

**DRAFT YOUTH STRATEGY 2022-2026**  
**SUBMISSION SUMMARY**

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
1.	Was well worded and comprehensive	No change recommended. Submitter in full support of the draft Youth Strategy.
2.	<p>1. p13 Focus Area 1.2 Physical Health Physical activity, healthy food, recreation and sport are all mentioned but physical health is much more than this.</p> <p>Hygiene and disease prevention is missing from the list (eg. skin health, urinary health, oral hygiene, sleep, basic education of anatomy of the body).</p> <p>2. p14 Focus Area Sexual Health 'empowers young people to make INFORMED or EDUCATED choices' could be less judgemental than 'positive choices'.</p> <p>3. The words Sexually Transmitted Diseases are used but the abbreviation in brackets does not match (STI's)</p>	<p>The following changes are recommended based on the three suggestions made by the submitted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No change recommended. Hygiene and disease prevention such as skin health, urinary health, oral hygiene, sleep, basic education of anatomy of the body fall outside the scope of Council delivery and would be delivered in other school and community health settings. Physical activity and healthy eating (as listed under Physical health, pg.13) support chronic disease prevention and fall within the scope of Council delivery.</li> <li>2. Recommend slight wording change (pg. 14) from <i>'empowers young people to make positive choices'</i> to <i>'empowers young people to make informed choices'</i>.</li> <li>3. Recommend to change wording from <i>'Sexually Transmitted Diseases'</i> to <i>'Sexually Transmitted Infections'</i> (pg. 14)</li> </ol>
3.	The survey didn't seem to include anything around intergenerational relationships and how these can benefit both younger and older persons.	Following consultation with Youth Council on this, Officers are recommending no changes to the draft Youth Strategy and recommend intergenerational opportunities be considered as part of the development of annual implementation plans.

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
	<p>Promoting connections between generations has so many positive outcomes, it would be good to see some visibility of this in the Youth Strategy.</p> <p>Note, I live and work in Nillumbik but the system only allowed one tick box to be selected</p>	
4.	No response	No changes to Strategy recommended.
5.	A sexual health centre would be great, or an LGBTQ centre.	<p>No changes to Strategy recommended.</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest a need over the next four years for a sexual health centre or LGBTIQ centre, however there is an opportunity to co-locate relevant services through the development of a Youth Hub in Nillumbik.</p> <p>Victorian Pride Centre, located in St Kilda, is the first purpose-built centre for Australia's LGBTIQ+ communities and is home to practical and supportive services for visitors from across Australia, and beyond. This information is promoted on Nillumbik Youth's website via the 'Need help' services directory.</p>
6. Headspace Greensborough	<p>I am the Service Manager for headspace Greensborough and headspace Plenty Valley which is led by Mind Australia. In our 5+ years of operation in the north east region of Melbourne we have supported almost 5,000 young people and their families and carers, addressing their needs and concerns relating to anxiety, depression, family discord, school related stress or bullying, problematic substance use, sexual orientation, gender identity and more.</p> <p>Our centre whole heartedly supports the Draft Youth Strategy developed by the Nillumbik Council Youth Development team and would like to acknowledge the value in the consultation that has occurred with young people throughout the community. The voices of young people have</p>	<p>No changes to Strategy recommended. Submitter in full support of the draft Youth Strategy.</p> <p>Council encouraged to consider increased funding opportunities to support youth programs, outreach and support services and a Youth hub as part of development of annual implementation plans.</p>

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
	<p>been heard and it is so valuable to have their voices heard throughout this strategy.</p> <p>COVID19 and the disruption to the lives of us all has been significant and has greatly impacted upon the Youth of our community. In the coming years our Youth need to be supported to restore their hope as they begin to re-engage in covid-normal life. The strategies documented in this strategy will greatly support young people in this process.</p> <p>Our centre would like to advocate specifically for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased funding for the Youth Development team - so that youth led projects and consultation can continue</li> <li>2. Provision of Youth outreach and individual short to medium term support for young people in Nillumbik - to support young people to overcome the challenges they may face</li> <li>3. Investment into a Youth Hub for Nillumbik - so that young people have a safe space they can reach out to for additional support and connection</li> </ol> <p>These 3 focus points will ensure that as a community we can support the young people residing in Nillumbik.</p> <p>headspace Greensborough and Plenty Valley look forward to the final outcomes of this Youth Strategy and the ability to collaborate and work together with council to support young people.</p>	
7.	<p>I feel this is an under resourced and major area of need for the future of the community.</p> <p>To respond the council need to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase EFT funding for the Youth Development team</li> <li>2. Need for Youth outreach and individual short to medium term support for young people in Nillumbik</li> <li>3. Investment into a Youth Hub for Nillumbik</li> </ol>	<p>No changes to Strategy recommended. Submitter in full support of the draft Youth Strategy.</p> <p>Council encouraged to consider increased funding opportunities to support youth programs, outreach and support services and a Youth hub as part of development of annual implementation plans.</p>

