



Report on:

## **‘Speak Out Youth Forum’** 7<sup>th</sup> March 2007

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## **Executive Summary**

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On Wednesday 7 March 2007, between the hours of 11.00am and 2.30pm, 110 young people from 13 secondary schools in the City of Joondalup were given the chance to 'have their say' at the City's inaugural "Speak Out" Youth Forum held at the Craigie Leisure Centre.

Forum participants responded to a series of six questions aimed at identifying what Local Government issues are important to young people and how the City can communicate with young people regarding those issues.

The analysis of responses to those questions outlined in this report will be pivotal in developing future strategies that will give young people the opportunity to provide feedback to council on issues that concern them.

Outcomes from the Youth Forum coupled with feedback from young people aged 18 to 25, will provide the City with valuable information on how the City can better engage young people to ensure that they have a strong voice in the decision-making processes of the City.

## **Recommendations Summary**

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The following recommendations summary is based on the analysis of outcomes of the Youth Forum. Rationale for these recommendations can be viewed on page 26

### **Recommendation 1:**

Increase awareness amongst youth aged 12 – 17 years regarding the functions of Local Government and their impact on young people within the City of Joondalup

#### **Recommended Strategies:**

- Presentations in school classes and at assemblies
- Involvement in school Expos
- Youth forums
- Information provision through media outlined in Recommendation 2
- Information provision in the Youth Notebook and other youth magazines/ material produced
- Youth attendance at a Council meetings
- Tours for students to Council Chambers

### **Recommendation 2:**

Utilise technology to develop and maintain contemporary, youth appealing communications with young people

#### **Recommended Strategies:**

- Develop a modern, non corporate style youth website that is updated regularly

- Provide online forums for young people to comment on issues
- Set up a Youth Services Myspace to promote services undertaken by the City and to develop an online network of young people
- Set up a youth friendly Mayor's Myspace
- Set up a designated youth email for all incoming queries e.g. Youth@joondalup.wa.gov.au
- Advertise youth events and activities through You Tube and other current popular websites
- Develop a youth register and distribute information through the network via SMS and email
- Deliver information to young people using interactive audio visual medium

**Recommendation 3:**

Further develop Local Government representation and involvement in secondary schools

**Recommended Strategies:**

- Develop relationships with School Chaplains
- Attend and deliver talks at school assemblies
- Deliver talks in school classes
- Invite students to attend a council meeting in Local Government week
- Work collaboratively with the City's School Liaison Officer
- Hold annual Youth Forums involving school students
- Establish targeted contacts within schools to work with. E.g. The Scene: English Classes for articles, Battle of the Bands: Art class for poster competitions
- Attend the yearly regional Principals and pastoral care meetings
- Engage with school Principals by inviting them to the City of Joondalup every six months
- Involve the Mayor in leadership talks in schools
- Attend Interagency Truancy group meetings and maintain links with other school related groups

**Recommendation 4:**

Increase the level of information regarding policy reforms and legislation relevant to young people; provide a forum for comment on these matters; and advocate on behalf of young people for improvement and/ or change.

**Recommended Strategies:**

- Constantly monitor youth related matters in the external environment
- Inform young people of current issues in a youth friendly manner as outlined in Recommendation 2
- Provide ability for comment on matters through email and online forums
- Communicate youth feedback to involved parties
- Maintain active working relationship with the Office for Youth and the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia

**Recommendation 5:**

Ensure all community consultation undertaken by the City and all Council committees are open and available for young people to attend, or make comment on; and include channels of communication to ensure young people are aware of and can have access to such information

**Recommended Strategies:**

- Develop guidelines for City of Joondalup Business units to include young people in consultation
- Internal advocacy for the inclusion of young people in consultation and decision making processes
- Develop or insert youth inclusion strategies into policies relating to consultation
- Ensure internal planning is undertaken with young people in mind

**Recommendations 6:**

Advocate for young people to be invited to participate in external community organisations' committees and working groups

**Recommended Strategies:**

- Make connection with youth related working groups
- Advocate youth participation and assist in gaining youth participation in these working groups

**Recommendation 7:**

To continue to deliver services that allow young people to engage in activities and programs

**Recommended Strategies:**

- Address current needs of young people
- Address inability to promote services due to excess demand for some programs.
- Develop pre-existing youth projects and programs to meet current needs.

## **Background**

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The Youth Forum initiative commenced following the approval from Council in 2006 for the implementation of a consultation process to evaluate alternative means of engaging with young people. The City (and the former City of Wanneroo) had engaged a Youth Advisory Council (YAC) in an advisory role since 1978 and a Youth Affairs Advisory Committee (YAAC) since 2001 however had in recent times experienced difficulty in achieving quorum and recruiting new members.

Following the Council decision to disband the YAC in favour of looking for new ways that young people can be involved in Council, a working group of six young people from the City of Joondalup together with Mayor Pickard, Cr Jacob and City officers was established. The working group met on six occasions over six months, during which time the Youth Forum concept was developed and implemented.

### ***Link to Strategic plan***

Development of the Youth Forum, and more specifically, youth inclusion strategies to involve young people in the decision making process of Council is linked to the Strategic Plan through the following objectives:

#### OUTCOME:

The City of Joondalup is recognised as a unique City.

#### OBJECTIVES

4.3 To ensure the City responds to and communicates with the community

#### STRATEGIES

4.3.1 Provide effective and clear community consultation

4.3.2 Provide accessible community information

4.3.3 Provide fair and transparent decision-making processes

The “Speak Out” forum provided young people with an opportunity to interact with the City of Joondalup in a two-way communication process. Information was provided to young people about the City and young people provided responses to a series of questions. The Forum setting was an effective form of community consultation and demonstrates the City’s commitment to involving youth in the actions of the City.

#### OUTCOME:

The City of Joondalup is an interactive community.

#### OBJECTIVES

4.4 To develop community pride and identity.

#### STRATEGIES

4.4.1 Build and develop marketing opportunities to promote the City.

Participants in the forum expressed a “call to action” response at the end of the day. Many of the comments were associated with a sense of pride in the community and an individual’s potential to make a difference in the lives of others.

OUTCOME:

The City of Joondalup provides social opportunities that meet community needs.

OBJECTIVES

- 1.3 To continue to provide services that meet changing needs of a diverse and growing community.

STRATEGIES

- 1.3.1 Provide leisure and recreational activities aligned to community expectations, incorporating innovative opportunities for today’s environment.
- 1.3.2 Provide quality-of-life opportunities for all community members
- 1.3.3 Provide support, information and resources.

The City recognises the changing needs of the youth community and supports this objective by opting to undertake this consultation process to evaluate alternative means of engaging with young people.

## Event Overview

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### ***Planning***

A working group of six young people from the City of Joondalup together with Mayor Pickard, Cr Jacob and City of Joondalup officers was established to assist in the planning of the youth forum for 12 – 17 year olds and further strategies for 18 – 25 year olds.

Young people assisting in this project included Hannah Walter, Abe van Hatch, Jo Cinquina and Clair Hand. Jodie Knox and Lauren Hicks retired from the working group prior to project completion.

