

## 7.4 Adoption of the Children and Young People's Action Plan

### Abstract

This report presents the community feedback received during the second round of community consultation for the Children and Young People's Action Plan (the Plan) (**Attachment 1**) and proposed actions (**Attachment 2**). The Plan was presented to, and endorsed by Council on 14 September 2020 for the purpose of community consultation. Officers are now seeking Council's adoption of the Plan and proposed actions.

The Plan represents Council's second iteration of a children and young people's plan. The Boroondara Community Plan 2017-27 (BCP), incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, provides the framework for the development of the Plan. It has also been informed by other relevant policies, in particular the Nest Action Agenda (The Nest), a comprehensive evidence based framework which aims to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people aged less than 25 years.

Extensive community consultation was undertaken during 2020 to define the needs and priorities of children, young people and families in line with the BCP themes. This consultation was conducted to fulfil Standard 7: Empowering Children of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act (2005) amended in January 2017, and is also referenced in Council's Child Safe Policy. During the engagement period, almost 1,000 community members were reached including 928 community members comprising of; 151 children, 356 young people, 421 parents and caregivers, and 49 service providers.

Officers employed a number of engagement methods to elicit feedback from the 0-25 years age group. Creative activities such as Voice Lab from Polyglot Theatre and artist led drawing sessions were held with children under 10 years of age to gather their insights around key areas of the BCP. Vox pops with parents were conducted at community events prior to statewide Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic lockdowns, while focus groups were run with young people to gather more rich qualitative data around how Council can address community needs. Online surveys for both parents/caregivers and young people also captured feedback. Service organisations providing care and support to Boroondara children, families and young people were engaged through interviews and an online survey to help strengthen the data. This data, along with the BCP consultation data from 2017 and 2021, and publicly available population, health and wellbeing data was used by officers to develop the Plan.

Council endorsed the Plan and proposed actions for the purposes of community consultation at the Special Services Committee on 14 September 2020. The second round of community consultation took place between 6 November and 6 December 2020. It was designed to be targeted in nature, and to ensure Council had accurately reflected the needs and priorities of children, young people and families identified during the comprehensive community consultation process conducted earlier in 2020. The community was invited to provide feedback through a range of different methods including a community survey, photograph competition for young people, and workshops for service providers working with children, young people and families.

Council received 52 responses during the second consultation period. Overall, the feedback received was positive and supportive of the Plan and proposed actions. There was a general sentiment the Plan was reflective of the priorities of children and young people in the Boroondara community. Strengthening the language to show Council's commitment to undertaking actions for the 0-25 years age group within the Plan was identified during the consultation process. As a result, the vision and some of the proposed actions have been updated to reflect this feedback. Details of word changes are outlined in **Attachment 3**.

The COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns had a negative impact on the community from a social and economic perspective. Children and young people, in particular, were adversely affected due to disruptions and significant adjustments in education. There has also been a reported rise in young people experiencing depression and anxiety symptoms. Young people were also affected through limited availability of employment opportunities.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was observed through the feedback received during the second round of consultation. The community provided feedback reinforcing the importance of Council working with young people and service providers to address the issues of mental health and employment in young people. While Council does not provide employment services, it plays an important role in assisting employment service providers, such as the Inner Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network and JobCo in identifying contributing factors and referring young people to those services. As such, Action 6.1 "Work with and support community partners to help facilitate and link young people with employment opportunities" has been updated to reflect this. Through the delivery of Actions 1.1 "Work with community partners to deliver mental wellbeing initiatives to improve outcomes of children, young people and families", and Action 6.2 "Explore opportunities and pathways to engage young people in working for Council", Council will also work to address these issues amongst young people. Action 1.22 "Work with young people to design and deliver a campaign and program for young people to access volunteering opportunities" will also help to contribute to positive mental health in young people through participation in the community.

Emphasising the importance of co-design with the community was an important consideration raised during the consultation period, as well as promoting the benefits of breastfeeding. A summary of all feedback raised during the consultation period and Council's response, including the generation of two new actions, can be found in **Attachment 3**.

In early 2021, Stage 1 of the BCP refresh was completed and this data was used to further verify the proposed actions in the Plan. Parents of children aged 13 years and under and young people aged 14-24 years were asked to rank their priority themes to help define what Council should focus on for the next ten years. Seventy one percent of young people aged 14-24 years rated Your Parks and Green Spaces as their top priority theme, followed by 62% and 49% of young people respectively rating The Environment and Your Local Shops and Businesses their other top priority themes. Becoming more environmentally friendly through adopting environmentally sustainable practices, preserving green spaces as well as improving waste collection were identified by young people as the main focus areas for Council. These sentiments are captured within the Plan's actions, specifically through the implementation of Council's sustainable living programs. Council's Climate Action Plan (currently under development) will also address these focus areas from the perspective of children, young people and families.

Parents of children aged 13 years or under ranked their top three priority themes as Your Parks and Green Spaces, Your Community, Services and Facilities and Your Local Shops and Businesses. Seventy six percent of parents rated Your Parks and Green Spaces as their top priority theme, followed by 57% rating Your Community, Services and Facilities their second priority theme, and 48% rating Your Local Shops and Businesses their third priority theme. Similarly to young people, parents also identified preserving green spaces and becoming environmentally friendly as their top two focus areas for Council over the next ten years. The Plan captures this through the exploration of further family friendly activations in local parks and green spaces. Parents also expressed delivering valued community services as another key focus area which will be addressed through the delivery of actions in Theme 1 in **Attachment 2**.

## **Officers' recommendation**

That Council resolve to adopt the Children and Young People's Action Plan, as annexed in the minutes.

**Responsible director:** Carolyn McClean, Director Community Support

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the community feedback received during the second round of community consultation for the Children and Young People's Action Plan (the Plan) (**Attachment 1**) and proposed actions (**Attachment 2**), and to seek Council's adoption of the Plan and proposed actions.

The development of the Plan was informed by the community priorities outlined in the Boroondara Community Plan 2017-27 (BCP), and extensive community consultation with children, young people, parents/caregivers and service providers in early 2020. High level findings from Stage 1 of the 2021 BCP refresh were included to understand the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on children, young people and families.

## 2. Policy implications and relevance to community plan and council plan

The BCP is structured around the following seven priority themes:

- Your Community, Services and Facilities
- Your Parks and Green Spaces
- The Environment
- Neighbourhood Character and Heritage
- Getting Around Boroondara
- Your Local Shops and Businesses
- Civic Leadership and Governance.

The Plan contains actions under all BCP themes except Theme 4: Neighbourhood Character and Heritage. There is a strong focus on Theme 1: Your Community, Services and Facilities. It also captures many of the health priority areas, particularly promoting mental health and social connection, and promoting active living.

The Plan acknowledges the role Council plays in implementing the Child Safe Standards as incorporated in the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005 (amended in 2017). Council is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children, as well as creating and maintaining a child safe organisation. Council understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility, has zero tolerance of child abuse, and is committed to actively contributing to a child safe city where children are protected from abuse. This is highlighted in the Council's Child Safe Policy.

Other Council plans and strategies that have informed the Plan include:

- Multicultural Action Plan (2019-23);
- Add life to Your Years (2019);
- Disability Action Plan (2018-22);
- Sport and Recreation Strategy (2016);
- Playground Strategy (2005); and
- Climate Action Plan (currently under development).

There are a number of plans and policies at the state and national level that informed the development of the Plan. At a national level, the Nest Action Agenda (The Nest) is an evidence based framework developed by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY), which aims to improve the wellbeing of children and youth aged under 25 years of age. The Nest is utilised by other local government and state governments across Australia to shape the planning of work addressing the priorities of this age group. This framework has been applied as a guiding lens when deriving actions that contribute to thriving children and young people in Boroondara.

Other national policy directives relevant to the Plan include:

- Child Care Subsidy (2018);
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) (2016);
- The National Quality Framework and National Quality Standards (2012);
- Education and Care Services Regulations (2011);
- Education and Care Service National Law Act (2010);
- National Early Childhood Development Strategy (2009);
- National Reform Agenda (2007); and
- Universal Access to Early Childhood Education.

There is currently no national policy for young people in Australia.

At the state level, the following legislative documents, plans and policies are relevant to children, young people and families in Victoria:

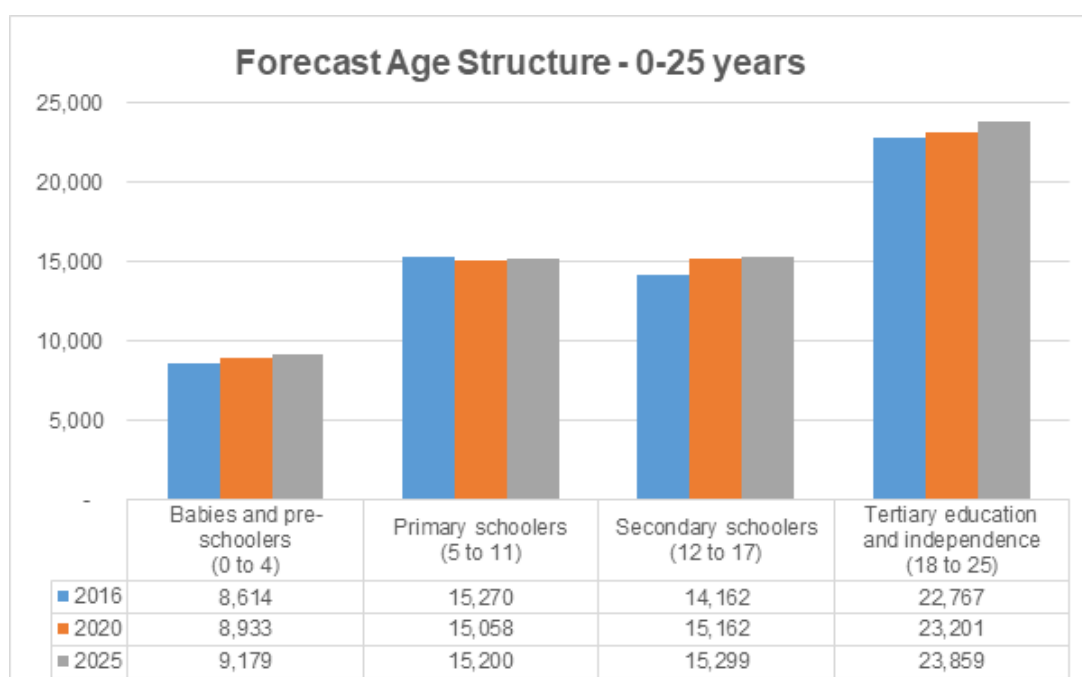
- Department of Education and Training Strategic Plan (2019-2023);
- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (2019-2023);
- Youth Policy - Building Stronger Youth Engagement in Victoria (2016);
- Aboriginal Education Plan (2016-26);
- No Jab, no Play (2016);
- Victorian Charter for Child Friendly Cities and Communities (2013); and
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act (2005) (amended in 2017).

The Family Violence Rolling Action Plan was developed by the Victorian Government in response to the 2015 Royal Commission into Family Violence in Victoria. The first iteration of the Rolling Action Plan 2017-20 saw the delivery of key reform initiatives such as the Establishment of The Orange Door Network, Respect Victoria, Australia's first Family Violence Command in Victoria Police, and the passing of the Gender Equality Act 2020. The second iteration of the Family Violence Rolling Action Plan 2020-23 will continue the Victorian Government's 10 year agenda to build a state free from family violence.

### **3. Background**

The Plan represents Council's second iteration of a children and young people's plan to address the needs and priorities of the 0-25 years age group. The 0-25 years life stage is a critical time in an individual's life where a period of rapid growth and development occurs. Council is committed to supporting children, young people and their families through taking a holistic approach that considers their social, emotional and physical development across the life stage and various life transitions.

The 2016 Census data shows the population aged 0-25 years in Boroondara was 60,813, representing 34% of the total population. Figure 1 demonstrates the population is projected to increase from 2020 to 2025 amongst the different service age groups. Looking forward to 2025, the largest increase in population will be seen amongst secondary schoolers (12 to 17 years).



**Figure 1:** Population forecast change by service age group for 0-25 years.

During January to March 2020, officers undertook the first round of community consultation to inform the development of the Plan and proposed actions. This consultation was thorough and received feedback from almost 1,000 community members including 928 community members comprised of; 151 children, 356 young people, 421 parents and caregivers, and 49 service providers. The community consultation data along with the BCP consultation data from 2017, the Stage 1 BCP refresh engagement data from 2021, and publicly available population, health and wellbeing data were used by officers to develop the Plan.

The Local Government Act 2020 (Section 106) outlines a series of service performance principles that a council must adhere to in the provision of its services. Section 106 (2A) states: "Services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community." The Plan has been developed to consider the diverse needs of the community through the consultation conducted, desktop research and application of the The Nest when considering the development of actions. Addressing equity will be a key principle Council will adhere to in the delivery of actions.

The Plan and proposed actions were endorsed for the purpose of community consultation at the Special Services Committee on 14 September 2020.

#### **4. Outline of key issues/options**

The Plan and proposed actions represents Council's strategic direction in supporting children, young people and families over the next five years.

Consultation on the Plan and proposed actions took place from 6 November to 6 December 2020. The purpose of this round of consultation was to ensure the needs and priorities of the 0-25 years age group and their families were accurately reflected in the Plan and its proposed actions. Therefore, this consultation was targeted in nature, as an extensive process had been carried out earlier in 2020. The community was invited to provide feedback through a range of different methods including a community survey, a photograph competition for young people and workshops for service providers working with children, young people and families. In addition, communication containing the Plan and proposed actions along with a link to the community survey was distributed to a number of Council advisory committees and networks to gather feedback. These included the Boroondara Early Years Advisory Committee, Community Disability Advisory Committee, Boroondara Interfaith Network, Boroondara Community Safety Advisory Committee and the Boroondara Public Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee.

Council received 52 responses during the consultation period. This comprised 25 online survey submissions, six entries in the photo competition and two direct responses from parents in the general community. Nineteen representatives from various organisations working with children, young people and families in Boroondara provided feedback including 16 who attended two service provider workshops and a further three who participated in interviews.

Overall, the feedback received was positive and supportive of the Plan and proposed actions. There was general sentiment that the Plan was reflective of the needs and priorities of children and young people in the Boroondara community, with majority of survey respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing the proposed actions met the expressed needs.

A summary of the key points raised during the consultation period from the community survey, service provider workshops and interviews is outlined below. Further detail regarding the feedback and recommended changes made to the Plan and proposed actions can be found in **Attachment 3**.

