

Burnie Youth Strategy

2017 – 2020



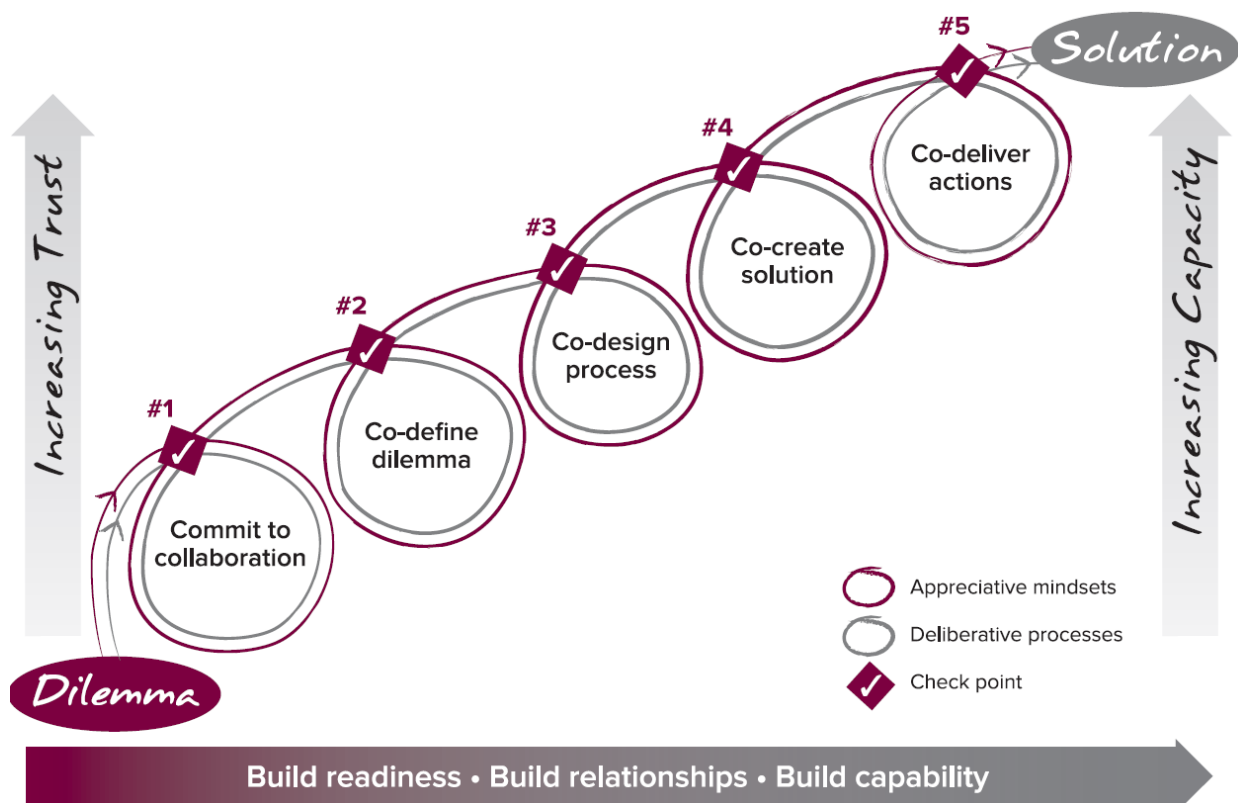
BURNIE
CITY COUNCIL

Approaching a Youth Strategy

The strategy aims to support approaches that inform decision makers of the current status of service delivery in Burnie as well as bring together those most affected by the issues with other stakeholders in the community to lead efforts to implement change.

The approach seeks to build upon the current foundation of Council’s ongoing work, to support the growth and capacity of democratic coalitions of collaboration within the community, to find agreement on common agendas after identification of root causes of issues, and to build leadership and capacity to create localised solutions or engage in advocacy in regard to policy change where required.

