

City of Greater Dandenong

YOUTH

STRATEGY

2016 - 2019





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MAYOR'S FOREWARD

The City of Greater Dandenong Council is committed to providing young people with the best possible opportunities to grow and develop.

Young people are an integral part of the rich diversity that makes up the population of this municipality. The City of Greater Dandenong is a community that welcomes, supports and encourages young people to be involved in and contribute to all aspects of community life.

Under the guidance of the Youth Strategy, Council will partner with young people, key agencies and the community to assist young people to achieve their goals and aspirations. Developing supportive environments to allow young people to grow and thrive helps to ensure that they will be able to achieve their full potential. Essential to this is ensuring there are mechanisms to support the development of young people with their families.

Council is also fully committed to working in partnership with community agencies in developing a comprehensive service network to achieve the goals of the Youth Strategy.

On behalf of Council I would like to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge the many agencies and individuals who have assisted with the development of Youth Strategy 2016-2019. This revised strategy consolidates the strong work laid out in the original document and reflects current challenges and opportunities in supporting and building the capacity of young people, families and community agencies.

On behalf of my fellow Councillors, we look forward to working with the community to implement the City of Greater Dandenong Youth Strategy.



Cr Heang Tak
Mayor
City of Greater Dandenong



1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Greater Dandenong's Youth Strategy 2016-2019, 'Supporting our young people: now and into the future' (Revised 2015) provides a strategic framework to direct the work of Council Youth and Family Services. The Strategy has been developed within the context of the Council Plan and Community Wellbeing Plan, and aligns with the directions of these strategic documents. The mid-way revision of the Youth Strategy enables this strategic document to reflect the current environment for young people and Council in terms of providing services and best meeting the needs of the community.

Young people are those aged between 12-25 years who live, work, and study, socialise or are significantly attached to the municipality. This is in accord with the national and state definitions of young people.

Greater Dandenong is a Child Friendly City and strives to ensure that children's voices and opinions are taken into consideration and influence the work of Council. Greater Dandenong utilises UNICEF's Child Friendly Cities framework and the Victorian Local Government Association Child Friendly Cities Charter. UNICEF defines children as those aged 0 - 18 years.

1.1 The Youth Strategy 2016 - 2019 priority areas

1. Leading collaborative service provision for young people
2. Opportunities to work, learn and engage
3. Support the health and wellbeing of young people
4. Recognising the strengths of young people as engaged citizens



1.2 Council's vision for young people

The Council Plan 2013 – 2017 outlines Council's vision of Greater Dandenong as a safe, vibrant city of opportunity for all – to visit, work, live and play.

The vision for young people is that young people are valued, respected and supported to reach their full potential.

To achieve this vision Council will work collaboratively with the community, young people and their families to develop an environment, where young people have the ability to develop social and learning skills and contribute to their community.

This vision outlines Council's commitment to promote and support the health and wellbeing of all young people who live, work, and study or have a significant connection with the City of Greater Dandenong. The Youth Strategy guides Council's role in relation to young people and outlines clear priorities for service development and delivery.

