Community Learning Plan

A VIBRANT, PROUD, GROWING AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY OFFERING LIFESTYLE CHOICES
The Shire of Melton is pleased to present its fourth Community Learning Plan 2008-2010. This Plan builds upon the strengths of previous plans and the valuable experience gained since the introduction of the first Community Education Plan in 1999. Melton Shire Council is committed to lifelong learning through fostering a community culture that encourages the continuity of learning at all age levels and supports the provision of high quality learning opportunities for all residents of the Shire.

Melton Shire Council established the Shire of Melton Education Board in 1998, comprising Council, community representatives and education providers. It was re-named the Melton Community Learning Board in 2004. The role of the Board was to establish a Community Education Plan and to ensure active community involvement in the formulation of that Plan. The result was the Community Education Plan 1999 – 2001, the first of its kind in Victoria, which outlined a strategy to establish a local culture where education is acknowledged as vital for both individual and community advancement.

This new updated Plan lays out the strategic direction for the next three years to enhance, progress and build on Melton Shire’s status as a learning community. The Plan aims to meet the diverse and dynamic needs of our municipality, which is one of the fastest growing in Australia, and over the life of the Plan we will see new communities such as Eynesbury and Toolern, begin to take shape.

The Community Learning Board’s approach to lifelong learning is to Encourage, Support and Stimulate, Advocate and Evaluate.

The rapid growth in our municipality has brought new developments, such as the Library for the Melton East Growth Corridor, which offers new opportunities for learning and increased community benefit. Consultation, engagement and collaboration with the business community will also increase under this Plan with the building of active community partnerships.

The Plan will see an increased focus on participation in learning by different sections of the community for people of all abilities, including older people, new residents to our municipality including new arrivals under Australia’s migration programs.

Overall, this Plan is a framework for our shared progress as a learning community. It stands to assist and empower our community with all the enjoyment, academic and vocational value that new skills and knowledge can provide.

I acknowledge the work of the board in developing this Plan and look forward to it helping to raise the quality of life in Melton Shire through the progression and promotion of our municipality as learning community.

Cr Bruce Rowan
Melton Shire Mayor
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The Shire of Melton Community Learning Board has responsibility for reporting to Council on matters related to learning across the municipality and for the development and implementation of the Community Learning Plan.

Board membership consists of a cross-representation of the wider community:

Councillor, Shire of Melton
Chief Executive, Shire of Melton
Head of Melton Campus, Victoria University
Chief Executive Officer, Djerriwarrh Employment and Education Services
Chief Executive Officer, Brimbank/Melton Local Learning and Employment Network
Manager, Community Support and Development, Shire of Melton
Manager, Business Growth and Sustainability, Shire of Melton
Senior Library Officer, Melton Library and Information Services
Government School Representatives
Catholic Education Sector Representative
Independent Schools Representative
Community Representatives
Property Developer Representative
Community Adult Education and/or Employment Services Representatives
Mature Age Learning Provider Representative
Business Sector Representatives
Early Childhood Services Representative
Youth Sector Representative
Disability Education Sector Representatives
Health Services Representative
Executive Support Officer, Shire of Melton Community Learning Board
Council recognises lifelong learning as a key mechanism through which personal, social, cultural, economic and environmental growth occurs. Council supports learning as an effective way to enhance community social connectedness, sustainability and the development of community resilience in meeting challenges.

Melton Shire Council’s vision for the municipality is that it be a ‘vibrant, proud, growing and healthy community offering lifestyle choices’”. Lifelong learning is an integral component in the achievement of this vision. Council recognises that as a key stakeholder, it must foster a community culture that embraces and encourages the continuity of learning at all age levels.

This Plan articulates, in a learning context, an approach to community development that:

- **Encourages** all stakeholders to engage and embrace lifelong learning and to actively contribute to the achievement of the Plan’s goals

- **Supports and stimulates** learners and learning providers to actively participate in learning to meet personal or community goals

- **Advocates** for and on behalf of learners and learning providers; and for the provision of appropriate facilities and services to enhance access to learning and its provision, and;

- **Evaluates** regularly and effectively the impact that the various learning programs and activities conducted across the municipality have on the social, cultural, economic and environmental growth of the municipality.

The Community Learning Board will continue to be flexible and adaptive in implementing the vision and goals of the 2008 – 2010 Community Learning Plan. In addition, the Board will continue to plan for future needs through local and sector networks, forums and partnerships.

The goals of the Plan will be achieved collaboratively through the continued work and development of partnerships to bring about better outcomes for the community.

1 Melton Shire’s Council Plan 2005 - 2009

The Shire of Melton’s vision:
Melton: a vibrant, proud, growing and healthy community offering lifestyle choices.