The Collaborative Process (from The Power of Co; Twyford)

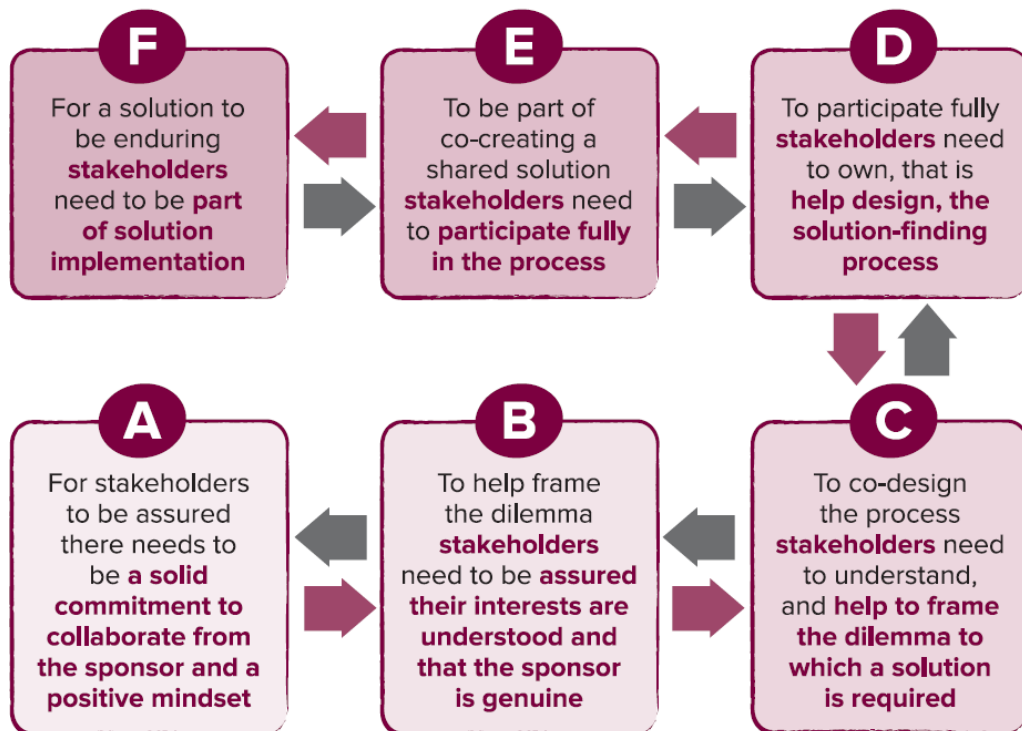


It is recognised that root cause analysis may identify the need for systemic or policy change as part of the process and require an all-of-community response. Therefore the building of collaborative leadership structures, meaningful consultation, as well as democratic governance and decision-making is essential for any coalition to prosper, and requires the inclusion of those affected by the issue to be part of any drive to change.

In avoiding a single, narrow, top down approach to the identification of action points on issues, there is required a framework that brings the spectrum of stakeholders together that

work with youth, as well as youth themselves, so that the prioritisation of issues can be addressed and appropriate models for prevention or intervention selected and implemented.

Co-Design Logic Model (from The Power of Co; Twyfords)



This strategic approach aims to start building a process for developing a local framework that builds upon other Council activities and provides direction in supporting a holistic community response that is able to adapt to changing requirements, and reflects the needs of the community.

Role of Local Government

Many Councils have been reviewing their traditional role of direct delivery of support services to young people in the community and are now focusing on the facilitation of strategic direction. To provide greater outcomes for youth, Council has been forming partnerships with the principal stakeholders in the sector along with supporting and facilitating other local service providers to provide collaborative approaches to complex issues, many of which affect all cohorts in the community, but may be amplified in the youth sector.

Over the past few years, Burnie City Council has focused on bringing together social assets in community and economic development best practice. In adopting strong partnerships and integration of leadership and direction in community services, the Burnie City Council has built community capacity to plan and respond to issues within the youth sector. Council involvement in facilitating groups such as the North West Action for Youth and its work within a Collective Impact Framework has ensured that the local youth sector is both working toward shared goals in meeting the needs of young people and connecting with statewide collaborative networks in its approach. The Youth Development Officer employed by Council acts as an internal liaison for the youth sector and a conduit to young people of the community. This approach involves directly identifying and strengthening community assets as they grow whether they be youth led or focused, as well as implementing programs and events that bring together young people or organisations to approach identified factors from ongoing engagement.

