



SPIRIT OF CO-OPERATION

AGREEMENT

2001

SPIRIT OF COOPERATION AGREEMENT

CITY OF WHITTLESEA YOUTH COMMITMENT

The purpose of this agreement is to formalise arrangements between agencies, organisations and businesses supporting the Whittlesea Youth Commitment (WYC).

The specific purpose of the Statement of Agreement is to

1. Confirm the objectives of the Whittlesea Youth Commitment
2. Establish comprehensive communications strategies to involve members of the WYC in achieving those goals and objectives
3. Commit to management and funding arrangements for the WYC for the year 2001
4. Commit to collectively using best endeavours to undertake the proposed work identified in the key elements of the WYC.
5. Commit to identifying organisational accountability within each WYC organisation for achievement of WYC objectives
6. Commit to the privacy principles outlined in this document.

GENERAL CONDITION - AUTONOMY OF MEMBERS

Nothing in the agreement affects the right of any agency, organisations or businesses to participate in any activity including with limitation the carrying out of other projects and the formation of alliances that are unrelated to the WYC.

DURATION OF AGREEMENT

This Statement of Agreement will operate for the year 2001 with a review before March 2002.

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

All parties to the Spirit of Cooperation Agreement agree to the following objectives, key elements, membership and management structure, and financial arrangements.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CITY OF WHITTLESEA YOUTH COMMITMENT

The broad vision of the WYC is to enhance the capacity of young people in the City of Whittlesea to be active, independent citizens. The Commitment will increase the level of community engagement in expanding work and learning opportunities in Whittlesea, in partnership with young people.

In the long term this will be realised by:

- ❖ providing all young people with the opportunity and support to complete Year 12 or its equivalent
- ❖ being flexible about the nature of this equivalence, which will be defined by the needs and aspirations of young people themselves
- ❖ developing new learning, training, employment and further education options for young people to achieve these goals
- ❖ exploring new workplacement, work opportunities, skill development, and community support structures for young people to achieve these goals
- ❖ establishing a school and community based mediating structure that will assist young people, as teenagers and as young adults, to meet their needs in terms of knowledge, learning, the labour market and the transition to adulthood
- ❖ develop and customise the curriculum provision of schools, TAFE and other training providers to better support the aspirations of young people.
- ❖ developing innovative and collaborative arrangements between key providers of employment, education, training and personal support services

OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Goals and measures of progress towards these goals will guide the WYC. These will be incorporated into this Spirit of Cooperation Agreement and will be reflected in the annual plans of each organisation. This is an attempt to provide complete service coverage for young people through collaboration on an ongoing basis

Local Government will promote the development of an overarching Youth Commitment in the municipality and will monitor its progress. The WYC reinforces Council's existing development of integrated opportunities in education, learning and work in Whittlesea.

Schools will gradually evolve into broader learning centres, committed to laying the foundations for lifelong learning for all, enabling teenagers to cross between formal learning, informal learning, workplacement, and employment. Other education and training providers will seek to expand pathways for young people in co-operation with schools.

Employers will be encouraged to develop stronger relationships with schools and other youth agencies, and take responsibility for further skill development and enhanced training of their labour force, developing career paths in conjunction with young people, and contributing to the structures that will deliver this Commitment to young people.

Community support and employment placement agencies will continue to work in co-operation with education and training providers towards developing employment, education,

training and support services which improve access for those most disadvantaged in the labour market.

WYC members will gradually integrate their expertise, knowledge, networks and other resources with others and broker the relationships and services with young people that will enable them to realise the Commitment.