A series of meetings took place in Council Chambers on the 4<sup>th</sup> September, 6<sup>th</sup> November, 4<sup>th</sup> December 2006, and 15<sup>th</sup> January, 5<sup>th</sup> February, and the 26<sup>th</sup> February 2007. These meetings served the purpose of discussing the concepts of the Youth Forum, developing actions to be completed and for the Youth Projects Officer (the Community Youth Worker prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> January) to report on the progress towards the completion of the project. A Gantt chart outlining the timeline of events in the planning stage of the Youth Forum can be viewed in **Appendix A**.

### ***Budget***

Council allocated \$5,000 for the implementation of a youth consultation process. Surplus funds from the Youth Forum budget will be utilised to implement the consultation strategy with 18 – 25 year olds. The following table shows expenditure for the Youth Forum.

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>AMOUNT (Incl. GST)</b>
BUDGET ALLOCATION	\$5,000.00
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>AMOUNT (Incl. GST)</b>
<i>YOUTH FORUM: 12-17 years</i>	
Venue Hire: Craigie Leisure Centre	-
Equipment Hire: Tables, chairs	-
Motivational Speakers: Equipe	\$649.00
Food: Lunch, 160 persons	\$750.00
Stationary, Table Lollies, mints	\$165.00
Media Costs: Photographer	\$260.00
Media Costs: Video (Shared cost with Marketing)	\$350.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$2,174.00
<b>SURPLUS</b>	<b>\$2,826.00</b>

## ***Implementation***

The Youth Forum was held on Wednesday 7 March 2007. All aspects of the forum as defined by the following headings combined to deliver an effective forum to communicate with local young people.

### **Location**

The Youth Forum was held in the function room at the Craigie Leisure Centre. This was an appropriate venue as there was sufficient space to accommodate all students, and the room was able to be darkened for audiovisual presentations. Holding the forum at the Craigie Leisure Centre also enabled the City to display one of the recreational facilities in the City. The Centre took advantage of this by organising lunchtime activities for the young people and providing free passes to the Centre's new Teen Cycle class.

### **Forum Layout**

Twelve tables of up to ten young people were set up in the room in front of a podium and a screen was used to display the answers to the questions as they were called out.

Representatives from each school and year level were separated onto 12 tables to provide their answers. The mix of students on each table aimed to receive a broader range of questions than what may have been received if students were placed together with their fellow school peers or friends.

Provided on each table were nametags, pens, agendas and a full list of names of students. Also at each table throughout the forum was a City officer to help facilitate the discussion and record answers. A3 sheets of paper with the question printed at the top of the page were used to record the answers to each question.

Teachers sat at the rear of the room to observe the proceedings. This was so students' behaviour and answers were not affected by the presence of their teachers.

## Agenda

City officers were also consulted during the development process. On the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2007, ten officers met to discuss the proposed agenda for the Youth Forum and wording for a series of questions to be asked of the young people attending the forum. Subsequently, a draft agenda including 6 questions was developed and presented to the youth working group for review.

The following agenda was executed at the Youth Forum on the 7<sup>th</sup> March.

TIME	ITEM	PRESENTED BY
11.00am	MC Welcome	MC: Abe Hatch
11.10am	Address from the Mayor of the City of Joondalup	His Worship The Mayor Troy Pickard
11.15am	<b>Youth Question 1:</b> What do you think Local Government (City of Joondalup) does?	MC Group discussion
11.25am	<b>Youth Question 2:</b> How do you think Local Government impacts on young people?	MC Group discussion
11.35am	Address from City Of Joondalup Representatives	Mark Bailey, Youth Outreach Worker and Clancy Read, Youth Projects Officer
11.45am	<b>Youth Question 3:</b> If you lived in the ideal suburb, what would it be like?	MC Group discussion
11.55am	<b>Youth Question 4:</b> What would you want to have a say in?	MC, Group discussion
12.30pm	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b> Students have the opportunity to have lunch with the Mayor and Councillors from the City of Joondalup.	
1.05pm	<b>Youth Question 5:</b> How can you communicate with the City of Joondalup?	MC Group discussion
1.20pm	<b>Youth Question 6:</b> How can the City of Joondalup communicate with you?	MC Group discussion
1.35pm	Equipe Industries Motivational Program: "Everyday Hero"	Jason Schroeder, Equipe Industries
2.25pm	Thank you and Conclusion	MC
2.30pm	Event Conclusion	



The agenda proved effective on the day of the Youth Forum, maintaining good flow and continuation from question to question. However, timeframes were tight and attention had to be given to ensure time allocations were adhered to. Over all, the format of the day was successful.

Following a welcome and 'ice-breaker' activity by the MC, the City's Mayor addressed the group. Mayor Pickard's opening address set the tone of the forum and enthused the young people. The Mayor shared with the audience that the City of Joondalup wants to recognise and communicate with young people, and that as young citizens, they have a role and a right to have a say about issues that will affect them.

Directly following the Mayor's address, question one and two were carried out, with ten minutes allocated to each. These questions aimed to determine young peoples' perception and knowledge of Local Government and how the function of Local Government impact upon them. For each question, time was allocated for each table to have individual discussions and then share their answers with the group.

Representatives from the City of Joondalup delivered a presentation on the roles and responsibilities of Local Government and what that meant to young people. Using examples, young people became informed about the function and scope of the City of Joondalup.

With this information, participants were then presented with question three and four. The young people had the opportunity to record how they felt the 'ideal suburb' would be and what they would want to 'have a say in'.

Prior to the lunch break, each table was asked to pick one issue they most wanted to have a say in and record the answer on a large piece of paper which was then posted on the wall and voted on, on the way to lunch. These topics were then used as a reference point in questions five and six.

Lunch was provided to students at the forum and served between courts two, three and four. Students ate their lunch on the steps of court one which was a suitable location. Thirty-five minutes was allocated for lunch, which was considerably short. There was little time left for the students to socialise and partake in structured activities run by Craigie Leisure Centre after the students had eaten their lunch.

Following discussions regarding the final two questions five and six, Equipe industries delivered a motivational presentation. This was an uplifting way to end the forum with many of the students leaving the forum feeling inspired and motivated.

### **MC, Rover and Scribe**

Abe van Hatch and Jo Cinquina from the Youth Forum Working Group worked together to create an uplifting and relaxed atmosphere. Abe performed the MC function for the forum whilst Jo acted as a 'rover' between tables and announcing answers.

A scribe recorded the answers, with the intention of displaying the answers on the projector screen as they were called out. Unfortunately due to technical problems, this was only achieved in the second half of the forum.

The constant background discussion between Abe and Jo coupled with background music was an effective means of creating a lively environment. Although as the evaluation forms reflect, the noise volume was at times too loud making it difficult for the young people to hear each others answers.

### Participants

Invitations to participate in the Youth Forum were sent to each secondary school in the City of Joondalup. Schools were asked to select two students from each year group, with a mixture of male and female students, to be part of the Youth Forum. The City also asked schools to consider a broad range of students - including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, "at risk" students and the more "academic" students - to enable the City to gain input from young people from a variety of backgrounds.

