal support, and referral.

Young People generally access more than one program at Youth Services and do so on an ongoing basis, rather than as a once off.

Youth work is done in many different ways. Melton City Council's Youth Service employs staff who have “generalist” youth working responsibilities which focus on the provision of developmental experiences for Young People, and staff with “support” youth working responsibilities which focuses on helping Young People overcome serious personal challenges.

The currently accepted ratio of generalist youth worker to Young People in the population for municipalities at the urban fringe of Melbourne is one worker to 3,000 Young People. This ratio is supported by the work of

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the Interface Councils (those on the urban fringe of Melbourne) in the report 'Staying Connected.'

At this point in time, there is no accepted ratio for the provision of a support Youth Worker. Any extra investment in more staff in this area is dependent on the identification of issues and needs within the community.

Given that we know the population of Young People will continue to grow, it is likely that we will need more youth workers in the municipality.

What did the community tell us?

In the Sector Workshops participants suggested a "different strategic approach to different communities, and place oriented approach."

In the Youth Forum, when asked how Youth Services can improve what we do, 296 – or 43.40% requested improved promotion. When participants were asked how they would like Youth Services to engage them in future, 271 – or 38.33% – voted for social media and online platforms. Finally, when asked how we can create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton, the highest single category was Education, with 108 votes (17.3%).

What can we do?

The City of Melton is growing very fast, and Youth Services must consider how to service increasing populations. The youth engagement process revealed opportunities to use our current level of staffing and resources more strategically.

For the Youth Strategy, it is recommended that we first concentrate on building strong and sustainable networks by linking our youth governance and leadership programs to education and employment outcomes, and building a strong digital promotion and engagement networks using free social media platforms.

Education and employment opportunities were identified as a way of enhancing existing growth so that participants can receive vocational outcomes and benefits through participation in Youth Services programs. These programs will need some adjustment, and partnerships with schools and higher education institutions will need to be brokered to make this happen.

To achieve this, it is recommended that Council considers how new roles may be created to better engage participants with youth-driven digital content, and also facilitate the partnerships with schools and higher education institutions needed to better service Young People aged 10-25.

"Hold more youth friendly events more often, spread the word of youth services and programs for youth to make us more aware."

16 – Melton

"To have more after school events and for on the holidays. Giving us more time to bond with our community."

16 – Kurunjang

“By creating places where teens can socialise, learn and be inspired in a safe and interesting environment - like a Youth Centre.”

13 – Caroline Springs

“The community can have more centres for Young People with troubles. There could be a few so that everyone can have a fair shot.”

16 - Hillside

“Provide a safer environment to those who are having a harder time at school/outside of school.”

14 – Caroline Springs

“You could have more facilities so younger adults, teens and little children could play and get alone, a place where racism is not allowed”

16 – West Melton

4.10 Youth Centres

What do we know?

Youth Centres facilitate opportunities for Young People to develop their physical, social, emotional, and cognitive abilities and to experience achievement, leadership, enjoyment, friendship, and recognition through a place to identify as their own within a community.

Council currently has two youth centres in the City, the Melton Youth Facility at 193 Barries Road, Melton, and the Taylors Hill Youth & Community Centre at 121 Calder Park Drive, Taylors Hill. These two centres serve a current total population of approximately 120,000.

The City's population continues to steadily grow, with new suburbs emerging in Toolern, Melton West, Rockbank North and South, Plumpton, and Kororoit. By the time that the land within the urban growth boundary is built out in about 2050, the City's total population will be approximately 430,000 people.

The urban planning process, called Precinct Structure Planning (PSP), that designs how these and other new suburbs take shape, is happening right now. As a result, the planning for the provision of youth centres to serve the future population of Young People in these new suburbs also needs to occur now.

It is therefore appropriate to consider the location, size, scope, and inclusions of potential new centres to ensure that Council is able to secure the land parcels required through the PSP process.

The current ratio of centres to population for the City of Melton is 1 centre to 60,000 people. This ratio is supported by the work of the Melbourne Planning Authority for infrastructure provision for Young People.