The vision statement outlined in Melton Shire’s Council Plan articulates Council’s desire to see continued provision of a wide range of opportunities for the community. The implementation of this Learning Plan contributes to the achievement of this vision.

The five guiding principles of the Melton Shire’s Council Plan are: Access, Consultation, Governance, Advocacy and Sustainability.

Access
Access involves:
• Design that allows actual physical access
• Communication that ensures that the community has the information needed to choose and participate
• Affordability, managing costs which act as a barrier to participation

Consultation
Sound consultation is essential to provide opportunities for active community involvement in the development of strategies and associated policies and programs

Governance
Effective governance ensures that the decision-making process is transparent, follows ethical practices and complies with relevant regulations

Good governance also requires that clear plans and actions are in place and that there is active monitoring and reporting

Advocacy
All strategies must identify where effective advocacy is needed to represent Council and its community to other spheres of government and other groups of influence.

Sustainability
All strategies must be environmentally, socially and economically sustainable for the long-term benefit of the Shire.
Key Directions

The following key objectives of the Melton Shire Council Plan support Council’s goal of lifelong learning for the community:

- Melton Shire Council is committed to a healthy and well connected community
- Melton Shire Council is committed to creating a strong local economy
- Melton Shire Council is committed to fostering a sustainable and liveable community.

Community Learning Board Mission

The Shire of Melton Community Learning Board mission is to improve the quality of life of Melton Shire residents through learning.

Goals and Objectives of the Community Learning Board

Encourage a positive and proactive environment where education and learning opportunities are provided, valued, facilitated and linked to improved learning outcomes for the municipality and its residents to:

- Increase the number of residents participating in lifelong learning activities
- Encourage developers and new businesses to routinely engage apprentices and trainees and provide high quality work placements for students.

Support and stimulate local institutions and providers of education and training to plan and deliver a comprehensive range of high quality learning opportunities to:

- Support and encourage adult and community learning providers to demonstrate an increased number of learning activities, programs and courses
- Lift the level of post-compulsory educational achievement in the Shire to at least the metropolitan average
- Identify groups with particular learning needs and support, broker or facilitate the development of programs targeted to those groups.

Advocate for the provision of facilities appropriate for a range of community learning activities to:

- Explore the creation of a new and separate category in Council’s Community Grants Scheme, dedicated to the development and enhancement of lifelong learning.

Evaluate the impact of the Community Learning Board’s goals and strategies to ensure plans remain current and effective to:

- Determine the effectiveness of the Community Learning Board annually
- Evaluate the impact of the Learning Precincts and review their role and function so that they remain effective and relevant
- Report to Council the findings of Annual Reviews of the Plan.

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3 Shire of Melton Community Learning Board Terms of Reference 2006
The Community Learning Board, on behalf of Council, works with partnerships and networks to effectively achieve the outcomes of the Plan. The links and participation of the organisations and agencies below may be more or less pronounced as Council, the Board and the Melton Township Learning Precinct work towards achieving the goals and outcomes of this plan.
The Shire of Melton is located in Melbourne’s outer Western region and offers an urban-rural lifestyle within 35 minutes travelling time of the Central Business District. Melton Shire is recognised as one of the fastest growing municipalities in Australia.

The Shire of Melton includes the Melton Township (Melton West, Kurunjang, Melton South, and Brookfield), the small townships of Diggers Rest, Exford, Rockbank, Toolern Vale and the rapidly growing Eastern Corridor (Hillside, Caroline Springs, Taylors Hill, Burnside and Burnside Heights). The Shire is the geographic hub of a region that extends from Geelong through to Werribee, Ballarat, Bacchus Marsh, Sunbury, Tullamarine Airport and to the Hume Highway.

In 2007, the population of the Shire was approximately 89,654. This is projected to rise to 143,710 by the year 2017. Melton Shire is currently a young community with 75 percent of the Shire’s population aged 45 years or under.

The Shire’s location provides access to Melbourne’s Central Business District, Melbourne International Airport, the Ports of Melbourne and Geelong and to national road and railway networks.

The Shire has an affordable blend of urban and rural living opportunities within its 528 square kilometres, with planning provisions in place to ensure that the Shire retains these features as it grows to become a major regional centre within the next two decades.

The network of services and resources available to residents includes shopping precincts, health services, recreational parks and gardens, open-air leisure opportunities and educational centres ranging from preschools, primary and secondary schools (both State and private) through to the Melton campus of Victoria University.

The diverse local economy includes manufacturing and engineering companies, and a range of smaller firms prominent in fields such as telecommunications, textiles, automotive components and high-tech sporting apparel.

The long established extractive and related manufacturing industries, and the horse breeding, training and agistment industry are other key features of the region’s economy. Melton’s innovative land care measures and availability of rural land also offer opportunities for a wide variety of agribusiness and rural developments.

Melton Township, the location of the Shire’s Civic Centre and offices, has at its core well established housing, shopping and business districts.