1.3 Role of Council in delivering Youth Services

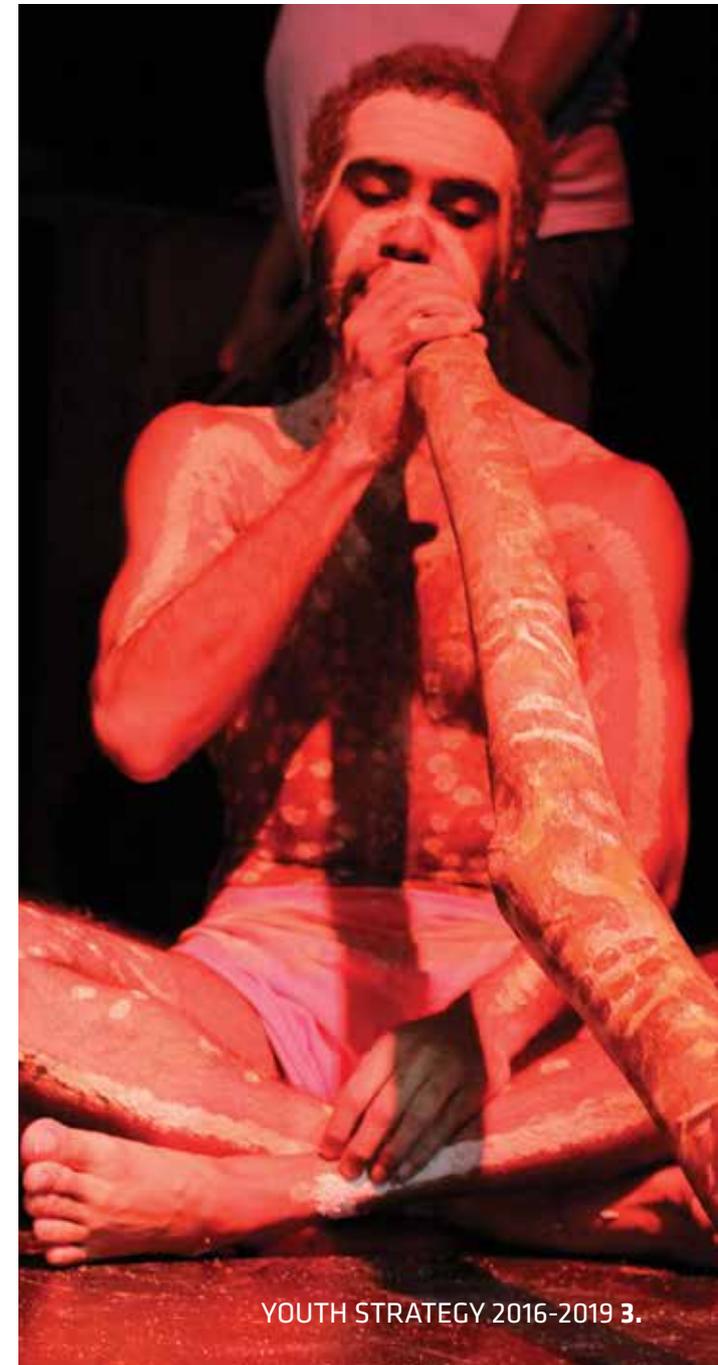
Council demonstrates sound leadership and commitment to young people by undertaking the following four key strategic roles:

Leader: collaborate with tiers of government and service providers, to identify priority needs and mobilise innovative responses

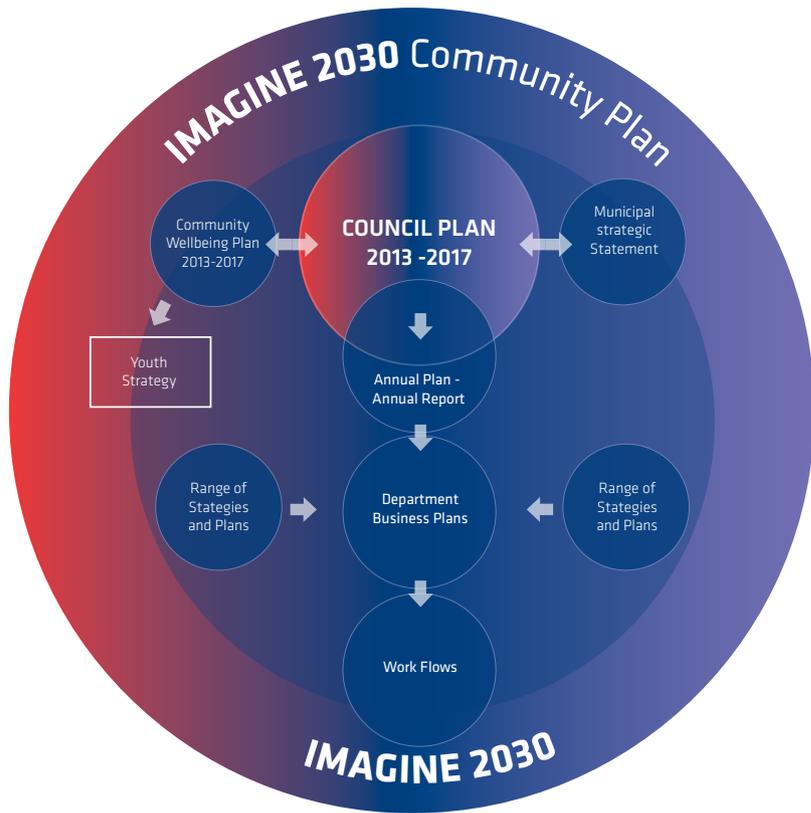
Planner: together with service providers, stakeholders and young people, identify gaps and opportunities for responses

Advocate: provide advocacy on local needs and priority areas of concern and its impacts on young people

Provider: facilitate opportunities for young people to actively participate in community and civic life, enhancing social and life skills, health and wellbeing.