Given that the eventual total population of Melton is likely to be approximately 430,000 people by 2050, it is crucial that Council give consideration to the question of how many more Youth Centres may be needed in the municipality to support the equitable delivery of youth services to local population catchments of about 60,000 people.

A Youth Centre can cost anywhere between \$2.5 million and \$5 million to build. If Council continues with the current practice of providing one centre for a population of 60,000 people, we may need to plan for several more to be built over the next 30 years. However, it is unlikely Council will have the resources, so careful planning is needed to make sure future centres meet community need.

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What did the community tell us?

In the Sector Workshops, participants suggested improving transport to existing facilities with a community bus circuit.

In postcards submissions, online surveys and engagement expos, several requests for new or improved youth facilities were included within the infrastructure theme.

In the Youth Forum, when asked how Youth Services can improve what we do, 38 participants (5.57%) requested improved transport to and from existing facilities, and 31 (4.54%) requested additional youth related facilities for music and activity, with 14 requesting centres in different suburbs, and 17 requesting more youth centres. When asked what new things Youth Services should introduce, 13 requested that existing centres be made more interesting and fun. When asked how we could create a better future for Young People in the City of Melton, 22 requested a place to express art. In the school workshops, several participants requested new youth centres.

What can we do?

The City of Melton is growing very fast, and Youth Services must consider how to service increasing populations with new facilities in line with Councils capacity to deliver and manage them. The Youth Strategy engagement process revealed an expressed need for centres to be within easy reach of the Young People that needed them.

For the Youth Strategy, it is recommended that Council adopt a practice of providing 1 centre to a population ratio of a minimum 60,000 and a maximum of 100,000 people. This would result in land being identified for a further 3 centres to be built into future plans as the population increases over time to the year 2050.

The model for these future centres is the same as the existing best practice centres at Melton and Taylors Hill, which provides stand-alone youth-dedicated space. It is recommended that future centres be considered in the areas covered by Toolern and Plumpton Precinct Structure Plans.

The Strategy engagement process also highlighted opportunities to use current facilities more strategically, with further developed education and employment pathway programs delivered at Melton Youth Centre with an enterprise and training emphasis, and an arts and creative industry emphasis at the Taylors Hill Youth and Community Centre.

“The way that we can make Melton a better place we should make more facilities to get kids off the street to show them that drinking and drugs can kill.”

16 – West Melton

“To provide more facilities for Young People to engage them in community activities for Young People to feel a sense of belonging in the community.”

15 – Caroline Springs

“More youth centres for teens to enjoy and feel relaxed”

14 – Caroline Springs

5

Action Plan

5.1 Safe, Vibrant and Connected Communities

No.	Actions	Performance Indicator	Requires New Submission?	Financial Year
1.1	Plan and provide facilities and services for future growth according to evidence-based need			
1.1.1	Work with Strategic Planning to include provisions for future youth spaces in the PSP process using a ratio of 1: 60, 000 – 100, 000 people.	Number of youth spaces included in Precinct Structure Plans	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
1.1.2	Develop a long-term approach to Youth Services growth that incorporates current practice on population ratios, balance of support to development programs, and other appropriate considerations.	Documentation of staff projections included in the organisational business planning system	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
1.2	Further develop youth leadership programs that build the skills, confidence and capacity of participants and their peer networks.			
1.2.1	Combine and enhance the functions of the Youth Advisory Group and Youth Council through the Youth Governance and Leadership program.	Documentation of formation of combined group Number of combined meetings	No	13/14 14/15
1.2.2	Pursue and Strengthen partnerships with local schools to develop an ongoing and municipal-wide Youth Governance and Leadership Program with representatives from each school's senior year's cohort.	Number of partnerships with schools Number of youth representatives	No	13/14 14/15 15/16 16/17
1.2.3	Develop and deliver a Youth Governance and Leadership program for secondary school students in partnership with a Registered Training Organisation.	Number of youth participants Number of graduates	Yes	14/15 15/16 16/17
1.2.4	Build the skills, confidence and capacity of Youth Governance and Leadership program participants and peer-networks to formulate and implement solutions to local issues.	Number of solutions implemented Number of participants from Youth Governance and Leadership program	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
1.2.5	Youth Governance and Leadership program participants to provide regular reports and digital presentations to Council on local issues and youth-driven solutions.	Number of presentations to Council Documentation of presentations	No	14/15 15/16 16/17