- The vision for the Plan was well received by the community, however some suggestions were made to strengthen it. Suggestions included the removal of “strive towards” and adding the word “empower”. The vision has been updated below with changes marked in bold.
  - “ The City of Boroondara is **to strive towards** a city where children and young people are valued, happy, healthy, safe and **empowered** to actively participate in our community.”
- Feedback from the service provider workshop participants highlighted some of the proposed actions could be updated to be more specific and measurable, include implementation years, and also emphasise the importance of agencies working together. This feedback has been considered and the implementation years, resourcing needs as well as progress measures have been included in the proposed actions table. Furthermore, Council recognises the importance of working collaboratively with community partners, and is committed to working with organisations in the implementation of the Plan.

- Council received feedback to reflect the importance of co-design with the community in the proposed actions. As such Actions 1.12, 1.15 and 1.16 were updated to ensure Council works with children, young people, and parents and caregivers to appropriately design Council programming and communications. Furthermore, a number of actions reflect the importance of working with community and stakeholders in the implementation of the actions including, action 1.1, action 1.4, action 1.22, action 5.1 and action 6.1.
- In both the community survey and service provider workshops, participants raised the issue of young people being disproportionately affected by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The mental health of young people has worsened as a result of the pandemic, and Council understands the importance of working with our community partners to implement initiatives aimed at strengthening young people's mental wellbeing. Furthermore, since the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment or underemployment in young people has increased and Council's acknowledges this is key factor for young people's wellbeing. The following actions have been updated or created to respond to the feedback raised:
  - Action 1.1, "Work with community partners to deliver mental wellbeing initiatives to improve outcomes of children, young people and families". This action has been updated to show the role Council can play in delivering programs and activities with community partners to address mental health from a primary prevention and early intervention perspective. Council will work with community partners to deliver mental health education through accredited programs, such as Mental Health First Aid, to assist community members in responding to mental health concerns of young people.
  - Action 6.1, "Work with and support community partners to help facilitate and link young people with employment opportunities". This action has been updated to reflect Council taking a coordinating role in the area of youth employment. Council will work with community partners including JobCo and the Inner Eastern Learning and Employment Network around identifying issues to support those agencies build the capacity of young people.
  - Action 6.2, "Explore opportunities and pathways to engage young people in working for Council". This new action has been created to acknowledge the role Council can play in addressing youth employment. Through the implementation of this action, Council will explore how opportunities, such as traineeships and pathways, can be designed to engage more young people in working for Council.
- Support for breastfeeding in the community was another issue raised in the community survey. While Boroondara Maternal and Child Health delivers comprehensive lactation support services, this highlights the need for Council to further promote the benefits of breastfeeding to families in the community. As a result, a new action has been included in the proposed actions:



- Action 1.29 - “Promote the benefits of breastfeeding to families in the Boroondara community”.

## **5. Consultation/communication**

The Boroondara community has been engaged twice throughout the process of developing the Plan and proposed actions.

During early 2020, officers undertook a comprehensive first round of community consultation with children, young people, parents and caregivers, as well as service providers, to determine their needs and priorities under the BCP themes. Almost 1000 people were reached during this consultation period. Consultation on the Plan and proposed actions took place between 6 November to 6 December 2020. This round of consultation was targeted in nature, and designed to ensure the needs and priorities of the 0-25 years age group identified in early 2020 were accurately reflected in the Plan and proposed actions. Fifty two individuals took part in this round of consultation

The BCP is undergoing a refresh in 2021. Stage 1 high level findings have been included to verify the proposed actions. Parents of children aged 13 years and under and young people aged 14-24 years were asked to rank their priority themes to help define what Council should focus on for the next ten years. Seventy one percent of young people aged 14-24 years rated Your Parks and Green Spaces as their top priority theme, followed by 62% and 49% of young people respectively rating The Environment and Your Local Shops and Businesses their other top priority themes. Becoming more environmentally friendly through adopting environmentally sustainable practices, preserving green spaces as well as improving waste collection were identified by young people as the main focus areas for Council. These sentiments are captured with the Plan's actions, specifically through the implementation of Council's sustainable living programs.

Parents of children aged 13 years or under ranked their top three priority themes as Your Parks and Green Spaces, Your Community, Services and Facilities and Your Local Shops and Businesses. Seventy six percent of parents rated Your Parks and Green Spaces as their top priority theme, followed by 57% rating Your Community, Services and Facilities their second priority theme, and 48% rating Your Local Shops and Businesses their third priority theme. Similarly to young people, parents also identified preserving green spaces and becoming environmentally friendly as their top two focus areas for Council over the next ten years. The Plan captures this through the exploration of further family friendly activations in local parks and green spaces. Parents also expressed delivering valued community services as another key focus area which will be addressed through the delivery of actions in Theme 1. Council recognises there are some distinctions between the priorities of young people and parents and caregivers regarding what they deem as important. Despite these differences, the merit of each is recognised. Council is committed to incorporating the views of young people and parents and caregivers in long term planning to ensure both groups are represented, and therefore influence Council's priorities as children develop, and young people progress into adulthood.

## **6. Financial and resource implications**

The majority of actions articulated in the Plan will be funded through operational budgets across Council. New projects arising from actions requiring funding will be subject to Council's annual budget process and considered by councillors in the development of future budgets.

## **7. Governance issues**

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006. The officers responsible for this report have no direct or indirect interests requiring disclosure.

## **8. Social and environmental issues**

The Plan has been developed to consider the social, economic and environmental factors that affect development across this formative life stage.

Since the adoption of the previous Children and Young People Strategy in 2015, findings from the Royal Commission in Family Violence in Victoria were released culminating in the Family Violence Rolling Action Plan which aims to build a state free from family violence. The Plan will address family violence through the implementation of Actions 1.4, "Work with community partners to identify trends in order to advocate to state and federal governments, and peak bodies to address the complex needs of families in Boroondara; especially in relation to family violence, mental health, alcohol and drug substance abuse and social isolation", and 1.11, "Participate in the Boroondara Family Violence Network to plan and develop strategies, create community awareness and share information that addresses family violence.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on the community from a social and economic perspective. Children and young people, in particular, were adversely affected due to disruptions and adjustments in education. There has also been a reported rise in young people experiencing depression and anxiety symptoms. Young people were also affected through limited availability of employment opportunities.

While a vaccination program is being delivered in 2021, the pandemic will continue to affect all residents for some time to come. Officers will continue to monitor data regarding the health and wellbeing of children, young people and their families to determine appropriate localised responses to emerging issues.

## **9. Evaluation and review**

Council will monitor and evaluate the progress of the Plan through existing reporting mechanisms and an annual assessment of the Implementation Plan. Officers will communicate progress updates to the Early Years Advisory Committee as part of the evaluation and review, and also to plan for the implementation of future actions.

In addition, a cross-departmental internal reference group will be established to track progress on current actions, and plan for the implementation of future actions.

## 10. Conclusion

Council is committed to listening to children, young people and parents and caregivers across Boroondara to understand their needs and aspirations in order to represent them in future commitments. Council's commitment to supporting children, young people and their families will continue to be a priority as demonstrated through the development of the Plan.

**Manager:** Andrew McHugh, Manager Health and Wellbeing Services

**Report officer:** Stephanie Leggett, Wellbeing Planning and Policy Lead

# Children and Young People's Action Plan

**Responsible Directorate:** Community Support  
**Authorised By:** Council  
**Date of Adoption:** <Date>  
**Review Date:** 2025  
**Plan Type:** Council



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## 1. Executive Summary - Message to our Community

Children and young people make up one third of our community, and represent the future of Boroondara. It is important that we support their development to ensure they grow and develop to become thriving, happy, healthy adults who contribute meaningfully to, and participate in, the community.

The Children and Young People's Action Plan (the Plan) provides the strategic direction for Council to support the needs and aspirations of children, young people and their families who live, work and study in Boroondara over the next five years.

The actions in the Plan reflect the community's priorities identified in both the community consultation we conducted in 2020, and the Boroondara Community Plan 2017-27 (BCP), Council's key strategic document which outlines the 10 year vision for Boroondara's future.

During community consultation, we asked children, young people, parents, caregivers and service providers in Boroondara what was important to them now and into the future. A number of different methods were used including surveys, focus groups and creative drawing activities to help define the priority areas for action across this life stage.

The results told us children place a high level of importance on caring for the environment and having strong relationships with their families and friends. It also showed young people in Boroondara are passionate about participating in the community.

Despite this, mental health, including increasing levels of psychological distress, social isolation and loneliness still remains a significant issue facing the 0-25 years age group. Building the resilience of children and young people is vital. Council is committed to strengthening existing partnerships, and building new connections with key partners and agencies to respond to these issues.

In 2021, we consulted with the community to refresh the BCP to ensure it reflects our community's current needs and priorities. Stage 1 results show us the top priority themes for parents of children aged 13 year and under included Your Parks and Green Spaces, Your Community, Services and Facilities and Your Local Shops and Businesses. For young people aged 14-24 years, top priority themes included Your Parks and Green Spaces, The Environment and Your Local Shops and Businesses.

Examples of key actions within the Plan include:

- working with community partners to identify trends in order to advocate to state and federal governments, and peak bodies to address the complex needs of families,
- developing a youth volunteering program and campaign to enhance young people's access to volunteering opportunities, including how they can play an active role in caring for the environment,
- exploring opportunities to increase Council's digital presence with young people. activities, and
- involving the voices of children, families and young people in the re-development of parks and playgrounds.

We are committed to supporting children, young people and their families throughout the implementation of the Plan over the next five years, and we will continue to identify and respond to emerging needs within our community.

Councillor Garry Thompson  
Mayor of Boroondara

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Our Vision for Children and Young People in Boroondara

The Children and Young People's Action Plan (the Plan) supports the vision of Council's key strategic document: the Boroondara Community Plan 2017-27 (BCP), for '*A vibrant and inclusive city, meeting the needs and aspirations of its community*'.

The vision of the Plan is:

*"The City of Boroondara is a city where children and young people are valued, happy, healthy, safe and empowered to actively participate in our community".*

#### Why 0-25 year olds?

The Plan recognises the importance of the 0-25 years life stage as a critical time in an individual's life where a period of rapid growth and development occurs. It is widely acknowledged amongst national and international evidence that the brain is constantly developing from birth and through to adulthood. Healthy brain development requires caring and supportive family relationships, and a range of engaging and stimulating learning experiences. Access to universal services and additional supports can help to optimise development. Early intervention is paramount to preventing long term adverse consequences and delays in developmental milestones.

Council is committed to supporting children, young people and their families through taking a holistic approach that considers their social, emotional and physical development across the first 25 years of life and beyond. The first iteration of the Children and Young People's Strategy recognised the importance of addressing the needs of children and young people (0-25 years) collectively in one strategy, acknowledging the journey families experience as their children grow into young people and then into adults. This approach is important as it allows children, young people and their families to be supported through the various transitions experienced during this time. Addressing the 0-25 years life stage in one plan also allows Council to incorporate the needs of children in the middle years' (9-12), which are often not addressed or incorporated into younger or older years' plans.

Council plays an integral role in supporting children, young people and families by providing high quality facilities, services and programs that enhance health and wellbeing. By providing a range of health, learning, cultural and environmental experiences, Council strives to contribute to the positive development of children and young people.

The Plan will focus on delivering on the needs and priorities of Boroondara's children and young people, and their families.

### 2.2 Corporate framework

As shown in Figure 1, the BCP incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, is Council's key strategic document and describes the 10-year vision and priorities. It guides Council's decision making, and directly informs the Council Plan, 10 year Financial Plan, and annual budget incorporating annual commitments and strategic indicators, as well as the Municipal Strategic Statement and Council's strategies, plans and policies.



**Figure 1:** Integrated Planning Framework

The current BCP is structured around seven priority themes with supporting strategic objectives which are outlined below. The Plan is informed by these themes.

- **Your Community, Services and Facilities**

Strategic Objective 1: Community services and facilities are high quality, inclusive and meet a variety of needs now and into the future.

- **Your Parks and Green Spaces**

Strategic Objective 2: Inviting and well-utilised community parks and green spaces.

- **The Environment**

Strategic Objective 3: Our natural environment is healthy and sustainable for future generations.

- **Neighbourhood Character and Heritage**

Strategic Objective 4: Protect the heritage and respect the character of the City to maintain amenity and liveability whilst recognising the need for appropriate, well-designed development for future generations.

- **Getting Around Boroondara**

Strategic Objective 5: Travel options that are connected, safe, accessible, environmentally sustainable and well-designed.



- **Your Local Shops and Businesses**

Strategic Objective 6: A vibrant local economy and shops that are accessible, attractive and a centre of community life.

- **Civic Leadership and Governance**

Strategic Objective 7: Ensure that ethical, financial and socially responsible decision making reflect community needs and are based on principles of accountability, transparency, responsiveness and consultation.

The Plan also contributes toward the following health priorities of the BCP:

- promoting mental health and social connection;
- promoting active living; and
- promoting healthy eating.



The Plan plays an important role in guiding Council to ensure the needs of children, young people and their families are considered in the planning, design and delivery of Council facilities, services and programs.

A refresh of the BCP is currently underway to understand how community priorities have changed since 2017, especially in relation to the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Stage 1 of the BCP refresh has recently been completed, and high level findings are incorporated in the Plan. The actions within the Plan reflect both the findings from Stage 1 of the BCP refresh, and community consultation held in 2020 as part of the development of the Plan.

## 2.3 The Nest Action Agenda

The Nest Action Agenda (The Nest) is an evidence based framework developed by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY), which aims to improve the wellbeing of children and youth aged under 25 years of age. It outlines a shared vision for Australia's children and youth where:

*"All young people are loved and safe, have material basics, are healthy, are learning and participating and have a positive sense of identity and culture."*

This vision applies to all Australian children and youth, regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnicity, race and socioeconomic status. The Nest incorporates six domains highlighted in Figure 2, which help to contribute towards a thriving child or young person. These include being loved and safe, the provision of material basics, being healthy, learning, participation and having a positive sense of culture and identity.

<b>Vision</b> All children and youth are loved and safe, have material basics, are healthy, are learning and are participating and have a positive sense of culture and identity.				
<i>Measured by Australia being consistently placed in the top third of OECD countries for comparable indicators of child and youth wellbeing, with the target of 50% of indicators in the top third by 2025 (currently 26%)</i>				
Loved and safe	Material basics	Healthy	Learning	Participating
Positive, supportive family environment  Positive parenting practices  Positive, trusted peer relationships and communication  Community safety  Children not placed in care  Youth not in detention	Material wellbeing  Income equality  Parental employment  Youth in employment/training/education  Internet access  Educational possessions  Housing amenity and stability	Healthy birthweight  Immunisation rates  Nutrition, activity and healthy weight  Healthy physical development  Dental health  Good mental health  Reduced injury deaths  Reductions in teenage pregnancies  Reduced substance use  Reduced youth violence	Early childhood education participation  Reduced early childhood developmental vulnerability  Parental engagement in child learning  Performance in English, Maths and Science (at Year 4 and 15 years)  School retention rates  Youth participation in education	Youth feeling able to have a say  Voting enrolment  Use and engagement of technology and social media  Involvement in organised activities  Membership of social, community, or civic groups
Positive sense of culture and identity				

**Figure 2:** The Nest Action Agenda

**Source:** Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY). (2014) The Nest action agenda: Improving the wellbeing of Australia's children and youth while growing our GDP by over 7%. Canberra. ARACY.