The Burnie Youth Council is an example of one of the aspects fostered in creating youth connectedness to the local government sector. Programs conducted with young people are typically in partnership with schools and youth organisations in the region. This partnership approach provides greater opportunities for a more comprehensive and dynamic youth engagement. Limited resources are focused on facilitating existing connections to build the capacity to deliver on Council's strategic directions.

Policy moves to planning when youth issues are identified, prioritised and addressed via these initiatives, allowing young people's active contribution and participation through the consultative and decision- making processes Council has put in place in response to community need. Council recognises that networking of organisations that work with youth to improve and build upon their services is important, but that strategic work is also required to connect those efforts with the broader community for greater outcomes.

Key Issues

Council has identified four key issues which directly impact on the youth of our community, and despite numerous attempts by various levels of government and significant resourcing these issues remain.

The four issues are:

- Housing
- Transport
- Employment; and
- Diversity

Housing

Council will bring together stakeholders to approach issues for young people around housing, affordability, access and rental.

A number of items have been identified by Council via engagement over the past two years as concern for youth, and a better idea of these and how they relate to the young people in the community is the first step in building a way forward.

Engagement with youth and statistics such as Tasmania's rental values increased by 41% between February 2016 and February 2017¹ identify a need to be prepared with a local understanding of the changing housing dynamic that is affecting young people in Tasmania.

Some of the issues to be explored:

- The requirement for references for housing for first-time renters locking young people out of the market
- It is a landlord oriented market, with more people looking for rental than there is housing available
- Numbers of homeless youth, including couch-surfers
- Affordability of housing
- Appropriateness of housing
- Discrimination by landlords/real estate
- The issues surrounding the lack of rental history, for example, the requirement that a young renter provide two referees, current employment details, previous employment details and previous rental history)
- Lack of income (Centrelink/student) which may encompass a number of issues such as discrimination
- The cost of private rental properties
- Shortage of cheap appropriate housing

¹ REA Group 2017, Property Demand Index (March 2017), REA Group

- The provision of Information on housing options and availability of support (bond loans etc)
- Those without transport find it hard to find appropriate housing

Objective	Action	Performance Indicators	Timeline
1. An understanding of the depth, its impact on the community, the stakeholders and the main issues surrounding housing for young people.	Investigate issues related to lack of housing and homelessness, and work with stakeholders in service providers and the community to advocate for improvement.	Number of submissions, recommendations, and reports on local issues.	2017-2019
	Investigate and implement methods to gain data on homelessness, couch surfing and rental stress to inform services and government of the issues facing young people.	Resource document updated yearly and contributed to by local organisations via NWAY.	2017-2018
2. An increase in the capacity of community initiatives to support young people in housing stress.	Identify any existing support networks and resources for those in housing stress and work with agencies and organisations to promote change.	Document collating existing resources available. Reports and submissions made.	2017-2018
	Bring together young people and real-estates/land lords with a focus on building understanding of the problems surrounding housing and create, assess and action possible solutions.	Workshop forum bringing groups together to identify gaps and approach sustainable solutions that bridge those gaps.	2018
3. A measurable improvement in access to suitable, safe, secure and affordable housing for young people.	Reduce the level of youth homelessness and housing stress based on the outcomes from collaboration with the community	Reports from stakeholder organisations as to the impacts of actions on youth homelessness and housing stress in Burnie.	2018-2019
	Create pathways that provide decision makers with an informed understanding of the housing needs of young people in the municipality.	Identifiable methods that information on the local housing situation reaches decision makers, and specific information available to representatives on how to gain information pertaining to housing stress.	2018-2019

Transport

Transport issues in rural areas have traditionally caused hurdles for people in accessing services due to their very nature. Bus services may be limited to particular areas, and service only particular routes that leave travelers a distance from the point of departure, their destination, or both.

Buses and other community-based transport may run only specific hours or may require travelers to catch more than one bus from a number of services in which timetables are not coordinated.

Fares may be unaffordable for many, and the traveler may need to buy separate tickets for each different bus service.

Whilst concessions are available for students and unemployed, they are not available to people on low wages.

The State Government is currently completing an Urban Bus review, and these issues have been consistently identified by stakeholders and the local community.

The Employment Partnership Group has also been working to assist learner driver initiatives as it is recognised that lack of transport options in the north west region can be a significant obstacle for job seekers.

