

GASCOYNE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Shire of Carnarvon Community Consultation Summary

Carnarvon Community Safety and Wellbeing Action Plan | 2020

The Carnarvon Community Safety and Wellbeing Action Plan discusses the challenges faced by the community of Carnarvon and recommends available resources and strategies to address the issues raised. Key challenges identified in this plan include mental health, employment, racism, support services, housing, and youth engagement. The plan recommends several strategies such as the creation of community emergency responses and safeguarding actions, family strengthening initiatives, mentoring programs, employment and training strategies, and youth summits. The importance of local facilities such as safe spaces, community centers, and sports facilities were highlighted. Community-wide coordination of service providers and engagement initiatives were identified as key starting points for the implementation of these strategies.

Carnarvon Community Forum Feedback | 2020

The Carnarvon Community Forum Feedback document is a brief table summarising a list of identified issues in Carnarvon, the local services available, and the proposed solutions. This document separates issues into seven key issues: health, culture, services, education and employment, family and community, poverty, and law and justice.

Shire of Carnarvon Strategic Community Plan | 2022-2032

The Shire of Carnarvon Strategic Community Plan is a summary of issues identified in the Shire of Carnarvon and proposes strategies to address them. Key issues identified in this plan include youth crime and engagement, drug and alcohol use, family violence and community safety. As a strategic plan, several key initiatives have been recommended to address the aforementioned issues. These include youth patrols, ranger programs, road safety improvements, elder groups, youth engagement programs, community bus services, and education programs.

Intensive Family and Community Intervention | 2022-2023

The Intensive Family and Community Intervention strategy discusses the development and implementation of a proposed *Intensive Family and Community Intervention (IFCI)* to address youth crime and antisocial behaviour. The IFCI will have an *Intervention Task Force* which will provide intensive support for at-risk youth and families. This proposed task force can provide service coordination, resources, recovery support, and guidance. In this document, the flaws of the existing T120 program have been mentioned.

Gascoyne Aboriginal Youth Collective Impact Plan | 2022

This document discusses the Aboriginal Youth Working Group and the establishment of the *Empowering Future Leaders* initiative which aimed to provide a culturally safe space for emerging Aboriginal youth to develop their leadership skills. The Collective Impact Plan was created to provide a platform for Aboriginal youth to voice their concerns and opinions and be a part of the decision-making processes relevant to them. This plan outlined eight key priorities: Young People and Families, Culture and Connection, Health, Housing, Education, Employment and Training, Alcohol and Substance Misuse, and Service Delivery and Access

Social Reinvestment WA Consultation Feedback | 2023

The Social Reinvestment WA Consultation Feedback document is a community feedback consultation that summarises Carnarvon into three categories: *What are the good things happening*, *Some of the top priorities*, and *Your vision for Carnarvon community*.

The good things happening in Carnarvon were identified as: People, Places, Environment, Programs and Services.

Top priorities were identified as: Smart Justice, Helping Kids to Thrive, Collaboration and Accountability, Meeting Everyone's Needs, Healing and Wellbeing, Overcoming Addiction, and Safe Homes and Families.

Regarding *Your vision for Carnarvon community*, topics identified were: Collaborating and Working Together, For Our Kids, Healing, Strong Culture, Family, Having the Basics Covered, and Leading Our Own Future.

Carnarvon Community Alcohol & Other Drugs Action Plan 2024-2027

The Carnarvon Community Alcohol and Other Drugs Action Plan has identified several key issues that have been affecting Carnarvon. The plan highlights objectives, actions items and timelines in addressing these issues. There are two parts to the plan, each with six and three priorities respectively. Part A discusses Structural, Social and Environmental Determinants of Wellbeing and Health.

The priorities for Part A in summary are: Registering a formal Local Action Drug Team, reducing stigma and discrimination against drug and alcohol affected people, improving child and family engagement in education, advocating for housing to reduce overcrowding, improving health literacy and access to health services.

The priorities for Part B in summary are: Reducing domestic and family violence, reducing alcohol and other drug related harm, and preventing and responding to FASD.