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
8.	no it looks good	No changes to Strategy recommended. Submitter in full support of the draft Youth Strategy.
9.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Solid structure and clear message.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Are you planning to develop a strategy on a page with key concepts like vision, purpose/role, priorities and values/beliefs?</b> This can act as an executive summary and be a good way to provide a strategy snapshot to people who won't read the full strategy.... noting that many people don't read full strategies (which is hard for me to write as a strategist!)</li> <li>3. <b>Should it be Youth Council has rather than Youth Council have?</b> Normally entities are singular rather than plural e.g. Spark has, Council has.</li> <li>4. <b>Love the infographic on page 11!</b></li> <li>5. <b>Healthy and well – “empowered to take action on their own education” took me by surprise here.</b> What's the thinking with including the part about education in the objective statement? Is this about health and wellbeing education or education in general? If the former, might be worth making that clear. Alternatively, it might be cleaner and clearer to keep education in equipped and employed.</li> <li>6. <b>Empowered and engaged – brilliant, really like this one and great quotes in this section.</b></li> <li>7. <b>Access to safe spaces and places – wondering if the objective statement overlaps a bit with welcomed and connected.</b> Is it worth noting in the objective statement that it is about safe, inclusive and relevant spaces and places for young people? I also wonder if the focus area about bullying might fit more logically/naturally under welcomed and connected.</li> <li>8. <b>Will this strategy help guide Council in what it does and doesn't do?</b> This is a key way that we define good strategy at Spark – it really helps with decision-making, both when to say yes and when to</li> </ol>	<p>In response to the recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No change required</li> <li>2. Recommend one page summary be provided to Council alongside Youth Strategy in December for endorsement to support Youth Strategy to include vision, purpose/role, priorities and focus areas.</li> <li>3. Recommend updating wording to include 'Youth Council has' rather than 'Youth Council have' where appropriate.</li> <li>4. No change required</li> <li>5. Recommend slight wording change (pg. 13) from <i>'empowered to take action on their own education'</i> to <i>'empowered to take action on their own health and wellbeing'</i></li> <li>6. No change required</li> <li>7. Recommend wording change (pg. 17) from <i>'Young people live in an inclusive community in which everyone feels safe and included to live, work, study, volunteer or play across Nillumbik'</i> to <i>'Young people have access to safe, inclusive and relevant spaces and places'</i></li> <li>8. No changes recommended. The introduction (pg. 5) states that <i>'This strategy sets out a four-year strategic</i></li> </ol>

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
	<p>say no. We know from our previous work with local government teams that there is a real risk of Council being all things to all people – strategy can be a good way to counter this.</p>	<p><i>commitment to how Council will support and respond to the needs of young people aged 12-25 years of age who live, work, study, volunteer or play in the Nillumbik Shire.'</i></p>
<p>10. Berry Street</p>	<p>As a youth specific homelessness support provider to young people in Nillumbik, and more broadly the northern region, Berry Street's Transitional Youth Support Service strongly endorse the five key priorities identified in the Draft Youth Strategy.</p> <p>In particular we endorse priority 1. Healthy and Well as a key area for young people who are at risk of homelessness due to family breakdown as a result of family violence or family conflict. There are few options for young people in crisis in Nillumbik and additional support to access drug and alcohol and homelessness services in a location accessible within their community is critical in terms of early intervention. Most young people who require emergency homelessness supports must travel to an Access Point located in Preston or the CBD to receive assessment and allocation for a crisis bed. This has been further exacerbated by the impact of COVID.</p> <p>Although Nillumbik is not broadly viewed as a lower socio economic area, not all support needs are as a result of low income or disadvantage. Mental health, drug and alcohol, family conflict, isolation, health issues and the risk of homelessness all impact on the wellbeing of young people.</p> <p>The Draft Youth Strategy seeks to highlight these support needs.</p>	<p>No changes to Strategy recommended. Submitter in full support of the draft Youth Strategy.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Yes, my strategy is to develop wattle glen and especially Wilson road huge lands need to be subdivided in to smaller lots, streets to narrow, path ways needed, lights need to be put on roads, some of the green wedge areas need to be developed to prevent a bush fire risk also improving every facility in the area will benefit the community.</p>	<p>No changes to Strategy recommended. Submission not relevant to the purpose and objectives outlined in the Youth Strategy 2022-2026.</p>