The following 12 schools accepted the invitation to be involved in the Youth Forum:

SCHOOL	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
Belridge Senior ESC High School	2
Belridge Senior High School	9
Duncraig Senior High School	14
Greenwood Senior High School	6
Mater Dei Catholic College	10
St Stephen's School	9
Padbury Senior High School	3
Sacred Heart College	11
St Mark's Anglican Community School	10
Woodvale Senior High School	9
Ocean Reef Senior High School	13
Kinross College	10
Warwick Senior High School	2
COMET	2
<b>TOTAL PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>110</b>

Only three schools declined the invitation to be involved. They were Lake Joondalup Baptist College, Montessori School and Prendiville Catholic College.

### Facilitators

A team of fifteen City officers assisted at the forum. Officers assisted each of the 12 tables of young people by listening, recording feedback and encouraging responses from young people to the series of questions. Their positive attitudes and enthusiasm not only helped to record valuable qualitative data to be used in developing future youth inclusion strategies, but it also helped communicate the message that the City of Joondalup is listening to young people.

All facilitators were briefed on their role for the day prior to the forum and requested to record answers how they were said, and not prompt answers.

The following officers were involved in the forum:

TABLE	FIRST	LAST	DEPARTMENT
1	Madeleine	Jodrell	Community Services
2	Julie	Eaton	Community Services
3	Mark	Bailey	Community Services
4	Annaliese	Cave-Smith	Library Services
5	Regan	Pownall	Community Services
6	Lanie	Pianta	Community Services
7	Mog	Piasecka	Strategic Planning
8	Lynley	Stapleton	Library Services
9	Alise	Selsmark	Community Services
10	Anita	McIntyre	Community Services
11	Trevor	Bly	Community Services
12	Ashwini	Nair	Community Services
Scribe	Melanie	Gordon	Community Services
Coordinator	Clancy	Read	Community Services
	Rebecca	Moore	Library Services

Following the Youth Forum, the team was nominated and awarded the 'Outstanding Team Service Excellence Award' for their contribution towards the Youth Forum.

### Sponsorship

Students involved in the Forum received giveaway bags at the completion of the event in gratitude for their participation. The following organisations contributed to the bags.

ORGANISATION	ITEM DONATED
Edith Cowan University	ECU bags, highlighters, pens, clips
Office for Children and Youth	Novelty large pens, Frisbees, mouse pads
Nandos	Upgrade vouchers, stickers and balloons
British Lolly Shop	100g lolly bags
Wendys	\$1.00 off vouchers
WA Police: Road Safety	Lolly pops, wrist bands, rulers
City of Joondalup	Bags, stress balls, water bottles,
City of Joondalup Financial Counselling	Financial management notebooks (My money, My life)

Information inserted in the bags include:

Craigie Leisure Centre	Flyers: information about their services
Youth Services	Flyers: Anchors Youth Centre, Hiphop and Warwick Drop-in

Other donations used as prizes include:

Grand Cinemas – Movie masters	2 for 1 passes, and free movie passes
City of Joondalup: Libraries	Pens, highlighters, bubbles
Craigie Leisure Centre	Free passes to Teen Cycling

## Analysis of Results

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The following analysis examines a total of 1113 answers to a series of six questions asked of 110 young people at the Youth Forum.

All answers have been recorded 'word for word' as they were written on the answer sheet to ensure answers are represented accurately.

Given the volume of answers, each answer has been grouped into a 'Subject Matter'. For example, the subject matter 'Safety' includes the following answers: 'Creates a safer place', 'Help us feel safe', 'Make public life safer', and 'provides a safer environment'. The holistic subject matter is then ranked according to the number of corresponding answers recorded.

A full analysis, including tables of all answers can be viewed in **Appendix C**.

### ***Question 1: What do you think Local Government (The City of Joondalup) does?***

The above question aimed to gauge the young peoples' perceptions on the function of Local Government, namely, the City of Joondalup. Ten minutes were allocated to this question, in which time 203 answers were recorded. The top ten subjects recorded are displayed below:

<b>Results at a Glance – top 10 subjects</b>	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>
Organise Events	21
Parks/ Environment	15
Road Works	14
Recreation/ Leisure	12
Rubbish Collection/ Recycling	11
Safety/ Security	10
Building Facilities	10
Education	7
Shopping Centres	6
Libraries	5

Of the 203 answers, 11 of 12 tables answered a total of 21 answers referring to the organisation of events. Specific events noted were Joondalup Festival (three answers), Scorcha (one), Battle of the Bands (one) Night Markets (one) and Youth Forums (one). Other events mentioned, not organised by the City of Joondalup include Rock-it and the Rock Eisteddfod.

The second most common answers were those referring to 'Parks/ Environments' with 15 answers from 10 tables, followed by 'Road Works' with 14 answers from nine tables. Answers under 'Road Works' included roads and the maintenance of, car parks and lighting and traffic lights.

There were seven tables that provided 12 answers about 'Recreation/ Leisure', 11 tables each provided a response about 'Rubbish Collection/ Recycling' and ten tables recorded ten answers about 'Safety'.

From the answers received, it can be assumed that the group demonstrated a high level understanding of the roles and responsibilities of local government.

### ***Question 2: How do you think Local Government impacts on young people?***

Responses to the above stated question dropped to 129 from the 203 recorded from the previous question 'What do you think Local Government (The City of Joondalup) does?' This may indicate that whilst young people have a good understanding of the functions of Local Government, young people believe a lower amount of these functions as recorded in Question 1 directly impact them.

A comparison of the top five answers to Question 1 and 2 can be viewed in the table below:

<b>Results at a Glance – comparing Question 1 and Question 2 results</b>		
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Question 1 responses</b>	<b>Question 2 responses</b>
1	Organise Events (21)	Education (15)
2	Parks/ Environment (15)	Recreation/ Leisure (10)
3	Road Works (14)	Safety (10)
4	Recreation/ Leisure (12)	Events (9)
5	Rubbish Collection/ Recycling (11)	Transport (8)

The subject with the most answers to Question 2 was 'Education' with 15 responses, compared to seven responses in Question 1. Half of these answers were general, for example: schools, education and providing schools. Other answers include 'They help us and provide us with education', 'School hours', 'Austudy', and 'School events – swimming pools' which indicates a misperception of the role of Local Government in education.

Although the number of responses relating to 'Recreation/ Leisure' dropped from 12 to ten, between Question 1 and 2, this was the second most recorded answer to 'How do you think Local Government impacts on young people?'

'Safety' also received ten answers, which is the shared second most recorded answer to this question. This indicates that the ten security / safety answers as recorded in Question 1 impact strongly on young people. Some of the responses include: 'Creates a safer place', 'Help us feel safe', 'Make public life safer', 'provides a safer environment', 'Somewhere to go to keep out of trouble' and 'More security – less violence, feel safer both mentally and physically'.

Whilst in Question 1, 'Events' received the highest number of responses (21), only nine answers were recorded in this question: 'How do you think Local Government impacts on young people?' This may indicate the general perception that although Local Government are concerned with the coordination of community events and festivals, there is a lesser impact of this function on young people.

Also dropping in the number of responses from Question 1 to Question 2 is the subject of 'Parks/ Environment'. This subject dropped from being the second most recorded subject in Question 1 with 15 answers to only three answers to how Local Government impacts on young people.

