

Community Engagement Plan

Desired Outcome:

The Early Years Infrastructure Plan (2019-2029) (EYIP) development process seeks to develop an:

- approved and inclusive participatory process structure that provides the opportunity for participatory community and stakeholder engagement in developing key high level directions for the Early Years Infrastructure and Services Plan.
- agreed implementation plan that is supported by community and endorsed by Council

The EYIP will be developed in a number of stages, to:

- address in principle Council's role in the provision of infrastructure for early years services including existing standalone early years infrastructure typologies: education and care services for children 0-5 years (pre-school and childcare), playhouses and maternal and child health services
- develop municipal catchments using influences including strategic planning spatially defined areas, population density, socio-economic status, employment participation levels, travel time, travel mode and travel direction
- develop a model for EY population planning, describe triggers for infrastructure planning and redevelopment
- provide directions for the delivery of services and infrastructure in place across the municipality, and
- provide a description (typologies by community hierarchy) for future early years infrastructure, and
- develop a mechanisms (process / model / form of partnership agreement) for delivering ongoing partnership between Council and community service providers

Key Stakeholders:

Key stakeholders in the development of the EYIP include:

- All 0-5 years children
- All childcare service providers
- Maternal and Child Health Service and users
- Playhouse providers and users
- Community members who currently use services
- Community members with children 0-5 years
- Community members who have used services
- Community members likely to young children 0-5 years
- Allied health and wellbeing services providing services to children 0-5 years
- Council (Strategic Planners, Health and Wellbeing Planners, Community Planners, Community Infrastructure Plan developers, Early years staff, Maternal and Child Health Providers) , and
- Councillors
- Department of Education and Training (DET)

Target Users:

Targeted users of early years infrastructure include:

- Community members who currently use services
- Community members with children 0-5 years who will use early years infrastructure
- Community members likely to have children 0-5 years in the future
- Maternal and Child Health Service and users now and into the future
- Playhouse providers and users now and into the future
- Parent Committees of all early years services operating in Council buildings
- Providers of all other early years targeted services in the municipality more generally, and
- Community
- Council (for instance other departments like strategic planning, community infrastructure planning, Precinct 3-4 Eltham)

Framework for Consultation



Diagram 1 describes the proposed structural framework for consultation for the EY Infrastructure Plan development.