The Nest is a well-renowned framework utilised by other local and state governments across Australia to help inform service planning for children and young people. Council recognises this, and has utilised The Nest as a guiding lens for the development of actions contributing to thriving children and young people in Boroondara.

A description of each domain including its importance can be found in Table 1. This information is sourced from page 5 of “The Nest Action Agenda - Improving the wellbeing of Australia's children and youth while growing our GDP by over 7%” by (ARACY, 2014).

**Table 1:** The six outcomes of The Nest

<b>Being loved and safe</b>	Being loved and safe embraces positive family relationships and connections with others, along with personal and community safety. Children and youth who are loved and safe are confident, have a strong sense of self-identity, and have high self-esteem. They form secure attachments, have pro-social peer connections, and positive adult role models or mentors which are present in their life. Children and youth who are loved and safe are resilient: they can withstand life's challenges, and respond constructively to setbacks and unanticipated events.
<b>Having material basics</b>	Children and youth who have material basics have access to the things they need to live a 'normal life'. They live in adequate and stable housing, with adequate clothing, healthy food, and clean water, and the materials they need to participate in education and training pathways.
<b>Being healthy</b>	Healthy children and youth have their physical, developmental, psychosocial and mental health needs met. They achieve their optimal developmental trajectories. They have access to services to support their growth and development, and have access to preventative measures to redress any emerging health or developmental concerns.
<b>Learning</b>	Learning is a continuous process throughout life. Children and youth learn through a variety of formal and informal experiences within the classroom and more broadly in their home and in the community. Children and youth who are learning participate in and experience education that enables them to reach their full potential and maximise their life opportunities.
<b>Participating</b>	Participating includes involvement with peers and the community, being able to have a voice and say on matters and, increasingly, access to technology for social connections. In practice, participating means children and youth are supported in expressing their views, having their views taken into account and they are involved in decision-making processes that affect them.
<b>Positive sense of culture and identity</b>	Having a positive sense of culture and identity is central to the wellbeing of children and youth, and is particularly important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) children and youth. This outcome includes having a sense of spiritual wellbeing. It underpins and is fundamental to the other Nest child and youth outcome areas, with appropriate measures of a sense of culture and identity to be developed.

## 2.4 Child Safe Policy

The City of Boroondara's Child Safe Policy outlines the organisation's commitment to ensuring a child safe organisation. The Child Safe Policy provides strategic and operational guidance to keep children safe, and outlines the responsibilities, procedures and practices that support this. It applies in all our operational environments and without fail wherever children and young people are participating in our organisation's activities, programs, services and/or facilities, as well as within the community of Boroondara when councillors, Council employees, volunteers and contractors are fulfilling their roles when children are present. The Policy highlights Council's commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children through the enactment of the

implementation and monitoring of the Child Safe Standards, as specified under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015.

Council will ensure the safety of children by:

- documenting our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect and communicating our commitment to all of councillors, staff, volunteers and contractors;
- educating Council's workforce, councillors, volunteers, contractors and the community about the safety of children and young people. This includes understanding their role and the behaviour we expect;
- providing environments that are safe for children and young people when delivering services and programs, including online, physical or psychological environments;
- embedding processes that safeguard children and young people from abuse across all aspects of our operation;
- responding appropriately and ensuring children are taken seriously if they raise concerns in relation to their safety and wellbeing;
- listening to the voices of children and young people, particularly as we plan and deliver programs and services;
- recognising diversity and promoting engagement with children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children and young people with a disability;
- having appropriate screening processes in place to minimise the likelihood that we or a contractor recruit a person who is unsuitable to work or volunteer with children and young people; and
- making our Child Safe Policy and procedures accessible, online and in forms that are easy to understand.

Council has legal obligations in relation to reporting child abuse under the Reportable Conduct Scheme. The Reportable Conduct Scheme requires organisations to respond to allegations of child-related misconduct made against workers (employees and contractors) and volunteers and report any allegations to the Commission for Children and Young People. There are five types of 'reportable conduct':

- sexual offences committed against, with or in the presence of a child;
- sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child;
- physical violence against, with or in the presence of a child;
- any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child; and
- significant neglect of a child.

Safeguarding children and young people is a shared responsibility within our organisation. It is the responsibility of all councillors, employees, volunteers and contractors to create and maintain a child safe culture. Council's Child Safe Policy outlines the specific roles and responsibilities of the following groups to creating and maintaining a child safe culture including:

- Councillors;
- Executive Leadership Team;
- Senior Leadership Team/Coordinators and Team Leaders;
- Management Steering Group;
- Council staff and volunteers;
- People and Culture;
- Child Safety Officers;
- Labour hire, agency employees and contractors;
- License/lease holders; and
- Council grant recipients.

### 3. Creating the Children and Young People's Action Plan

The development of the Plan involved a number of steps outlined below.

#### **Stage 1: Review and plan**

A review of the first Children and Young People's Strategy was undertaken and found all actions were implemented and a number of key achievements were made. These achievements are detailed in Section 6 of the Plan.

Officers developed a plan to ensure all relevant stakeholder groups were consulted through the process in order to receive rich qualitative data. Council's key strategic document, the BCP, informed by the views of nearly 12,000 residents was used as the framework for producing action areas for the Plan.

#### **Stage 2: Understanding the context**

Officers undertook benchmarking of socio-demographically similar and neighbouring Councils' children and young people plans and strategies. The Councils included in the benchmarking were Cities' of Stonnington, Bayside, Glen Eira, Banyule, Manningham, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra. Benchmarking reaffirmed Council's life stage approach, i.e. 0-25 years, towards the development of the Plan.

Desktop research was performed to produce an updated community profile for the 0-25 years age group. This profile included a range of sociodemographic and health and wellbeing statistics. During this stage, a policy review was conducted to source recently published directives or guidelines from international, national, state and local levels pertaining to children, young people and families. As The Nest comprehensively addresses health and wellbeing of children and young people, it was therefore included as a lens over the BCP 2017-27 in developing the Plan.

Finally during this stage, officers undertook an analysis of the BCP engagement data for parents of children aged 13 years or under and also for young people aged under 15 years and between 15-24 years of age. This analysis informed the creation of the community engagement plan supporting the development of the Plan.

#### **Stage 3: Community consultation - design and development**

Undertaking in-depth engagement with children and young people was considered a key requirement of the engagement process, and consequently an emphasis was made to ensure qualitative methods were used to elicit rich responses. A community engagement plan was developed and implemented between January and April 2020. It involved a number of different activities described in Section 8.

#### **Stage 4: Action development**

Following community consultation and analysis of the data, officers began collaborative discussions to ensure a whole of Council approach was adopted to producing actions. Officers also met with service provider agencies through advisory committee meetings to review engagement results and discuss future actions. The actions can be found in the attached implementation plan.

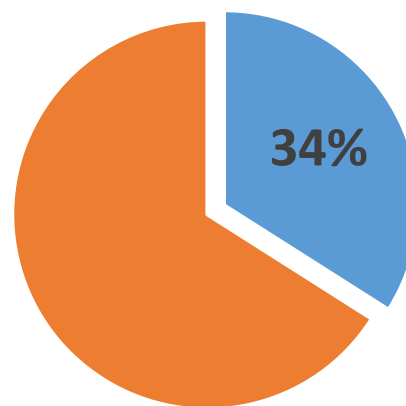
## 4. Background

### 4.1 Community Profile

#### 4.1.1 Population

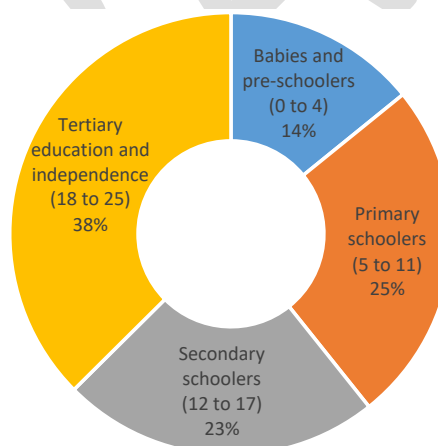
The City of Boroondara Estimated Resident Population in 2019 was 183,199 residents. The total population is expected to grow to 190,352 by 2025.

At the last Census count in 2016, the population of children and young people, aged 0-25 years in Boroondara was 60,813, representing 34% of the total population. The population of children and young people is expected to increase to 63,356 in 2025, representing 33% of the total forecasted population. There are also a number of children and young people who travel into Boroondara to study or work on a regular basis.



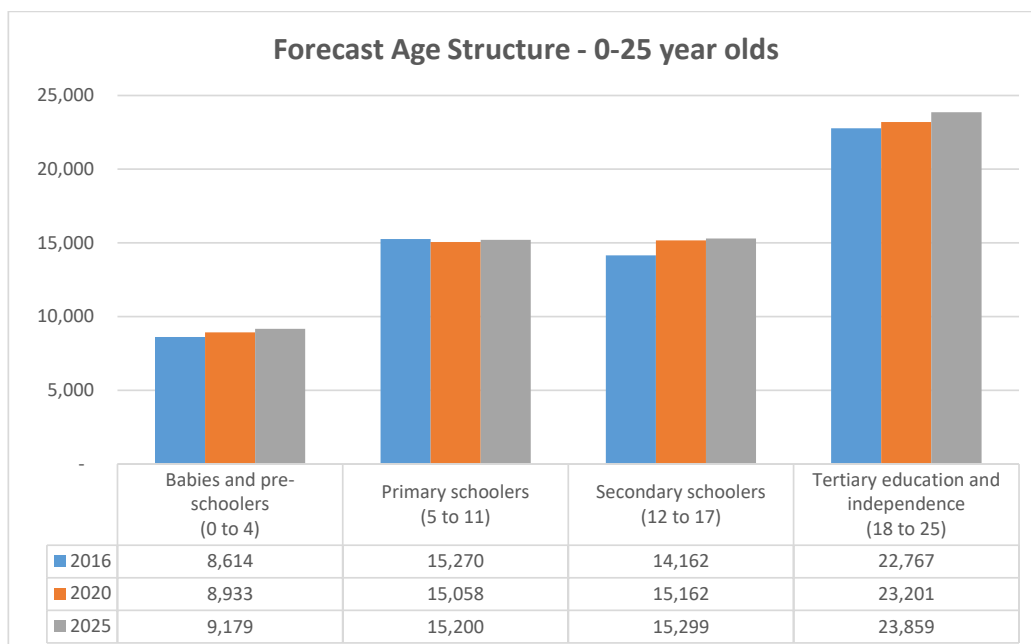
**Figure 3:** Population proportion of 0-25 years' age group in comparison to the total Boroondara population.

Service age groupings, developed by .id Consulting are used in planning to estimate the demand for services during different life stages, and to understand how demand for certain facilities and services changes as the population changes. Figure 4 shows the breakdown of each service age group in Boroondara. Young people, i.e. secondary schoolers and tertiary education and independence comprise 61% of the population aged 0-25 years.



**Figure 4:** City of Boroondara population 2016 (0-25 years') (Age group as percentage of total 0-25 years' Boroondara population in brackets)

Population forecast data from 2020 demonstrates since 2016, there has been a minimal increase (1%) in the proportion of secondary school aged young people (12-17 years) across Boroondara. The growth in this age group is expected to remain constant to 2025, while a 3% increase is expected in the 18-25 years age group. As the population of young people increases, it will be important to provide services to meet growing demand. Figure 5 illustrates how the population is forecasted to change for each of the service age groups.



**Figure 5:** Population forecast change by service age group for 0-25 years.

For planning purposes, Council divides the municipality into five precincts represented in Figure 6, to assist with more detailed service planning. Population data is used to plan for the delivery of services, for example, Maternal and Child Health and other early years services, youth services, asset management planning and grant applications.

Table 2 below displays the precincts in Boroondara with the highest population amongst each age group as forecasted for 2020 and 2025. The central and south west precincts have the highest population of 0-25 year olds across Boroondara. Specifically, the south west precinct has the highest population of 0-4 year olds and 18-25 year olds, and the central precinct has the highest population of 5-17 year olds.

**Table 2:** Precinct population forecast changes across 2020 and 2025 with the number of children in each service age group identified in brackets.

Age Group	Precinct with highest population 2020	Precinct with highest population (2025)	Precinct with highest growth (2020-25)
0-4	South west (2210)	South west (2248)	Central (+87)
5-11	Central (3655)	Central (3727)	South west (+193)
12-17	Central (3746)	Central (3727)	South west (+156)
18-25	South west (7090)	South west (7334)	Central (+247)/south west (+244)

When examining the population growth rates in each of the service groups across Boroondara, the central and south west precincts have the highest growth. Between 2020 and 2025, the precincts with the highest growth for each service group are in the right hand column of Table 2. For the 0-4 years age group, the central precinct has the highest growth (+87). In the 5-11 years and 12-17 years group, the south west precinct has the highest growth at (+193) and (+156) respectively. Both the central and south west precincts have similar growth for the 18-25 years age group at (+247) and (+244) respectively.

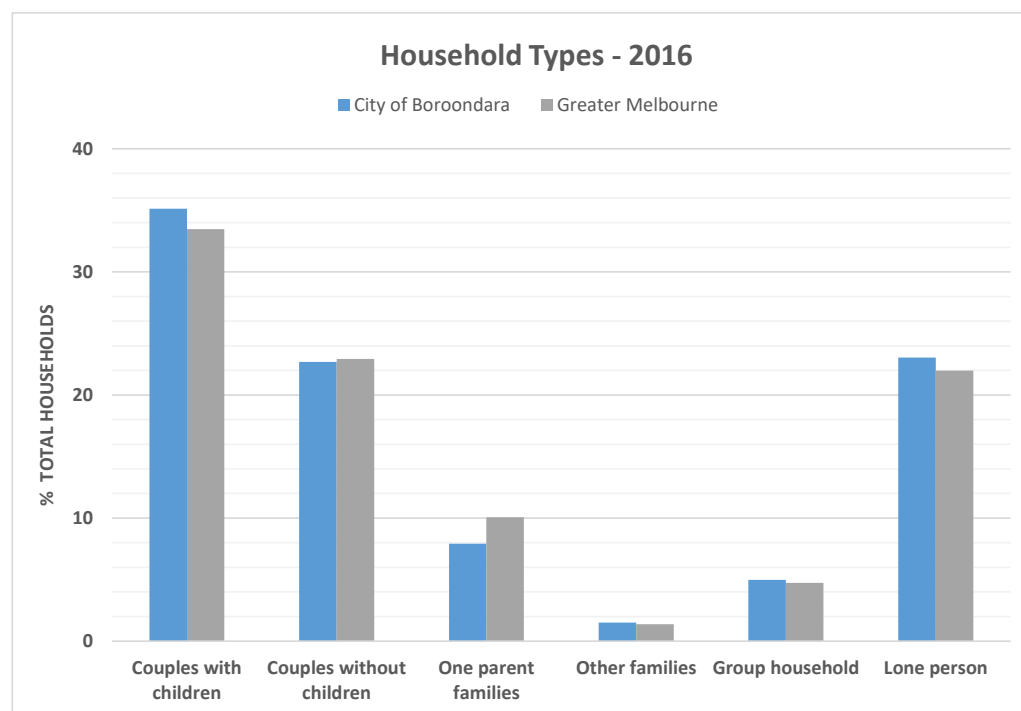


**Figure 6:** Council identifies five precincts for planning purposes across Boroondara.



#### 4.1.2 Households

Figure 7 highlights data from the 2016 Census pertaining to household type. In 2016, couples with children, couples without children and lone person households were the most common household type in Boroondara. Thirty five percent of households were couples with children. Specifically, this household type was comprised of 17.5% of couples with young children (aged under 15 years), 4.8% of couples with mixed age children (one of more children under 15 or one of more children aged over 15 years), and 12.8% of couples with older children (aged 15 years or over). Single parent families comprised 7.9% of total households, while 1.5% of total households were classified as other families.



