

1.1 B4 EARLY YEARS COALITION MEMBERSHIP

To: Council
Reporting Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services
Responsible Manager: Director Corporate and Community Services
File Reference:
Council Report Date: 14 May 2018
Enclosures: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council become a member of the B4 Early Years Coalition and works together with families and the community to improve outcomes for children in the early years.

PURPOSE

This report has been prepared to assist Council to consider membership of the B4 Early Years Coalition. The B4 Early Years Coalition membership is a commitment to work collaboratively to ensure every child in Tasmania, is cared for and nurtured through the early years, no matter what.

BACKGROUND

The B4 Early Years Coalition (B4) is a Tasmanian Government initiative supported through the Department of Education, to connect and support individuals and organisations cross Tasmania, through collective impact.

The B4 Early Years Coalition Vision is:

Every child in Tasmania, is cared for and nurtured through the early years, no matter what.

And to achieve the following Goals:

1. Everyone values the early years
2. Everyone supports the early years
3. Everyone works together for the early years.

Working together across the three B4 Early Years Coalition goals will ensure everyone:

- is aware of, and understand the importance and lifelong benefits of strong healthy development, pregnancy to 4 years of age.
- has the skills, knowledge, resources and a role to support children, pregnancy to 4 years of age, their families and communities; and

- families, services, business and communities have the knowledge, skills and confidence to partner and ensure the best start for children, pregnancy to 4 years of age, their families and communities.

The B4 Early Years Coalition will connect people and organisations from across the Tasmanian community who are committed to supporting children, pregnancy to 4 years of age and their families.

The name B4 represents the early years of a child's life, pregnancy to age four, the years 'before' a child begins full-time school and the period before birth. These early years are a time of rapid change and development for children, as they learn and grow and discover the world around them.

The B4 Early Years Coalition is based on the 'collective impact' model where organisations and individuals from across diverse sectors work together to address social issues. The B4 Early Years Coalition will bring together individuals, businesses, communities and government to think about what we want for our youngest community members and drive community action to achieve better outcomes for young children and their families. The coalition comprises of Leaders, Members and Supporters all of which impact and influence the outcomes either through their sector, organisation or as an individual.

Leaders are influential individuals from diverse backgrounds who after a public expression of interest have been appointed by the Minister for Education and Training in 2017. Leaders will represent and engage groups and individuals across identified sectors. The current Leader for Local Government is Tracey Bradley.

Members are organisations taking action to improve outcomes for children in the early years, working together with families and communities.

Supporters are individuals who are committed to supporting children in the early years and working together with families and communities.

STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Statutory Requirements

There are no statutory requirements identified.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan Reference

GOAL 1: Leadership and Governance
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Desired Outcomes

Reports of Officers and Committees

We encourage broad community input to create a focussed and strong sense of belonging.	
We highly value the use of an evidence-based approach to the development and implementation of strategies and policies that support and strengthen our decision making.	
We are recognised for proactive and engaged leadership.	
Our Priorities	
1.1	Commit to best practice in community engagement.
1.4	Facilitate the meeting of community needs through strong advocacy and local and regional collaboration for shared outcomes.
GOAL 3: Connected Communities	
Desired Outcomes	
We listen and engage with our community in decision making.	
Our natural and built environment aids the community with an active and healthy lifestyle.	
Our strong local economy allows for the development of affordable services and programs for all ages.	
Our community uses its voice to shape its future alongside a strong Council willing to listen and implement where reasonable and practical.	
Our Priorities	
3.1	Promote and work with stakeholders to provide affordable quality services.
3.2	Deliver engagement strategies that adapt to community needs to ensure effective communication and collaboration.
3.3	Deliver planning for activation through effective urban design and planning that promotes liveability, social gathering and connectedness, and which recognises and celebrates local history.
3.4	Build community capacity through services and programs that strengthen, support and care for our community.
3.5	Provide high quality shared and multi-use community hubs that combine a range of recreational, sporting and educational uses.
3.6	Facilitate activities and events that promote inclusion, health, safety and a sense of place.
3.7	Promote and strengthen community safety to retain and attract families to live and recreate in Waratah-Wynyard.
GOAL 4: Community Recreation and Wellbeing	
Desired Outcomes	
Our community is welcoming and supportive.	
Our community values, encourages and supports physical, social and cultural activities.	
We provide recreational opportunities to the community for all ages and abilities.	
Our community enjoys access to visually appealing safe spaces and facilities for recreation.	
Our Priorities	
4.1	Commit to ongoing recreation and open space planning to ensure evidence-based decisions are made about the role of Council and its partners in recreation.
4.2	Focus on the value of recreation in promoting the health and wellbeing of our community.
4.3	Employ land-use planning strategies to promote connectivity and equity in the allocation or use of open space for recreation purposes.
4.4	Provide and maintain quality and safe places and spaces for physical, social and cultural activities, including shared and multi-use facilities where possible.
4.5	Collaborate with community organisations that provide recreation opportunities to our community.
4.6	Encourage community providers to be welcoming, supportive and inclusive, and to provide for all ages, abilities and cultures.
GOAL 5: Economic Prosperity	
Desired Outcomes	
Education and training opportunities are available and targeted.	
Pathways to improve liveability now and in the future are provided.	
Our Priorities	
5.1	Promote value-adding to current production streams.
5.5	Support a variety of learning opportunities and encourage high school retention and