1.3 Develop youth engagement policies and processes to enhance council services, planning and decision making.

1.3.1	Support the Youth Governance and Leadership group with the development of youth-appropriate policy and participatory planning projects to enhance services, amenity and infrastructure.	Documentation of the projects enhanced through the Youth Governance and Leadership group	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
1.3.2	Work with and for Young People to advocate improved internet access and Wi-Fi at strategic locations throughout the municipality.	Number of available Wi-Fi locations available throughout the Municipality Number of youth participants utilising Youth Services Internet Cafes	No	14/15 15/16 16/17

1.4 Work with schools and youth governance group to develop inter-school arts and event projects to strengthen local identity and community connectedness.

1.4.1	Further develop the annual Youth Forum in partnership with local schools and the Youth Governance and Leadership group.	Increased number of Young People attending the Youth Forum from different schools Number of partnerships with schools	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
1.4.2	Strengthen partnerships with local schools and students to develop place-based arts and events projects.	Number of partnerships with schools Documentation of arts and events projects Number of youth participants	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
1.4.3	Strengthen partnerships with local schools and students to support an annual inter-school cultural celebration initiative.	Number of partnerships with schools Documentation of inter-school cultural celebration Number of youth participants	Yes	14/15 15/16 16/17

1.5 Advocate with and for Young People to achieve improved community safety, services, sustainability and amenity

1.5.1	Strengthen partnerships with police, Young People and other stakeholders in addressing community safety and urban renewal using a collective impact approach.	Number of police liaison meetings Number of actions achieved through police liaison meetings	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
1.5.2	Support Young People in contributing to Council advocacy addressing bullying, racism and other community safety issues.	Documentation of Advocacy	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
1.5.3	Work with Young People and other appropriate stakeholders to implement actions from Council's Community Safety Plan.	Number of actions achieved in Council's Community Safety Plan	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
1.5.4	Work with Young People to develop and promote initiatives and campaigns to enhance environmental sustainability.	Documentation of initiatives undertaken	No	14/15 15/16 16/17

1.6 Work with Young People, businesses, and education providers to develop innovative engagement initiatives, campaigns and events.

1.6.1	Enhance youth media programs with digital and filmed content to support digital engagement initiatives.	Number of youth participants	No	14/15
		Number of multi-media productions		15/16
				16/17
1.6.2	Enhance digital gamer programs with design and delivery of multi-participant team challenges, events and promotions.	Number of youth participants	Yes	15/16
		Number of team challenges		16/17
		Documented program plans		
1.6.3	Engage local businesses in a membership discount initiative to stimulate the local economy while providing service and value for Young People	Number of businesses participating	No	14/15
				15/16
				16/17

5.2 Engaging, Accessible and Youth Driven Services

No.	Actions	Performance Indicator	Requires New Submission?	Financial Year
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2.1 Develop, resource and implement ongoing engagement initiatives to promote our services through strong and sustainable networks.

2.1.1	Strengthen partnerships with local schools to promote Youth Services and Development opportunities at campus assemblies, events and dedicated engagement sessions.	Number of engagement sessions	No	13/14
		Number of partnerships with schools		14/15
				15/16
				16/17
2.1.2	Further develop and implement an integrated database of program participants as a membership card initiative.	Number of membership cards	Yes	15/16
		Implementation of Councils Public Internet Standardisation project		16/17
2.1.3	Develop and implement youth-appropriate social media policies and processes with which to build strong and sustainable digital engagement networks.	Documentation of policy	No	14/15
2.1.4	Enhance web presence to promote local services, programs, events and other opportunities.	Number and type of web presence	No	15/16

2.2 Enhance the skills, confidence and capacity of young program participants through contemporary Youth Development practice.

