

Youth Projects Update

TO	Mercury Bay Community Board
FROM	Marlene Perry and Cathy Klouwens - Community Development Officers
DATE	03 February 2015
SUBJECT	Youth Projects Update

1 Purpose of Report

To inform the Mercury Bay Community Board of Youth Projects being undertaken District wide.

There are three key project areas which will be outlined in this report including:

- The Thames-Coromandel Youth Strategy
- Youth Employment - Future Action Network
- Value 4 Youth - Volunteering and Achievement Awards

Each project has a youth lead, a youth organising committee , youth support advocates from a range of organisations, and involvement from Thames Coromandel District Council staff- in particular the Community Development Officers.

2 Background

The Thames Coromandel District Council supports youth projects and engages with youth in a variety of ways which are outlined below.

2.1 Thames Coromandel District Council Youth Strategy

Thames-Coromandel District Council has taken a key agency leadership role in developing a Youth Strategy which identifies a vision for what we hope young people can achieve in the Coromandel. TCDC is working with the Coromandel Youth Collective to progress the strategy into an action plan and to gain a youth voice at a democratic level.

The purpose of the Strategy is to:

- Bring agencies together
- Share information and expertise to provide both a local and district-wide picture
- Consider alignment between national priorities, local practice and current delivery of youth projects
- Identify gaps in service provision
- Identify and create opportunities for youth
- Focus collective resources where possible.

The Vision of the Youth Strategy that the Coromandel is a place where:

- Young people are safe and valued
- Their voices are heard

- Their issues and needs are understood
- Local work opportunities are available and interesting
- And finally, for those that leave, that the Coromandel is a place that they have their roots and would be happy to return and live.

Coromandel Youth Collective and Upcoming Annual Camp Event

The Coromandel Youth Collective consists of youth and agency representatives from wards throughout the Coromandel Peninsula who advocate for youth. The Collective meets throughout the year and also holds an annual camp event.

As a member of the Collective the Thames Youth Centre hosted a visit from the Youth Minister Nikki Kaye in 2014. During the visit Youth were represented from throughout the District to discuss their main issues and activities that they are involved in. The Minister was impressed with the projects the youth were engaged in, and suggested future funding for service volunteers.

The Coromandel Youth Collective holds an annual Camp. The Collectives 2015 annual meeting will be held at the Miranda Hot Pools, Saturday 21 February 2015. 2-4pm

2.2 Coromandel Youth Surveys 2013

Evaluation reports have recently been released by Population Health for the Thames-Coromandel District. The surveys were conducted in 2013 with an age group of 12-20 year olds. A total of 788 responses were received by Population Health.

Some of the key findings of the youth survey included the following:

- 60% of respondents felt their community was youth friendly
- 40% of those surveyed still felt that their district was non-youth friendly because there was nothing to do, they were sick of the same old things and some felt unsafe because of crime, violence and intimidation.
- some respondents felt there was a lack of youth focussed facilities, shops and activities.
- the biggest and most current issue for youth was the use of legal and illegal drugs and a lack of motivation due to boredom
- 63.22% of respondents felt that it was still important for young people to be involved in decision making in matters that affects them
- Seeking a youth voice and perspective during planning and implementation phases of projects was significant for them.

2.3 Youth Employment - Future Action Network Project

Thames Coromandel District Council Economic Development Committee has supported a District Wide project to encourage youth employment on the Coromandel. Thames Community Development Officer, Marlene Perry is providing the key lead for council on this project.

Development of the Future Action Network

TCDC is working closely with a range of key partners including Smart Waikato (www.smartwaikato.co.nz) who have developed a project called the Future Action Network which encourages connections between youth, employers, training providers and industry training organisations.

Future Action Network provides a series of programmes and events that bring youth, employers and training providers together in a series of events and workshops to identify the key needs from each of these sectors. The aim of the network is to increase employment opportunities for youth in the district.