1.4 Integrated planning in Greater Dandenong



1.5 Council's strategic direction

COUNCIL PLAN 2013-17	COMMUNITY WELLBEING PLAN 2013-17	YOUTH STRATEGY 2016-19
THEMES	PRIORITIES	PRIORITIES
PEOPLE	Education, Employment, Lifelong Learning Collaborative Health and Wellbeing Planning	Opportunities to work learn and engage Support health and wellbeing of young people
	Physical Activity, Leisure and Recreation	Opportunities to work learn and engage Support health and wellbeing of young people
PLACES	Safer Communities	Leading collaborative service provision for young people Opportunities to work learn and engage
OPPORTUNITIES	Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities	Leading collaborative service provision for young people Recognising the strengths of young people as engaged citizens

1.6 Action Plan

1.6.1 Action Plan Implementation

The implementation of the Youth Strategy Action Plan will be influenced by the Council Plan, Community Wellbeing Plan, Children's Plan, Community Safety Plan and relevant state and Commonwealth policy related to young people.

1.6.2 Monitoring and Review

The Action Plan will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Youth and Family Services business unit. Key indicators will be reported against in the quarterly reporting processes. An annual report against the indicators will be produced in July each year and presented to Council.



2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2.1 Principles

The following principles underpin the development and implementation of the City of Greater Dandenong's Youth Strategy 2016 – 2019.

Leadership and Advocacy

Council will employ effective leadership to facilitate collaboration in the development of the local service system, build the capacity of communities to meet the needs of young people and develop programs that are responsive to local needs.

Strengthening Community

Council will continue to strengthen partnerships with the State and Commonwealth Governments, community stakeholders and young people in addressing youth issues, closing service gaps and delivering responsive services.

Health and Wellbeing

Using a strengths-based approach and underpinned by a resilience framework, Council will continue to provide services across the continuum of care from early childhood through to adolescence.

Youth Participation

Council is committed to engaging young people in meaningful discussion and decision making processes, and as active participants in economic and community life.

Diversity

Council's services for young people will reflect the diversity of our young people's views, experiences and backgrounds, including, but not limited to culture, age, gender, disability, sexuality, spirituality, schooling and work and life experience.

Continuous Improvement

Council will employ evidence based practices to develop programs and services which deliver positive outcomes for young people. Council will continue to review existing services and, where appropriate, deliver new and innovative initiatives that are responsive to community need.

Partnerships

A fundamental principal underpinning the Youth Strategy is the integral development and fostering of partnerships; and an emphasis on collaboration and consultation with relevant stakeholders.

2.2 Policy context

The development of the City of Greater Dandenong's Youth Strategy 2016 – 2019 has been informed by the following Commonwealth and Victorian State Government policies and frameworks.

2.2.1 Commonwealth Government

The Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international convention to which Australia is a signatory. The Convention is a set of standards that ensure that governments give consideration to what is in the best interest of children. These principles and standards are reflected in Council's Youth Strategy.

National Mental Health Strategy

The Commonwealth Government's National Mental Health Strategy is a commitment by Australian governments to improve the lives of people with a mental illness. The strategy aims to:

- Promote the mental health of the Australian community
- Where possible, prevent the development of mental disorders
- Reduce the impact of mental disorders upon individuals, families and the community
- Assure the rights of people with a mental illness.

Australia's Multicultural Policy

Australia's Multicultural Policy aims to strengthen social cohesion through promoting a sense of belonging, fostering respect for diversity, and encouraging engagement with Australian values, identity and citizenship, within the framework of Australian law. The approach articulates the rights and responsibilities that are fundamental to living in Australia and supports the rights of all to celebrate, practice and maintain their cultural traditions within the law and free from discrimination.

2.2.2 Victorian State Government

Victoria's Vulnerable Children: Our Shared Responsibility 2013 -2022

The Victoria's Vulnerable Children: Our Shared Responsibility Strategy 2013 -2022, together with the supporting Vulnerable Children Action Plan (July 2014) is a whole-of-government strategy

that outlines the goals of preventing abuse and neglect, acting earlier when children are vulnerable and improving outcomes for children in statutory care. The strategy acknowledges that achieving this will require a shared responsibility between government and the community sector. Through the Strategy, the State Government has adopted a collaborative governance structure, which includes the creation of Children and Youth Area Partnerships of State and local government, along with service providers and communities.