A new Council Civic Centre and Library has recently opened in Caroline Springs to service the large number of new residents settling in the Shire’s Eastern Growth Corridor.

The region also attracts tourism with its wineries, olive grove, festivals and key sporting events such as the Melton Plate and V8 Jetboats. It is soon to become the home of Harness Racing Victoria, with a new racing track and entertainment complex currently under construction.

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4 id Population Forecast 2001 - 2016 produced for Melton Shire Council (2004)
Shire of Melton Population

Melton Shire is the fastest growing municipality in Victoria, with an annual growth rate of around 9%. The rapid growth of the Shire’s population over recent years has seen significant residential development in the Eastern Growth Corridor.

In 2008, it is estimated that the population of the Shire of Melton will be 96,063, representing a population increase of 22% from 78,909 in 2006.

Young People

Population forecasting for the Shire of Melton indicates that in 2008, people 24 years of age or younger will represent 38.3% of the Shire’s population. Table 1 shows that primary school aged children (5 to 11 years) will represent 11% of the total population; secondary school aged young people (12 to 17 years) will represent 9% of the total population; and post secondary school aged young people (18 to 24 years) will represent 10.1% of the total population.

Table 1: Population of Young People in School Age Groups 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number of Young People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post Secondary School (18-24 years)</td>
<td>9,746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School (12-17 years)</td>
<td>8,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School (5-11 years)</td>
<td>10,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool (0-4 years)</td>
<td>7,858</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Families

At the 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Census of Population and Housing, more than half of all households in the Shire of Melton were couples with dependent children (55%). The other most common household types were couples only (28%), and one-parent families 16%.

5 Department of Sustainability, Victorian Population Bulletin 2007
Older Persons

Older persons are those 55 years of age or older. In 2006, 15% (11,889 persons) of the total population of the Shire were aged 55 or older.\(^{10}\) By 2016, the number of older people is expected to increase to 24,351 representing 17.45% of the Shire’s projected population.\(^ {11}\)

Country of Birth

Analysis of the Country of Birth of the population in the Shire of Melton in 2006 (Table 2) shows that 24.4% of the population were born overseas and 18.8% were from a non-English speaking background.\(^ {12}\)

The dominant non-English speaking country of birth in the Shire of Melton was the Philippines, where 2.0% of the population or 1,561 people were born.\(^ {13}\)

Since the 2001 Census, the largest changes in Country of Birth of the Shire’s population were:

- The Philippines (920+ persons)
- India (729+ persons)
- Vietnam (465+ persons) and
- New Zealand (447+ persons).\(^ {14}\)

Table 2: Country of Birth

Country of Birth (top 10), Melton Shire and Melbourne Statistical Division, 2006 (Usual Residence data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Birth</th>
<th>% of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census of Population and Housing (Usual Residence))

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12 .id Community Profile 2006
13 .id Community Profile 2006
Language Spoken at Home

Analysis of the Language Spoken at Home within the Shire of Melton in 2006 (Table 3) shows that 70.2% of the population spoke English only, and 24.3% spoke a non-English language.\(^{15}\)

The largest changes in spoken languages in the Shire of Melton between 2001 and 2006 were for those speaking:\(^{16}\)

Filipino (944+ persons)
Macedonian (841+ persons)
Chinese languages (741+ persons) and;
Spanish (684+ persons).

Table 3: Language Spoken at Home

Language spoken at home (top 10), Melton Shire and Melbourne Statistical Division, 2006 (Usual Residence data)

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census of Population and Housing (Usual Residence))

\(^{15}\) .id Community Profile 2006
\(^{16}\) .id Community Profile 2006
School Participation and Qualifications

Compared to the Melbourne Statistical Division there was a larger proportion of the Shire’s population attending primary school, a similar proportion attending secondary school and a smaller proportion engaged in tertiary level education (Table 4).

Overall, 9.8% of the population were attending primary school, 7.1% of the population were attending secondary institutions and 4.0% were learning at a tertiary level, compared with 7.8%, 6.5% and 6.9% respectively for the Melbourne Statistical Division.17

The major differences between the share of the population attending learning institutions in the Shire of Melton and the Melbourne Statistical Division were:

• A larger percentage of persons attending primary school (all) (9.8% compared to 7.8%), and;
• A smaller percentage of persons attending University (2.3% compared to 4.8%).

Table 4: Attendance at Education Institutions

Education institute attending, Melton Shire and Melbourne Statistical Division, 2006 (Usual Residence data)

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census of Population and Housing (Usual Residence))
Melton Shire has a diverse range of learning providers offering a variety of programs and opportunities for learning at many levels. Council, through its Community Learning Board continues to work with education providers to meet the increasingly diverse learning demands of the municipality.