**Figure 7:** Household types in Boroondara and Greater Melbourne

Group households are often associated with young people living close to education or employment, and indicate a house-sharing arrangement. Group households are common among students and young professionals. In 2016, group households accounted for 5% of household types in Boroondara compared to 4.7% in Greater Melbourne. This proportion ranged from a low of 2.1% in Canterbury to a high of 9.8% in Hawthorn and Hawthorn East. Lone person households make up 23.1% of households who usually comprise adults or older adults living alone.

#### 4.1.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Census data from 2016 shows that there were 157 children and young people aged 0-25 years who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI), representing 50% of the total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Boroondara. The highest proportion is aged between 20-25 years old. In the 2019-20 financial year Maternal and Child Health had 18 ATSI children enrolled, while there were 9 ATSI children enrolled in Boroondara kindergartens.

#### 4.1.4 Cultural Diversity

In 2016, 30.9% of Boroondara residents were born overseas and 24.9% were born in a country where English was not the main language spoken. China, Vietnam, India and Malaysia represent the four main countries where those who are born overseas have immigrated from since 2011. Since 2011, the highest increase has been from people moving from China to Boroondara with over 4,000 new residents recorded at the 2016 Census. The top five languages spoken at home other than English include Mandarin, Cantonese, Greek, Italian and Vietnamese.

Within the 0-25 years cohort, proficiency in English changes across the lifespan for those indicating they have a language background other than English. Early in life, i.e. 0-4 years of age there is a higher number of children who speak English not well or not at all, however starting school ameliorates this in later years for the 5-19 years of age. English proficiency drops again in the 20-25 years age group which corresponds to young people arriving from overseas for study or employment. This highlights the importance of providing language supports to parents and children in the early years and also to young people arriving from overseas.

Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) 2018 data also shows that since 2012, the proportion of school aged children who are from a language background other than English and who are proficient in English has increased by almost 9%. This indicates an increase in the proportion of multilingual children throughout Boroondara.

#### 4.1.5 Children and Young People with Disabilities

A need for assistance with daily activities represents a measure of disability within a population. In 2016, 762 (1.25%) children and young people aged 0-25 years reported requiring assistance with core activities, which is lower when compared to the Greater Melbourne area. The following table shows the breakdown of those requiring assistance with core activities by age group.

**Table 3:** Number of young people under 25 years requiring assistance with core activities

Age Group (Years)	Number requiring assistance
0-4 years	64
5-9 years	202
10-14 years	176
15-19 years	163
20-25 years	157

Preschool Field Officers support the inclusion and participation of children with additional needs in early years services in funded kindergarten programs. Data from the Preschool Field Officer program in Boroondara shows the top five reasons for kindergartens referring pre-school aged children to the program are for emotional regulation, school readiness, anxiety, disability and attention and concentration.

#### 4.1.6 Parental Workforce Participation and Childcare

Participation of parents, in particular mothers, in the workforce is an indicator of the strength of the local economy. It also provides important insights into the types of services required, such as maternal and child health services and child care services.

The City of Boroondara has a higher proportion of mothers with dependent children in the workforce (71.6%), compared to Greater Melbourne at 66.9%. The proportion of mothers in the workforce was lowest in Deepdene and Balwyn at 65.4% and 67.2% respectively, and highest in Glen Iris and Surrey Hills at 75.7% and 75.1% respectively.

AEDC data also shows that since 2012 there has been a 20% increase in the proportion of children attending day care, and a 10% increase in the number of grandparents caring for their grandchildren in Boroondara.

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## 4.2 Boroondara Children and Young People - Health and Wellbeing

The six domains of The Nest provide a useful framework to capture a snapshot of the health and wellbeing status of children and young people across Boroondara, as collectively, these domains contribute to a thriving individual. In this section, data from a range of indicators is presented under each domain. The data in this section has been identified from a range of sources and is documented below.

### Domain: Loved and Safe

LOVED AND SAFE			
Indicator	Year	Boroondara or Inner Eastern Metropolitan Region	Victoria
<b>Family Violence<sup>1</sup></b>			
No. family violence incidents attend by VicPol where L17 form completed (rate per 100,000 population)	2019	464.6	1253.1
<b>Bullying<sup>2</sup></b>			
Proportion of children who report being bullied (Year 5 & 6) (%)	2018	12.9	15.9
Proportion of children who report being bullied (Year 7 & 9) (%)	2018	12.0	17.5
Proportion of young people who report being bullied recently (%)	2018	44.1 (IEM)	44.7
<b>Safety<sup>2</sup></b>			
Proportion of young people who report having a trusted adult in their lives (%)	2018	71 (IEM)	69.3
Proportion of young people who feel safe (%)	2018	86.3 (IEM)	85.4

*IEM refers to data collected for the Inner Eastern Metropolitan region encompassing Councils including the City of Boroondara, City of Whitehorse, City of Monash, City of Manningham. This is the most localised level data available for these statistics.*

#### Data sources:

1. Crime Statistics Agency, 2019
2. Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System, 2019

Since 2014-15, the rates of family violence have increased across the City of Boroondara, although by comparison, are lower than to the Victorian average. Data from the Inner Eastern Metropolitan region of which Boroondara is a part, details that in 2018, approximately one in eight students from years 5 to 9 reported experiencing bullying, with cyber bullying being the main form.

Being safe and having trusted adults is very important for a young person's development. Although above the Victorian average, 71% of young people in the Inner Eastern Metropolitan region reported they had a trusted adult in their lives, which is concerning as nearly one third did not have a trusted adult in their lives.

### Domain: Material Basics

MATERIAL BASICS			
Indicator	Year	Boroondara	Victoria
<b>Housing<sup>3</sup></b>			
Proportion of households experiencing housing stress (%)	2016	8.7	11.4
Proportion of households experiencing rental stress (%)	2016	21.5	28.1
<b>Income<sup>3</sup></b>			
Proportion of households on low income <\$650 per week (%)	2016	13.8	18.3
<b>Employment Status (all age groups)<sup>3</sup></b>			
Proportion of persons employed (%)	2016		
• Employed		94.4	93.4
• Unemployed		5.6	6.6
<b>Youth Unemployment Rate<sup>3</sup></b>			
Proportion of young people aged 15-24 years who are unemployed (%)	2016	13.2	15.2
Proportion of young people aged 15-24 years who are disengaged from employment or education (%)	2016	3.2	8.2

**Data Sources:**

3. id Consulting, 2016

The City of Boroondara is a socioeconomically advantaged local government area where, on average, residents experience high incomes, lower levels of unemployment and housing and rental stress compared to the Victorian average. Despite this, there are pockets of relative disadvantage throughout Boroondara, particularly in the north east and south west parts of the municipality.

Overall, the youth unemployment rate across Boroondara is slightly below the Victorian average, however Hawthorn has a higher unemployment rate. The proportion of disengaged youth remains lower on average, but areas including Ashburton and Surrey Hills have higher rates at approximately 5%.

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has also had a negative impact on housing and rental stress, and also unemployment levels, which will be further reflected in the 2021 Census. While the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has not been as catastrophic as originally forecasted, young Victorians have fared worse than their counterparts across Australia due to the long state wide lockdowns experienced in 2020. Council will track data pertaining to young people's employment as it is published, and work with community partners to support government funded employment agencies to develop appropriate responses with young people in Boroondara.

## Domain: Healthy

HEALTHY			
Indicator	Year	Boroondara or Inner Eastern Metropolitan Region	Victoria
<b>Breastfeeding<sup>4</sup></b>			
Proportion of infants fully breastfed (%)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At discharge</li> <li>3 months</li> <li>6 months</li> </ul>	2017-18	78.6 61.6 11.5	69.3 49.4 22.0
<b>Immunisation<sup>5</sup></b>			
Proportion of infants and children fully vaccinated (%)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12-15 months</li> <li>24-27 months</li> <li>60-63 months</li> </ul>	2020	94.1 93.0 96.2	94.6 91.2 95.6
<b>Nutrition<sup>2</sup></b>			
Proportion of young people meeting recommended fruit (2 serves) and vegetable (5 serves) recommendations (%)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fruit only</li> <li>Vegetables only</li> <li>Combined</li> </ul>	2018	58.3 (IEM) 2.0 (IEM) 10.0 (IEM)	56.6 2.3 10.8
<b>Physical Activity<sup>(2,6)</sup></b>			
Proportion of young people who do the recommended amount of physical activity everyday (%) <sup>2</sup>	2018	24.2 (IEM)	23.4
Participation of children aged 0-4 years in sport and recreation activities (%) <sup>6</sup>	2016	84.4	-
Participation of children aged 5-14 years in sport and recreation activities (%) <sup>6</sup>	2016	99	-
<b>Electronic Media Use<sup>2</sup></b>			
Proportion of young people spending more than 2 hours a day on media	2018	62.4 (IEM)	64.4
<b>Mental Health<sup>2</sup></b>			
Proportion of young people experiencing high to very high rates of psychological distress (depressive symptoms) (%)	2018	22.4 (IEM)	20.4
<b>Alcohol and Other Drugs<sup>2</sup></b>			
Proportion of young people who have ever smoked cigarettes (%)	2018	8.4 (IEM)	8.0
Proportion of young people reporting ever drinking alcohol (%)	2018	51.5 (IEM)	51.8
Proportion young people who have used marijuana or other illegal drugs (%)	2018	12.1 (IEM)	10.3

*IEM refers to data collected for the Inner Eastern Metropolitan region encompassing Councils including City of Boroondara, City of Whitehorse, City of Monash, City of Manningham. This is the most localised level data available for these statistics.*

**Data Sources:**

2. Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System, 2019
4. Department Health and Human Services, 2019, Maternal and Child Health Service 2017-18 annual reports
5. Australian Immunisation Register, 2020
6. City of Boroondara, 2016, Sport and Recreation Strategy
7. Department Health and Human Services, 2020, Maternal and Child Health Service 2019-20 annual reports.

Children and young people across the City of Boroondara experience similar levels of health and wellbeing compared to their other Victorian counterparts. Breastfeeding and immunisation rates are higher in Boroondara compared to the Victorian average.

Data from the 2019-20 Maternal and Child Health Annual report highlights postnatal depression and anxiety in parents is high in Boroondara. In approximately one fifth, or 17.4% of consultations where mental health was identified as an issue, Maternal and Child Health nurses made referrals to specialist services for further parental mental health support<sup>(7)</sup>.

Similar to other local government areas across Victoria, the proportion of young people consuming the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables is low. Boroondara children and young people have high levels of participation in sport and recreation activities. The proportion of young people achieving the recommended 60 minutes of vigorous activity per day in the Inner Eastern Metropolitan region is low, with just under one quarter achieving the recommendations. This presents as an opportunity to address as part of the Plan.

Psychological distress amongst young people continues to grow across Victoria. In 2018, 22.4% of young people in the Inner Eastern Metropolitan region reported very high or high levels of psychological distress. While it is too soon to objectively determine the impact on the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health locally, data from the headspace National Mental Health Survey conducted in 2020 found 34% young people were experiencing high to very high levels of psychological distress. One in two also reported they were unable to carry out their daily activities as a result of the pandemic, therefore highlighting the negative impact on their wellbeing. Services and programs that address clinical needs, as well as preventative initiatives that decrease loneliness and promote social connections, are required to ameliorate these outcomes.

Consumption of alcohol and use of illicit drugs (AOD) amongst young people in the Inner Eastern Metropolitan region is slightly higher than the Victorian averages. The link between mental health and AOD use is well established.

**Domain: Learning**

<b>LEARNING</b>			
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boroondara</b>	<b>Victoria</b>
<b>AEDC - Proportion (%) of children developmentally vulnerable at initiation of school<sup>(8)</sup></b>			
Developmentally vulnerable - Physical health	2018	4.9	8.2
Developmentally vulnerable - Social competence	2018	4.8	8.8
Developmentally vulnerable - Emotional maturity	2018	5.1	8.1
Developmentally vulnerable - Language and Cognitive Skills	2018	1.8	6.4
Developmentally vulnerable - Communication skills and general knowledge	2018	4.8	7.4
Developmentally vulnerable - One or more domains	2018	12.9	19.9
Developmentally vulnerable - Two or more domains	2018	5.4	10.1
<b>NAPLAN Results<sup>2</sup></b>			
Students achieving national minimum standards in literacy (reading) (%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 3</li> <li>• Year 5</li> <li>• Year 7</li> <li>• Year 9</li> </ul>	2017	98.1 98.7 98.7 98	95.8 95.2 94.9 92
Students achieving national minimum standards in numeracy (maths) (%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 3</li> <li>• Year 5</li> <li>• Year 7</li> <li>• Year 9</li> </ul>	2017	95.8 98.9 99.6 99.2	96 96 96 95.5
<b>Education Engagement<sup>3</sup></b>			
Proportion of young people aged 15-24 years engaged in workforce and/or education (%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully engaged</li> <li>• Partially engaged</li> <li>• Disengaged</li> </ul>	2016	86.4 6.5 3.2	75.5 10.7 8.2
<b>Victoria Certificate of Education (VCE) completion<sup>9</sup></b>			
Proportion of young people attending schools in Boroondara with satisfactory completion of their VCE	2019	98.9	98.1

**Data Sources:**

2. Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System, 2019

3. id Consulting, 2016

8. Australian Early Development Census, 2019

9. Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority, 2020



The 2018 AEDC data for Boroondara shows the proportion of children starting school who are developmentally vulnerable. The proportion of children who scored in the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile or under in each domain has increased since 2012. Approximately 13% of children are vulnerable in at least one domain, and 5% vulnerable in two or more domains. The domains where the largest increases in vulnerability have been experienced are the physical health, communication and general knowledge domains. There are a myriad of reasons contributing to these increases, including cultural nuances in what aspects of development are important, with a preference towards cognitive and language development.