Engage Involve Create

The Victorian State Government's 'Engage Involve Create' Youth Statement is its vision for young people, which encompasses engagement in employment, participation in education, positive relationships, and involvement in community decisions and activities. This vision is reflected throughout Council's Youth Strategy.



Victorian Human Rights Charter

Human rights are the foundation for freedom, justice, peace and respect, and are an essential part of any democratic and inclusive society that respects the rule of the law and human dignity and equality. The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities contains an agreed set of human rights, freedoms and responsibilities by law.

Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013 – 2018

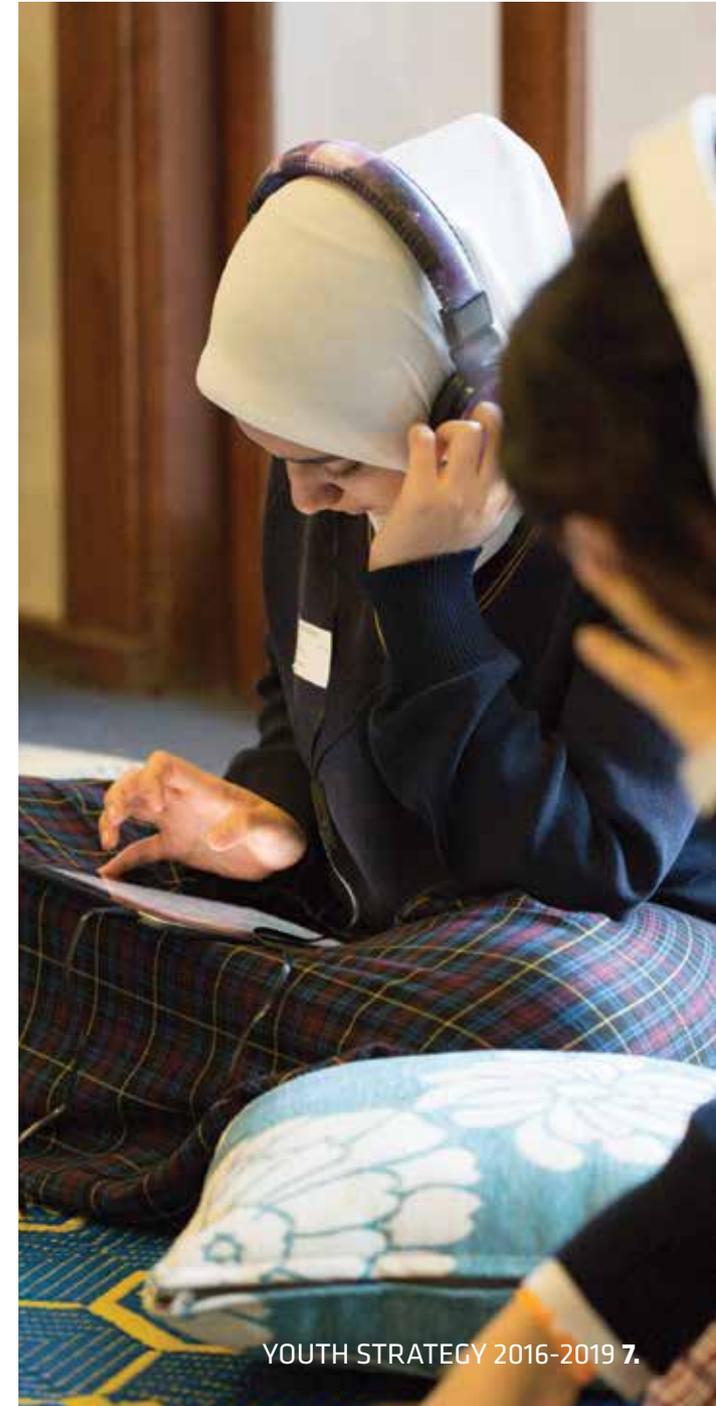
The Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013 - 2018 (VAAF) brings together Government and Aboriginal community commitments and efforts to create a better future for Victoria's Aboriginal population. Key priorities identified for improved Government effort and reform in Aboriginal affairs include:

- > Building prosperity through economic participation;
- > Protecting and supporting vulnerable children and families; and
- > Ensuring access to services that meet the needs of Aboriginal people across the State.

2.2.3 Council related policies, strategies and plans

The following Council related policies, strategies and plans hold direct relevance to young people and have been drawn upon in the development of the City of Greater Dandenong Youth Strategy 2016 – 2019. This Youth Strategy serves to complement cross-organisational strategic directions to ensure consistency in approach and identify opportunities for collaboration.