In Question 1, 11 tables each provided a response about 'Rubbish Collection/ Recycling'. However only four answers referring to 'Cleaning' were recorded from this question. They were: 'Cleaning', 'Street sweepers', 'Makes things cleaner', and 'Rubbish bins'. There were no answers regarding recycling, compared to five answers in Question two: 'What do you think Local Government (The City of Joondalup) does?' This indicates that whilst the young people know Local Government is concerned with recycling, none of the young people attending the forum felt it was a matter that impacted upon them.

Subjects with a higher number of responses in Question 2, compared to Question 1, indicating that the matter impacts strongly on them was 'Transport'. The number of responses referring to transport rose to eight from five in Question 1. As per the subject of 'Education', there is a misperception of the actual role of Local Government in the issues of transport as described in the answers to this question.

### ***Question 3: If you lived in the ideal suburb, what would it be like?***

The above question aimed to evoke a range of responses to help understand what factors in the community are important to young people. There were a total of 235 responses recorded. Some of these responses were idealistic, however the most common answers provide a clear understanding of those factors young people believe will create the 'ideal' suburb. The top 5 subjects recorded can be viewed in the table below:

<b>Results at a Glance – top 5 subjects</b>	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>
Activities	31
Transport	21
Clean/ Graffiti Free	19
Facilities	16
Theme Parks	12

Answers categorised under the subject of 'Activities' received 31 responses. A range of activities was recorded for example: 'More clubs and cafes', 'more free concerts and events', 'graffiti walls', 'artist license', 'Lots of things to do', 'Community classes, dance, arts, etc'.

Answers referring to 'Transport' recorded 21 responses. These included: 'new buses – more frequent', 'cheaper taxi', 'buses to Kingsway shopping centre – linking to other major cities', 'trams', 'no traffic', and 'special transportation for seniors'. Other answers referred to the ease of access to 'everything' and to 'get everywhere'.

The third most common subject with 19 answers was those answers regarding 'Clean/ Graffiti' free suburbs. Included in this subject is 'no smoke', 'no pollution', and 'clean air'. In addition to these answers, are nine answers regarding an 'Environmentally Friendly'

suburb. Answers include: 'solar powered scheme', 'small renewable power station', 'carbon neutral', 'self sufficient homes', 'own power & water', and 'naturally powered'.

The fourth most common subject was 'Facilities' with 16 answers. Examples of answers include: 'more facilities', 'BBQ area', 'parks with swings', 'updated facilities modern & Funky, tennis courts', 'swimming pools', 'more footy goals/ sports facilities', 'gyms, netball/ basketball courts' and 'golf course'.

#### **Question 4: What would you want to have a say in?**

The five most common responses to the above stated question were:

<b>Results at a Glance – top 5 subjects</b>	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>
Education	35
Events/ Youth Activities <i>plus</i> Music related responses	26 <i>plus</i> 11
Planning & infrastructure decisions	22
Shopping Centres	12
Communication	10

Answers under 'Education' include a broad range of responses, most of which Local Government does not have the power to make decisions on, however does have the ability to advocate on behalf of young people. From the results, the main education topics young people wish to have a say in are subjects / curriculum, uniforms, homework, school hours, and general choices and decisions about the happenings of the school for example programs, lockers, canteen and transport.

Two responses referred to alternate education, stating the desire for 'more courses for Young People, more education facilities other than school' and 'more tutoring programs out of school'. Other responses suggest the input of a 'school liaison officer – selection of Youth programs in schools' and 'education in schools on Youth Events & Local Government'.

The second most recorded answer was concerned with 'Youth Activities/ Events'. Although there were 26 responses referring to 'Youth Activities/ Events' only five responses indicated exactly what they want to have a say in. Those responses are:

- Selecting subjects & topics for Youth
- Family events – how they are run
- What/when & who plays at festivals
- What competitions are run
- When youth concerts occur

In addition to the 26 answers referring to 'Youth Activities/ Events', 11 answers related to music. Five of these states that the young people wish to have a say in what bands play at concerts.

The third most recorded answers were those referring to 'Planning & infrastructure decisions' with 22 responses. Some of the main responses include: parks, recreational

facilities, skate parks, new developments and pathways. One table of young people stated they would like to have a say in the current Ocean Reef Marina project.

Answers regarding 'Shopping Centres' was recorded 12 times, half of which refer to trading hours. Others include location of shops and retail store selection. One table responded that they would like to have a say in 'Physical & Verbal abuse in public places like shops'.

The fifth most recorded answer referred to 'Communication' with ten answers. The young people responded that they would like to have a say in the following communication media:

- Open forums for all
- Small forums
- Website
- Internet forums
- City of Joondalup Youth Advisory Council
- Youth Advisory website Forums
- Inserts in normal COJ paper
- Questionnaires

This is a positive response indicating that young people are interested in 'having a say' about issues that affect them. In addition, one table responded that they would like to have a say in 'creating awareness in public places about what kids want'

### Further Discussion

Following a group discussion of the answers received from this question, each table were asked to choose one topic they felt most strongly about wanting to have a say in. These topics were then posted on the wall and voted on. A full list of the topics and corresponding votes are below:

Results at a Glance – chosen subjects and vote results		
Rank	Subject	Votes
1	The minimum wage – what young people get paid	63
2	Personalising and customising educational choices	54
3	What Local Government spends money on	34
4	Music – what bands play, music development	31
5	Involvement in youth activities - opportunities for young people to meet young people	30
6	The way we live day to day – laws, crime prevention, safety	23
7	Transport - routes and their times, extension of CAT buses	18
8	Media Entertainment – youth radio station, youth TV show on Channel 3	17
9	Preservation of indigenous culture, history and environment	11
10	Shop development	8
11	The theme of festivals	8
12	Drug and alcohol – the attitude in the community, responsibilities, safe environments	8

From these topics and ranking, four broad subject matters were chosen to be a basis for the following two questions: 'How could you communicate with the City of Joondalup?' and 'How could the City of Joondalup communicate with you?' Each subject was carefully chosen to evoke a range of communication strategies to subjects with different communication needs. These subjects were:



- *Advocacy*: this subject was chosen as an alternative to the most voted topic 'Education'. It was also explained to the young people that even though Local Government cannot make decisions regarding education choices and many of the items recorded in previous questions, the City of Joondalup *can* advocate on behalf of young people.
- *Youth issues*: although this was not a direct topic voted upon, this subject was chosen to broaden the communication strategies answered in the following questions 5 and 6, as this subject would require different communication strategies.
- *Budget (how Local Government money gets spent)*
- *Events/ Activities/ Programs*: This subject aimed to encompass topics 4, 5 and 11 from the above list.

### **Question 5: How can you communicate with the City of Joondalup?**

Participants were asked to consider the topics of 'Advocacy', 'Youth Issues', 'Budget' and 'Events/ Activities/ Programs' when answering both the above stated question and Question 6. The top ten subjects recorded are displayed below:

<b>Results at a Glance – top 10 subjects</b>	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>
Media	20
Online	14
Letters	11
Email	10
Phone	10
In Person	10
Council Meetings	9
Through Schools	8
Petitions	8
Youth Forums	7

The most frequent response to 'How can you communicate with the City of Joondalup?' was through the 'Media' with 20 of a total 165 responses. Some of these responses were broad, for example 'radio' 'commercials' and 'paper', however there are also specific responses referring to writing a letter to the newspaper, editor or opinion column in the Joondalup Times.