	pathways into college and tertiary education.
5.9	Actively manage community and economic growth through community engagement.

Sustainable Murchison Community Plan 2040

Community Future Direction Theme	Key Challenges & Opportunities:
Strong communities and social capital	<i>Enduring community capital – Growing, proud, self-reliant communities that are inclusive and engaged with volunteers and shared facilities.</i>
Health and Wellbeing	<i>Maintaining good health and wellbeing – Healthy communities, people taking responsibility for their wellness, convenient access to medical services and facilities.</i>
Education	<i>Lifelong learning and education – Education and lifelong learning is valued and there is access to vocational training and tertiary education. Education retention rates have increased.</i>
Place making and liveability	<i>Liveable places for all ages – Liveable attractive townships, relaxed lifestyles and community pride attract people to Murchison. Communities have history and character that drive their place-making strategies. Sport and recreation is widely supported especially by young people. Multi-purpose recreational and cultural facilities are well utilised.</i>

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications identified from this activity

DETAILS

The evidence is clear as to why the Early Years are so important , nurturing healthy development in the early years lasts a lifetime, shaping the child, youth and adult they become. What happens in the early years impacts on a child's future health, education, social, emotional and physical wellbeing. Through new understanding of brain development we know the early years are the critical period for development and growth with early intervention more effective and able to achieve greater outcomes than interventions later in life.

Many challenges in adult society have their roots in the early years of life, including major public health problems such as obesity, heart disease, and mental health problems. Experiences in early childhood are also related to criminality, problems in literacy and numeracy, and economic participation.

- Despite amazing services, programs, passion and innovation in 2015 1 in 5 Tasmanian children were developmentally vulnerable in one or more of the 5 domains in the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC).

- Evidence shows pregnancy to 4 is a developmental window of opportunity that happens once in a child's life but sets up their life trajectories across multiple domains.
- The social climate change affect – Tasmanian children are now being raised in families and communities that are very different to the families and communities they were raised in, demanding different responses.
- Investing support early and targeting those children and families at risk will not only change the child's life but Tasmanian's social and economic future.
- The smartest investment you can make is in the early years, investing early provides greater impact for intervention and investment.
- There is no single policy, government department, organisation or program that alone, can ensure every child in Tasmania gets a great start, the early years needs a collective impact.

Local government is already doing amazing things to ensure children in the early years thrive. Having the closest and most direct connection with communities, families and children, local government have an amazing opportunity to build on and support their community's capacity to ensure a great community for their children.

Waratah-Wynyard Council provides much of the built environment that supports families to spend time together, recreate and have a healthy lifestyle. Council also builds the connections that give families a sense of belonging. Advocacy and promotion of the important issues is a key role for Council and it is through this that services, programs and activities are implemented to enhance children's outcomes.

B4 Early Years Coalition Membership will document the important work being undertaken by Council to enhance outcomes for families and children and to build understanding of the critical role everyone plays in building communities.

A Member Action Plan will be developed as part of the membership. This will highlight activities which are already occurring and also provide an early years lens through which to evaluate Council programs.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no significant risks identified.

COMMENT

Council provide a wide range of services, programs and activities which support families to raise strong, healthy children. Whilst not often recognised for supporting the early

years, Council plays a critical role in building the environments and support systems that enhance children's lives.

It is therefore recommended that the Council become a member of the B4 Early Years Coalition and works together with families and the community to improve outcomes for children in the early years.