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
12. healthAbility	<p>Submitter is supportive of draft Youth Strategy, particularly areas of:</p> <p><b>1.1 Mental Wellbeing</b> – enhancing opportunities for young people to have access to mental health services, delivery of early intervention and primary intervention initiatives and working with partners to provide targeted programs</p> <p><b>3.1 Youth Friendly Community Spaces</b> – explore opportunities for a Youth Hub in Nillumbik</p> <p><b>5.1 Creative Community</b> – work with young people to plan and deliver youth focused arts and culture-based programs</p> <p><b>5.3 Social Connection</b> – provide a regular program of youth activities through Nillumbik Youth Services</p> <p>Submitter advocating for further investment from Council in the Youth Strategy through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing EFT funding for the Youth Development team to support community program development and management</li> <li>• Increased youth outreach and short-medium support for young people in Nillumbik</li> <li>• Investment into a Youth Hub for Nillumbik – HealthAbility is very enthusiastic about partnering with the council to develop and co-manage a Youth Hub in Nillumbik.</li> </ul> <p><b>Full submission included below (Appendix 1)</b></p>	<p>No changes to Strategy recommended. Submitter in full support of the draft Youth Strategy.</p> <p>Council encouraged to consider increased funding opportunities to support youth programs, outreach and support services and a Youth hub as part of development of annual implementation plans.</p>
13. Banyule Nillumbik Local Learning Employment Network	<p>Banyule Nillumbik Local Learning and Employment Network (BNLLEN) is a strategic partnership broker organisation (NFP) that works across the following key stakeholder areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary Schools (19 schools across the region),</li> <li>• Community Service Agencies,</li> <li>• Further Education/Training Providers and</li> </ul>	<p>No changes to Strategy recommended. Submitter in full support of the draft Youth Strategy.</p> <p>Council encouraged to consider increased funding opportunities to support the delivery of more youth programs, outreach and support services and a Youth hub as part of development of annual implementation plans.</p>

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business/Industry.</li> </ul> <p>We broker local school-community-industry partnerships to improve secondary school students, post school outcomes into further education, training and employment.</p> <p>Some of our programs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Structured Workplace Learning - brokering industry work placements for students resulting in stronger vocational outcomes.</li> <li>- Real Industry Job Interview Program – providing students the opportunity to develop job search skills and experience a mock interview. This program prepares young people for future employment by building their employability, and work-readiness skills including job search, resume and cover letter writing as well as interviewing skills.</li> <li>- Working Community Program - provides personal and professional development activities and engagement with local community organisations to support student led projects, the program is mapped to learning in VCAL.</li> <li>- Banyule L2P Learner Driver Mentor Program – a program that helps eligible young people accrue the mandatory 120 hours of supervised driving experience required for a probationary licence. The TAC L2P Program Banyule is funded by the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) and Department of Transport (DoT). The program is supported by the Victorian Government and delivered by the Banyule Nillumbik Local Learning and Employment Network (BNLLEN) on behalf of Banyule City Council.</li> </ul> <p><b>Feedback on the Draft Youth Strategy 2022 – 2026</b></p> <p>The four-year strategy and commitment to support and respond to the needs of young people (aged 12 – 25 years) who live, work or play in the LGA is a positive step in the right direction. The integrated approach that council has undertaken to incorporate and include young people’s feedback alongside the work of the newly formed Youth Council is a</p>	

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
	<p>testament to the dedicated approach that council has adopted to be inclusive of local youth.</p> <p>The 5 key priority areas are all relevant and of equal importance and complement one another when the planning and implementation for each one is undertaken simultaneously and done with the appropriate resourcing and planning.</p> <p>For BNLLLEN, our main clients are local secondary school communities (professional practitioners and students or young people) of which there are 6 in Nillumbik. We also work with local businesses and community organisations to facilitate school-community-industry partnerships to improve post-school outcomes for young people. Nillumbik Shire Council is considered one of our largest, closest and valued partners in the region, which includes working closely with the Youth, Community &amp; Place team and the Economic Development and Tourism Team.</p> <p>Our feedback will relate mostly to Priority 4. Equipped and Employed, however I will also discuss items that may align to many of the other priority areas too.</p> <p><b>Council to Lead by Example on the Employment of Youth:</b> As one of the largest employers in the region, Council has a pivotal and crucial role to perform as one of the biggest employers to lead by example on the employment of local youth.</p> <p>Some councils across Victoria have developed procurement policies / processes to achieve (a percentage of) employment outcomes for local people, to meet key priorities and to secure a future workforce reflective of the council's residents. These have been established in many different ways, however some include internal council planning and commitment for a percentage of employees to reflect specific cohorts (such as 10% youth, 10% people with disability etc.).</p> <p>One example is Darebin City Council, who 5 years ago made a commitment to support and employ a percentage of their annual workforce to be reflective of local youth. Another example of this is Banyule City Council's Inclusive Employment Program, which commits</p>	