Online communication strategies (not including email) received 14 responses with 'Websites' recorded six times, 'Myspace' four times, and MSN, Blogs and online forums three times each.

The more conventional form of communication, 'letter writing' received 11 answers over 'emailing' that received ten answers. 'Phone' and 'In person' received ten answers each.

Also mentioned as strategies to communicate with the City of Joondalup were 'Council Meetings' (Nine responses), 'through schools' (eight), 'Petitions' (eight) and 'Youth Forums' (seven).

### **Question 6: How can the City of Joondalup communicate with you?**

In this question, students were asked how the *City of Joondalup* could communicate with young people. The top 11 subjects recorded are displayed below:

<b>Results at a Glance – top 10 subjects</b>	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>
Media	30
Through schools	16
Online	16
Pamphlets/ flyers	14
Community Events	8
In person	6
SMS (text messages)	4
Forums	4
Letters	4
Advertising where Young People frequent	4
Telephone	4

The most frequent subject, with 30 of a total 146 responses was through the media spread evenly between radio, TV, magazines and newspapers.

An equal amount of responses (16) were recorded for the subjects of 'Through Schools' and 'Online'. Specific means of communication through schools includes daily notices, school assemblies, chaplains in schools, and by sending City of Joondalup representatives and/ or youth workers to talk with students. Means of communicating online recorded include 'Myspace' (four), Blogs (one) and through websites.

'Pamphlet/ Flyers', also including posters, brochures and banners recorded 14 answers followed by 'Community Events' with 8 responses. Specific answers regarding community events include through 'get togethers', 'musical events', 'public get together', and 'tie communication in with something fun'.

*A full analysis of the answers recorded from these six questions, including tables of all answers can be viewed in **Appendix C**.*

## Youth Forum Evaluation

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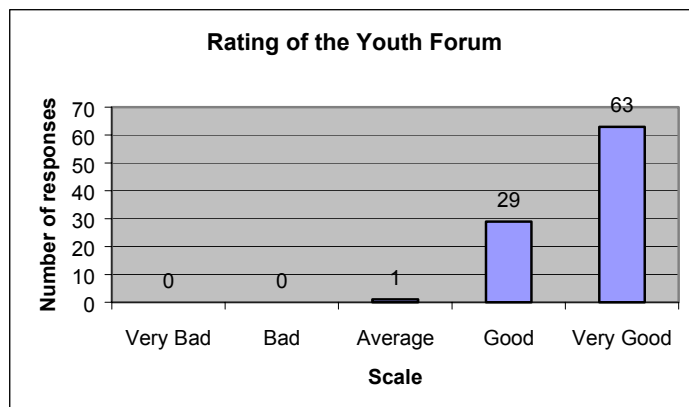
### ***Participant Feedback***

At the completion of the Speak Out Youth Forum, participants were requested to complete an evaluation form.

Of the 110 participants attending the forum, 96 participants completed the evaluation form. This equates to 87% of the total participants.

A full report on the participants' evaluation can be viewed in **Attachment D**. The following provides a summary of the answers to each question.

#### **Question 1: Overall, how would you rate the forum?**



#### **Question 2: Please List 3 things you liked best about the forum**

A total of 256 responses were recorded for this question. 2 respondents did not answer this question. The majority of responses (64) to this question referred to the motivational presentation by Equip Industries, 'Everyday Hero'. 39 responses referred to being able to have a say at the forum as what they liked best. 35 responses indicated they liked the MCs and speakers the best about the forum and 34 responses wrote answers about specific items relating to the event format. These include group work and the questions.

#### **Question 3: Please list 3 things you did NOT like about the forum**

A total of 93 responses were recorded for this question. 36 participants did not respond. The majority of written responses (21) wrote there was nothing that they didn't like about the forum whilst 14 responses to this question referred to the noise level and that they couldn't hear the facilitator due to the loud music and/ or microphones. 12 respondents indicated that they did not like the food or would like more lollies or water. Ten respondents indicated they did not like either the length of the forum or some speeches and nine respondents indicated they didn't like sitting down for so long and not being able to sit with their own schools or mixing with other tables.

**Question 4: Please list ways the forum could be improved**

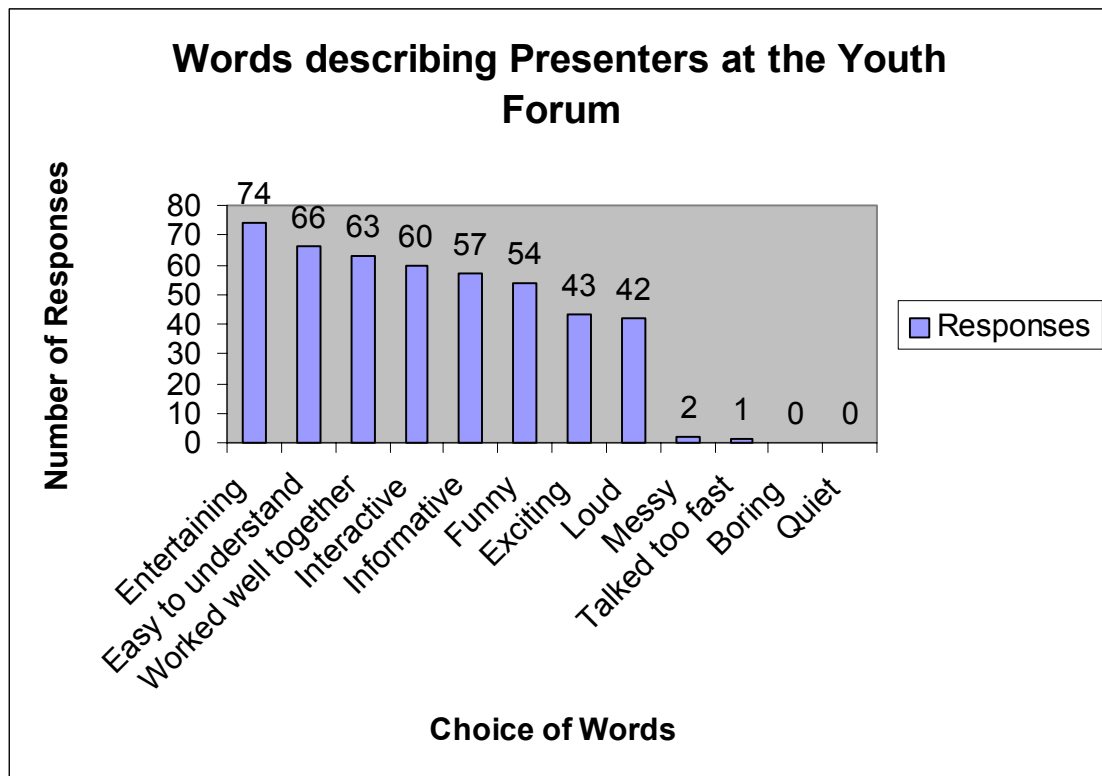
A total of 68 responses were recorded for this question. 36 participants did not respond. 20 participants responded to this question indicating that more activities involving hands on work, interaction with other groups and with the group as a whole would help improve the forum.