Some of the issues to be explored:

1. Improvements to existing Transport Services
 - a. Adjustments and improvements to existing services
 - b. Fares
 - c. Timing
 - d. Service areas
2. Community Transport Services
 - a. Bike paths
 - b. Ride sharing
 - c. Community buses
3. Policy And Funding Schemes
 - a. Learner driver courses I2P's
 - b. Affordable transport schemes for individuals who are unable to access public or private transport for employment
4. Outreach Services
 - a. Activity and Information bus/combined services

Objective	Action	Performance Indicators	Timeline
1. Understanding the dynamics and blocks to the progress of improvement to transport	Identify blockages to previous investigation outcomes related to transport	Document outlining previous blockages to outcomes from forums and local projects.	2017-2018
	Work with stakeholders to build solutions that advocate for improvement.	Group formed to specifically approach and discuss advocacy around transport that includes community members as well as organisations	2018-2019
	Identify areas surrounding the issue of transport that Council may be able to have an impact.	Report contributed to by organisations and community members	2018-2019
2. An increase in community driven solutions to improve the access young people have to transport	Explore community driven solutions and bring together stakeholders to investigate their implementation	Number of young people using a community driven solution	2017-2020
3. Young people have improved access to transport to work and to school.	Facilitate advocacy and based on the outcomes from engagement with services and the community	Number of recommendations to statutory bodies and other stakeholders on outcomes from community collaborations.	2018-2020

Employment

While the north west region has seen a significant improvement in the employment rate over the last two years, youth aged 15 – 24 continue to be at a higher risk of unemployment than most other age cohorts (other than those people aged 55+).

The current unemployment rate for the north west is currently 6.3% down from 8.0% in October 2015.

Burnie’s unemployment rate for the March quarter was 7.3%, down from 10% in October 2015.

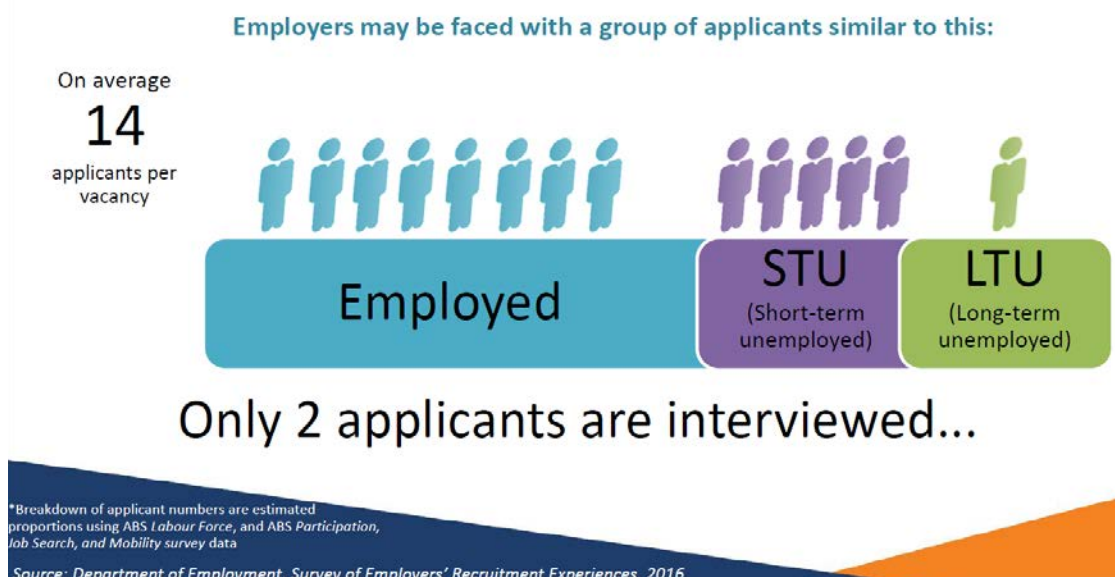
Young people aged between 15 – 24 make up 15% of the north west population, however make up 22.3% of the Job Active (employment services) case load.

Data from the Department of Employment on October 2016 indicates that 19% of businesses in the north west region increased staffing in the previous 12 months and a further 17% planned to increase staffing during 2017.

However a survey by the Department of Employment indicates that many young people are unable to find work due to employers seeking experienced or qualified applicants.