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
	<p>to recruiting and supporting 24 residents each year from specific cohorts (including youth, people with a disability, ATSI and CALD/newly arrived migrants) to undertake a 6-month internship with Council. Banyule City Council reports that in 90% of these supported internship placements lead to secure employment within council or a local employer.</p> <p>Further to leading in the employment of youth space, this process could be supported by working alongside organisations like ours who specialise in supporting (over 100) employers across the Banyule and Nillumbik region to formally take on student placements and providing the guidance and support necessary to make the experience positive for all parties involved. Working in partnership often means meeting similar objectives in collaboration and sharing the load. Work placement opportunities provide employers with the prospect to trial (potential) future employee's whilst providing much needed and important experiences for local young people.</p> <p><b>Partnership Approach to improving outcomes for young people:</b></p> <p>As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have identified through work with local schools that the impacts on young people and their experience of school, work and social life domains have had an impact and been detrimental to young people's health and wellbeing. This includes mental health, successfully achieving milestone moments, abilities to learn and thrive with peers and to gain meaningful work experience / placement to help pivot their ability to participate in economic life once the COVID restrictions ease.</p> <p>We strongly recommend that the youth strategy imbeds some staff resourcing required to develop, support and maintain partnerships across the LGA that share mutual values and aligned strategies to support young people to be the best they can be in a post COVID-19 world. At minimum, I would suggest that 1+ Full Time EFT would be a good start.</p> <p><b>Need for Youth outreach and individual short to medium term support for young people in Nillumbik:</b></p>	

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
	<p>Due to the distance and travel challenges that young people face in the Nillumbik Shire, having an outreach service that young people can access which is place based is important. This can be short – medium or long term supports, however the distances and isolation in some parts of the shire pose a challenge for young people to gain equal access to services which is not fair or equal to that of their peers. This further imbeds the disadvantages and inequities for some of our already vulnerable young people and can lead to further isolation and impacts to wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Development of a Youth Hub for Nillumbik:</b></p> <p>One of many ways to respond to the need for all the items mentioned above, including outreach to youth, is for services to be made available in a safe place where young people can feel welcome, included and safe. This could include the development of a local Youth Hub.</p> <p>A place-based youth hub could serve as a one stop shop for young people which could include services such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A safe youth space for young people to hang out</li> <li>• A creative studio spaces</li> <li>• Mental health, Drug and Alcohol Service, Emergency Support, and relief (housing, food, domestic violence).</li> <li>• Education and employment and career transition support services.</li> <li>• A safe place for LGBTQI young people and others.</li> <li>• GP and other medial/allied services as well as many more.</li> </ul> <p><b>Adequate Resourcing within the Youth and Community Team</b></p> <p>In order to meet the demands of the items mentioned about, it is crucial for the shire to increase their reach, scope and offerings to local youth and this needs to be done with the consideration of additional staff resourcing at a minimum of an additional 2+ EFT resourcing.</p>	

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
<p>14. Youth projects</p>	<p>Submitter is supportive of the draft Youth Strategy and the commitment demonstrated through the Strategy to support and respond to the needs of young people who live, work, study, volunteer or play in the Shire of Nillumbik.</p> <p>Submitter supports the 5 Strategic Priority Areas within the Strategy, and were especially pleased to see that Healthy and Well, Empowered and Engaged, and Equipped and Employed feature as 3 of the 5 priority areas.</p> <p>Submitter highlights the following points for Council to consider as part of the endorsement of the Youth Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people have bore the brunt of COVID-19, being the first to lose jobs, education, social connection and crucial rights of passage that were disrupted or lost all together. The disproportionate impact was widely recognised, with historic investment at Federal and State levels into the need to invest more into youth mental health. However, despite these efforts, there is clear evidence of a need to further invest locally in order to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of young people</li> <li>• Having access to local youth specialist services is a key area of need in Nillumbik with currently no direct service providers locally based. Only adhoc or services that are based outside of the municipality in neighboring LGAs.</li> <li>• Data collected from local services including Youth Substance Abuse Service (YSAS), Greensborough Headspace and Navigator indicates that rates of referrals to these services of Nillumbik youth are not as high as the data presented in the 2021 Young Minds: Your Voice, Our Future survey suggests they should be with youth voicing major challenges with mental health (anxiety 58%), loneliness (35%), and school stress (86%). Demonstrating young people are not aware of these services (or how to access them) or are unable to access them due to lack of transport with all of these services being predominately based outside the Nillumbik area.</li> </ul>	<p>No changes to Strategy recommended. Submitter in full support of the draft Youth Strategy.</p> <p>Council encouraged to consider proposal for YHOP as a pilot to provide short to medium term support and outreach to young people in Nillumbik to help address the key issues identified through the Young Minds: Your Voice our Future survey and priorities identified in the 2022-2026 Youth Strategy.</p>