Project Governance

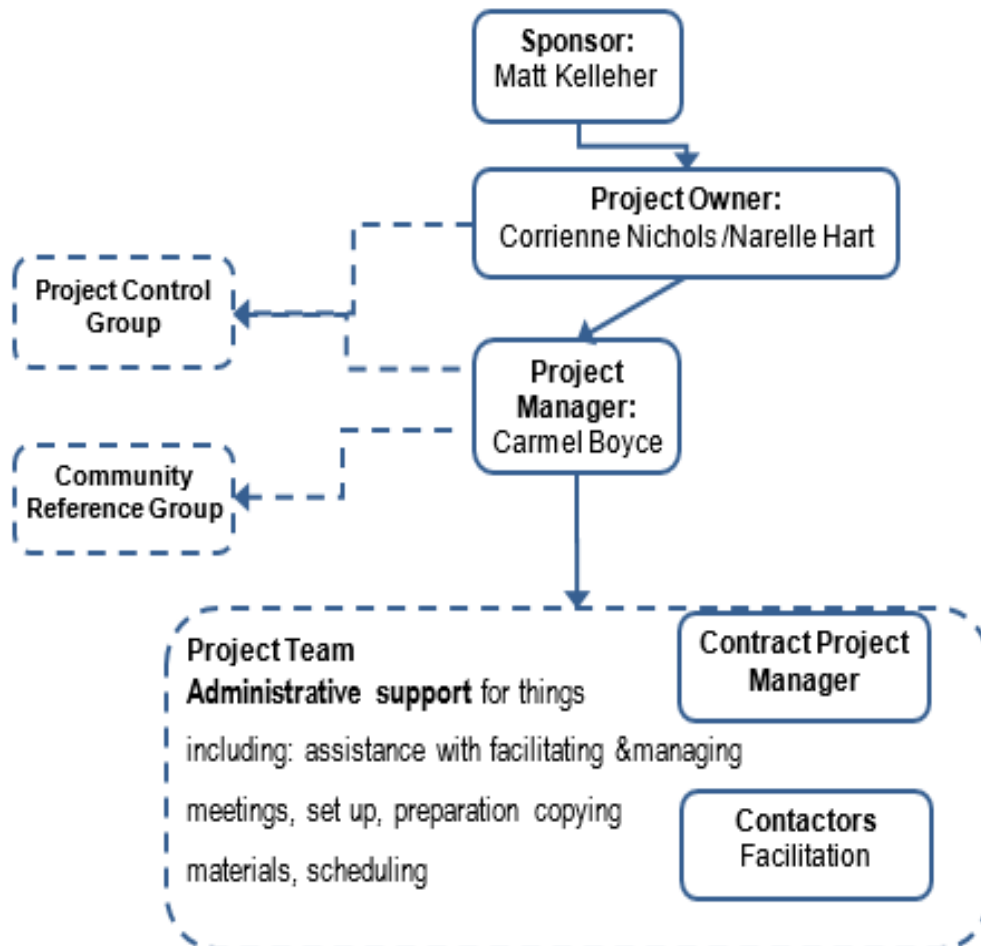
Project Control Group

The Project Control Group will comprise Corrienne Nichols, Narelle Hart and Carmel Boyce additionally Matt Kelleher as Project Sponsor and Christine Cooper, Coordinator of MCH.

This small internal PCG will sit over the top of the Community Reference Group to ensure progress and manage any project issues.

Inception meetings have been scheduled for once per fortnight. Availability will be considered in future scheduling.

Project Governance Model



Community Reference Group

The consultation model provides for the development of a Community Reference Group (CRG), chaired by the Portfolio Councillor CR Jane Ashton, of representatives from all communities in Nillumbik, and all sectors (private and community based, early years and childcare, maternal and child health and playgroups as well as the Department of Education and Training).

It is intended that some members will be nominated (representatives of DET Region as well as local primary schools with early years on site and M&CH), other members will be nominated by services, and others members of the community (past, current, future EY users or CoM) will be nominated through a public open and transparent process. The roles of members will be to represent the views of their community of interest, as well as to work collaboratively to assist in ensuring the Plan provides for sustainable early years services while responding to community needs and expectations.

The PRG will have a clear terms of reference (TOR).

The PRG will operate for the life of Plan development and implementation, as long as it is resourced.

The PRG will report into Council through the Project Manager and Directorate hierarchy.

The role of the PRG will be to:

- establish the principles for EY infrastructure development and delivery–
 - for development and delivery (the qualities of infrastructure, community locality hierarchies and which community gets what type of infrastructure, location and site attributes) and
 - management (how infrastructure is managed by Council through leases and service agreements, whether there is a broader role for collaboration than infrastructure provision (see below))
- monitor local consultation on the application of principles to township in development of the EY Infrastructure Plan
- Present the Plan to Council for endorsement and implementation, and
- Monitor the implementation of the Plan
- Report on implementation of the Plan to Council

Township Working Groups

Whereas the high level principles of the Plan will be established by the PRG, the practical implementation of the Plan will be influenced by the PRG in consultation with local area working groups.

Local working groups will work on developing responses to identified needs in place, thinking through the implications of current and future population projections, current enrolment demand and projections etc for future provision by type of infrastructure.

Local area working groups will be asked to specifically address how a township might maximise use and efficiency of local EY infrastructure and what this means for infrastructure development and delivery in place.

Township working groups will be asked to identify local sites that might meet locational attributes identified by the PRG and preferences for sites.

Consultation with professionals

In addition to township working groups the Project will facilitate a special session with professional staff engaged in related projects, and early years specific delivery to better understand the view of these user groups.

Stakeholder Analysis.

	How could this stakeholder ...			
Stakeholder	Impact the project?	Be impacted by the project?	Issues raised for this stakeholder	How will we engage this stakeholder?
All children 0-5 years	Child friendly principles could be employed in line with Council policy	Earlier or later delivery of modern fit for purpose early years infrastructure that supports quality learning outcomes, depending on desires and EYIP outcomes	Impact on learning outcomes over a lifetime	An opportunity to better understand what children want in early years in consultation with centres
	Opportunity to make a positive difference	Might need to go to a different service than they thought	What a future 0-5 years service might look like	Working with providers to understand aspirations of 0-5 years of age
All childcare service providers	Opportunity to make a positive difference	Recommendations may not be consistent with preferences	Potential closure of service	Participation in PRG Participation in township based working groups
All childcare service providers	n/a	Earlier or later delivery of modern fit for purpose early years infrastructure that supports quality learning outcomes, depending on desires and EYIP outcomes	Impact on learning outcomes over a lifetime	An opportunity to better understand what providers want for fit for purpose delivery
Maternal and Child Health Service and service users	Seeking to remain in standalone facilities	Earlier or later delivery of modern fit for purpose early years infrastructure that supports nurses and service users health safety and amenity, depending on desires and EYIP	Health safety and amenity	In consultation with team and coordinator