Boroondara families have good access to quality education services for children and young people across the municipality. Currently, 74 organisations offer a kindergarten program in Boroondara spanning across standalone kindergartens, long day care centres and independent schools. Boroondara also has one of the highest concentrations of schools of all Victorian local government areas, with 58 secondary, primary and special education schools, including 12 combined primary and secondary schools.

### Domain: Participating

PARTICIPATING			
Indicator	Year	Kooyong	Victoria
<b>Enrolment to vote<sup>10</sup></b>			
Proportion of young people aged 18-24 years enrolled to vote (%)	2016	77%	75%

**Data source:**

10. Australian Electoral Commission, 2016

Enrolment to vote is deemed an indicator of young people's participation in the community. In 2016, the Kooyong Electoral District contained the majority of suburbs in Boroondara, except for Ashburton and Glen Iris which were in the Higgins Electoral District. The electoral count for the Kooyong Electoral District in 2016 showed 77% of young people aged 18-24 years were enrolled to vote compared to 64% in the Higgins Electoral District.

### Domain: Positive Sense of Identity and Culture

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans/transgender, Intersex, Queer/questioning, Asexual and other diverse sexual orientations and gender identities (LGBTQIA+) Young People:

A 2019 survey<sup>(11)</sup> of 68 young people conducted by Access Health and Community and headspace amongst Boroondara LGBTQIA+ young people found 60% of young people felt safe and supported as an LGBTQIA+ young person in Boroondara. Thirty percent stated they were unsure about being safe and supported.

Young people commented they felt unsafe to identify as LGBTQIA+ in Boroondara as they felt it was dangerous, and that their views would not be accepted. Young people also called for more inclusive facilities such as provision of more gender neutral bathrooms in buildings throughout Boroondara.

**Data source:**

11. Access Health and Community (headspace), 2019

## 5. Policy Context

The Plan has been informed by key legislation, policy and research evidence from a range of international, national, state and municipal sources.

### 5.1 International

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989 was ratified in Australia in December 1990. There are four Guiding Principles of the CRC including:

- respect for the best interests of the child as primary consideration;
- the right of survival and development;
- the right of all children to express their views freely on all matters affecting them; and
- the right of all children to enjoy all the rights of the CRC without discrimination of any kind.

The Australian Government reports to the United Nations every five years regarding the CRC and how children in Australia are performing, and what is occurring as a nation to protect children's rights.

### 5.2 National

There are a number of policy directives that remain in place at a federal level to support the development of children in the early years. These policies include:

- National Reform Agenda (2007);
- National Early Childhood Development Strategy (2009);
- Education and Care Service National Law Act (2010);
- Education and Care Services Regulations (2011);
- The National Quality Framework and National Quality Standards (2012); and
- Universal Access to Early Childhood Education.

In 2018, the Child Care Subsidy commenced to replace the previous Child Care Benefit and Rebate. This subsidy provides assistance to families for the cost of child care for a child aged 13 years or younger who is not attending secondary school.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was introduced in 2016 to support eligible people with intellectual, physical, sensory, cognitive and psychosocial disability. The Early Childhood Intervention approach is available to all children aged under 7 years of age with a developmental delay or disability. The NDIS has been progressively rolled out in services across the municipality in recent years.

There is currently no national policy for young people in Australia.

### 5.3 State

The Child Wellbeing and Safety Act (2005) was amended in 2017 to include the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme. The Victorian Child Safe Standards and principles apply to all organisations working with children in Victoria. The Standards include three overarching principles and seven broad standards. All Victorian organisations, including Council and other agencies in Boroondara that provide services, facilities or programs to children, are required by law to implement Child Safe Standards to protect children from harm.

The Early Years Compact, established in 2017, is a partnership between the Department of Education and Training, Department of Health and Local Government represented by the Municipal Association Victoria. This compact strengthens the collaborative relationship between the three partners in planning, development and provision of early years' services.

In 2015, the Victorian Government launched the Education State to improve education outcomes for children, young people and adults across the State. As part of this, an Early Childhood Reform Plan was adopted to support young children to thrive. In 2018, the Victorian Government announced funding for 15 hours for three year old kindergarten which will be progressively implemented across the State, commencing in Boroondara from 2022. Substantial evidence exists that highlights the benefits of two years of early learning resulting in improved development outcomes.

In 2016, findings from the Royal Commission into Family Violence in Victoria were released resulting in the Family Violence Rolling Action Plan 2017-20. This Plan outlines 227 recommendations which are currently being addressed to improve outcomes for children, families and young people across the State. The Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme was developed as part of this Plan to enable the sharing of information between authorised organisations to access and manage family violence risk.

The following policy directives are relevant to children, young people and families across Victoria:

- Family Violence Rolling Action Plan (2020-23);
- Gender Equality Act (2020);
- Department of Education and Training Strategic Plan (2019-2023);
- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (2019-2023);
- Youth Policy - Building Stronger Youth Engagement in Victoria (2016);
- Aboriginal Education Plan (2016-26);
- No Jab, no Play (2016); and
- Victorian Charter for Child Friendly Cities and Communities (2013).

In 2019, the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System commenced a review of Victoria's mental health system to help Victorians to experience their best mental health now and in the future. The final report was released in March 2021 with 65 recommendations to create a mental health and wellbeing system that is contemporary and adaptable. The Victorian Government has committed to implementing all 65 recommendations of the Royal Commission. Children, young people and families are captured in a number of the recommendations. From a community perspective, the Commission recommends establishment of community collectives for mental health and wellbeing to encourage community participation, inclusion and connection.

## 5.4 Local

The BCP is Council's strategic framework for planning and reporting for the City of Boroondara. The BCP contains seven priority themes highlighted in Figure 8.

The Children and Young People's Strategy (2015) was developed to represent Council's overarching commitment to servicing the needs of children, young people and their families. This Strategy concluded at the end of 2019 and will be superseded by the Plan.

The City of Boroondara is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and, as such, is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation. Child safety is everyone's responsibility, and Council has zero tolerance of child abuse, and is committed to actively contributing to a child safe city where children are protected from abuse. Council's commitment will be enacted through the implementation and monitoring of the Child Safe Standards, as specified under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015, which is represented in the organisation's Child Safe Policy. This policy applies to all employees, City of Boroondara volunteers, work experience students, relevant contractors and Councillors.



Figure 8: Seven priority BCP themes

Other Council plans and policies that have helped inform the Plan include:

- Multicultural Action Plan (2019-23);
- Add life to Your Years (2019);
- Disability Action Plan (2018-22);
- Sport and Recreation Strategy (2016);
- Playground Strategy (2005); and
- Climate Action Plan (currently under development).

## **6. Key Achievements of Boroondara's Children and Young People's Strategy 2015-2019**

The first Children and Young People's Strategy focussed on four themes that guided Council's operations at the time. For consistency, the following key achievements have been documented under these themes, and described below.

### **Theme 1: Resilient, safe and inclusive community**

- Since 2015, Council has increased the number of programs offered to parents from Chinese speaking backgrounds to meet community needs. The Parent-Child Mother Goose and Mandarin speaking facilitated playgroups have been successfully delivered, helping to strengthen attachments between parents/carers and children, and also enhance community connections to reduce the risk of isolation. In 2019, Boroondara Youth partnered with Access Health and Community to deliver the program 'Tuning into Teens' in Mandarin.
- Council has continued to run and partner with other organisations to provide an extensive range of parent information sessions for parents of children and young people across Boroondara. These information sessions have covered a myriad of topics, some of which include dealing with anxiety in children, working with dads, raising colourful and adventurous eaters, tuning into teens, online cyber safety, responding to difficult behaviour, and understanding school refusal.
- In 2019, a number of teams and departments across Council joined together to produce a regular school holiday program booklet that outlined various activities available to families during the school holiday period.
- Since 2017, the Boroondara Youth team has increased engagement with international students attending Swinburne University by being present at orientation week activities to promote Council services and other support services. Council continued to work with Swinburne University in 2020 to ensure support for international students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic was provided.

### **Theme 2: Liveable, sustainable and health promoting city**

- To continue to support children to learn about road safety, a long term plan for the renewal and upgrade of Kew Traffic School was developed. An upgrade to the bike storage shed and party room was completed in November 2020. The road safety education program at Kew Traffic School has been reviewed with three new programs being offered focusing on different components of the Safety Education Program including, pedestrian safety, bike safety and passenger safety. The revised programs have been written to meet the curriculum outcomes for both early childhood education and care services as well as primary schools.
- Each year, Council has continued to deliver Walk to School programs and other bike and pedestrian safety initiatives funded by VicHealth and VicRoads to primary school children across Boroondara.
- In 2019, Council received funding from the Victorian Government to implement a 40km/hr speed limit along the Burwood Village Shopping strip. This has improved the safety of the area for pedestrians, cyclists, tram passengers and drivers. Council

continues to advocate for the introduction of 40km/hr speed limits to improve community safety across the City, particularly for the 0-25 years age group.

- In 2018-19, the process of booking and accessing Kew Traffic School was streamlined to make it easier for families to access.
- In 2019, Boroondara WILD was launched to promote families getting out into the parks and gardens across Boroondara.

### **Theme 3: Equitable access for all**

- Council has continued to commit funding and resources for developing new community facilities and renewing and upgrading existing facilities to meet the needs of children, young people and their families now and into the future. Since 2015, the following facilities described below have been planned, constructed or completed.
  - The Greythorn Hub opened in 2018 combining a range of community service providers including Maternal and Child Health and Greythorn Early Childhood Centre and Kindergarten.
  - The Surrey Hills Preschool and Maternal and Child Health co-located into a new building in 2016 increasing provision of these services to the community.
  - Construction commenced on the new Camberwell Community Centre in 2019 including Maternal and Child Health and sleep and settling services.
  - Council was successful in 2019 in securing a \$1.6 million grant under the Children Facilities Capital Program for the construction of a new community hub housing important early years' services in Canterbury. The construction of the Canterbury Community Precinct has commenced and is expected to be completed by late 2022.
- To support at risk young people to stay at school, advocacy to the Victorian State Government for the School Focused Youth Service (SFYS) program has been successful with funding granted until December 2021.
- In 2019, Council was successful in applying for funding for the Transport Accident Commission L2P Learner Driver Mentor program to provide opportunities to young people by assisting them to gain their probationary driver's license.
- In 2019, Council was awarded grant funding under Healthy Equal Youth from the Youth Affairs Council Victoria to develop and run a support network for young people identifying as LGBTQIA+ in Boroondara.

### **Theme 4: Best practice health and wellbeing planning and leadership**

- Preschool Field Officers support the inclusion and participation of children with additional needs in early years' services that provide a funded kindergarten program. PSFOs have continued to facilitate a transition network of educators who teach both kindergartens and prep/foundation classes. In 2019, an additional network was included for Maternal and Child Health nurses and three year old kindergarten teachers. These networks provide opportunities for early years educators to work together to achieve the best outcomes for children; and in addition strengthens partnerships.

- Since 2015, Council has strengthened partnerships with headspace, Access Health and Community, Kew Neighbourhood Learning Centre and the Victoria Police Boroondara Youth Resource Officer. The Boroondara Youth Hub is also a site for the continued service provision by JobCo and counselling support from Access Health and Community.
- The Early Years Conference for early childhood educators has been delivered on an annual basis, strengthening partnerships and building the capacity of educators across Boroondara.
- In 2019, planning for an early years' digital hub, Boroondara Families, commenced to provide accessible information and advice for families in one central location. The Boroondara Families digital hub was successfully launched in May 2020. In the first six months since the launch, Boroondara Families had 57,108 visits. This is up 99.4% from the same time last year under the old website structure. The kindergarten section of Boroondara Families is the most prominent page, getting 32,497 of the 51,108 clicks (63.6%). Additionally, the kindergarten calculator had 1,696 clicks and the immunisation calculator had 860 clicks.



## 7. Key Findings from the Boroondara Community Plan 2017-27

During the development of the BCP in 2016/17, just under 12,000 Boroondara residents were involved in community engagement activities. Of the 11,845 respondents:

- 372 respondents were aged under 15 years;
- 409 respondents were aged 15-24 years; and
- 1,799 respondents were parents of a child aged less than 12 years of age.

Over 500 children participated in activities where they shared their ideas about what makes Boroondara a great place to live.

The BCP responses were scanned to identify key themes expressed as being important to children, young people and families in Boroondara. The main findings have been summarised in a snapshot summary, as well as more in-depth responses in Section 7.2. The priorities most important to children, young people and families mainly traversed four themes: **Your Community, Services and Facilities, Your Parks and Green Spaces, The Environment and Getting Around Boroondara.**

The BCP is currently undergoing a refresh to determine how community priorities have changed since 2017. High level findings from Stage 1 of the 2021 refresh show that for young people and parents, there has been a slight change in priorities since 2017. These shifts are documented in the sections below. In 2021, the priority theme of **Your Local Shops and Businesses** has increased in importance, alongside other priority themes of **Your Parks and Green Spaces** and the **Environment**. This shift may partly be attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the focus on living locally throughout lockdowns in 2020. While the actions within the Plan take into account Stage 1 findings of the BCP refresh, once the refresh is complete, there will be an opportunity for Council to review any other emerging findings impacting on children, young people and families and develop any new actions as required.

### 7.1 Snapshot Summary

The original consultation for the BCP revealed that being connected to the community was important to parents, young people and children. Having good relationships with neighbours and family and friends was important as well as supporting more vulnerable members of the community. Parents and young people highly valued access to community facilities and there was a large amount of appreciation expressed for the facilities and services offered throughout Boroondara.

All age groups showed a high degree of appreciation for parks, green spaces and playgrounds, with a desire to see more local activations and events in these settings. Protecting the environment and implementing environmentally sustainable practices, like recycling, was particularly important to parents and young people.

Feeling safe in the community, including personal safety and road safety of pedestrians and cyclists, was also of significant importance to parents and young people. Supporting the local economy, including local shops and cafes, was very important to parents in particular, as it helped to foster community connection.

In 2021, as part of Stage 1 of the BCP refresh, the community were asked to rank their priority themes and help to define what Council should focus on for the next ten years. Seventy one percent of young people aged 14-24 years rated Your Parks and Green Spaces as their top priority theme, followed by 62% and 49% of young people respectively rating The Environment and Your Local Shops and Businesses as their other top priority themes. Becoming more

environmentally friendly by adopting environmentally sustainable practices, preserving green spaces and improving waste collection were identified by young people as the main focus areas for Council. These priorities are addressed by the Plan's actions, specifically through the implementation of Council's sustainable living programs

Findings from Stage 1 of the BCP refresh also show for parents of children aged 13 years or under, their top three priority themes included Your Parks and Green Spaces, Your Community, Services and Facilities and Your Local Shops and Businesses. Seventy six percent of parents rated Your Parks and Green Spaces as their top priority theme, followed by 57% rating Your Community, Services and Facilities their second priority theme, and 48% rating Your Local Shops and Businesses their third priority theme. Similarly to young people, parents also identified preserving green spaces and becoming environmentally friendly as their top two focus areas for Council over the next ten years, and the Plan captures this through the exploration of further family friendly activations of local parks and green spaces. Parents also expressed delivering valued community services as another key focus area which will be addressed through the delivery of actions under Theme 1.