Preschool Learning

Preschool opportunities exist across the Shire in a variety of settings, including ‘traditional’ Kindergartens, as part of Long Day Care Centres or co-located with schools as part of an integrated model, particularly in the growth areas of the Shire. These are complemented by a range of playgroups, toy libraries, and occasional care programs that provide early learning opportunities.

Schools

Schools across the Shire offer high quality learning programs and activities that are responsive to the needs, expectations and requirements of their students, as well as to those of the broader community. A student’s school of choice may be selected to best meet learning needs, aspirations, faith or locality from a variety of Independent, Catholic Education and Government schools at both primary and secondary levels.

Whilst most schools provide the widely accepted prep to year six primary or years seven to twelve secondary school program, there is an emerging trend where schools have increased their education program capacity to include Kindergarten programs and stand-alone senior campuses (years ten to twelve). Schools in the Shire of Melton collectively offer a broad curriculum and an extensive range of extra curricula activities. All schools in the township area offer a single VCE prospectus, increasing the subject choice for years eleven and twelve. In addition, secondary schools across the Shire continue to be innovative in their collective efforts to provide optimum curriculum choice and provision of learning opportunities for all students.

The Western Edge Cluster, a partnership of all secondary schools (Independent, Catholic Education and Government sector) collaboratively offers Vocational Education Training (VET) classes to all students, no matter which school they are formally enrolled in. It is not uncommon to see a VET classroom with students from a variety of schools. External agencies such as Djerriwarrh Employment and Education Services and Victoria University also support the programs and activities with valuable resources and facilities.
A number of service providers (including TAFE colleges, Registered Training Organisations and Community Education providers) offer programs such as vocational training and the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning for students and the broader community.

**Post-secondary Education**

A campus of Victoria University is located in Melton South. Victoria University offers undergraduate, post graduate and vocational education and training courses. The Melton campus has a strong focus on education courses, early childhood education and a variety of TAFE programs.

Young people and adults undertaking post-secondary education may participate in accredited or non-accredited courses in formal or informal settings. Service providers across the municipality offer vocational training and or higher education courses; activities that enable participants to
pursue recreational or artistic pursuits, as well as personal support and development programs. Service providers include Universities, TAFE colleges, Registered Training Organisations, Special Interest Groups, Community Houses and organisations funded through Victoria’s Adult and Community Further Education Board and individuals with an interest in sharing their skills and knowledge with others.

**Learning Partnerships**

Council actively engages partners, or facilitates partnerships with learning providers to assist in meeting the goals, objectives and outcomes of the Community Learning Board and the Plan.

In partnership with learning providers and property developers, Council continues to take an active role in planning and establishing schools and learning precincts to meet the diverse learning needs of the rapidly growing population. Within the Shire there are Learning Precincts where a number of schools (Government, Independent and Catholic Education) share purpose-built facilities and community facilities (library, sporting and arts facilities). Some schools are co-located on one site, sharing teaching spaces, facilities and open space areas. Some schools provide space for Council managed preschool programs and space for Council’s Maternal and Child Health services on their sites.

The development of Learning@Caroline, with strong links to schools, the public library and to Community Houses will form a second learning precinct, servicing Melton’s Eastern Corridor.

**Learning Directory**

Communication is an essential component in facilitating individual or community access to and participation in learning. Knowing what’s on, where and when, enables people to make learning choices. Council publishes the Shire of Melton Learning Directory four times a year, with information about courses and activities available. The Learning Directory is delivered to each home in the municipality as an insert in a local paper and has been well accepted by the community. Some listed service providers have reported that as soon as the Directory is published the number of calls they receive about programs being offered increases sharply and in many instances courses are oversubscribed.

The Learning Directory will continue as a key information tool in the delivery of the 2008 - 2010 Community Learning Plan.
The strategic intent of the Community Learning Board and the Plan is to meet the goals of Melton Shire’s Council Plan in relation to lifelong learning through building a best practice learning community that features comprehensive engagement, innovation, effectiveness, inclusion and skilled partnerships.

This will be done by brokering arrangements and working with partners to:

• Ensure that learning opportunities meet the needs of the rapidly increasing population

• Increase the number of residents participating in community learning activities in the Shire of Melton

• Increase the provision of courses, community learning initiatives and learning opportunities and;

• Make learning more accessible.
Encourage a positive and proactive environment where education and learning opportunities are provided, valued, facilitated and linked to improved learning outcomes for the municipality and its residents.

Objective:
To increase the number of residents participating in lifelong learning activities.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME 1
Enhanced community, capacity, participation and prosperity through the provision of opportunities for people to build the range of skills they need to respond to everyday challenges and opportunities.