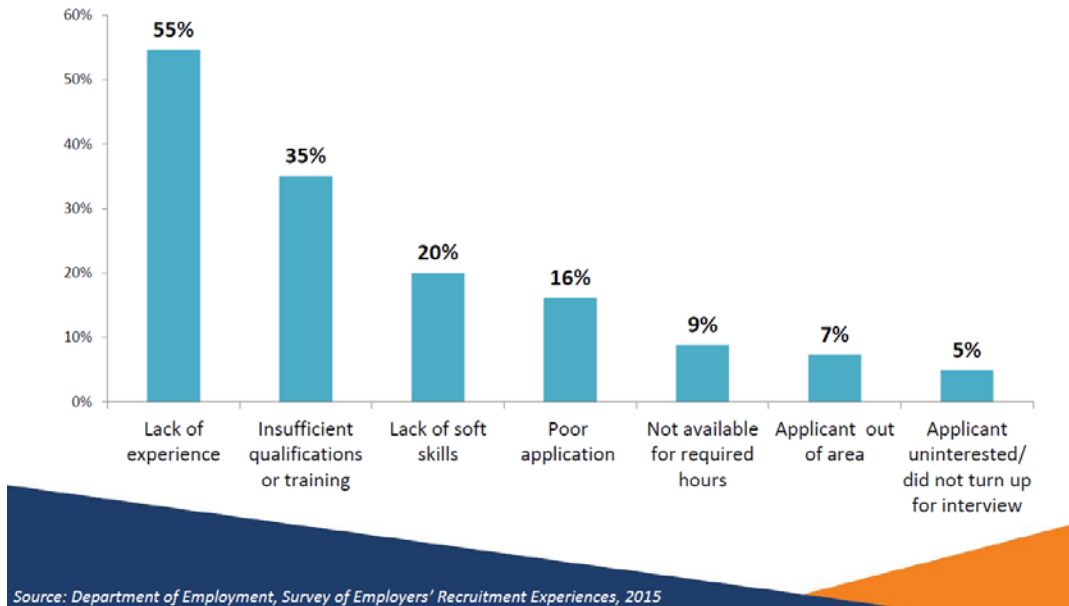
Currently most applicants are screened out

Internet and newspaper advertisements only, West and North West, 2016



...and inexperienced job seekers are usually not interviewed

Reasons applicants not interviewed, Tasmania, 2015



This data is supported by a number of local forums which have explored issues around unemployment.

The Strategy aims to work across sectors and build on initiatives already in place.

Objective	Action	Performance Indicators	Timeline
1. Collaboration between those affected, employment agencies, business and Council in identifying and approaching issues that affect young people in accessing services	Bring together employment agencies, business, unemployed youth and other stakeholders in the community to create strategies to approach better access to services and pathways to employment	Facilitated network meetings	2017-2020
2. Promote projects, organisations and methods that better prepare young people for the workforce	Maintain and build upon the Dream Big project	Project delivery reports and schools involved	2017-2020
	To build strategic alliances to assist young people in building their capacity to find employment	Alliances covering range of education from primary to secondary	2017-2020
	Build strategic alliances to support organisations that provide opportunities for young people to find meaningful and fulfilling work	Requested feedback from organisations Council is working with that are currently delivering services to young people	2017-2020
	Explore business and community partnerships that may enhance young people's opportunities to find employment	Partnerships created	2017-2020
3. An increase in the capacity of service agencies to approach complex issues in the youth sector that act as barriers to employment	Explore options that connect youth services with education and business	Host/attend community service provider meetings that focus on networking as well as strategy. Feedback from service agencies.	2017-2020

Diversity

Our community contains a diversity of young people who cover the spectrums of ability, ethnicity, religion, gender and sexuality, and Council maintains a social justice responsibility to its residents in terms of maintaining service provision.

By actively engaging with organisations and individuals working to help foster supportive, safe and accepting environments within our community, Council aims to increase accessibility to inclusive services so that young people are not disadvantaged by their environments, and their wellbeing is equal with their peers.

Disadvantages can be reflected in such things as lack of consultation, consideration in planning and inclusivity in events. It may also be reflected in other aspects of this strategy such as housing, employment and transport.

An example of positive inclusivity, driven by the youth themselves, is the Burnie Youth Council's working committee considering disabled youth in their planned 'Colour Me Krazy' fun run.