13 of the 68 responded positively for example “It is really good” (3 responses) and “Have event more often” (two responses) or stating that “nothing” could be improved.

**Question 5: Please circle words that best describe the presenters of the forum**

Participants were provided with a list to select words from that best describe the presenters of the forum. The results indicate a positive response to the presenters at the forum. One respondent added their own words to the list: Awesome, sweet, unreal - Get them every year!

A breakdown of responses can be viewed in the table below:

**Question 6 (Part 1) Describe how the information was presented to you**

Participants were able to describe how the information was presented to them by circling one of three statements:

- I understood everything
- I understood some of it
- I didn't understand much

79 respondents, 89% of the sample size that responded to the question, circled 'I understood everything' with one respondent indicating that this was “done well”

**Question 6 (Part 2) Describe how the information was presented to you (2)**

In the second part to this question, participants were able to describe how the information was presented to them by circling one of three statements:

- I can use most of this info
- I can use some of the info
- I cannot use any of the info

52 respondents, 58.5% of the sample size responded to the question, circled 'I can use *most* of this info', followed by 36 respondents, 40.5% of the sample size responded to the question, circled 'I can use *some* of the info'

**Question 6 (Part 3) Describe how the information was presented to you (3)**

In the third part to this question, participants were able to describe how the information was presented to them by circling one of three statements:

- This info is very important for a young person like me
- This info is kind of important for a young person like me
- This info is not very important for a young person like me

70 respondents, 80% of the sample size that responded to the question, circled 'This info is very important for a young person like me', followed by 17 respondents, 19% of the sample size that responded to the question, circled 'This info is kind of important for a young person like me'

**Question 7: Is there anything you have learned in this forum that you will use in the future? What is it and how will you use it?**

This open-ended question received 54 responses. 94.5% of these responses were positive. Only three responses were negative. The responses to these questions could be categorised by the following headings:

***Answers indicating how much the young person learned:***

- 11 of the 54 respondents answered this question with 'A lot', heaps, or everything. Two of these respondents answered 'Everything was so informational and helpful' and 'Everything because I can use it in day to day life, and in the future'
- Three respondents answered negatively: 'Probably not', 'Not really' and 'I didn't really learn much'

***Emotive Answers:***

These seven responses are emotive in nature and indicated a sense of enhanced importance. Answers include:

- "That I'm important and worthwhile to society"
- "That your voice counts, no matter how small and insignificant your voice sounds"
- "I am useful"
- "Yes, that if I think, I can do I can. There will always be someone there to listen"
- "The fact that I can achieve anything"
- "To treat others equally. We are all equal and deserve to be treated with respect"
- "No matter who you are, you are special"

*Call to action:*

Seven respondents indicated some type of 'Call to Action' to either make a change or to voice their opinion through their response. Responses include:

- 'TAKE ACTION'
- "How to be more pro-active"
- "Yes, to change things"
- "To speak out if I think something needs to be changed"
- "How to achieve more in life"
- "Yes, to always treat others right, and take chances and risks to make a change"
- "There are so many ways for youth to voice their opinion, There are lots of people like me that want to make a difference, but don't know how"

*Answers directly referring to Local Government:*

14 of the 54 respondents answered this question referring to Local Government. All responses of this nature were positive.

Three respondents answered simply with "Local Governments", "About Local Government Issues" and "How our info is used in everyday life".

Three respondents extended their response about Local Government. These answers include:

- "I have learned that the Government really does care a lot about young people and their thoughts, and also that many other people have the same thoughts/ ideas as me. :-)"
- "This will help me understand how our community works and how it provides services for the public"
- "I have learned things about the City of Joondalup Council and found out who the Mayor was! I have also learned to be more tolerant towards other people"

Five respondents indicated that they learned about communicating with and how to communicate with Local Government.

One respondent learned about career options in Local Government stating: "Learned that jobs are involved in community services and Local Government. A good career option for myself"

Two respondents referred to communication strategies with the City of Joondalup stating: "The email to put my ideas to the Joondalup Council", referring to the email she placed on the bottom of the page, and "If there is a website I would use it and contribute ideas"

*Answers directly related to the Everyday Hero Presentation:*

12 of the 54 respondents answered this question referring directly to the Everyday Hero Presentation. Six of the respondents answered with a few word answers including "Everyday Hero" and "Anyone can be a hero" "Being an Everyday Hero"

Extended answers include:

- "Yes, the Heroes. I would like to try and be a role model"
- "Yes - Jase and his motivational talk - help me live better and get involved"
- "The guy who spoke last was really inspiring"
- "Take action on getting info out to young children" and
- "Not to take things for granted"

**Question 8: if you would like to be involved in the future, please give your details**  
52 respondents, 54% indicated they would like to be involved in the future by leaving their contact details.

A full report on the participants' evaluation can be viewed in **Attachment D**.

### ***Facilitator Feedback***

Each of the 13 facilitators that assisted on the day of the forum were sent an email requesting feedback. Three questions were asked, they were:

- What worked well?
- What didn't work so well?
- Any additional comments?

Seven facilitators provided feedback; their comments are listed below categorised by subject matter.

#### **What Worked Well?**

Questions Used in the Forum:

- Discussion Questions
- Relevant questions for the young people to answer
- The questions asked provided the young people to think more broadly - and in return received some great responses
- Answering questions in table groups, as it wasn't intimidating for young people to talk in small groups

Forum Agenda:

- The format
- The order of service, running sheet.
- Overall program was good with a good energy level for most of the day
- Event duration and time of day

Motivational Presentation:

- The Everyday Hero presentation
- The Equipe presentation was brilliant
- Having a motivational speak present to the group at the end of the forum

MC and Rover:

- Abe & Jo roving
- Student interaction with the roving questions. Students related to the presenters & vice versa
- It was excellent when the rovers visited the tables, asked directly for ideas, provided positive feedback when one of the young 'uns gave them an idea and then noted those ideas on their pads. It was a great way of collecting AND validating ideas.

Organisation:

- Fabulous organisation. You, and your helpers, had everything covered. From the nametags, table settings & goodie bags - well done.

- Organisation of the event including pre-planning, orientation for staff assisting, time management on the day - well done

Location:

- The venue
- Venue was good - lots of space

Distribution of young people:

- Mixing up the schools on each table
- The diverse range of students and mixing them up

Facilitators:

- Having a facilitator on each table
- Number of facilitators/ staff

Involvement of the Councillors:

- Lunchtime chats
- Providing opportunities for the Mayor, Councillors, CEO and Management to get involved with our local young people and hear what they have to say

Other comments on what worked well include:

- Most members of the team including Library staff assisting with the facilitating and set up and pack down
- Clancy being the facilitator of the forum
- Catering for the event.
- Explanation of what local government does by Mark and Clancy
- Encouraging students to participate physically (hand shake exercise, writing on documents)
- The music choice and young presenters
- Placing teachers on a separate table

### **What didn't work so well?**

The unanimous response to this question was the noise levels in the room during discussion time. Facilitator comments regarding this include:

- Having music and the MC's chatting in the back ground when the groups are responding to questions/brainstorming
- Roving microphones a great idea, as well as discussion in between, but was difficult to hear students at the other end of the table. (this probably more with acoustics of the room)
- Noise levels - found it very difficult to hear what people were saying and the quieter participants were not comfortable shouting out their ideas - particularly as most of them had never met before and were a bit shy.
- Could cheerfully have murdered the 'youth rovers' as they contributed significantly to the noise levels and also provided the answers (yes I know it was to stimulate discussion!) for the young 'uns. People on the table needed time to think first. If discussion wasn't happening on the tables it would have been good to use the rovers at that point.
- Abe & Jo way to loud very hard to hear students around table



- The volume of the music made it difficult to hear, there could have been a few more minutes to answer the questions.