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future school and training disengagement rates are also an area of high concern given the challenges of COVID and remote learning over the past 18 months. Coupled with the anxiety that isolation from local connections due to the pandemic has had. Many young people will struggle to make the transition back into the community and specifically vocational pathways and know that there will be many needing support in order to re-engage.</li> <li>• Of the 900 young people who completed the 2021 Young Minds: Your Voice, Our Future Survey, 44% stated that they were unemployed, and 38% unsatisfied with the hours of work they were getting every week, totalling 82% of total responses (738) who have identified unemployment or underemployment as a significant issue.</li> </ul> <p>Given their extensive history assertively engaging and effectively supporting vulnerable young people within some of the most disadvantaged regions of Melbourne (Hume, Moreland, Melton), Youth Projects suggest that a proactive and early intervention approach is the only way to breaking the cycle of poverty and changing the trajectory of a young person's life for the better. YHOP is a program which assertively engages and targets young people who are at the very start of disengagement. Capturing them early, wrapping supports around them and providing the link to longer term support and the stability that is needed.</p> <p>YHOP was first funded by Hume City Council since July 2018 to deliver flexible and tailored case management support for disengaged young people using an assertive engagement model - YHOP goes to the young person. Since 2018 YHOP has engaged close to 500 young people aged 12 to 25 years who would have otherwise fallen through the cracks. Hume continue to fund YHOP until 2024. The program has since successfully expanded YHOP into the Moreland LGA in 2020, providing a quick service respond to the high numbers of disengaged youth due to COVID impacts (mental health, social isolation, family violence, school/training/job disengagement).</p>	

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
	<p>Youth projects welcome the opportunity to speak to Council further on the ways in which we can work in partnership and collaboration through delivery of a program such as YHOP to better engage and support the youth in Nillumbik aligned to needs voiced by young people in the 2021 Young Minds: Your Voice, Our Future Survey, and captured in the Key Priority Areas of the Nillumbik Draft Youth Strategy 2022-2026.</p> <p><b>Full submission included below (Appendix 2).</b></p>	
<p>15. Friends of Nillumbik</p>	<p>Submitter is supportive of the draft Youth Strategy and the five key priority areas used to group areas of focus in the Strategy. In particular, the submitter makes the following key points as part of their feedback on the Youth Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition that Council has rightly placed 'Healthy and Well' as priority 1</li> <li>• Pleased to see Climate Action as the top focus area for Priority 2 - 'Empowered and Engaged'</li> <li>• Support the continued development of the Youth Council and encourage Council to look at the example set by other municipalities to improve youth engagement such as a Youth summit</li> <li>• Supports the exploration of a Youth Hub in Nillumbik as a space integrating a range of services and community uses and encourage Council to visit the City of Whittlesea youth services hub located at Westfield Plenty Valley to see such a space in action.</li> <li>• Acknowledges that employment and work experience opportunities in our local community are important, and supports focus areas within the 'Equipped and Employed' section. Council should continue to develop close links with local training providers, businesses, traders' groups, and organisations to identify opportunities.</li> <li>• Supports the recognition of the need for local arts and cultural programs in the 'Welcomed and Connected' section, including those focused on engaging young people in the Shire.</li> </ul>	<p>No changes to Strategy recommended. Submitter in full support of the draft Youth Strategy.</p> <p>Council encouraged to consider exploration of a Youth Hub and Youth Summit as part of the annual implementation plan.</p>

Submission No.	Summary of submission	Officer response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognition that the proposed plan for implementing the Draft Youth Strategy is a suitable process to ensure Council maintains its commitment to the priority areas and delivers them in a timely manner.</li> </ul> <p><b>Full submission included below (Appendix 3).</b></p>	
<p>16. Women's Health in the North</p>	<p>My name is Tilly Mahoney, and I am the Coordinator, Sexual and Reproductive Health at Women's Health In the North.</p> <p>I've read through the strategy and I am excited to see the inclusion of specific actions for promoting sexual health and respectful relationships! Young people are the best! I would love to hear more about the work in this area and see whether there is anything WHIN could do to support these efforts.</p> <p>I would also like to let you know that WHIN is in the process of developing the next iteration of our sexual and reproductive health strategy 'A Strategy for Going South In the North 2022-2026'. As part of this process we will be eager to highlight a wide range of voices in consultations. It would be wonderful if we could engage with some of the young people on council on these priorities. We aren't quite at the consultation stage, but just a heads up that I hope to be in contact soon for some valuable input!</p> <p>In relation to the Draft Youth Strategy, I do have a couple of suggestions for the Sexual Health actions to use the most up-to-date language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The most accurate language for STIs is 'sexually transmissible infections'.</li> <li>Birth control is better referred to as 'contraception'.</li> </ul>	<p>Recommend updating reference to 'Sexually Transmitted Diseases' to 'Sexually Transmissible Infections' and updating reference to 'birth control' to 'contraception' (pg., 14).</p>

## Appendix 1 – Submission 12



21 October 2021

Nillumbik Shire Council  
34 Civic Dr  
Greensborough VIC 3088

To Whom it May Concern,

### Support for Nillumbik Youth Strategy 2022-2026

This letter is to express support for the Nillumbik Shire Council's Youth Strategy 2022-2026. HealthAbility is a community health service which offers a wide range of services and programs in Nillumbik. These include Youth Services, Mental Health, NDIS, My Aged Care, Dental Services and more.