The Department of Health states that broadly, people of diverse sexual orientations, sex or gender identity account for about 11% of the population. Research indicates that there are benefits to including LGBTI people in policy development and that 'the community that local government serves is a resource' when it comes to developing LGBTI inclusive initiatives.

Statistics collected and collated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Beyond Blue, Suicide Prevention Australia and various universities across the country found that LGBTQ people are between three and 14 times more likely to commit suicide than heterosexual Australians; that one in six young LGBTQ people have attempted suicide and one in three have self-harmed. Amongst school age young people, 40% of teenage boys state they would not want a same-sex attracted person as a friend; 60 percent had witnessed first-hand someone being bullied for their sexuality, and a quarter believe homophobic language is acceptable. Up to 80 percent of LGBTQ teens have experienced homophobic language at schools and one quarter had experienced physical abuse at school.

"Customer satisfaction entails accessible services that do not discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation, but responsiveness arguably goes beyond this. Responsive services require the proactive creation of mechanisms for listening to LGB people, such as fora, and mechanisms for acting in response to these, and positive support for diversity."

Surya Monro, 'Evaluating Local Government Equalities Work: The Case of Sexualities Initiatives in the UK' (2006) 32(1) Local Government Studies 19, 30

Objective	Action	Performance Indicators	Timeline
1. Recognise and celebrate all aspects of youth diversity, including culture, sexuality and disability	Work with organisations, services and Council committees to promote and offer forums and events surrounding diversity issues	Agencies working with the diversity of youth are consulted and supported	2017-2020
	Promote an inclusive practice by connecting with, and provide an avenue for, the diversity of youth in the community to have their views adequately represented in Council decisions, events and actions.	Council policy or practice that ensures an adequate attempt to consult and/or gather feedback from youth or representative organisations, on issues that may affect them.	2018-2019
	Support organisations that build capacity for youth in the community to deliver events that support marginalised cohorts	Council YDO involvement in supporting community led events.	2018-2020
	Support organisations in working to increase accessibility to inclusive services for young people.	Feedback from organisations working with youth	2018-2020

Elements of our approach

In developing initiative involving collaborative coalitions to resolve long term issues within the community, there are a number of actions that are common in Council objectives.

The broad nature and complexity of these issues make it difficult to define action items that pinpoint solutions without risk of missed opportunities when addressing the complex nature of these issues. Thus the coordinated approach of services and the community is needed to supply a foundation for any projects that arise from a collective knowledge, and the ability for coalitions to shape direction, goals and actions based on the output.

Council is committed to identifying and working with our community so that a sustainable framework can be over a long term, including both the services delivered to young people but involving the young people themselves in the process.

Council's role will be, where opportunity is identified, to:

- Facilitate and resource self-management activities that are driven by young people.
- Maintain regular contact with service providers, reporting up to Council gaps in service delivery
- Bring together stakeholders regularly to
 - identify challenges and issues
 - identify frameworks or models for change
 - collectively advocate to fill gaps in services or facilities
- Work with the community to identify gaps in services between agencies working with youth and the broader youth cohort, and support organisations ability to fill those gaps.
- Facilitate committees, forums or other collaborative frameworks to explore solutions to gaps or issues surrounding services and facilities.
- Develop methods to inform young people of youth services, organisations, business, and their associated programs and groups that operate in the region.
- Incorporate young people's and youth-oriented organisations views into planning for programs
- Investigate and implement a program that promotes the identification, support and celebration of "youth champions" in the community
- Work together with organisations via NWAY and other networks to advocate and raise awareness of identified issues that are broader than the local community with the aim of bringing about policy and program change
- Develop methods including collaborative partnerships to build capacity to engage with young people in the community
- Investigate opportunities for utilisation of public spaces and their use by community groups to host activities that engage with young people
- Incorporate young people's and youth-oriented organisations' views into planning for community spaces.

Document Endorsement

Responsibility:	It is the responsibility of the Director Community and Economic Development to oversee the implementation of this strategy. It is the responsibility of the Governance Unit to maintain this policy in the corporate document framework.
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Previous Strategy Replaced:	This document replaces the previous document Youth Strategy, dated January 2008.
Publication of Strategy:	This Strategy is publically available on Council's website, www.burnie.net