2.2.1	Review Melton Youth Services branding to reflect commitment to participatory, place-based Youth Development, individual support and associated services.	Documentation of scoping/feasibility undertaken	Yes	14/15
2.2.2	Train staff in contemporary best-practice Youth Participation and Development.	Number of staff trained	Yes	14/15

2.2.3	Review and enhance current programs and services using best-practice Youth Participation and Development principles.	Documented program evaluation and proposal	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
2.2.4	Continually improve budgetary, administration, and evaluation processes to align with best-practice participatory Youth Development.	Delivery of service within approved budget/forecast Number of improvements to process completed Creation of KPI to collect data on improvements	No	14/15 15/16 16/17

2.3 Develop policies and processes to improve program accessibility for transport disadvantaged participants.

2.3.1	Embed and promote transport support options to and from centrally based programs.	Documentation of program transport promotion Number of transports	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
2.3.2	Explore program provision at library, leisure or other appropriate facilities when transport support is not sufficiently resourced.	Documentation of program provision Number of youth participants attending program	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
2.3.3	Further enhance programs and projects for and with communities identified as transport disadvantaged.	Documentation of program provision Number of youth participants attending program	No	14/15 15/16 16/17

2.4 Work in partnership with community groups to identify and address barriers to participation through co-created programs, services and projects.

2.4.1	Work with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse, migrant and/or refugee communities to design and deliver appropriate programs and services.	Documentation of program proposal and evaluation Number of engagements	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
2.4.2	Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to design and deliver appropriate programs and services.	Documentation of program proposal and evaluation Number of engagements	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
2.4.3	Work with GLBTI communities to design and deliver appropriate programs and services.	Documentation of program proposal and evaluation Number of engagements	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
2.4.4	Work with 'At-Risk' and disengaged Young People to further enhance programs, services and projects.	Documentation of program proposal and evaluation Number of engagements	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
2.4.5	Work with 'tween' and school transition cohorts to design and deliver appropriate programs and services.	Number of youth participants Number of programs and services delivered	Yes	14/15

2.5 Provide programs and services at the locations, times and duration of evidence-based need.

2.5.1	Further enhance Melton Youth Centre as a Training and Enterprise facility.	Number of training opportunities provided	No	14/15
		Number of youth participants		15/16 16/17
2.5.2	Further enhance Taylors Hill Youth Centre as an Arts and Education facility.	Number of Art opportunities provided	No	14/15
		Number of youth participants		15/16 16/17
2.5.3	Enhance existing drop-in programs with Youth Cafe enterprise and ongoing training and development opportunities.	Number of programs with enterprise and training opportunities	No	14/15
		Number of youth participants		15/16 16/17
2.5.4	Further enhance accessibility of programs with provision on weekends and school holidays.	Number of programs with provision on weekends and school holidays	No	14/15
		Number of youth participants		15/16 16/17
2.5.5	Incorporate quadruple bottom-line measures in the planning and evaluation of youth programs and services	Documentation of quadruple bottom-line in evaluation framework	No	14/15
				15/16 16/17

2.6 Further enhance and promote programs, services and events as 'Access All Abilities.'

2.6.1	Work with and for Young People of all abilities and their carers to further develop access criteria in service design and delivery.	Number of youth participants	No	14/15
		Documentation of all ability criteria in program/event plans		15/16 16/17
2.6.2	Further enhance 'Access-All Abilities' information for all promoted programs, projects and services.	Documentation of Access-All Abilities' information for all promoted programs, projects and services	No	14/15
				15/16 16/17

5.3 Developing Education and Employment Services

No.	Actions	Performance Indicator	Requires New Submission?	Financial Year
3.1	Work in partnership with schools and training providers to design and deliver future programs as education and employment pathways			
3.1.1	Strengthen partnerships with alternative education and training providers to further enhance and promote pathway opportunities for unemployed, disengaged and at-risk Young People.	Number of partnerships with alternative education and training providers	No	14/15
				15/16
				16/17
3.1.2	Enhance program design in consultation with education providers to further develop open and accessible pathways to alternative, vocational and tertiary education.	Documentation of program design	No	14/15
				15/16
				16/17

3.1.3	Develop and support after school homework and tutoring initiatives for secondary school students.	Number of after school homework clubs Number of youth participants	No	14/15
3.1.4	Enhance student placement opportunities and support structures.	Number of student placements	No	14/15

3.2 Further develop social enterprise programs and projects that improve the skills, confidence and capacity of Young People.