Midwest Gascoyne District Leadership Group Sub-committee | 2023

This subcommittee meeting discussed community issues with representatives from: WA Police, Shire of Carnarvon, Regional Alliance West, Carnarvon Men's Group, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, Aboriginal Medical Service, PCYC, Community Alcohol and Drug Service, Department of Communities, and the National Indigenous Australians Agency. Key community issues identified from the meeting were: Youth crime and engagement, alcohol and drug use, domestic violence, Aboriginal overrepresentation in justice, and community health.

Key Identified Issues in Carnarvon

A review of six community plans, and a sub-committee meeting has identified the primary concerns of the Carnarvon Community. These concerns can be categorised into four key pillars: Health, Education, Justice, and Community. Within these pillars are ongoing issues that recur in the community plans.

Health

- Mental Health and Counselling
- Access to health services
- Alcohol and drug abuse

Education

- Youth engagement and school attendance
- Out of school programs
- Cultural education programs

Justice

- Youth crime
- Family violence
- Rehabilitation

Community

- Housing availability
- Service provider access
- Employment opportunities

Statistics

To highlight the importance of these key issues, the below terms in *Table 1* appeared in the above documents the following number of times:

Table 1 Term Occurrence in Carnarvon Community Documents Included in This Summary

Term	Occurrence
Health Terms (Total)	277
Mental Health	24
Counselling	8
Suicide	9
Health Service	14

Alcohol	116
Drug	95
Meth/Methylamphetamine	1
Hospital	10
Education Terms (Total)	179
Education	59
Culture	20
School	64
Training	33
Disengagement	3
Justice Terms (Total)	87
Youth Crime	8
Rehabilitation	3
Family and Domestic Violence	21
Prison	7
Police	28
Justice	20
Community Terms (Total)	182
Service Provider	23
Housing	43
Employment	29
Unemployment	1

Health

Mental Health and Counselling

Mental Health has been identified as a key contributor to suicide rates in Carnarvon. The stigma and shame surrounding mental health, alongside the unavailability of a 24/7 support service has been attributed to rates of mental health crises. Mental health was identified as a priority issue in the Gascoyne Aboriginal Youth Collective Impact Plan, and a lack of specialists was identified as an issue in the Community Forum Feedback. It was also mentioned as a top priority in the Social Reinvestment Consultation Feedback and Carnarvon Community Alcohol and Other Drugs Actions Plan. Most plans identified a need for adequate counselling services in dealing with grief and mental health.

Access to Health Services

Health services have been identified in particular by the Youth Collective Impact Plan and Alcohol and Other Drugs Action Plan. Access to health services has been attributed to increased sexual education, alcohol and drug treatment, and mental health support. Specifically, access to age-appropriate health services for youth was considered to be a shortfall.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Alcohol and drugs have appeared most of all issues in these community plans. There is community wide support for the implementation of more alcohol and drug treatment services. The restriction of alcohol sales was attributed to less crime on Sundays and Mondays by WAPOL representatives in the sub-committee meeting. The exploitation of at-risk youth and the proliferation of family violence was attributed to alcohol and drug abuse in the IFCI plan. The Alcohol and Other Drugs Action Plan, led by WACHS-MWG and Professor Steve Allsop is dedicated to education and treatment of substance misuse in Carnarvon.

Education

Youth Engagement and School Attendance

Youth engagement has been identified as key to promoting school attendance and addressing youth behavioural issues in Carnarvon. The IFCI plan suggests the implementation of two police officers and youth engagement officers, and the Youth Collective Impact Plan suggests the employment of Youth Engagement Officers. The T-120 program is focusing on re-engagement back in school for youth, and parental-engagement was identified as a mechanism for promoting school attendance in the Community Forum Feedback. The Strategic Community Plan recommended that WA police engage more with youth to combat truancy rates whilst the Alcohol and Other Drugs Action Plan believes the creation of youth-led initiatives and committees will empower youth to make positive change for themselves.

Out of School Programs



Out-of-school programs and initiatives were identified as a key mechanism in engaging Carnarvon's youth. The Alcohol and Other Drugs Action Plan strongly believes that these programs, alongside sports, will promote school attendance and reduce antisocial behaviour. The Strategic Community Plan believes before and after school care can also provide employment opportunities. The Shire of Carnarvon is working in partnership with organisations like Ngala to provide out of school youth programs.