OUTCOMES

As a direct result of the Whittlesea Youth Commitment there will be, over time:

- ❖ improved mobility by young people between school, further education, training and work
- ❖ learning and training environments actively re-engaging disaffected young people
- ❖ improved curriculum, organisational arrangements and support options in schools and TAFE
- ❖ an informed community supporting the objectives of the WYC
- ❖ increased employment opportunities for young people
- ❖ better accessed and distributed part-time employment opportunities for young people while at school and in entry level employment
- ❖ pathways and options that enable casual and temporary work to be transformed into more stable employment where appropriate
- ❖ more comprehensive preparation for stable employment through schools and TAFE and forms of work placement
- ❖ deeper and sustained employer commitment to structured training and workplace learning for younger people
- ❖ strengthened integration of community service, education and employment sectors ensuring clear, seamless and signposted provision of programs and services that meet the needs of young people
- ❖ individual case management, mentoring or other forms of direct support for each young person to enable them to realise their goals in terms of learning, work and citizenship

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE WYC IN THE YEAR 2001

In 2001, WYC members will commit to the following

Goals and measures towards goals

WYC members commit to supporting a process for establishing goals and measures for each sector as part of their commitment to the Five Year Plan, and to measuring their organisation's performance in relation to the goals set.

Transition Brokers

WYC members, particularly schools, will identify extra resources for School Transition Brokers and will collaborate to attract those resources to local schools.

Community Team

Relevant WYC members will support development of a Community Team by including participation in the Community Team in the workplan of appropriate operational staff.

Expanding education and training options to meet the needs of all young people

Currently a range of initiatives exist, including school/industry links, TAFE taster programs, New Apprenticeships, VET in schools programs, prevocational programs mentoring young people and the new Vocational Education and Training Certificate.

- ◆ WYC members will commit to actively expanding these initiatives and creating links between sectors in order to expand opportunities for young people.
- ◆ WYC members will support activities which develop an effective youth voice in the City of Whittlesea, particularly on education and employment issues. This would translate into membership of the Management Committee of the WYC and into initiatives which provide an ongoing forum for feedback on relevant issues.

Expand employment options

Employment options will grow as the City grows. The WYC will actively support initiatives to increase the take-up of young staff by local employers. WYC Organisations will investigate new opportunities so that links between education, training, employment brokers and employers continue to expand for young people.

MEMBERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WYC

The following is proposed for membership and management of the WYC.

1. All who sign the Spirit of Cooperation Agreement are members of the WYC and will join the Hume/Whittlesea Local Learning and Employment Network.
2. The following organisations/sectors/constituencies are stakeholders for the purpose of nominating members of the Management Group for the WYC, provided they are located or are operational in the City of Whittlesea and are members of the WYC.

- Young people
- Schools
- TAFE Institutes
- Employers
- Adult, Community and Further Education
- Community Youth Services
- Local Councillors/Local Government
- Centrelink
- University
- Employment Placement Providers
- Group Training

3. That 'young people' is a constituency but individual membership of the WYC is not necessary in order to nominate for membership of the Management Group.
4. 'Community Youth Services' constituency comprises WYC community agencies offering youth services

5. Each stakeholder/constituency will have one position on the Management Group except for those nominated below.
 - ◆ Whittlesea Business Link will nominate one employer and the Northern Area Consultative Committee will have a nominee.
 - ◆ Schools may have two nominees, at least one of whom is a member of the WYC Community Team and one is a Principal of a WYC member school.
 - ◆ Two position(s) for young people will be available. A Youth Reference Group will be formed during 2001 to advise on issues relevant to the Youth Commitment.

All positions for 2001 will be nominated by stakeholders by April 2001, with the exception of the positions for young people.

All participating organisations will support the Hume/Whittlesea Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) as a major mechanism for achieving the goals of the WYC and will promote ongoing sign up of relevant organisations to the LLEN.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following arrangements are agreed for 2001 .

1. Maintain the current sectoral membership of the Management Group as outlined above until May 2002
2. Involve each constituency in nominating a person for the 2001 Management Committee
3. Management Group members will establish formal mechanisms to engage with their constituencies between management meetings in order to involve a maximum number of organisations, and to secure consensus on issues and strategies
4. Each Management Group member will lead a working group to finalise the Five Year Plan and will convene meeting as necessary to achieve the goals agreed in the Five Year Plan
5. A maximum of six Management Group meetings per year will be held, to reflect the emphasis on active involvement of members between meetings.

The Management Group will:

- ◆ manage the directions set by the WYC members on an annual basis.
- ◆ negotiate on behalf of members of the WYC for funding
- ◆ authorise expenditure of funds.