Currently the Future Action Network is supported by funds from Smart Waikato who have contributed \$5,000 from Ministry of Social Development Funding, \$3,000 from Smart Environmental Ltd and \$1,000 from Ministry of Youth Development / TCDC funding.

Future Action Network Upcoming Event

A Future Action Networking event is being held in Thames on 29th April 5.30pm - 7.30pm. The purpose of the event is to discuss ways to address youth unemployment, skills shortages and to identify how to retain young people in the District.

The event is:

- Free to attend
- Supported by TCDC and Smart Environmental
- It will be hosted by a high profile, local employer (Toyota's Thames Vehicle Operations)
- The event is for all employers and hiring managers regardless of size of business (educators, local government representatives and local community groups interested in youth unemployment or education-employment transitions are also encouraged to attend)
- It provides the opportunity to network with people who have direct access to young talent
- Attendees will have access to free resources and contacts to successfully transition young people into the workplace, hear inspirational stories from other employers already engaged with youth and from young people early in their careers

2.4 Recognising and Celebrating Youth in the District

Value 4 Youth: Youth Achievement Awards Event and Youth Volunteering

Thames-Coromandel District Council has received \$20,000 funding from the Ministry of Youth Development in this financial year to establish youth volunteering projects and a youth achievements awards event in the District.

The funding has been allocated as follows:

\$10,000	Is being distributed equally between five wards for travel and volunteering projects (\$2,000 per ward)
\$2,000	For training opportunities with Volunteer Waikato or similar to encourage youth to volunteer and be informed about the parameters of volunteering
\$6,000	Achievement Awards Event - venue, marketing, advertising, the event itself, music, etc.,
\$2,000	To assist with initiatives which support youth
\$20,000	Total expenditure

The Youth Achievement Award Categories are:

- **Young Creative Award for Artist Expression** - young people who have made an outstanding contribution in the arts, culture, music, dance and performance
- **Helping Hand Award for Community Service** - young people who have volunteered in order to improve the community

- **Green Thumb Award for Environmental Care** - young people who have completed environmental projects improving protection, conservation, and/or sustainability
- **Kia Kaha Award for Perseverance** - young people who have overcome challenges in order to improve the community
- **Legend Award for Leadership** - young people who have demonstrated great leadership in projects that have improved the community
- **The People's Choice Award for Excellence** - this award is chosen from all nominations in all categories

The Criteria for the Awards

All activities of nominees must have been completed within the last two years (March 2013 to March 2015). Nomination systems are currently being researched and Youth Project applications are available from the Community Development Officer Thames.

Youth Achievement Awards Event Date

A formal ceremony for the Youth Achievement Awards will be held on Saturday 23 May 2.30-5pm, Thames War Memorial Hall (Civic Centre).

3 Issue

Mercury Bay Community Board has over the last year taken an active role in youth development in the following ways:

- Development and support of Sport and Recreation Facilities - particularly at the Mercury Bay Multi Sport Park and Mercury Bay Community pool
- Funding of community projects with a youth focus through the contestable funding round
- Support of events on council reserves
- Development of closer relationships with agencies and organisations working with youth - particularly Mercury Bay Area School and the Youth Space team.

All these facilities and services above benefit youth and encourage young families to live, stay, work and engage in activities in the Mercury Bay Area.

4 Discussion

Thames-Coromandel Peninsula can lose a quarter to a third of its youth each year - the aim of these initiatives is to encourage youth to have a sense of belonging, through volunteering, achievement awards and youth employment. In the long term this will increase the economic development of our District.

Community Board members and Councillors play a significant role in getting to know our youth and their aspirations which can be easily met by attending various youth events, listening to them and finding ways of elevating a youth voice to Board meetings.

5 Suggested Resolution(s)

That the Mercury Bay Community Board:

1. Receives the report

2. The Board nominates a Board member(s) to be an advocate for The Thames-Coromandel Youth Strategy, Youth Employment and the Value 4 Youth - volunteering and Achievement Awards activities.