	How could this stakeholder ...			
Stakeholder	Impact the project?	Be impacted by the project?	Issues raised for this stakeholder	How will we engage this stakeholder?
		outcomes		
	Opportunity to make a positive difference	Recommendations may not be consistent with preferences	Potential closure of service	Participation in PRG Participation in township based working groups
Community members who currently use services	Being unsettled – may cause confusion, anxiety and the idea that a service might close in the future is likely to have an impact on numbers attracted to the service in the short term so might create viability issues	Earlier or later delivery of modern fit for purpose early years infrastructure that supports quality learning outcomes, depending on desires and EYIP outcomes	Impact on learning outcomes for their children over a lifetime	In PRG and township consultation
Community members with children 0-5 years	Being unsettled Being put off attending Council owned early years facility	Earlier or later delivery of modern fit for purpose early years infrastructure that supports quality learning outcomes, depending on desires and EYIP outcomes	Impact on learning outcomes for their children over a lifetime	In PRG and township consultation
Community members who have used services	Being critical of change in services they have used and loved in the past	Earlier or later delivery of modern fit for purpose early years infrastructure that supports quality learning outcomes, depending on desires and EYIP outcomes	Tradition, connection to place, future practice if they have additional children into the future	In PRG and township consultation
Community	Being unsettled	Earlier or later	Impact on	In PRG and

	How could this stakeholder ...			
Stakeholder	Impact the project?	Be impacted by the project?	Issues raised for this stakeholder	How will we engage this stakeholder?
members likely to children 0-5 years	Being put off attending Council owned early years facility	delivery of modern fit for purpose early years infrastructure that supports quality learning outcomes, depending on desires and EYIP outcomes	learning outcomes for their children over a lifetime	township consultation
Allied health and wellbeing services providing services to children 0-5 years	Opportunity to participate in childrens' service hubs	Opportunity to participate in childrens' service hubs	Service coordination	In PRG
Council (Strategic Planners, Health and Wellbeing Planners, Community Planners, Community Infrastructure Plan developers, Early years staff, Maternal and Child Health Providers)	Infrastructure and service planning and land use coordination	Opportunity to participate in developing physical and locational attributes of services	Consistency with other spatial and infrastructure planning	Cross Council consultation
Councillors	Political Influence	Lobbying by stakeholders for preferential treatment	Acceptance by the community Affordability of the plan	Councillor Chair of PRG Councillor participation in township based working groups Reports to Council
DET	Other government funding or planning decisions may be pertinent to the Plan	Priorities may be different and Council may need to be flexible in order to benefit from other opportunities that arise in partnership	Capacity of Council to deliver on Plan in partnership	Work with the Regional Office Planning Provision Manager from DET Work with VSBA IFSD (Provision Planning), and

Stakeholder	How could this stakeholder ...		Issues raised for this stakeholder	How will we engage this stakeholder?
	Impact the project?	Be impacted by the project?		
				PPU (Policy and Priorities), Relocation Planning to better understand decision-making priorities

Key Issues

Issue	Why the Issue is Important	Plan to Deal with the Issue
Community management and control	Community based committees of management have controlled early years infrastructure for much of the last 50 years	Deliberative decision making process that is about a plan for a community rather than a plan for a centre Decision making that maps pathways to collaboration between services
Community outrage	Could undermine the entire process	Deliberative decision making process that is about a plan for a community rather than a plan for a centre
Councillor interference	For the EYIP to be delivered successfully and accepted it has to be seen to be above interference and a priority or a tool of one group over another	To limit the role of Councillors through development of Terms of Reference for PCG, PRG and Township Groups To accept the role of Councillors as decision makers in the Council Chamber
Attitudes to service providers	For years we have built a particular picture of early years providers. As far as is possible we need to begin this process with goodwill and open minds	Provide staff an appropriate opportunity to participate in the professional stakeholder engagement To provide the opportunity to watch, participate and support open township sessions but not contribute personal or professional views in these forums
Places where there is no current provision	In places in the municipality where there are no early years services provided outcomes for early years are lowest.	The Plan must address the issue of universal access beyond addressing our current infrastructure provision
Where the Plan diverges from evidence based recommendations	It is possible that in some instances the EYIP will differ from professional recommendations	Understand the merit of alternate recommendations and be sufficiently flexible to change our minds as required

Identified Risks & Minimisation Costs

Key Risk	Minimisation strategy
The PRG cannot come to high level consensus on the principles that should govern early years infrastructure provision	<p>Ensure that all sessions have the opportunity to sort and rank desired attributes and outcomes</p> <p>Ensure that consultation outcomes report is published and canvasses all issues raised and acknowledges all participation</p>
Township groups cannot come to agreement on short medium and long term plan for the locality	<p>Ensure that all townships have basic material for informed decision making to underpin informed outcomes</p> <p>Ensure that in decision making the township has the opportunity to sort and rank recommendations</p> <p>Ensure that consultation outcomes report is published and canvasses all issues raised and acknowledges all participation</p>
Despite having a clear and transparent process some members of the community are unhappy with the outcomes	<p>Ensure that all project materials and reports are attached to the website and distributed at the earliest opportunity</p> <p>Ensure that all materials distributed as closely as possible reflect the content of the meeting and decisions made</p> <p>Ensure that photos are available of the process and deliberation tools used</p>