HealthAbility has a long history of working in the community to address the needs of young people. This has included a long relationship and partnership with the Youth and Community Services team at Nillumbik Shire Council. My role as School Focused Youth Service Coordinator involves coordinating interventions in schools to prevent disengagement (in Banyule & Nillumbik).

I wholeheartedly support the Youth Strategy, particularly in the focus areas of;

- 1.1 **Mental Wellbeing** – enhancing opportunities for young people to have access to mental health services, delivery of early intervention and primary intervention initiatives and working with partners to provide targeted programs
- 3.1 **Youth Friendly Community Spaces** – explore opportunities for a Youth Hub in Nillumbik
- 5.1 **Creative Community** – work with young people to plan and deliver youth focused arts and culture-based programs
- 5.3 **Social Connection** – provide a regular program of youth activities through Nillumbik Youth Services

I strongly believe Nillumbik Shire Council should further invest in the Youth Strategy through:

1. **Increased EFT funding for the Youth Development team to support community program development and management**
2. **Increased youth outreach and short-medium support for young people in Nillumbik**
3. **Investment into a Youth Hub for Nillumbik** – HealthAbility is very enthusiastic about partnering with the council to develop and co-manage a Youth Hub in Nillumbik.

Given the recent events of the COVID pandemic, there is more need than ever for support for young people, particularly in the areas of mental health and social connection. I request the council consider strengthening the Youth team's ability to provide this support to the community.

Yours Sincerely

**Sarah Nichols**

School Focused Youth Service

Box Hill 43 Carrington Road, Box Hill VIC 3128 | Eltham 917 Main Road, Eltham VIC 3095  
Other service locations Boronia, Nunawading and Wellington Road, Box Hill | Email [contact@healthability.org.au](mailto:contact@healthability.org.au)  
Phone (03) 9430 9100 | Website [healthability.org.au](http://healthability.org.au) | Fax Box Hill (03) 9898 8010 | Fax Eltham (03) 9431 0339  
ABN 32 180 310 839

## Appendix 2 – Submission 14

High impact support. Without judgement. Fullstop.  
Harm Prevention & Outreach | Health & Life Skills | Employment & Training | Social Enterprise  
ABN 91 366 009 057



### Youth Projects Submission

#### Nillumbik Shire Council Draft Youth Strategy 2022-2026 Community Feedback

Youth Projects Ltd is an independent, not-for-profit community organisation providing front line health care, mental health and AOD counselling, outreach, employment and training services to people experiencing disadvantage, unemployment, homelessness and alcohol and other drug issues. We deliver high impact support through wrap-around and holistic service models, supporting over 1500 young people each year. We don't just believe in early intervention, we live it. We've been supporting the most vulnerable young people since 1984, breaking the cycle of poverty early.

Our DNA and very purpose is entrenched in responding to emerging needs. We first launched our outreach service in the North West in the 80's. First on the street educating young people, providing assertive engagement on health and wellbeing. We've rapidly responded to the manufacturing downturn, GFC and now on-the-ground service responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our schools-based programs, mobile outreach, membership of community-based youth forums and locational expertise helps us to monitor community trends, responding to the needs of young people with multiple risk factors.

Youth Projects is pleased to read Nillumbik Shire Council's Draft Youth Strategy 2022-2026 and the commitment demonstrated through the Strategy to support and respond to the needs of young people who live, work, study, volunteer or play in the Shire of Nillumbik. We would like to congratulate Council on acknowledging and prioritising the needs of young people.

Supporting the 5 Strategic Priority Areas within the Strategy, we were especially pleased to see that *Healthy and Well, Empowered and Engaged*, and *Equipped and Employed* feature as 3 of the 5 priority areas:

- Young people have borne the brunt of COVID-19, being the first to lose jobs, education, social connection and crucial rights of passage that were disrupted or lost all together. The disproportionate impact was widely recognised, with historic investment at Federal and State levels into the need to invest more into youth mental health. However, despite these efforts, there is clear evidence of a need to further invest locally in order to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of young people
- We are aware of the challenges faced by Nillumbik youth due to our operations as a direct service provider in the area delivering Youth-At-Risk Disability Employment Services and through our involvement on key local networks including the Banyule and Nillumbik Youth Services Executive Network and the Greensborough Headspace Consortium. Having access to local youth specialist services is a key area of need in Nillumbik with currently no direct service providers locally based. Only adhoc or services that are based outside of the municipality in neighboring LGAs.
- Based on our collections of Nillumbik youth specific data from key local service organisations, Youth Substance Abuse Service (YSAS), Greensborough Headspace and Navigator, the rates of referrals to these services of Nillumbik youth are not as high as what the *2021 Young Minds: Your Voice, Our Future Survey* suggests they should be with youth voicing major challenges with mental health (anxiety 58%), loneliness (35%), and school stress (86%). This tells us that either young people are not aware of the services to access or have the inability to access due to lack of transport and these services being predominantly based outside of the Nillumbik area.
- Future school and training disengagement rates are also an area of high concern given the challenges of COVID and remote learning over the past 18 months. Coupled with the anxiety that isolation from local connections due to the pandemic has had. We know that many young people will struggle to make the transition back into the community and specifically vocational pathways and know that there will be many needing support in order to reengage.
- What is significantly concerning is that from the 900 young people who completed *the 2021 Young Minds: Your Voice, Our Future Survey*, 44% stated that they were unemployed, and 38% unsatisfied with the hours of work they were getting every week. That's 82% of total responses (738) who have identified unemployment or underemployment as a significant issue.

Being a specialist youth employment service and delivering and adapting our effective early intervention models over our 37 year history, a key indicator of youth engagement is the pathway to a job. Unemployment is very often the end result for a disadvantaged young person. Who actually needed help, support and a set of positive interventions well before they reached unemployment and in turn the official unemployment rate.

Given our extensive history assertively engaging and effectively supporting vulnerable young people within some of the most disadvantaged regions of Melbourne (Hume, Moreland, Melton), we know from firsthand experience that a proactive and early intervention approach is the only way to breaking the cycle of poverty. Changing the trajectory of a young person's life for the better.

Within the Hume and Moreland LGAs Youth Projects has been delivering a program which does early intervention at the core. Assertively engaging and targeting young people who are at the very start of disengagement. Capturing them early, wrapping supports around them and providing the link to more longer term support and the stability that is needed. The program is called 'YHOP'

### What is YHOP?

YHOP started as the 'Youth in Hume Outreach Program'. Funded by Hume City Council since July 2018 to deliver flexible and tailored case management support for disengaged young people using an assertive engagement model - YHOP goes to the young person. Since 2018 YHOP has engaged close to 500 young people aged 12 to 25 years who would have otherwise fallen through the cracks. Hume continue to fund YHOP until 2024.

We successfully expanded YHOP into the Moreland LGA in 2020, providing a quick service respond to the high numbers of disengaged youth due to COVID impacts (mental health, social isolation, family violence, school/training/job disengagement). Initially funded through a range of private donors and our own internal Youth Projects contribution, Moreland City Council agreed to extend our initial 6 month pilot for a further 6 months, and funded YHOP Moreland until July 2021. Acknowledging the need for local youth to have a YHOP service response in place.

### YHOP is a one-of-a-kind service that provides what no other service do:

- Minimum eligibility - no red tape - YHOP is there for any disengaged young person
- Crisis response, early intervention, intensive support for up to 6 months - to address barriers to engagement
- Flexible, responsive outreach – we go to where a young person is, take them to services and stand by their side
- Mentoring, support and a positive advocate - to navigate and access the services they need
- Individualised approach, holistic support -100% youth-led
- High rates of community reengagement post YHOP (school, services, training, jobs)
- Post-referral-support - to ensure young people remain engaged, and if not, reengage back with them

### Hume YHOP has achieved significant impact for vulnerable young people:

- Over 900 supported referrals to specialised services (including mental health, housing),
- 35% increase in wellbeing and happiness, as reported by YHOP participants (youth who access YHOP)

### Direct outcomes for young people assertively engaged with YHOP include:

- 35% engaged back into education/training pathways,
- 33% housing situation stabilised,
- 45% reporting improvements to mental health,
- 25% engaged into a job,
- 70% reporting more positive and enhanced social/community engagement.

See the following quotes to demonstrate the direct impact YHOP has had on vulnerable disengaged young people within Hume and Moreland:

*Things like domestic violence, my family breaking down and sleeping at different people's houses made my mental health bad. I didn't go back to school for like ages until I met my YHOP Coach. He helped me get my confidence back and talk to my old friends. I'm so excited that he helped me start at a new school. Never give up" – 2019 YHOP Participant, aged 13 years.*

*"My son actually went back to school because of this program" Parent of a YHOP Participant 2020*

*"It has given me the confidence to be independent, know that I can work, to know that I am good enough to get through the tough times at home" 2020 YHOP Participant, aged 20 years*

We welcome the opportunity to speak to Council further on the ways in which we can work in partnership and collaboration to better engage and support the youth in Nillumbik aligned to needs voiced by young people in the 2021 *Young Minds: Your Voice, Our Future Survey*, and captured in the Key Priority Areas of the Nillumbik Draft Youth Strategy 2022-2026.