Why this objective is important
The Community Learning Board recognises the value of establishing a comprehensive learning community and local culture where education is seen as critical for both individual and community advancement. Through the development of Learning Plans the Board aims to foster ‘whole of life’ learning opportunities for all residents in the Shire, from preschool through to older residents. Active participation in learning and skills acquisition provides opportunities for people to develop a sense of wellbeing and the capacity to cope well in rapidly changing environments.

Strategies to meet the objective
• Conduct a comprehensive Learning Needs Analysis. This will have the dual effect of stimulating interest in the Plan from enterprises, groups and individuals and will facilitate the gathering of accurate data for the planning of learning provision
• Engage Community Houses. Currently, there are significant gaps in the involvement of key providers in the delivery of the goals of the Learning Plan. Membership of this sector on the Community Learning Board needs to be reviewed

Recommendation:
It is recommended that Community Learning Board representation be sought from the local network of providers.

• Liaise with Council’s Business Growth and Sustainability Unit to develop and implement a high quality, comprehensive marketing plan and strategy to promote the value of active participation in lifelong learning to all sections of the community

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the Plan incorporate a staged approach that is aligned with the Action Plans.

Shire of Melton Community Learning Plan 2008-2010 14
How will we know we have succeeded?

• A report on the findings of the Learning Needs Analysis will be tabled for consideration by the Community Learning Board. Board recommendations will be incorporated into the Action Plans of the Community Learning Board

• All relevant Community Houses will be represented on the Community Learning Board

• A three year Lifelong Learning Marketing Plan and Strategy will be developed and implemented that results in increased engagement from a wide cross-section of the community.

Objective: To encourage developers and new businesses to routinely engage apprentices and trainees and provide high quality work placements for students.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME 2
An increased number of businesses are engaged in cross-sectoral partnerships that:

• Deliver vocational pathways for young people

• Meet the demands for a highly skilled local workforce generated by rapid economic growth.

Why this objective is important?
The engagement of business with the education and community sectors through learning and skill development is vital in supporting economic growth, increased prosperity and wellbeing. The rapid population growth of the Shire of Melton requires the underpinning of innovation and the availability of a highly skilled, adaptable workforce. Businesses are essential partners in the provision of effective vocational pathways for young people who are currently under-represented in the employment market in the Shire.

Achievement of this objective will:

• Assist at the local level in addressing challenges presented by increasing business diversity and in developing sustainable small businesses

• Assist business personnel to acquire relevant skills in recruiting, engaging and retaining suitable employees.
Strategies to meet the objective

- Consulting with developers and other businesses in the development of the Community Learning Board’s Marketing Strategy, so that it promotes the benefits to business of learning in the workplace, including a focus on employing young people as apprentices and trainees
- Identifying and addressing the gaps in Community Learning Board representation to assist in developing the engagement of employers with the goals of the Learning Plan. This might include businesses, developer representatives and organisations charged with developing learning relationships and the supporting of businesses in taking on apprenticeships such as the Western Local Community Partnership and the Job Network
- Developing a strong relationship with the Business Growth and Sustainability Unit of Council through:
  - Inviting participation by the Unit Manager on the Community Learning Board
  - Investigating points of alignment between the Community Learning Plan and Council’s Economic Development Strategy
  - Considering how the Community Learning Board and the Business Growth and Sustainability Unit can work collaboratively to achieve common strategic objectives
  - Ensuring that the Community Learning Board meeting agenda includes regular discussion on the progress of educational and business partnerships and the partnering with the Business Growth and Sustainability Unit; to maintain ongoing dialogue with local established and developing business and industry representatives (eg business breakfasts)
- Advocating that Council’s Business Growth and Sustainability Unit encourage developers and new businesses to commit to engaging apprentices and trainees and/or taking students on work placements
- Community Learning Board partners offering advice to new businesses about assistance that they can provide in relation to apprenticeships, traineeships and work placements.

How will we know we have succeeded?

- There will be active business engagement with the Community Learning Board and feedback to the Board that an increased number of businesses report the benefits of engagement with learning (appropriate representative/s will be recruited to the Board and there will be regular attendance at Board meetings)
- There will be evidence of partnership activity (such as consultations at business functions) with the Business Growth and Sustainability Unit that result in focused and strategic business engagement with educational partners, demonstrated by new and or strengthened partnerships and initiatives
- There will be an increase in the number of locally employed apprentices and trainees and an increase in local vocational placements for students.
Support and stimulate local institutions and providers of education and training to plan and deliver a comprehensive range of high quality learning opportunities.

Objective:
To support and stimulate adult and community learning providers to provide an increased number of relevant and responsive learning activities, programs and courses.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME 1
Comprehensive and leading edge provision of a diverse range of learning opportunities that embrace technology, motivate learning and meet the demands of individuals, enterprises and the community. Programs and initiatives will demonstrate current good practice and be responsive to 21st Century learning needs and styles.