- > Council Plan 2013 - 2017
- > Community Wellbeing Plan 2013 - 2017
- > Children's Plan 2015 - 2019
- > Community Safety Plan 2015 - 2022
- > Cultural Diversity Plan
- > Disability Action Plan
- > Imagine 2030
- > Asylum Seeker Refugee Statement
- > Indigenous Plan
- > Long Term Financial Strategy
- > Revitalising Central Dandenong of Aboriginal people across the State.



2.3 Local Profile

2.3.1 Greater Dandenong

A demographic snapshot of the City of Greater Dandenong (CGD)

Based on ABS Census Data and other sources

- > In 2015, the total population of Greater Dandenong is around 153,000 people
- > Over 27,000 young people aged between 12-25 years old. This is around 1/5 of the total population.
- > 49% of all young people in this city were born overseas
- > Nearly two-thirds of young people in Greater Dandenong speak languages other than English at home
- > One in 20 of these young people have limited fluency in English
- > Among the 490 indigenous residents of this community, 129 are aged 12-25 *



2.3.2 Young People in Greater Dandenong

27,000 young people aged 12-25 years reside in Greater Dandenong, accounting for one-fifth of its population. Owing to recent patterns of migrant settlement, these young people reflect a wide diversity in their birthplaces and spoken languages.

Cultural Diversity

Nearly a half (49%) of all young people in Greater Dandenong aged 12-25, were born overseas. In 2010-2011 over 650 recently arrived immigrants, aged 12-25, settled in Greater Dandenong from countries such as Afghanistan, Cambodia, India and Sri Lanka.

Nearly two-thirds of young people speak languages other than English at home and one in twenty have limited fluency in English – three times the metropolitan level.

Among the 490 Indigenous residents of this city, 129 are aged 12 to 25 (*as at 2011).

Education

Young people in Greater Dandenong experience less favourable early school progress, often leaving school early, are less inclined to attend university and are less likely to be employed, than those throughout Melbourne. Thirteen per cent (13%) of young people in Greater Dandenong leave school before completing year eleven compared with 10% across metropolitan Melbourne. Recent humanitarian settlers are at high risk of leaving school early.

Employment

Unemployment rates among 20-24 year-olds declined from 18% to 12% in the decade to 2006, however local unemployment remains higher than the Melbourne Metropolitan unemployment level (9%). Unemployment rates rise to their highest levels among young people from Sudan and Afghanistan. Seven per cent of 15-19 year-olds (or 600 people) and 15% of 20-24 year olds (1,400 people) are neither in paid employment nor enrolled in education which is (7%) the second highest level of disengagement in Melbourne.



Social Inclusion

Educational outcomes and employment levels among young people set limits upon social and economic opportunities. In addition, the perceptions of young people themselves, as well as crime levels and birth rates, hold important implications for social inclusion and future prospects of local young people. Locally, the proportions of young people who commit or are victims of violent crime are among the third highest in metropolitan Melbourne. Ominously, levels of substantiated abuse of adolescents are the second highest in the metropolitan area, while the proportions of young people who did not have a trusted adult in their life, did not have someone to turn to for advice, or were dissatisfied with life, all are the highest in Melbourne, according to a State Government survey. In 2013, the local birth rate among women aged 15-24 years was almost twice the corresponding metropolitan rate. Such elevated birth rates are strongly related to limited educational attainments and employment prospects.

Disability

Approximately 360 young people, or 1.4% of those aged 12 to 25 years in Greater Dandenong live with a disability - which is the same rate as for metropolitan Melbourne.

Incomes and Dwelling Types

Most young people in the municipality live with their parents. Their housing tenure reflects broader trends across the City. Approximately seven in ten young people live in homes owned or rented by their parents, while most of the balance rent their accommodation privately and 3% reside in government-subsidised accommodation. It is estimated that approximately 500 people in Greater Dandenong are homeless, of whom a substantial proportion are teenagers or young adults. Among young people aged 20 to 24 years who are not studying, incomes are lower than elsewhere across metropolitan Melbourne, owing to the higher local unemployment rate and the nature of local employment.

Family Type / Household Composition

Family and household circumstances of young people vary widely. Within Greater Dandenong, 79% of residents aged 15-24 years live with their parents or other relatives, either as dependent students or non-dependent children, 10% reside with a partner, 2% live alone and 6% are in group households. This is a similar pattern of household circumstances to that witnessed across metropolitan Melbourne.

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