A copy of this submission has also been emailed to Nillumbik Council Officer: Katie Camilleri Coordinator Youth, Community & Place Community Services

Completed by: Wendy Caspar, Executive Manager, Youth Projects

Approved by: Ben Vasiliou, Chief Executive Officer, Youth Projects

## Appendix 3 – Submission 15



### Friends of Nillumbik Inc.

PO Box 258, Eltham 3095 | [mail@friendsofnillumbik.org](mailto:mail@friendsofnillumbik.org) | [www.friendsofnillumbik.org](http://www.friendsofnillumbik.org)

### **Submission: Draft Youth Strategy 2022-2026**

Friends of Nillumbik is a not for profit, non-political community group backed by about 1,000 local residents. We care about the environment and the character of Nillumbik's urban and rural areas and are committed to protecting Nillumbik's Green Wedge and its other environmental assets.

We are grateful to Council for the opportunity to make a submission on the Draft Youth Strategy 2022-2026. We applaud Council's commitment to engage meaningfully with young people in our Shire, and in doing so giving them the opportunity to have their say on the many issues that face young people today.

We also take this opportunity to congratulate the inaugural Nillumbik Youth Council for the work they have done to bring this document together. We are sure that this is just the beginning of the contribution these young leaders will make in our community.

Friends of Nillumbik supports the five key priority areas used to group areas of focus in the Strategy. In particular we acknowledge the results of Council's consultation that informed the development of the Youth Strategy, and that the top three issues raised by survey participants were mental health, climate change, and discrimination, with mental health featuring particularly strongly. The priority areas that young people would like Council support on – mental health, coping with stress, and general health and wellbeing – reinforces the fact that mental health is the biggest concern for young people in Nillumbik.

Recognising this, Council has rightly placed the 'Healthy and Well' priority area at the beginning of the Priorities section of the Strategy. We support the focus areas in this section. We agree that young people should be "empowered to take action on their own education" but remind Council that many young people (let alone the general population of the Shire) often struggle to identify where and who they can contact for local support and information. Council must do all it can to be an active and visible presence throughout the community, to ensure that when young people do want to engage, they are aware of their options and feel comfortable in reaching out.

Concern about the climate emergency also featured in the survey results, and FoN is pleased that this is recognised prominently at the beginning of the 'Empowered and Engaged' section. We believe that there is a great opportunity to demonstrate to young people the

difference they can make to their local community in enhancing and protecting our local environment. We agree that local volunteering opportunities should be provided and promoted as a way to educate young people about the environment and sustainability, with a focus on the biodiversity found in our Shire and the importance of protecting and enhancing the Nillumbik Green Wedge.

We support the continued development of the Youth Council and encourage Council to look at the example set by other municipalities to improve youth engagement. The Youth Summit model in Banyule enables a greater number of young people to engage directly with Council staff, Councillors, and others in the local community to discuss a range of issues. We are sure there are many young people interested in participating in local decision-making who may not necessarily have been interested in the long-term commitment of the Youth Council. Council should be flexible in providing a range of opportunities to reach the broadest possible cross-section of young people in the Shire.

Regarding 'Access to Safe Spaces and Places', FoN supports the exploration of a Youth Hub in Nillumbik as a space integrating a range of services and community uses. We encourage Council to visit the City of Whittlesea youth services hub located at Westfield Plenty Valley to see such a space in action.

Employment and work experience opportunities in our local community are important, and FoN agrees with the focus areas within the 'Equipped and Employed' section. Council should continue to develop close links with local training providers, businesses, traders' groups, and organisations to identify opportunities. As one example, Council should again look to the example set by Banyule Council, through their initiation of social enterprise cafes in their municipality, with a focus on providing work and training to local young people.

FoN also supports the recognition of the need for local arts and cultural programs in the 'Welcomed and Connected' section, including those focused on engaging young people in the Shire. In a similar vein to efforts to encourage employment opportunities, Council should do all it can to provide young people who are musicians, artists and performers the opportunity to showcase their skills and become involved in local activities.

The proposed plan for implementing the Draft Youth Strategy is a suitable process to ensure Council maintains its commitment to the priority areas and delivers them in a timely manner. FoN supports the development of annual implementation plans, and annual reviews conducted at the end of each calendar year.

Friends of Nillumbik again thanks Council for the opportunity to make a submission on the Draft Youth Strategy, and we look forward to seeing the Strategy delivered over the coming years.

Greg Johnson – President  
Friends of Nillumbik  
October 2021