Other comments on what didn't work so well include:

- Table size maybe slightly smaller (I realise this is dependent upon no. of facilitators also)
- After lunch question quite difficult to get momentum going again - perhaps a small motivational item first, then the questions.
- A few of the young people at my table got really tired with about 2 questions still to answer. Maybe putting the equippe presentation in the middle before answering the last couple of questions would have been useful, but I understand that this is not necessarily practical.
- Young people suggested they were quite hungry before lunch as they missed their morning tea. So perhaps provide more snacks on the tables, or have morning tea, or have lunch earlier?
- Explanation of council functions could have had simple visual representation (PPP) that would have helped explain the structure and different areas. Fact sheet to take away

#### **Additional Comments:**

"Excellent day and I was impressed with the student interaction  
Am glad that I volunteered as was a chance to get to know you all a bit better (and those in our community). If you need help in the future I would be happy to volunteer."

"Well done! Would suggest that the notes taken by the rovers in response to the key questions will provide the best qualitative information. When the report comes out, the young 'uns will probably remember who said what on their tables and support the outcomes of the workshop. Suggest that the report is circulated to a number of participants for validation before finalising."

"Brilliant job Clancy! Such a useful forum! :-)"

"AWESOME JOB, YOU SHOULD BE VERY PLEASED WITH YOURSELF!!!!!!"

"Fantastic, moving, optimistic experience and the students were surprisingly forthcoming with their views and ideas. Well done Clancy, you have made a little piece of history!"

#### ***Suggestions to improve the Forum:***

The following suggestions are based on feedback received from participants and facilitators:

- Reduce the volume of background music and microphones
- Provide morning tea for participants upon arrival, as school students would have missed recess to attend the forum at 11.00am
- Provide a vegetarian option for lunch
- Ensure sufficient lollies and mints are on tables at all times
- Spread tables to allow for more space

- Allow more time for lunch
- Use visual tools for presentations; a generic educational video or slides could be produced
- Use the Youth Forum concept for future consultation, annually

## Recommendations

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The Youth Forum was implemented as a consultation strategy to evaluate means of engaging with young people as an alternative to the disbanded Youth Advisory Council. The following recommendations are based on the analysis of outcomes of the Forum.

### **Recommendation 1:**

Increase awareness amongst youth aged 12 – 17 years regarding the functions of Local Government and their impact on young people within the City of Joondalup

#### **Recommended Strategies:**

- Presentations in school classes and at assemblies
- Involvement in school Expos
- Youth forums
- Information provision through media outlined in Recommendation 2
- Information provision in the Youth Notebook and other youth magazines/ material produced
- Youth attendance at a Council meetings
- Tours for students to Council Chambers

**Rationale:** Answers received at the Youth Forum to the questions: ‘what do you think Local Government (the City of Joondalup) does, and how do you think Local Government impacts on young people indicate that youth have a good understanding of the function of Local Government, particularly those functions that are ‘visible’ in the community; for example community events, rubbish collection, parks and leisure centres. There are however misperceptions about what role Local Government has concerning topics such as education, transport, and other state and federal matters. Evidence also suggests that young people are less aware of how Local Government functions impact upon them.

Increasing the awareness of the function of Local Government would enable young people to become informed citizens and encourage them to become active in the community and in the decision making processes of the City.

### **Recommendation 2:**

Utilise technology to develop and maintain contemporary, youth appealing communications with young people

#### **Recommended Strategies:**

- Develop a modern, non corporate style youth website that is updated regularly
- Provide online forums for young people to comment on issues

- Set up a Youth Services Myspace to promote services undertaken by the City and to develop an online network of young people
- Set up a youth friendly Mayor's Myspace
- Set up a designated youth email for all incoming queries e.g. Youth@joondalup.wa.gov.au
- Advertise youth events and activities through You Tube and other current popular websites
- Develop a youth register and distribute information through the network via SMS and email
- Deliver information to young people using interactive audio visual medium

**Rationale:** Young people at the Youth Forum indicated that they would be receptive to engaging in online communication including youth websites, online forums and 'Myspace' sites. They also indicated that further use of interactive and audiovisual devices would help improve the forum.

Using technology when communicating with young people will help the City communicate in a way youth will be interested and respond to, and in turn build interest levels and involvement in the City's processes.

Furthermore, given the increase in Internet use amongst young people and schools, communicating through the Internet would prove an effective means of reaching young people on a large scale.

Examples of effective Local Government youth websites include:

<http://www.generate.qld.gov.au/> and <http://www.visible-ink.org/>

### **Recommendation 3:**

Further develop Local Government representation and involvement in secondary schools

### **Recommended Strategies:**

- Develop relationships with School Chaplains
- Attend and deliver talks at school assemblies
- Deliver talks in school classes
- Invite students to attend a council meeting in Local Government week
- Work collaboratively with the City's School Liaison Officer
- Hold annual Youth Forums involving school students
- Establish targeted contacts within schools to work with. E.g. The Scene: English Classes for articles, Battle of the Bands: Art class for poster competitions
- Attend the yearly regional Principals and pastoral care meetings
- Engage with school Principals by inviting them to the City of Joondalup every six months
- Involve the Mayor in leadership talks in schools
- Attend Interagency Truancy group meetings and maintain links with other school related groups

**Rationale:** The outcomes of the forum indicate young people consider that communication through schools would be an effective means of reaching young people.

Representation in schools will assist in promoting youth interest in Local Government, and as one young person attending the forum indicated, help promote Local Government as a career choice for the future. In addition, schools are an effective means of communicating to youth on a large scale to a captive audience.

**Recommendation 4:**

Increase the level of information regarding policy reforms and legislation relevant to young people; provide a forum for comment on these matters; and advocate on behalf of young people for improvement and/ or change.

**Recommended Strategies:**

- Constantly monitor youth related matters in the external environment
- Inform young people of current issues in a youth friendly manner as outlined in Recommendation 2
- Provide ability for comment on matters through email and online forums
- Communicate youth feedback to involved parties
- Maintain active working relationship with the Office for Youth and the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia

**Rationale:** There were many subjects raised at the Youth Forum that were outside the realm of Local Government function. Examples include topics relating to education, transport and the minimum wage. The minimum wage, and personalising and customising educational choices were the top two nominated subjects that young people most wanted to have a say in.