Why this objective is important
As the pace of change has escalated, so has the rate at which the need for the development of new skills and knowledge becomes vital. Amongst the new competencies required are strong skills in thinking and reasoning, in teamwork and in the use of technology. People are increasingly required to adapt to changing labour market requirements. Likewise, learning providers need to ensure that they offer relevant, accessible programs in flexible formats that meet not only labour market objectives, but also people’s changing learning demands.

The US 21st Century Workforce Commission describes the new competencies required for effective participation in communities in the 21st Century as learning, citizenship, relating to people, managing situations and managing information.

Strategies to meet this objective
- Facilitating discussion at both the Community Learning Board level and within the broader community on current good practice and future demand, to assist partners plan and develop relevant programs. (This could include discussion papers, guest presenters at Community Learning Board meetings and conducting or participating in a range of community forums such as ‘On Track’ briefings, business breakfasts, conferences and seminars)
- Ensuring that the Community Learning Board is well linked with relevant local, national and international practitioners and networks to provide high quality ongoing input into local plans and strategies
- The Community Learning Board consulting (through local Learning Precincts) with the major learning providers to determine the effectiveness of current planning for learning
Support and stimulate (continued)

• The Community Learning Board adding value to proposals by local organisations for new programs by offering the support of existing and future stakeholder partnerships working collaboratively to increase participation in lifelong learning

• The Community Learning Board consulting with its members to determine current barriers imposed by infrastructure limitations (such as transport, accessibility to premises, access to the internet and broadband capability) and reporting on the impact of the barriers to learning to relevant Units in Council and State and Federal Government departments with recommendations for improvement.

How will we know we have succeeded?

• Community Learning Board meeting notes will record regular and active contribution by presenters and discussion of current trends in lifelong learning

• The Learning Directory will reflect an increase in the range, style and extent of learning programs by the relevant partners

• Community Learning Board meeting notes will reflect that new learning proposals demonstrating good practice (by being responsive to demand; based on evidence and supported by partnerships brokered by the Community Learning Board) have been submitted to funding bodies as opportunities arise

• Community indicators will reflect improvements in infrastructure supporting participation in lifelong learning: (ref www.communityindicators.net.au/wellbeing_reports)

• There will be increased community use of existing public internet facilities and there will be increased provision of these facilities.

Objective:

To lift the level of post-compulsory educational achievement in the Shire to at least the metropolitan average.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME 2

An improved level of achievement in post-compulsory educational outcomes by residents of the Shire of Melton.

Why this objective is important

Currently, Melton’s post-compulsory educational outcomes are equivalent to the Victorian average, although at the lower end of the metropolitan attainment. Levels of transition from school to higher education are very low. It is important to note however, that participation and achievement levels in VET and the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) are stronger than Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) measures, and are at, or slightly above the State average.

Community Learning Board partners are already engaged in implementing a regional youth commitment, Western Youth Futures.

Recommendation:

The Board will encourage Council to lead the engagement of all key stakeholders in committing to Western Youth Futures and its goals to improve retention and effective transition from school
to employment, vocational training or further education.

Improving school retention and achievement in the Shire will improve the opportunities for citizens to experience an improved quality of life, to have genuine choices and to play a part in creating a community that is desirable, viable and competitive.

Strategies to meet this objective

- The Community Learning Board recommending that Council’s Leadership team invite all relevant stakeholders to sign the Western Youth Futures Memorandum of Understanding by the end of 2008
- The Community Learning Board supporting all local schools to develop and provide responsive educational programs that result in enhanced learning outcomes.
- Through its learning partners, the Community Learning Board continuing to support strategies of the Melton Education Project, aimed at improving student retention, engagement and achievement, particularly through the expansion of vocational education and training pathways
- The Community Learning Board assisting and encouraging its partners and stakeholders to build their skills in demonstrating good practice. This could be achieved by the partners employing evidence-based strategic planning through the Board, to encourage participation in opportunities for relevant data collection, reporting, discussion and analysis. Reporting by participants to the Community Learning Board on such activity could be improved.
- The Community Learning Board developing the range of educational options through encouraging partners to engage in initiatives that may include:
  - Implementation of the Student at Risk Mapping Tool
  - Vocational pathways initiatives such as the Western Edge Cluster and Beacon
  - Intervention programs such as Community and Learning Melton (CaLM), Kinder Kinder, Kinder College and CHALLENGE
  - Community VCAL
- Data sources the Community Learning Board could use for planning and to encourage partners to do the same could include:
  - Reports from the Student at Risk Mapping Tool
  - Findings of Victoria University’s ‘Aspirations Project’
Support and stimulate (continued)

