

E.13 YOUTH POLICY

Community Services Directorate

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council Youth Policy (Policy) has been reviewed and a revised policy is presented to Council for adoption. It is similar to the existing policy, with an emphasis on Council encouraging and supporting youth engagement and participation across the community.

Document/s pertaining to this Council Report

- **Attachment 1** - Revised Youth Policy

INTERNAL POLICIES / STRATEGIES / DOCUMENTS

South Gippsland 2020 Vision

Community Strengthening Strategy 2008

South Gippsland Shire Council Youth Engagement Toolkit (2013)

COUNCIL PLAN

Strategic Goal:	1.0	A Vibrant Engaged Community
Outcome:	1.1	Active, Resilient Community
Strategy No:	1.1.1	Community Partnerships

CONSULTATION

Consultation has been undertaken with members of the South Gippsland Youth Council, Council staff who contributed to the development of the Council's Youth Engagement Toolkit, South Gippsland Shire Councillors, and other youth service agencies.

REPORT

Background

Council has had a formal Youth Policy since 2001. It was last reviewed in 2006.

The South Gippsland 2020 Vision notes that South Gippsland will value young people to be active participants in their community.

Discussion

The revised Policy focuses on partnership with the community, agencies and young people to:

- foster opportunities for young people to be active within their communities;
- provide information on services provided by other agencies and groups;
- create opportunities for young people to take a leadership role with their peers; and
- champion the role of young people in the community.

The revised Policy does not advocate for Council to play a major role in specific youth service delivery. However, the Policy does allow for limited direct service provision for young people where no other existing agency is well placed to deliver the service, or where no other existing agency is willing to do so but Council believes that the service is important. The current example of Council providing a specific youth service is the L2P learner driver program.

This revised Policy provides more detail on possible implementation activities than the 2006 version. These changes increase opportunities for staff to develop external partnerships and access more external funds to support youth engagement and participation.

Adoption of a formal policy to encourage participation in community activity plays an important role in encouraging young people to feel engaged in their community, and encourages adults to look for opportunities to collaborate with the younger members of the Shire.

Options

Council can choose to:

- adopt the revised policy;
- retain the current policy unamended; or
- no longer having a specific Youth Policy.

Proposal

It is proposed Council adopt the revised Youth Policy 2013.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

This revised Policy does not require an increased Council budget, as the actions suggested will be supported by existing Community Strengthening staff and fits within the Department's business plan and Council's Long Term Financial Plan.

RISK FACTORS

There are no risks associated with supporting this revised Youth Policy.

The Policy allows the opportunity for Council staff to hear the voice of young people.

CONCLUSION

South Gippsland Shire Council has played an active role in supporting young people to be directly involved with their local communities. Adoption of this revised Youth Policy will continue this work and will provide guidance to young people, the broader community and Council on further opportunities for youth participation in community activity.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council revoke the Youth Policy 2006 and adopt the revised Youth Policy 2013.

STAFF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Nil

NOTE: The recommendation was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY as part of a single motion, refer to page 216.

Attachment 1 Revised Youth Policy



South Gippsland Shire Council

Policy Number:	C46	Directorate:	Community Services
Council Item No.	E.13	Department	Community Strengthening
Council Adoption Date	26 June 2013	Primary Author:	Sophie Dixon
Revision Date:	May 2017	Secondary Author:	Ned Dennis

COUNCIL POLICY

POLICY OBJECTIVE

Young people of all abilities have an important contribution to make to the civic, social, economic, recreational and cultural life of South Gippsland. The future wellbeing of the community is assisted by retaining and attracting young people to the district, and by encouraging young people to feel valued as community members. This Policy is designed to support the provision of opportunities for engagement, participation and inclusion in the wider community by young people.

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Victorian Government Youth Policy (Engage Involve Create, Youth Statement)

DEFINITIONS

Young people are defined as aged between 12 and 25 years old.

POLICY STATEMENT

South Gippsland Shire Council provides a key role in youth engagement, participation and inclusion through;

- Provision of a supported Youth Council.
- Advocating for provision of quality services for young people including education, training, social and cultural services and employment opportunities.
- Promotion of young people as active members of the community through providing opportunities to participate in community programs, initiatives and decision making processes.
- Providing a leadership role in developing strong partnerships between all stakeholders and provide a sustainable future for young people in South Gippsland Shire.
- Provision of leadership and community engagement skills development opportunities for young people.

RISK ASSESSMENT

This Policy will provide guidance to Council when allocating resources to youth engagement activities, and when seeking to partner with other organisations to develop or provide resources for such activities. This policy will also provide South Gippsland's young people, wider community and potential funding partners with a clear statement on the role of Council in supporting youth engagement and participation.

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IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

- Council will endeavour to engage young people in all aspects of planning that affect young people's lives and provide opportunities to contribute to decision making and the development of policy, programs and initiatives that affect them and their community through the support of an active Youth Council.
- Council will consult with and listen to the needs, opinions and ideas of young people and provide opportunities for them to participate in their communities.
- Council will promote and facilitate strong partnerships between young people, and key stakeholders, which provide opportunities for young people to be valued, respected and involved in social, civic and economic opportunities, and live a safe and healthy life in South Gippsland.
- Council will consult with and acknowledge the diversity of young people and their needs when making decisions that affect young people.
- Council will support funding submissions and fundraising activities that benefit young people.
- Council will actively seek programs and services which enhance the engagement, participation and inclusion of young people in the community dependant on availability of funding and budget constraints.
- Council will work with service providers, youth agencies and community organisations to improve access by young people to relevant information that supports their participation in education, training, health, cultural, recreation and civic activity.

LINKAGES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Young people
Community groups
Local Government
State Government
Federal Government
Regional youth networks
Youth services organisations
Education
Business
Sport and recreation
Arts and culture
Community safety
Municipal Health and Wellbeing plan
Community health providers

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

South Gippsland Shire Council – Youth Engagement Toolkit
ENGAGE INVOLVE CREATE – Victorian State Government Youth Statement