3.2.1	Liaise with BACE to develop, promote and support local youth enterprise.	Number of youth enterprises	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
3.2.2	Work with Young People to support and develop the Venture Melton initiative driven by Council's Economic Development team.	Documentation of initiatives	No	15/16 16/17
3.2.3	Develop online platform to support the youth-driven enterprise projects, products and services.	Documentation of online platform delivered	No	17/18

3.3 Further develop the vocational hospitality program to a youth cafe model.

3.3.1	Develop and deliver programs for unemployed or disengaged Young People aged 18-25 in partnership with a Registered Training Organisation.	Number or programs delivered Number of youth participants	Yes	14/15 15/16 16/17
3.3.2	Work with Registered Training Organisations to develop industrial kitchen facilities as social enterprise and training locations.	Number of youth participants	No	14/15 15/16 16/17

3.4 Work with partners at a local and regional level for improved learning and employment outcomes.

3.4.1	Conduct an environmental scan of services, initiatives and opportunities in partnership with the Local Learning Board and other relevant stakeholders.	Documentation of environmental scan	No	14/15
3.4.2	Work with the Local Learning Board, and other relevant stakeholders to broker improved learning and employment outcomes at a local and regional level.	Documentation of employment outcomes Number of actions achieved in Learning Plan	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
3.4.3	Work with the Melton Learning Board and other relevant stakeholders to develop the careers expo and other initiatives that aim to improve youth employment and education outcomes.	Careers Expo delivered	No	14/15 15/16 16/17

5.4 Healthy and Thriving Young People

No.	Actions	Performance Indicator	Requires New Submission?	Financial Year
4.1	Work in partnership with relevant stakeholders to enhance and promote existing services.			
4.1.1	Continually improve the function of MYAN through action research, professional development and ongoing training to meet present and future health and wellbeing challenges.	Number of meetings held Number of youth participants Documentation of action research, professional development and /or training	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
4.1.2	Work in partnership to develop an on-line youth services directory relevant to Young People, families, residents and workers in the sector.	On-line youth services directory developed	Yes	15/16
4.1.3	Promote volunteer and civic participation opportunities throughout council and community networks.	Documentation of volunteer and civic participation opportunities promoted	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
4.1.4	Advocate for additional funding and support for existing and established Council programs targeting vulnerable and at-risk Young People.	Number of advocacy actions Number of funding submissions	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
4.2	Work with networks of Young People, agencies and service providers to identify and develop targeted wellbeing initiatives.			
4.2.1	Continually improve MYAN and other relevant networks with participatory youth-driven planning and evaluation processes wherever possible.	Documentation of processes in MYAN work plan	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
4.2.2	Work with Young People, MYAN and other relevant stakeholders to contribute to youth-related advocacy using action research and a collective impact approach.	Documentation of advocacy	No	15/16 16/17
4.2.3	Enhance governance of MYAN through co-generated, strategic and inter-organisational solutions.	Number of meetings Number of organisations engaged and involved	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
4.3	Attract and support the development of services to improve the health and wellbeing of Young People according to evidence based needs.			
4.3.1	Advocate for the establishment of specialist, targeted services relevant to the needs of Young People in the municipality.	Documentation of advocacy Number of co-located services at Youth facilities	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
4.3.2	Further develop local accessibility through specialist and targeted services at Youth Centres where possible.	Number of co-located services at Youth facilities	No	14/15 15/16 16/17

4.3.3	Contribute to the establishment of evidence-based need for youth crisis accommodation or other appropriate housing services.	Documentation of partnership to advocate for crisis accommodation	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
4.3.4	Strengthen partnerships to support implementation of the Preventing Violence Against Women Strategy.	Number of actions achieved in Preventing Violence Against Women Strategy	No	14/15 15/16 16/17

4.4 Engage Young People in the development and delivery of health promotion campaigns and initiatives.

4.4.1	Work with Council's Community Planning team and other relevant departments to implement youth-driven initiatives in line with the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.	Documentation of actions achieved in Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
4.4.2	Work with Young People to further enhance opportunities for and access to physical exercise and recreation	Number of opportunities provided for Young People to access physical exercise and recreation	No	14/15 15/16 16/17
4.4.3	Provide and promote healthy nutritious food options in youth programs, events and services.	Implementation of Councils Healthy Eating policy	No	14/15 15/16 16/17