- Annual ‘On Track’ reports
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reports on educational attainment
- The Community Learning Board supporting appropriate stakeholder proposals and initiatives aimed at improving retention and engagement of young people in learning or training, including prioritised commitment to:
  - CaLM
  - Enhancement of partnership engagement in the Melton Township Learning Precinct
  - Learning@Caroline
- The Community Learning Board establishing a working party to explore ways to identify relevant partners and opportunities for a specifically targeted effort to improve student achievement and address skill shortages. This may comprise a specific community-wide initiative driven by the Community Learning Board or recommendations for a proposal by community partners. Consultations and data reveals that current local issues to be addressed are:
  - Low numbers of students going on to University
  - Shortage of engineers
  - Shortage of health practitioners
  - Low participation of young people in Transport, Distribution and Logistics industries
  - Low participation in Science courses at University
  - Generally low community skills and knowledge in Maths and Science
- Using the Marketing Plan of the Community Learning Board to promote the benefits of learning to the lifelong growth and capacity building of individuals.

How will we know we have succeeded?

- There will be comprehensive formal commitment to Western Youth Futures by the end of 2008
- Retention to Year 12 or its equivalent will increase between 2008 and 2010
- The gap between levels of VCE and VET achievement in Melton and metropolitan levels will be reduced between 2008 and 2010
- Increasing enrolments in VCAL will indicate that it continues to be regarded as a desirable post-compulsory program with effective outcomes
- Community Learning Board support will assist the CaLM program to become sustainable by 2010
- At least two Learning Precincts will be operating effectively in Melton Township and the Eastern Growth Corridor by end of 2009
- Schools will be supported, stimulated and encouraged in their efforts to increase local student participation in University level Science and Maths between 2008 and 2010
- All learning providers in the Shire of Melton will be supported in alignment of vocational course provision with skill shortages from 2008.
Support and stimulate (continued)

Objective:
To identify groups with particular learning needs and support, broker or facilitate the development of programs targeted to those groups.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME 3
To increase participation by people and groups that are not engaged as active lifelong learners in order to strengthen and sustain the community.

Why this objective is important
People of all ages face periods of transition and many face these periods without assistance so that they do not manage them as well as they might. Participation is about more that just getting by. People who are engaged in learning can be less severely disconnected, and less likely to reinforce prejudice and ignorance and are likely to be more able to contribute to their community (Vinson: 2004: Community Adversity and Resilience).

Strategies to meet this objective
• Identifying and addressing any gaps in the Community Learning Board’s representation to enhance the engagement by groups with particular needs with the goals of the Learning Plan (eg. Community Learning Board consultation has identified the Police as an important new strategic partner)
• The Community Learning Board supporting increased participation by older adults in learning activities through:
  • Advocating to the Community Centres and appropriate Units within Council for focused initiatives such as a Shire-wide co-ordinated Men’s Shed Program
  • Brokering partnerships to develop intergenerational initiatives that capitalise on existing resources such as Best Start, Kinder Kinder, Kinder College and U3A (eg. an ‘Eight to Eighty’ project)
• The Community Learning Board supporting increased participation by people newly arrived to Australia under migration plans through:
  • Advocating for and supporting partnerships that will assist newly arrived families settle in the community
  • Advocating for and supporting partners in increasing provision of Community VCAL, CHALLENGE, English as a Second Language (ESL) and other appropriate programs to re-engage, train or retain young people ‘at risk’
• The Community Learning Board supporting increased participation of people of all abilities through:
Support and stimulate (continued)

- Brokering partnerships between specialist service providers and other partners such as Community Houses, Universities and businesses
- Carrying out recommendations of the Marketing Plan by consulting with sporting, cultural and service club representatives to determine possible future partnerships for expanded learning opportunities
- The Community Learning Board supporting increased participation by other groups identified above in a manner appropriate to people of all abilities.

How will we know we have succeeded?

- Representation on the Community Learning Board of groups with particular needs will be strengthened by the addition of at least one new member in 2008 (shown in meeting records)
- Learning providers will report increased numbers of people of all abilities, (older adults, new arrivals and other identified groups) engaged in learning activities
- At least one new specific initiative targeting a high needs cohort will be established by the end of 2009 by Community Learning Board partners as a result of Community Learning Board advocacy
- The number and or capacity of current intervention programs will increase
- The numbers of young people attempting VCE studies in year 12 will increase
- The numbers of young people disengaging from school, vocational training and employment will decrease by 2010.
Advocate for the provision of facilities appropriate for a range of community learning activities.

Objective:
To explore the creation of a new and separate category in Council’s Community Grants Scheme, dedicated to the development and enhancement of lifelong learning.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME 1
Extended provision of facilities for lifelong learning activities, including multi-purpose spaces and Learning Shops. This will include a focus on opportunities for partnerships and innovative models of integration, co-location and shared facilities.