WYC Member meetings

WYC members will meet three times a year for a report back on progress and to set new directions as necessary. Extra meetings of the members will be called as necessary to discuss issues for which the Management Group needs further endorsement.

Members will keep in touch between meetings through contact with their representative on the Management Committee and through regular editions of Infolink.

TERMINATION OF AND WITHDRAWAL FROM AGREEMENT

Without limitation, members may by written notice to the Management Group, immediately withdraw from this agreement.

VARIATION AND REVIEW OF AGREEMENT

Proposals for variations to this Agreement must be put in writing to the Management Group for consideration by all members.

PRINCIPAL CONTACTS

All WYC members will nominate a person as the principal contact to facilitate communication between all members.



SPIRIT OF CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT

Name (Block Letters) _____

Position _____

Authorised Signatory of _____
(Insert name of agency/organisation/business)

Signature _____

Date _____

Principal Contact Person for the WYC

Name _____

Position _____

Postal Address (inc postcode)

Street Address (if different to postal address)

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

DEFINITIONS

Whittlesea Youth Commitment

Stakeholders in the City of Whittlesea agree to collaborate to improve the social safety net for school leavers and young jobseekers in order to enhance the capacity of young people in the City to be active, independent citizens.

Case Management

This term is used to describe individual support over time for young people to assist with meeting the employment, education and training goals established at the point of exit from school or in discussion with a WYC organisation.

Year 12 or its equivalent

It is the goal of the WYC to encourage development of a range of employment, education and training options for young people beyond the compulsory years of schooling in order to meet diverse needs and interests.

Transition Broker

This role is assigned within schools to a person or a team to ensure that all school leavers, particularly those not completing Year 12, are aware of the employment, education and training options available to them once they leave school, and the support available through community, local Council and government agencies should they need it. Ideally a transition manager or team will follow up early school leavers over the course of a year to assist should there be a problem gaining access to employment and education some time after leaving school.

WYC Community Team

This comprises a staff member from each local WYC school and WYC agencies who are working directly with young people (operational staff). It will include staff in the Jobs Pathway Programme, Centrelink, Kildonan Child and Family Services, Whittlesea Housing, Council youth staff, Job Network, Group Training and any other project staff whose focus is on transition from school to work. The Community Team will, over time, provide opportunities for the full range of agencies to work together to address the needs of particular young people with multiple barriers to employment, education and training. It will identify gaps in services and will propose to WYC agencies and the Management Group ways to improve collaboration and service delivery to provide seamless service to young people.

Education and Employment Passport

This is held by each early school leaver and comprises personal contact details, school history, information which forms the basis of a Resume, and an Action Plan which identifies the employment and education goals of the young person and the people who can assist. As the young person moves between agencies eg Centrelink to Job Network, the Passport assists the person in the agency to move quickly to identify the assistance needed.

APPENDIX A

WHITTLESEA YOUTH COMMITMENT EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION BROKERAGE

Transition Broker at school

On the basis that schools are the key organisation working with young people, then extra support is required at the point of exit in every school. Having a dedicated person ensures accountability for each student making a managed transition and ensures that each young person has the ongoing support needed beyond the time they exit school. The State Government has committed extensive funds to provide Managed Individual Pathways Services to young people leaving State Secondary schools before completing Year 12. The Whittlesea Youth Commitment schools have committed to employing three brokers for twelve months from March 2001.

School support for the Transition Broker/Manager

In 2001 the Transition Brokers will be connected to appropriate structures such as the school's transition team.

WYC Community Team

In reviewing the elements of a good system to support each young person, it is clear that much is already there. We have schools, TAFE, University, Adult Community Education, employers, employment placement providers, the Jobs Pathway Programme, Centrelink, community support agencies and Council youth support staff. Our collective efforts to develop the Youth Commitment have forged new relationships between providers, which can now be expressed as commitment to a Community Team. This Team comprises one staff member in each WYC agency meeting regularly.

During 2000, the Community Team showed that discussion between teachers and other providers can assist individual young people, and program planning in schools and other WYC organisations.

This Agreement commits participating organisations to continuing involvement of operational staff in the Community Team during 2001/2.