Council recognises there are some distinctions between the priorities of young people and parents and caregivers regarding what they deem as important. Despite these differences, the merit of each is recognised. Council is committed to incorporating the views of young people and parents and caregivers in long term planning to ensure both groups are represented, and therefore influence Council's priorities as children develop, and young people progress into adulthood.

## 7.2 Findings by BCP theme

### Theme 1: Your Community, Services and Facilities

- A sense of community was important to participants, from parents who expressed general sentiments of valuing “the community” to young people and children who valued their relationships with neighbours, friends and family.
- Access to community facilities including: libraries, pools, recreation centres, playgrounds, skate parks and leisure centres were highly valued by all age cohorts. Children aged 3-13 years of age particularly valued pools, leisure centres and libraries as places where they could “play”, “have fun” and “be active”.
- Parents and young people mentioned the importance of more affordable services, such as childcare, housing and health care services.
- Young people aged 15-24 years of age appreciated the existing community services, particularly free services that catered to youth.
- There was a desire to see more events and sporting facilities that young people could engage with, such as events in the park, pool activities and street parks as well as infrastructure for sports such as cricket, football and netball.
- A sense of safety and security was often mentioned in a general sense but also specifically in relation to road safety and personal safety in the evening. Early BCP refresh results indicate personal safety and security is still important for young people.
- While not exclusive to this cohort, young people aged 15-24 years of age particularly mentioned the importance of supporting and celebrating the diversity within our community such as culture, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religious affiliation and age.
- Providing services and taking direct action that supports vulnerable members of our community such as refugees, the homeless community and the elderly were mentioned as important for all age groups, even young children.
- Parents rated Your Community, Services and Facilities as their third top priority theme in 2021, outlining delivering valued community services including life-long learning facilities as focus areas for the next ten years.

### Theme 2: Your Parks and Green Spaces

- Children, young adults and parents valued the green spaces and parks, including their associated amenities such as playgrounds and walking trails. Early results from the BCP refresh in 2021 show the community continue to value parks and green spaces, with parents and young people rating it the top priority theme.
- Green spaces and big “open spaces” with access to public amenities were also valued by the community.
- Parents and young people expressed through the BCP refresh that the preservation of green spaces should be Council’s top priority focus over the next ten years.
- There was an expressed desire to see more and different amenities in these spaces such as shaded areas, complex playgrounds, rubbish bins, toilets and sporting facilities.
- Young people in particular would like to see these spaces activated with events.

### Theme 3: The Environment

- A clean, green and well maintained environment was valued by respondents of all ages. Early results from the BCP refresh in 2021 highlight that the environment was the second top priority theme for young people.

- The natural environment of flora and fauna was particularly valued and many residents commented on the importance of preserving, maintaining and cultivating the trees, gardens and local wildlife in Boroondara.
- There was also concern about the environment in relation to climate change and environmental sustainability in both 2017 and 2021. In 2017, children made comments such as “make the planet clean”, while young adults and parents emphasised the importance of implementing environmentally sustainable practices such as renewable energy. In 2021, early stage BCP refresh results show that both young people and parents believe environmentally sustainable practices are important, with both groups stating Council should focus on becoming more environmentally friendly and preserving green spaces over the next ten years.
- A clean environment was linked with good waste management, e.g. recycling.

#### Theme 4: Neighbourhood Character & Heritage

- Participants appreciated the maintenance and attention dedicated towards ensuring streets were clean and aesthetically pleasing.
- Preservation of the neighbourhood character was important.
- Ensuring development was consistent with the character of the area was important but notably unsatisfactory to many parents and young people. Many participants commented on the “inappropriate development” that was becoming increasingly prevalent and saw it as Council’s role to enforce appropriate restrictions.

#### Theme 5: Getting Around Boroondara

- Road safety, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists was of concern for all age groups, even children.
- Participants suggested improvements to both road and footpath infrastructure, such as speed limit restrictions, pedestrian crossings and bike lanes.
- Commuter safety when walking and catching public transport was also important. Notably, parents commented on the importance of children’s safe access to schools.
- Participants and particularly young people, desired improvements to public transport, commenting on its limited frequency and low reliability.
- Road congestion and lack of parking was mentioned, often unfavourably.
- Better infrastructure for cyclists was also encouraged and ranged from bike lanes on the roads for commuters to bike paths through parks for leisure.

#### Theme 6: Your Local Shops and Businesses

- Supporting the local economy was extremely important to community members.
- Participants valued their local shops and cafes as places to socialise and, specifically for children, as places where they could have fun and spend time with family.
- Parents in particular, desired vibrant shopping strips that fostered community connection, supported local business and promoted neighbourhood experiences.
- During the 2021 BCP refresh, both parents and young people identified Your Local Shops and Business within their top three priority themes.

#### Theme 7: Civic Leadership and Governance

- Community leadership was valued by participants as was fair and transparent local government.
- Community members saw the Council as playing an important role in the community, particularly when it comes to the provision and allocation of resources and programs.

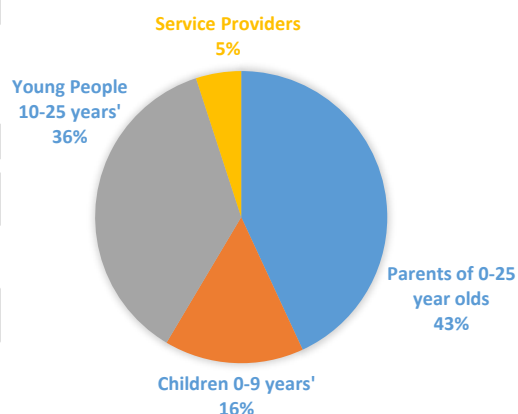
## 8. Community Consultation

From January to April 2020, officers undertook additional consultation with children, young people and their parents/caregivers across Boroondara to help complement and build on the findings from the BCP. Service providers were also consulted as part of this process.

A range of engagement methods were employed to reach the target audience. Creative activities such as Voice Lab from Polyglot Theatre and artist led drawing sessions were held with children under 10 years of age to gather their insights around key areas of the BCP. Vox pops with parents were conducted at events, while focus groups were run with young people to gather more rich qualitative data around how Council can address community needs. Online surveys for both parents/caregivers and young people also captured feedback. Services providing care and support to Boroondara children, families and young people were engaged through interviews and an online survey to help strengthen the data.

The high level findings of the consultation are represented below. Figure 9 shows the breakdown of respondents reached during the consultation. The findings have been summarised as a snapshot in Section 8.1 and also in greater detail in Section 8.2 by consultation target group.

- Almost **1,000** people were reached through the consultation, of which **928** were children, young people and parents/caregivers across Boroondara.
- **151** children aged under 10 years of age took part in creative activities including Voice Lab run by Polyglot Theatre and in art drawing sessions.
- **342** parents/caregivers completed an online survey where **98%** were parents.
- **58%** of young people consulted were aged 10-17 years of age.
- **340** young people completed an online survey with **59%** identifying as female, **36%** male, **2%** as non-binary and **3%** not stating.
- **16** young people took part in **two 1.5 hour** focus groups eliciting in-depth information about the key needs of young people in Boroondara.
- **53** parents or grandparents from Chinese speaking backgrounds were consulted through translated sessions at Balwyn Library and the Greythorn Community Hub.
- **49** service providers, representing organisations across each of the domains of The Nest were interviewed or completed an online survey.



**Figure 9:** breakdown of respondents reached during the Children and Young People Action Plan engagement.

## 8.1 Snapshot summary of 2020 community consultation

A number of key themes emerged during the community consultation. Many of the results were noted as being consistent with the BCP community consultation results.

This round of community consultation highlighted community participation and connectedness continued to be important for Boroondara parents, young people and children. Parents valued a community where their children could grow up healthy, happy and safe and where diversity and inclusion was supported. Similarly, young people also rated the community as important, while children valued connections and kindness between others. Young people desired more opportunities to participate in civic life with over half expressing they would like to become a volunteer in their local community, and have opportunities to contribute to Council decision making.

Parents and young people alike expressed their appreciation for the range of community facilities and services offered across Boroondara. While facilities such as parks and playgrounds, libraries, pools and recreation centres and maternal and child health centres had high levels of usage and awareness; some other facilities and services such as the Boroondara Youth Hub, parent information sessions, arts and cultural centres and school holiday programs had lower levels of both awareness and usage.

Congruent with BCP findings, the environment remained a concern for parents, young people and children. Children believed it was important to protect the environment especially plants and animals, and parents and young people desired more action on climate change and environmental sustainability.

Mental health and family violence continue to be two key health and wellbeing issues for children and young people in Boroondara. With the incidence of both family violence reports and mental illness on the rise, service providers reported the need for more affordable support services to meet the growing demand. Service providers and young people also expressed social isolation was emerging as a key issue for young people adding to increasing levels of loneliness and mental health concerns in this group.

The consultation also highlighted safety, including road and personal safety, as an important issue for young people and parents. Young people felt personal safety in the community was important as well as safety on public transport. Parents of school aged children also commented that bike and pedestrian safety, especially near schools, was important to them.

Section 8.2 describes in more detail the key findings under each of the target audiences of children, young people, parents/caregivers and service providers.

## 8.2 What did children, young people, parents/caregivers and service providers in Boroondara tell us?

All community consultation data was collated and analysed. High level findings of the themes that emerged from each target group are summarised below.

### Children:

- Children reported being with friends and family made them the most happy:

*"I like having play dates with my friends, I like playing games with my family because it makes me feel like I'm a lucky person"*

*"Spending time with my family makes me happy"*

- Children reported they liked art and libraries:

*"I love art, its one of my favourite things to do... drawing, its really fun!"*

*"[Art] makes me feel like peaceful, like if I'm stressed it makes me feel better"*

*"...I like to borrow books and look on the catalogue..."*

*"I normally like to browse books and look for books that I like by the same author..."*

- Caring for the natural environment and animals was the most important issue for children:

*"I would probably invent a way to make electricity ...without polluting the environment"*

*"Have no plastic in the world so the animals can breathe"*

*"I would make it so people would stop polluting the environment and people would stop cutting down trees"*

- Being kind to each other was also important to children:

*"...everyone would just be happy, and everyone know each other and be kind to each other"*

*"...everyone should be kind to each other!"*



*Parents/caregivers:*

- Parents and caregivers reported high levels of awareness and usage of Boroondara parks and playgrounds, libraries, maternal and child health centres and pools and recreation centres. They were also highly appreciative of the services provided by Council to the community.
- Around 25% reported low levels of awareness of some community facilities and services including parent information sessions, arts and cultural centres, school holiday programs and the Boroondara Youth Hub.
- One in six parents reported they desired local services and programs to be offered after hours and on weekends to cater for full time working parents. Parents also expressed they would like to see more family activities that traversed multiple age groups so the whole family could get involved.
- Parents would like more information about the range of playgroups offered throughout Boroondara.
- Just over half of parents/caregivers stated they would like to see more family friendly events in Boroondara parks and playgrounds.
- Parents expressed concern about bike and pedestrian safety in Boroondara, particularly around primary schools. There were calls to advocate to improve accessibility of public transport throughout the municipality.
- Addressing climate change and encouraging environmentally sustainable practices was reported as being important to parents.
- Parents stated they would like to see a future for their children where they are well educated, happy, healthy, safe and resilient, accepting of diversity and having a strong connection to their community.
- One third of survey respondents reported they spoke a language other than English at home. There were suggestions to increase the provision of services and programs that are offered in more languages.

*Young people:*

- Young people reported high levels of awareness and usage of Boroondara parks and green spaces, libraries, pools and recreation centres.
- Lower levels of community facility and service awareness were seen for other Council services including the Boroondara Youth Hub and all associated programs, arts and cultural centres and the Junction Skate Park.
- Young people suggested increased advertising and promotion of the services and programs available for youth in Boroondara would help to increase awareness and usage.
- 54% of young people stated they are not currently a volunteer but were interested in volunteering in the future. Helping those in need of assistance and caring for the environment were key areas of interest.
- Over 50% of young people surveyed were involved in a sports club at least once a week. Involvement in other community groups like church groups, art/theatre and music groups was much lower.
- Over two thirds of young people reported personal safety and the environment, i.e. addressing climate change, were two areas that are very important to them. Just over half stated community connections and inclusion and diversity were also very important.
- 96% of young people reported mental health was a key health issue for their age group.
- 31% of young people responding to the survey stated they spoke a language other than English at home.
- Lack of employment opportunities for young people across Boroondara was a concern raised during the consultation.
- Young people desired the opportunity to be more involved in Council matters.



*Service providers:*

- Family violence remains a key issue affecting children, families and young people across Boroondara with the incidence of reporting on the rise, particularly within CALD communities.
- Mental health remains a significant health issue affecting children, families and young people across Boroondara. In particular:
  - service providers noted children are now presenting for stress and anxiety type concerns at a much younger age,
  - there are increasing levels of anxiety and depression presentations for first time parents, and
  - there is a lack of adequate and affordable supports and services available to deliver therapeutic treatment for families and young people.
- Services for the middle years, i.e. ages 6-10 years, presents as a significant service gap area as there is a lack of government funding to address education, health and wellbeing concerns in this cohort.
- Vulnerability amongst children and families is increasing for those experiencing financial disadvantage across Boroondara. Families who are financially disadvantaged have fewer options when it comes to accessing health and wellbeing services.
- Service providers working with children and families have noted an increase in the numbers of grandparents now caring for their grandchildren. Adequate supports need to be provided to this group.
- There are a lack of employment opportunities for young people across Boroondara, and in particular a lack of vocational opportunities for young people with disability.

### 8.3 Emerging issues and opportunities

Analysis of the data received from the community, service providers, Council staff and emerging research and policy directives highlighted a number of issues and opportunities to be addressed in the Plan.

A summary of the emerging issues and opportunities from community consultation and relevant State policy directives is documented in section 8.3.1 below.

The COVID-19 pandemic was declared in 2020, and has resulted in unprecedented changes to the way society functions. During 2020, Council adapted its service delivery to provide a range of online services to children, young people and families. Council will seek to continue the provision of these online services in the future, and most importantly is committed to assisting the pandemic recovery and responding to emerging community needs in the 0-25 years age group.