Cultural Education Programs

The promotion of cultural education and heritage, particularly with Indigenous people, has been strongly advocated for by the Strategic Community Plan, Community Feedback, and Youth Collective Impact Plan. It is believed that culturally appropriate and relevant learning can help in the empowerment of Indigenous people and the teaching of respect in community.

Justice

Youth Crime

High youth crime was identified as an issue in the Community Feedback plan, IFCI plan and Youth Collective Impact Plan. Community members believe that WAPOL efforts are required to combat youth crime whilst the IFCI believes intensive engagement with the at-risk youth and their families is the only effective solution left. The Youth Collective Impact plan has stated that youth crime is attributed to family instability, family violence, homelessness, overcrowding, and substance misuse. By addressing other issues identified in this summary, youth crime is expected to drop, as it is a symptom of several pre-existing problems.

Family Violence

Family and Domestic violence was identified as a problem in the community in the Community Safety and Wellbeing Action Plan, Community Feedback plan, IFCI plan, Youth Collective Impact Plan, Alcohol & other Drugs Action Plan. Family violence has been attributed to drug and alcohol abuse, and systemic dysfunction in families. There is a lot of positive engagement in regard to combating family violence. The Regional Alliance West announced a *Leave Safe, Stay Safe* program for women victims of family violence, and the IFCI is targeting family violence as a priority for engagement with families. The Alcohol and Other Drugs Action Plan has recommended the establishment of awareness programs for Domestic Violence, particularly during the *16 Days in WA* period.

Rehabilitation

There is significant community interest in seeking alternative methods of punishment and rehabilitation of criminal offenders in Carnarvon. The Strategic Community Plan has suggested engaging Elders from the families of young offenders to reconnect with country and learn respect. The IFCI plan has suggested a similar approach, utilising an 'Circle Sentencing' model involving victims, family members and Elders in the delivery of punishment. The Youth Collective Impact Plan suggests a Rehabilitation and Wellbeing Centre for youth to reduce

reoffending. The Social Reinvestment Consultation Feedback has identified a desire for 'Smart Justice', which suggests alternatives to prison, ongoing support after prison, more support in court, a local Aboriginal court, and "stopping the revolving door". The *Leave Safe, Stay Safe* program announced by Regional Alliance West is focused on females leaving prison to protect against re-entering negative and unsafe environments.

Community

Housing Availability

Poor housing and overcrowding were identified as an issue in the Community Safety and Wellbeing Action Plan, Community Feedback plan, Strategic Community Plan, IFCI plan, Youth Collective Impact Plan, Social Reinvestment Consultation Feedback, and Alcohol and Other Drugs Action Plan. Key issues in housing were overcrowding in Department of Communities housing, waitlists to receive houses, and the quality of housing. Housing shortages were attributed to domestic violence and family dysfunction. There are recommendations for 'Safe space' houses dedicated to at-risk youth and family violence victims. Advocacy from community and government organisations has been identified as the only practicable solution to increasing housing allocations and availability.

Service Provider Access

The need for easier access to service providers has been identified in the Community Safety and Wellbeing Action Plan, Community Feedback plan, IFCI plan, Youth Collective Impact Plan, the sub-committee meeting, and Alcohol and Other Drugs Action Plan. A lack of access to service providers was attributed to a lack of available information, collaboration, and resources. Recommendations for solutions to access include the implementation of 'Service Provider Calendar', employment of an Information Officer, External service provider support, Cultural Awareness Training, and increased funding.

Employment Opportunities

A lack of local employment was identified in the Community Safety and Wellbeing Action Plan, Community Feedback plan, Strategic Community Plan, Youth Collective Impact Plan and Reinvestment Consultation Feedback. There are concerns that there is discrimination against employing local people due to the stigma surrounding crime and dysfunction in Carnarvon. This is believed to be attributed to racial divide and socioeconomic pressures. Lack of local employment has been attributed to an increased reliance on royalties, and an increase in antisocial behaviour in youths. Recommended solutions include local employment and training strategies, culturally tailored education and training, opening childcare facilities, implementing youth patrol and ranger programs, and better access to traineeships and alternative education programs. The Youth Collective Impact Plan has prioritised employment as a key issue in Carnarvon, and believes mentorships,

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available transport, paid work experience, a wider range of tertiary training are important in addressing employment rates in youth.