Why this objective is important.
Individual funding bodies often develop their strategic intent in isolation. This objective aims to maximise the impact of all relevant funding grants by aligning them with the engagement goals and strategies of Council through the Community Learning Board (eg. this could be facilitated by Council allocating a proportion of the total amount of money available through its Community Grants Scheme for the development and enhancement of lifelong learning provision across the municipality).

Strategies to meet this objective
- The Community Learning Board establishing a working party to liaise with the Council’s Community Grants Scheme Officer to prepare a proposal advocating that a proportion of community funding grants be quarantined for an ‘Enhancement of Lifelong Learning’ category. (The proposal will specify the intent and scope of the new category)
- The Community Learning Board adding value to proposals from applicants for such grants by offering the support of existing and future stakeholder partnerships that work collaboratively to increase participation in lifelong learning. (In the immediate future, this includes focused commitment to Victoria University’s plans to establish Learning Shops in the region).
How will we know we have succeeded?

- The Community Learning Board will liaise with Council’s Community Funding Scheme Officer to ensure that a report on the scope and nature of community funding grants is tabled annually.

- A proportion of Community Funding Grants will be devoted to the development and enhancement of lifelong learning. This proportion will be calculated and the appropriateness of its level discussed by the Community Learning Board.

- Reports will indicate that innovative models of co-operation have been developed resulting in expanded provision of lifelong learning activity.

- At least one Learning Shop (or other partnership facility) will be established in the Shire by 2010.

Objective:

To advocate for the development or enhancement of the physical and social infrastructure in new and emerging growth areas, to increase available learning spaces and opportunities for local participation in lifelong learning activities.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME 2

A built environment that provides and supports a range of learning opportunities supported and developed by stakeholders in partnership.

Why this objective is important

This objective aims to support Council in fostering lifelong learning opportunities as it works with consultants and developers in new growth areas and aims to strengthen the commitment of local business to building a culture that values lifelong learning as critical to community enhancement.

The Community Learning Board supports and advocates the innovative use, development and availability of facilities outside the mainstream provision of educational services and facilities.

Achievement of this objective would demonstrate the impact of ‘whole of community’ strategic alignment and partnership by Community Learning Board stakeholders.
Strategies to meet this objective

- Investigating points of alignment between this objective of the Community Learning Board and the plans of the Business Growth and Sustainability Unit to strengthen strategies that will influence developers to incorporate into their plans the provision of facilities that can accommodate community lifelong learning activities including:
  - Consulting with developer representatives through Community Learning Board meetings and participating in relevant Business Growth and Sustainability Unit activities to better understand the developer perspective, including perceived barriers to engaging with this objective.
  - Including developer contributions in the design and construction of facilities for community use and ensuring that these facilities are ‘lifelong learning’ friendly
  - Advocating (on the basis of these consultations) that Council’s Business Growth and Sustainability Unit builds into negotiations with developers, agreements that underpin developer commitment to providing community accessible lifelong learning facilities

- Through existing and new Learning Precincts, developing partnerships with key learning providers (Victoria University, Djerriwarrh Employment and Education Services and other learning providers) to enhance the scope and scale of learning provision and to improve access to high quality community learning programs (such as expanding community activity at Melton Campus of Victoria University).

How will we know we have succeeded?

- The findings of relevant consultations with developers will be reported and tabled to the Community Learning Board for discussion
- New development plans will include facilities that accommodate community lifelong learning activities
- The Melton Campus of Victoria University will be retained and enhanced as a community learning asset
- New and existing key learning providers will be encouraged and supported to provide learning opportunities in new growth areas, using existing infrastructure and developing their own infrastructure.
Evaluate

Evaluate the impact of the Community Learning Board’s goals and strategies to ensure its plans remain current and effective.

Objectives:

To determine and review the effectiveness of the Community Learning Board annually.

To evaluate the impact of the Learning Precincts in relation to provision of lifelong learning and alignment with the goals of the Community Learning Board and to review their role and function so that they remain effective and relevant.

To report to Council the findings of the Annual Reviews.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME
An evidence base of the impact of the Community Learning Board and its key initiatives that can be used for future plans.

Why these objectives are important
A culture of on-going evaluation demonstrates good practice in strategic planning and partnership development that continues to identify and meet the needs of the community and continues to improve the potential for personal growth of residents and the development of the municipality as a whole, whilst enhancing the reputation of the municipality.

The evidence-base enables the Community Learning Board to draw conclusions, advocate for its strategy and resources and develop the next stages in its plan for the development of the Shire of Melton as an effective learning community. This will also assist the Community Learning Board to maintain currency with the changing learning needs of its community.

- Dedicating one meeting of the Community Learning Board annually, to update the ‘Measuring Impact’ Report on the Community Learning Board
- Considering the appropriateness of the ‘Measuring Impact’ Report in evaluating the Learning Precincts (either implementing it or investigating an alternative method of evaluation).
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