#### 8.3.1 Summary of findings

A summary of the emerging issues and opportunities for families, early and middle years as well as young people is represented in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Summary of emerging issues and opportunities

Target Group	Emerging Issues and Opportunities
Families (all ages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a high proportion of Boroondara families with both parents in the workforce, resulting in high demand for affordable childcare services. There has been a 20% increase in the proportion of children attending day care since 2012.</li> <li>• Service providers have noted a large increase in the number of grandparents providing care to grandchildren in Boroondara.</li> <li>• Family violence reports are increasing with 464.6 reports completed per 100,000 population in 2019. This figure has increased from 446.8 in 2018. Service providers also noted an increase in demand for services responding to family violence.</li> <li>• Approximately 9% and 21% of households reported housing and rental stress respectively in 2016, with service providers indicating increased levels of financial stress and disadvantage amongst families. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted housing and rental stress, and Council will monitor available sociodemographic data to understand the impact in 2021 and beyond.</li> <li>• For the 2019-20 year, approximately one in five consultations where mental health was identified as an issue, Maternal and Child Health nurses made subsequent referrals to specialist services for further parental mental health support.</li> <li>• Around 25% of parents and caregivers surveyed reported they were unaware of some Council services and programs for families, including parent information sessions, arts and cultural centres, school holiday programs and the Boroondara Youth Hub.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents desired more local services and programs to be offered after hours or on weekends to better provide for the needs of full time working parents. Family activities and events that catered for children of multiple age groups were also desired. Council will continue to explore opportunities to work with our community partners to provide more flexible options for families.</li> <li>• Parents articulated they would like information about the range of playgroups offered throughout Boroondara.</li> <li>• Just over half of parents/caregivers surveyed stated more free or low cost family friendly events in parks and playgrounds would be beneficial.</li> <li>• Parents expressed concern about bike and pedestrian safety, particularly around primary schools. There were calls to advocate to improve accessibility of public transport throughout the municipality.</li> <li>• Addressing climate change and encouraging environmentally sustainable practices was reported as being important to parents.</li> <li>• Parents from CALD backgrounds desired programs and services to be offered in more languages other than English.</li> </ul>
Early Years (0-5 years of age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proportion of children starting school who are classified as being “developmentally vulnerable” by the AEDC has been increasing across Boroondara since 2012. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Approximately 13% are developmentally vulnerable in one or more domains,</li> <li>○ Approximately 5% are developmentally vulnerable in two or more domains.</li> <li>○ The physical health and communication skills and general knowledge domains represent the two largest growths in vulnerability.</li> <li>○ Investment in children’s health and wellbeing and building communication skills is required across Boroondara.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Almost 80% of infants are fully breastfed at discharge from hospital dropping to 62% at 3 months of age, highlighting the importance of breastfeeding support services available through Maternal and Child Health services.</li> <li>• High participation rates in sport and recreation activities amongst young children with 85% being involved.</li> <li>• Children expressed concerns about caring for the environment and protecting our plants and animals throughout the consultation.</li> <li>• Having strong relationships with family and friends was voiced as being important to young children.</li> </ul>
Middle Years (6-9 years of age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A large service gap for the middle years cohort exists due to insufficient funding from State and Federal governments to address education, health and wellbeing concerns.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a very high educational achievement amongst Boroondara children (Year 3) across literacy and numeracy standards.</li> <li>• Children expressed concerns about caring for the environment and protecting our plants and wildlife.</li> <li>• Having strong relationships with family and friends was voiced as being important to children.</li> <li>• Looking after vulnerable community members such as older adults, homeless people and refugees were important to children.</li> </ul>
Young people (10-25 years of age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health is the most significant health and wellbeing issue for young people with 96% young people surveyed stating it was very important or important.</li> <li>• Rates of psychological distress (depressive symptoms) are increasing with 22.4% young people reporting high or very high levels (data from Inner Eastern Metropolitan region).</li> <li>• Only 25% of young people undertake the recommended amount of physical activity per day (data from Inner Eastern Metropolitan region).</li> <li>• Use of electronic media is high amongst young people with 62.4% spending more than 2 hours a day on media (data from Inner Eastern Metropolitan region).</li> <li>• 12.1% of young people report having used marijuana or other illegal drugs, which is higher than the Victorian average of 10.3% (data from Inner Eastern Metropolitan region). Recent data is not available at local government area level.</li> <li>• There is very high educational achievement amongst Boroondara young people (Years 5, 7, 9) across literacy and numeracy standards.</li> <li>• Young people and service providers reported a lack of suitable employment opportunities for their age group during community consultation.</li> <li>• 60% of young people identifying as LGBTQIA+ felt safe and supported in Boroondara.</li> <li>• Only 30% of young people surveyed were aware of the Boroondara Youth Hub and associated programs and committees, representing an opportunity to increase awareness and usage of these services.</li> <li>• Celebrating and accepting diversity is important to young people.</li> <li>• The environment and addressing climate change was deemed very important or important to 92% of young people surveyed.</li> <li>• Young people desire more activations of parks and green spaces with free activities.</li> <li>• 92% of young people surveyed felt personal safety and road safety was very important or important to them.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Young people identified the need for more support during the transition from school to tertiary education and work to help attenuate social isolation and loneliness.</li><li>• 54% of young people surveyed reported they are not currently a volunteer but would like to become a volunteer in community service roles or caring for the environment.</li><li>• Through focus groups, young people stated they would like more opportunities to be more involved in Council decision making.</li></ul>
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### 8.3.2 Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic emerged worldwide. This has resulted in unprecedented changes to the way society functioned, including state wide lockdowns causing economic and health and wellbeing ramifications. During 2020, Council adapted its service delivery to provide a range of online services for children, young people and families to meet their needs, and is committed to continuing to offer some online services in the future.

The health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was largely felt in the area of mental health. During the height of the pandemic, the mental health of the community, and in particular of children and young people worsened as a result of the lockdowns experienced. A recent report<sup>(12)</sup> found that one in two young people were unable to carry out their usual daily activities on at least one day a week during the pandemic highlighting the impact to wellbeing.

While the overall economic burden of the pandemic has not been as catastrophic as originally forecasted, the impact is still evident. Economic data highlights that compared to September 2019 the proportion of Boroondara residents employed in September 2020 fell by 4.7%, or 14.1% without JobKeeper. Local jobs also decreased by 5.5%, or 16.6% from September 2019 to September 2020. Furthermore, the proportion of residents aged 15-64 years receiving JobSeeker or Youth Allowance was at 3.2% for January 2021, 2% higher than March 2020<sup>(3)</sup>.

As the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic continues, Council will monitor the emerging needs of children, young people and families to determine any needs that emerge in the short, medium and long term. Council recognises the need to be agile in developing strategies for how we will respond to the needs of the community in order to facilitate the recovery process.

## 9. Implementation and Evaluation

Council is committed to addressing the needs and priorities of children, young people and families in Boroondara. Council will work with a range of community partners that service these age groups to implement actions that address their needs and priorities. The community partners listed are examples of those Council has existing relationships with, however this list is not exhaustive. It is expected this list will grow throughout the implementation of the Plan.

The emerging issues identified by age groups and BCP themes in Section 8.3 have formed the basis of the development of the action plan in **Appendix 1**. The Plan acknowledges other Council strategies and plans that address the needs of children, young people and families. Following the completion of the BCP refresh the Plan will be reviewed to determine if actions can be strengthened or modified based on community engagement data to reflect contemporary views.

A separate evaluation framework will be produced in the first year of the Plan to monitor the implementation and impact of the Plan. The Early Years Advisory Committee will also play a role in the ongoing monitoring of the Plan throughout its five year life cycle.

## 10. Accountabilities

For all queries or feedback regarding this Plan, please use the contact details for the responsible department below.

Department Contact	Contact Number	Contact email
Stephanie Leggett <b>Wellbeing Policy and Planning Lead</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	03 9278 4517	stephanie.leggett@boroondara.vic.gov.au

## 11. References

1. Crime Statistics Agency, 2019
2. Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System, 2019
3. id Consulting, 2016
4. Department Health and Human Services, 2019, Maternal and Child Health Service 2017-18 annual reports
5. Australian Immunisation Register, 2020
6. City of Boroondara, 2016, Sport and Recreation Strategy
7. Department Health and Human Services, 2020, Maternal and Child Health Service 2019-20 annual reports
8. Australian Early Development Census, 2019
9. Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority, 2020
10. Australian Electoral Commission, 2016
11. Access Health and Community (headspace), 2019

## 12. Related Documents

- Boroondara Community Plan (2017-27)
- Children and Young People's Strategy (2015-19)
- Disability Action Plan (2018-22)

- Multicultural Action Plan (2019-23)
- Add life to Your Years (2019)
- Sport and Recreation Strategy (2016)
- Boroondara Annual Report (2018-19)
- Playground Strategy (2005)
- The Nest Action Agenda (ARACY, 2014)

### **Appendix 1 - Action Plan Table**

(refer to Attachment 2 for action plan table)

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## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

**Theme 1: Your Community Services and Facilities**

<b>ACTION NUMBER</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>NEST FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION YEARS</b>	<b>RESOURCING</b>	<b>PROGRESS MEASURE</b>
1.1	Work with community partners to deliver mental wellbeing initiatives to improve outcomes of children, young people and families.	Healthy Participating Loved and Safe	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Community Planning and Development  <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> Access Health and Community, headspace, Camcare, YMCA, Swinburne University, Neighbourhood Houses, Women's Health East	2021/22 - 2023/24	Budget bid	Number of community partners engaged.  Number of children, young people, parents and caregivers engaged.  Number of initiatives delivered.
1.2	Conduct advocacy on behalf of early years services in Boroondara to prepare for the roll out of the Victorian Government three year old kindergarten program for implementation from 2022.	Learning	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> Early childhood education and care years services	2021/22	Operational	Planning completed.
1.3	Improve access to community and early years' services in Canterbury through the provision of new facilities as part of the Canterbury Community Precinct.	Healthy Learning	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Capital Projects	2020/21-2022/23	Budget bid	Number and range of services available in Canterbury Community Precinct.

## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEARS	RESOURCING	PROGRESS MEASURE
1.4	Work with community partners to identify trends in order to advocate to state and federal governments, and peak bodies to address the complex needs of families in Boroondara; especially in relation to family violence, mental health, alcohol and drug substance abuse and social isolation.	Healthy Loved and Safe	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> Eastern Domestic Violence Outreach Service, Access Health and Community, Camcare, Mercy Health O'Connell Family Centre, Migrant Information Centre, Eastern Community Legal Centre, Women's Health East.	All years	Operational	Annual information sharing reports produced capturing trends across Boroondara.
1.5	Promote vaccinations recommended by the Australian Government Department of Health that are available to children and young people under the National Immunisation Program.	Healthy	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Immunisation communications promoted through relevant communication channels, Boroondara Families, MCH services and schools.
1.6	Provide targeted information and education sessions for parents/caregivers to assist them to understand child and youth development, and helping them to feel more confident in supporting their families.	Healthy Loved and Safe	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Libraries Services, Community Planning and Development  <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> Neighbourhood Houses	All years	Operational	Number of information sessions held.  Number of parents in attendance.

## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEARS	RESOURCING	PROGRESS MEASURE
1.7	Deliver the Preschool Field Officer program to support the inclusion and participation of children with additional needs in funded kindergarten programs.	Learning  Loved and Safe	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Number of Preschool Field Officer referrals.  Satisfaction from educators regarding the Preschool Officer Program.
1.8	Promote the Boroondara Kindergarten Central Enrolment Scheme to streamline the registration and enrolment process for 3 and 4 year old programs at participating member kindergartens.	Learning	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> Standalone kindergartens	All years	Operational	Number of kindergartens registered with the Boroondara Kindergarten Central Enrolment Scheme
1.9	Undertake a review of Council's early years' capacity building initiatives to ensure they continue to meet the needs of parents/caregivers and educators and are meeting the requirements of Early Childhood Reform.	Healthy Learning	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	2021/22	Operational	Undertake and complete review

## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEARS	RESOURCING	PROGRESS MEASURE
1.10	Implement and promote Boroondara Families as Council's primary source of information for the early years (0-8 years).	Healthy Learning	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Number of visits to Boroondara Families page
1.11	Participate in the Boroondara Family Violence Network to plan and develop strategies, create community awareness and share information that addresses family violence.	Loved and Safe	<b>LEAD:</b> Community Planning and Development  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Number of Council staff in attendance at meetings.  Number of community members reached through community awareness activities.
1.12	Co-design a school holiday program, including promotion and marketing material with children and young people to encourage their attendance at school holiday programs and experiences.	Learning Healthy	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Strategic Communications  <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> YMCA, Neighbourhood Houses, Schools (Outside School Hours Care)	All years	Operational	Number children and young people engaged through the co-design process.

## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEARS	RESOURCING	PROGRESS MEASURE
1.13	Provide the School Focused Youth Service to support students at risk of disengaging from education.	Learning Material Basics	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> Schools	All years (subject to funding)	External funding	Number of students engaged.  Number of schools supported.
1.14	Deliver a youth-led program for young people to participate in affordable and accessible music and cultural events.	Positive sense of culture and identity	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Arts and Culture	All years (subject to funding)	External funding	Number of young people engaged through the youth led program.  Number of events held.
1.15	Co-design a promotion and marketing approach with children, young people and parents and caregivers to increase awareness about the Council facilities, services and programs available for children, young people and families.	Not Applicable	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Strategic Communications	All years	Operational	Number of children and young people engaged through the co-design process.

## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEARS	RESOURCING	PROGRESS MEASURE
1.16	Work with young people to promote active living by exploring ways to increase access to local sporting and recreation facilities, as well as encouraging participation in community sporting clubs.	Healthy	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Strategic Communications  <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> Sporting clubs, State Sporting Associations, YMCA	2021/22 - 2024/25	Operational	Alternate avenues of active living identified.  Young people involved to identify new active living opportunities.  Number of young people engaged through community sporting clubs.
1.17	Undertake research into the local playgroup networks and determine how Council can promote and support playgroups.	Learning Loved and Safe	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> Playgroups Victoria	2021/22	Operational	Research completed, promotional opportunities identified.
1.18	Develop and deliver an annual Boroondara Youth Awards event to recognise and celebrate young people and those who work with young people.	Positive Sense of Identity and Culture	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	2022/23 - 2024/25	Operational  Subject to budget bid	Annual awards planned and conducted.

## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEARS	RESOURCING	PROGRESS MEASURE
1.19	Deliver targeted health and wellbeing programs to young people to feel safe and connected in the community.	Positive sense of culture and identity	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Number of programs delivered.  Number of young people engaged.
1.20	Involve children, young people and their families in placemaking projects through engagement and activation opportunities.	Participating	<b>LEAD:</b> Liveable Communities  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	2021/22	Operational	Number of children and young people engaged in Placemaking projects.
1.21	Explore opportunities for children and young people to be more physically active through placemaking projects across the City.	Healthy Participating	<b>LEAD:</b> Liveable Communities  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	2021/22	Operational	Number of young people engaged in placemaking projects.
1.22	Work with young people to design and deliver a campaign and program for young people to access volunteering opportunities.	Participating	<b>LEAD:</b> Community Planning and Development  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services, Liveable Communities, Library Services, Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces	2022/23 - 2024/25	Operational  Subject to budget bid	Number of young people involved in the co-design process.  Volunteering campaign and program for young people developed.

## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEARS	RESOURCING	PROGRESS MEASURE
1.23	Partner with Neighbourhood Houses across Boroondara to deliver services and programs that address the needs of children, young people and families.	Healthy Learning	<b>LEAD:</b> Community Planning and Development  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> Neighbourhood Houses, Men's Sheds	All years	Operational	Number of neighbourhood houses engaged.  Number of children, young people and parents and caregivers reached through neighbourhood house programming
1.24	Provide a range of enriching programs and experiences for children and families that foster early literacy and language skills and a lifelong love of reading.	Learning	<b>LEAD:</b> Library Services  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Number of programs and experiences delivered.  Number of children and families reached.
1.25	Enhance the flexibility of Council's services and programs to meet the changing needs of children and families across the municipality.	Learning	<b>LEAD:</b> Library Services  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Arts and Culture, Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Audit of Council services and programs conducted.  Plan for enhancing the flexibility of services developed.



## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEARS	RESOURCING	PROGRESS MEASURE
1.26	Provide programs and experiences to children and young people to enhance their engagement with art and culture.	Learning Positive Sense of Identity and Culture	<b>LEAD:</b> Arts and Culture <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Number of programs delivered.  Number of children and young people engaged.
1.27	Explore opportunities to increase Council's digital presence with young people.	All Domains	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services <b>SUPPORT:</b> Transformation and Technology	2022/23	Operational	Research conducted and report produced
1.28	Support children, young people, families and community partners through the COVID-19 pandemic recovery process.	All domains	<b>LEAD:</b> Community Planning and Development <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	2021/22	Operational	Number of COVID-19 pandemic related supports available to children, young people and families.
1.29	Promote the benefits of breastfeeding to families in the Boroondara community.	Healthy	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Number of activities delivered that promote the benefits of breastfeeding.

## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

## Theme 2: Your Parks and Green Spaces

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEAR	BUDGET	PROGRESS MEASURE
2.1	Explore ways to activate parks and green spaces across the municipality through the provision of family friendly events and self-guided experiences.	Healthy	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces	2022/23 - 2024/25	Subject to budget bid	Number of community members engaged through activations.  Number of parks and green spaces activated.  Development of self-guided experiences.
2.2	Involve the voices of children, families and young people in the re-development of parks and playgrounds.	Participating	<b>LEAD:</b> Capital Projects  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Number of children, parents and caregivers and young people engaged.

## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

## Theme 3: The Environment

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEAR	BUDGET	PROGRESS MEASURE
3.1	Engage with children, young people and families through the delivery of Council's sustainability and engagement and education program - Living For Our Future.	Learning	<b>LEAD:</b> Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Number of programs delivered.  Number of children, young people and parents/caregivers engaged.
3.2	Support the Canterbury Toy Library to provide high quality sustainable play experiences for children and families through the provision of a purpose built toy library in the Canterbury Community Precinct.	Learning	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services <b>SUPPORT:</b> Capital Projects <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> Toy Libraries	2022/23	Operational	Construction of the toy library in the Canterbury Community Precinct.
3.3	Conduct upgrades and renewal works to early years facilities in accordance with Council's Sustainable Building Policy.	Not Applicable	<b>LEAD:</b> Capital Projects <b>SUPPORT:</b> Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces	All years	Operational	Number of upgrades and renewal works undertaken.
3.4	Support the implementation of actions for children, young people and families within the Climate Action Plan (currently under development).	Healthy	<b>LEAD:</b> TBC <b>SUPPORT:</b> TBC	2021/22 - 2024/25	Operational	Number of actions implemented for children, young people and families.

Children and Young People's Action Plan

Proposed Actions Table

**Theme 4: Neighbourhood Character and Heritage**

No actions relating to children, young people and families were identified under this theme.

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## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

## Theme 5: Getting Around Boroondara

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEARS	RESOURCING	PROGRESS MEASURE
5.1	Work with local primary schools to encourage active travel and sustainable travel through the delivery of health promoting programs (subject to funding).	Healthy  Loved and Safe	<b>LEAD:</b> Traffic and Transport  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	External funding	Number of primary schools engaged
5.2	Review the road safety curriculum at Kew Traffic School to align with relevant educational frameworks.	Learning	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	2021/22	Operational	Road safety curriculum review completed.
5.3	Deliver road safety education to children through the operation of Kew Traffic School.	Healthy  Loved and Safe	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Number of children who received road safety education.
5.4	Deliver the TAC L2P learner driver mentor program to provide opportunities for young people by assisting them to gain their probationary driver's license (subject to funding).	Material Basics  Learning	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	External funding	Number of young people assisted via program.
5.5	Continue to advocate to Victoria Police to monitor speed limits around primary schools where speeding issues are recorded.	Loved and Safe	<b>LEAD:</b> Traffic and Transport  <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> Victoria Police	All years	Operational	Number of advocacy submissions.
5.6	Promote active travel to children, young people in families by providing a range of sustainable transport programs including, bike education and Walk or Wheel Wednesdays.	Healthy	<b>LEAD:</b> Traffic and Transport	All years	Operational	Information on sustainable transport options provided on Council's website and to community organisations.

## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

## Theme 6: Your Local Shops and Businesses

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEAR	RESOURCING	PROGRESS MEASURE
6.1	Work with and support community partners to help facilitate and link young people with employment opportunities.	Material Basics	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Liveable Communities  <b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS:</b> Inner Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network, JobCo, employment agencies, businesses.	All years	Operational	Number of community partners supported.  Number of young people supported.
6.2	Explore opportunities and pathways to engage young people in working for Council.	Material Basics	<b>LEAD:</b> People, Culture and Development  <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Number of young people engaged opportunities working for Council

## Children and Young People's Action Plan

## Proposed Actions Table

## Theme 7: Civic Leadership and Governance

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	NEST FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPLEMENTATION YEAR	RESOURCING	PROGRESS MEASURE
7.1	Ensure the safety of children and young people through implementing and promoting the Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme.	Loved and Safe	<b>LEAD:</b> People, Culture and Development <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Adherence to the Child Safe policy
7.2	Identify, assess and manage family violence risk through the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS), the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) and the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM).	Loved and Safe	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	All years	Operational	Implementation of the CISS, FVISS and MARAM in Council services where applicable.
7.3	Formulate best practice methods to represent the voices of children, young people and their families in the development or renewal of relevant Council plans, policies and strategies.	Participating Positive sense of identity and culture	<b>LEAD:</b> Strategic Communications <b>SUPPORT:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	2021/22 - 2022/23	Operational	Best practice methods developed.
7.4	Advocate to all levels of government and other peak bodies about the health, wellbeing and education needs of children, young people and their families, as well as funding opportunities where they arise.	As applicable	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services <b>SUPPORT:</b> Community Planning and Development	All years	Operational	Number of advocacy submissions.
7.5	Develop an evaluation framework to effectively monitor the impact and reach of the Plan.	All domains	<b>LEAD:</b> Health and Wellbeing Services	2021/22	Operational	Evaluation framework developed.

## Children and Young People's Action Plan (the Plan)

### Summary of the Plan's consultation feedback

No.	Action Plan area	Consultation feedback	Council's response
1.	Plan vision statement	Statement to be more committed and inclusive in nature: Remove 'strive', add 'empower'	Vision amended to:  "The City of Boroondara is <del>to strive towards</del> a city where children and young people are valued, happy, healthy, safe <b>and empowered</b> to actively participate in our community."
2.	All documentation (action plan and proposed actions list)	The language could be strengthened to demonstrate Council's commitment to children and young people. At present language is too passive.  E.g. "Seek to represent voices.." to "represent the voices"	Vision amended - see above  Actions: 1.1 - remove "investigate" 1.11 - remove "actively" 1.23 remove "identify ways" 1.27 replace "explore" with "research" 1.28 remove "actively"
3.	Proposed actions table	A large number of actions are too vague, unmeasurable with no stated timeframes.  Amend actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be more specific and clearly indicate Council's priorities and objectives</li> <li>• be measureable - include evaluation indicators</li> <li>• distinguish between actions that are strategic vs operational in nature</li> <li>• include implementation year(s)</li> <li>• emphasise the importance of agencies working together to maximise effectiveness.</li> </ul>	Council appreciates the need to be transparent with the community regarding our priorities and objectives working with children and young people. This feedback has been considered and the proposed actions table has now been updated to include implementation years, resourcing considerations and progress measures.  While some community partners have been listed this list is not exhaustive. Council highly values the relationships it has with community agencies, and will endeavour to strengthen existing partnerships and build new ones through the operationalising of the Plan.



4.	Proposed actions table	Action 1.22 regarding developing a volunteering campaign and program for young people is too broad.	This action has been left broad as more engagement will be undertaken with young people to determine the volunteering roles of interest, in order to develop an appropriate program and campaign.
5.	Proposed actions table	<p>There is a need to emphasise the importance of co-design in actions Council is proposing for children and young people.</p> <p>Strengthen wording of actions to include “co-design”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1.12 promote/facilitate WITH children and young people</li> <li>○ 1.15 work WITH families and young people</li> <li>○ 1.16 work WITH young people</li> </ul>	<p>Council recognises the value of co-designing the development of programs, and promotion and marketing tools with regard to increased service awareness and usage.</p> <p>Wording of actions 1.12, 1.15 and 1.16 have been adjusted as suggested to reflect this.</p>
6.	Proposed actions table	<p>Insufficient recognition of the impact of COVID-19 on young people :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement that the pandemic has disproportionately impacted young people from a health and economic perspective. Great recognition and action needs to be taken on the impact of COVID-19 on young people’s employment and ability to access mental and physical health services.</li> </ul>	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic had significant negative impacts on our community, including young people. Data from the 2020 headspace National Youth Mental Health Survey shows 34% young people were experiencing high to very high levels of psychological distress in 2020. One in two young people reported they were unable to carry out their daily activities on at least one day of the week highlighting the impact to wellbeing as a result of the pandemic<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>Young people, especially those in Victoria also experienced a greater economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic compared to the rest of the population. From April to September 2020, the employment rate of young people aged 18-24 years in Victoria fluctuated between 45-60% compared to over 65% for the general population<sup>2</sup>.</p>

<sup>1</sup> headspace National Youth Mental Health Survey, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Melbourne Institute, 2020

			<p>High level findings from Stage 1 of the 2021 Boroondara Community Plan (BCP) refresh show what young people in Boroondara value. Young people aged 14-24 years, rated their top three priority themes as Your Parks and Green Spaces, The Environment, and Your Local Shops and Businesses. Seventy one percent of young people rated Your Parks and Green Spaces as their top priority theme, followed by 62% and 49% respectively rating The Environment and Your Local Shops and Businesses their other top priority themes.</p> <p>Becoming more environmentally friendly through adopting environmentally sustainable practices, preserving green spaces as well as improving waste collection were identified by young people as the main focus areas for Council over the next ten years. Young people also expressed it was important to support local businesses. These results highlight how the COVID-19 pandemic has changed young people's priorities, as during the original BCP engagement in 2016/17 Your Local Shops and Businesses was considered of lower importance.</p> <p>Council is committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of young people, which includes their mental health and issues surrounding employment. The impact of COVID-19 on young people will be assessed and addressed through the implementation of Actions 1.1, 1.28, 6.1 and 6.2.</p>
7.	Proposed actions table	Council should play a larger role in supporting young people, and in particular young people with a disability to find employment. Suggestion to include more actions pertaining to youth employment.	Council acknowledges the role it can play in supporting youth employment in Boroondara through the relationships and connections held with local businesses and support organisations.

			<p>Action 6.1 has been updated to reflect Council taking a coordinating role in the area of youth employment to support community partners such as JobCo and the Inner Eastern Learning and Employment Network, as well as education settings around building the capacity of young people to be employment ready. As a member of the Inner Melbourne JobSkills Taskforce, Council will continue to engage with employment services and advocate for the needs of young people when it comes to accessing employment opportunities.</p> <p>Furthermore a new action, Action 6.2 “Explore opportunities and pathways to engage young people in working for Council” has been developed acknowledging the role Council can play in addressing youth employment by providing opportunities and pathways for young people to work for Council.</p>
8.	Proposed actions table	<p>Specific vulnerable population groups of children and young people are not adequately catered for in the actions table - e.g. CALD families, families with a child/young person who has disability.</p> <p>Suggestion to amend current actions or include new actions to target specific vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>Council understands and recognises there are vulnerable groups within the community who are at risk of more adverse health and wellbeing outcomes, including those from CALD backgrounds and individuals or families with disability. Council's commitment to working with children and young people from these groups is outlined in the following plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability Action Plan 2018-22; and</li> <li>• Multicultural Action Plan 2019-23.</li> </ul> <p>In the Disability Action Plan 2018-22 there is a focus on children and young people, by supporting children with disability in funded kindergarten programs, as well as providing information and</p>

			<p>education sessions for families and educators around supporting a child or young person with disability. Council is also committed to working in partnership with disability organisations to ensure the inclusion of children and young people with disability in children and youth services, programs and events.</p> <p>The Multicultural Action Plan 2019-23 contains a number of actions that are targeted at children, young people and families. There is a focus on building awareness amongst newly arrived culturally diverse communities for the services offered by Maternal and Child Health, as well as offering more library programming in multiple languages through library services. Further to this, it is planned that research will be conducted to understand the health and wellbeing needs of young people from CALD backgrounds in Boroondara.</p>
9.	Proposed actions table	Include an action that addresses the need for more breastfeeding support.	<p>Boroondara Maternal and Child Health (MCH) provides a wide range of lactation support services. Breastfeeding clinics are offered two afternoons per week at Glen Iris East MCH and East Kew MCH. Furthermore, 1:1 appointments are available for mothers with complex breastfeeding needs as well as home visit with MCH lactation consultants.</p> <p>Council acknowledges the role it can play in promoting the benefits of breastfeeding to families in the community. As a result of this feedback a new action, 1.29 "Promote the benefits of breastfeeding to families in the Boroondara community" has been included in the proposed actions.</p>

10.	Proposed actions table	There are gaps in actions that cater for the middle years (6-9 years) age group and also young people aged 18-25 years.	<p>Council offers a wide range of services and facilities providing activities and programs to the middle years (ages 6-9) and young people (18-25 years) age groups. These services are reflected within the Plan under Theme 1. For the middle years, some these services include parent information sessions, Boroondara Families, library programming, arts programming and recreation centres.</p> <p>Boroondara Youth provides programming for 10-25 year olds who live, work, study and play in Boroondara. Over the course of the Plan's implementation, a youth volunteering program will be developed, as well as work to identify and develop initiatives aimed at increasing young people's physical activity levels. The 18-25 years age group will be considered during the implementation of these actions.</p>
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