6

Appendices

6.1 References

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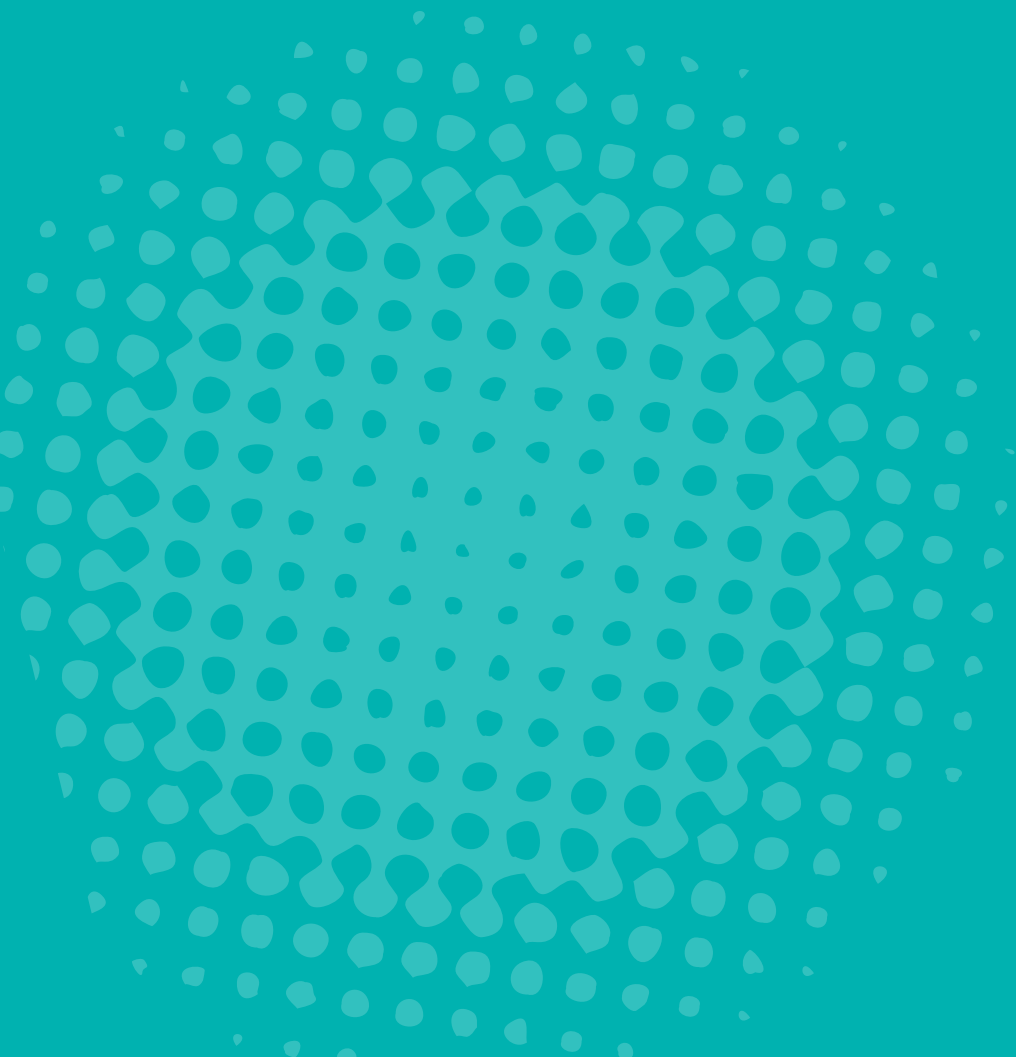
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6.2 Glossary of Terms

ATSI	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
BACE	Western Business Accelerator and Centre for Excellence
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
GLBTI	Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
MYAN	Melton Youth Advisory Network.
PSP	Precinct Structure Plan



For more information about this document or contents, please contact Melton City Council Youth Services via youthservices@melton.vic.gov.au, by phoning 03 9747 7200, or via our website at www.melton.vic.gov.au