Working with young people with multiple barriers to successful transition

As the WYC Community Team develops its professional relationships, there is scope to work collectively to address the needs of individual young people. In this way there is potential to ensure a universal service which has the capacity to focus more intense effort on the needs of people who are now marginalised.

A Common Client Information Form

The Community Team uses a common registration form and a common format for development of an Education and Employment Action Plan to use with each young person. This Plan identifies the steps required to meet goals, and the agencies/people who can assist at each stage.

School Transition Managers and Jobs Pathway staff will undertake much of the assessment work. Community agencies use the form with their clients if employment and education goals were necessary. Employment placement agencies use it with a young person where it is appropriate.

The information form may identify issues which the young person needs to address before an education/employment placement is secured, or which require ongoing support. Any referral for these purposes would be confidential and would meet the privacy principles outlined in the Spirit of Agreement.

Education and Employment Passport

The Action Plan developed is effectively the passport the young person takes to other agencies, along with school and work documents as necessary. The passport facilitates referral by identifying the goals and the agreed plan as the young person presents at a referral agency. As noted above, it need not identify any confidential information.

Participating organisations will commit to continuing to use and develop the Passport as part of the Community Team.

Data collection

One advantage of working as a Community Team is the possibility to capture reliable data on numbers of young people with multiple barriers and the transparency or otherwise of the pathways available to all young people.

This positions the community well for any ongoing service development opportunities. It provides an ongoing method to measure progress towards service improvement and is a platform for change.

Participating organisations commit to continuing to collect data and will participate in the monthly audit of the progress of early school leavers.

Organisational Commitment

The WYC Community Team person, in conjunction with senior staff, have key roles in developing staff understanding of the goals of the WYC. Senior staff have a particular role to ensure up-to-date data input, analysis and feedback within their organisation in relation to WYC performance indicators in order to monitor progress over time.

Participating organisations will commit to a program of staff development which will improve understanding of the goals of the WYC and which will lead a review of staff roles and reporting in order to achieve these goals.

APPENDIX B

INFORMATION PRIVACY PRINCIPLES

Principle 1

Purpose of Collection of Personal Information

Limits the information which can be collected by WYC members to that which is relevant to a function or activity of the member in relation to the WYC. The onus is placed on the collector to justify why certain information is being collected.

Principle 2

Source of Personal Information

Ensures that the individual maintains control over who their personal details are given to by stating that information should only be collected from the individual concerned (except in certain circumstances).

Principle 3

Providing Notification when Personal Information is Collected

Ensures that individuals are aware of what their information will be used for, who will have access to it and their own rights of access. This assists in achieving an appropriate level of openness about how an individual's information is handled.

Principle 4

Manner of Collection of Personal Information

Prevents undue pressure or coercion being placed on the individual when information is being collected, and ensures that staff are sensitive to the particular circumstances when information is collected.

Principle 5

Storage, Security and Transmission of Personal Information

Prevents other individuals and organisations from obtaining access to personal information when they are not authorised to. Without adequate security safeguards, there is the risk that personal information could be misused or inappropriately disclosed.

Principle 6

Maintaining a Policy of Openness

Makes explicit the requirement for personal information to be handled in an open and accountable manner.

Principle 7
Right of Access to Personal Information

Ensures that the individual is able to find out what information the WYC member holds about them.

Principle 8
Correction and Accuracy of Personal Information

Permits individuals to seek correction of information held about them where they believe it is incorrect. There is an onus on the WYC member to keep any information they hold up-to-date, accurate, complete and not misleading. This ensures that all decisions are based on information which is both current and correct.

Principle 9
Retention and Disposal of Personal Information

Places an obligation on the WYC member to retain information where this is required, and to make sure information is disposed in a secure manner when it is no longer required. This prevents any possible future misuse of information.

Principle 10
Limits on Use and Disclosure of Personal Information

Places limits on the extent to which information can be used within the WYC organisation, and also on the circumstances in which information can be released to other organisations.

Principle 11
Unique Identifiers

Provides guidance on assigning and using unique identifiers to ensure they are used in an appropriate manner.

Principle 12
Compliance Audits

Assesses the extent to which the WYC member is complying with the Information Privacy Principles.