Keeping young people informed of these and other topics that affect them and providing the forum for young people to have a voice and opinion will bring many advantages to youth and to the City. It will raise awareness of issues that affect young people and provide a channel of communication from local level, through to state and federal government for youth to be able to voice their opinion. The City of Joondalup will be able to better advocate on behalf of young people to state government and peak organisations when they are more informed and there is an established channel of communication.

**Recommendation 5:**

Ensure all community consultation undertaken by the City and all Council committees are open and available for young people to attend, or make comment on; and include channels of communication to ensure young people are aware of and can have access to such information

**Recommended Strategies:**

- Develop guidelines for City of Joondalup Business units to include young people in consultation
- Internal advocacy for the inclusion of young people in consultation and decision making processes
- Develop or insert youth inclusion strategies into policies relating to consultation

- Ensure internal planning is undertaken with young people in mind

**Rationale:** Outcomes from the forum indicate that young people want to be involved in Local Government processes and decisions. Their interests move beyond events, and youth activities to include environmental, planning and infrastructure, and budget issues. Young people at the forum indicated that given the opportunity, they would have a say through a range of communication media for example Internet forums, Website, forums, and questionnaires.

#### **Recommendations 6:**

Advocate for young people to be invited to participate in external community organisations' committees and working groups

#### **Recommended Strategies:**

- Make connection with youth related working groups
- Advocate youth participation and assist in gaining youth participation in these working groups

**Rationale:** In addition to recommendation 5, the City should also advocate on behalf of young people to be included in community organisations' committees and working groups external to the City's functions.

#### **Recommendation 7:**

To continue to deliver services that allow young people to engage in activities and programs

#### **Recommended Strategies:**

- Address current needs of young people
- Address inability to promote services due to excess demand for some programs.
- Develop pre-existing youth projects and programs to meet current needs. These include:
  - Anchors Youthlink
  - Warwick Drop-in
  - Free Hip Hop workshops
  - Young Woman's programs
  - Skate/ BMX competitions
  - Battle of the Bands
  - SCHORCHA music festival
  - Youth Area at Joondalup Festival
  - Mobile Youth Services
  - Youth Action Programs (Holiday programs)
  - Youth and public space program including Youth Outreach and Youth Liaison Program

**Rationale:** Young people attending the forum indicated that community activities and events are the most important factor in what defines an 'ideal suburb'. Continuing to deliver programs implemented by the City and increasing the ability for these services to meet demand will increase the young persons' sense of belonging and participation in their community.

## Media Coverage and Images

The Youth Forum was included in the Mayors Column in the Joondalup Times on Thursday March 8<sup>th</sup> 2007 and Thursday April 5<sup>th</sup> 2007. The following photo accompanied the April article:



A media release, which can be viewed in Appendix A was distributed on the 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2007. The article below appeared in the Joondalup Times on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007.



An article also appeared in the April edition of the City of Joondalup's City Chat.

Video and photographic services were employed for the Youth Forum, producing a professional video and collection of images of the Forum proceedings.

A selection of these images can be viewed on the following pages.







MC and Youth Forum Working Group youth representative: Abe van Hatch



Young people engage in an 'Ice breaker' welcome activity



A Youth Forum participant is eager to have his say in the discussion



His Worship the Mayor Troy Pickard addresses youth at the Forum



Rover and Youth Forum Working Group Youth representative: Jo Cinquina

## City of Joondalup Speak Out Youth Forum, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2007



Councillor Albert Jacob joins the discussion with Forum participants



Students vote on the issues they most want to have a say in



Mayor Troy Pickard joins a group of young people for lunch and a chat



City of Joondalup Youth Services Officers Mark Bailey and Clancy Read discuss the roles and responsibilities of Local Government



Nine young people discuss a series of six questions with facilitator Lanie Pianta, Community Development Officer from the City of Joondalup



Youth engage in discussion with table facilitator Lynley Stapelton, Library Service Officer from the City of Joondalup

## **Appendix A – Youth Forum Media Release**

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March 16, 2007

### **Youth Speak Out at City of Joondalup Youth Forum**

Secondary school students were given the chance to ‘have their say’ at the City of Joondalup’s first ‘Speak Out Youth Forum’ recently.

About 117 students from 13 High Schools in the City were given the opportunity to speak out and voice their opinions.

“The forum was an invaluable way to meet and interact with the City’s young people – and most importantly listen to what they had say,” said Mayor Troy Pickard.

Mayor Pickard’s opening address set the tone and enthused the young people. “As young citizens, the City of Joondalup wants to recognise and communicate with you. You have a role and a right to have your say about issues that will affect you,” he told them.

The students took full advantage of the opportunity, identifying issues important to young people, including:

- The minimum wage; what young people get paid
- Personalising and customising educational choices
- What Local Government spends money on, and
- The desire to have more Involvement in youth activities including opportunities for young people to meet young people and specifically what bands play at festivals and fostering music development

“Although not all the issues raised at the forum are under the control of Local Government, we are beginning to get a clearer idea of what is important to young people – areas in which we can act and areas in which we can advocate on behalf of young people,” Mayor Pickard said.

Young people were also invited to suggest strategies of communication between young people and Local Government.



The most popular responses included personal contact with Council or City of Joondalup representatives such as school visits and more forums.

Online strategies were also popular, suggesting communication through online youth forums or MSN chat. In an answer reflecting the younger generation and their increasing use of the Internet, one young person suggested the Mayor have his own 'Myspace'. As a result of this suggestion, the Mayor has now registered his own Myspace and will be launching it in the coming months.

Students from Belridge, Duncraig, Greenwood, Padbury, Ocean Reef, Warwick and Woodvale Senior High Schools, Mater Dei, Sacred Heart and Kinross Colleges, St Mark's Anglican Community School and COMET attended.

The forum was developed by a working group of hardworking local young people including Hannah Walter, Abe van Hatch, Jo Cinquina and Clair Hand with Mayor Pickard, Cr Albert Jacob and City of Joondalup Community Development officers.

Forum feedback was positive with 99% of students rating the forum as 'good' or 'very good'.

"Being able to have a say" was one of the top responses to the question "what did you like best about the forum" Answers included "The fact our opinions have value" and "The opportunity to make a difference".

The forum evoked an unexpected emotive response from some young people in attendance. Participants answered the question 'Is there anything you have learned in this forum that you will use in the future? What is it and how will you use it?' with:

"That I'm important and worthwhile to society", "That your voice can count, no matter how small and insignificant your voice sounds" and "Yes, that if I think, I can do - I can. There will always be someone there to listen"

One young person answered, "I have learned that the Government really does care a lot about young people and their thoughts"

Involvement of the young people was rewarded with an inspiring presentation by motivational speaker Jason Schroeder from 'Equipe Industries' and a participation bag that included a range of giveaways from local businesses.

The Youth Forum is just one part of the Youth Inclusion initiative with strategies being implemented to engage with young people aged 18 – 25 on the same topic in the following months.

Involvement in this initiative by young people in the City of Joondalup will be pivotal in developing future strategies that will give young people the opportunity to provide feedback to council on issues that concern them.

“This forum, coupled with the pending engagement of young people aged 18 to 25, will arm the City with valuable intelligence on how the City can better engage young people to ensure that they have a strong voice in the decision-making forums of our City.” said Mayor Troy Pickard.  
ends