



DIY LOCAL GOVERNMENT RENOVATION KIT

Building a better council
for young people



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This campaign kit is an updated version of YAPA's Turning Policy into Action, produced for the 2003 State Government elections.

The information contained in the "Making the media work for you" section was taken from *The Real Useful Media Kit* by Ettinger House 1996, and *Now the News In Detail* by Masterton & Patching Deakeun U Press 1990.

The information regarding dates of local Government elections was obtained from the State Electoral office website – www.seo.nsw.gov.au – and was correct at the time of printing.

The information contained in the "Enrolling to vote" section was drawn from information by the Australian Electoral Commission.

YAPA welcomes feedback on this campaign kit. Please forward comments to info@yapa.org.au



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About This Kit



This kit has been designed for young people and local youth networks by the Youth Action and Policy Association (YAPA). It contains ideas, information and resources to help you run a successful Local Government Election Campaign.

Essentially, it is up to individual youth services, workers and young people to decide how they want to use this kit. We have tried to present it in a way that encourages you to do as much or as little as you are able to, given the other demands on your time.

Most Local Government Elections will take place on Saturday 27 March 2004.

However, some local governments are considering merging and will hold elections on Saturday 18 December 2004. These include:

- Tamworth, Nundle, Parry and Manilla
- Severn and Glen Innes
- Bingara and Yallaroi

Also, the 10 councils have been redistributed to form 7 new councils. Elections for these areas will take place on Sat 1st May 2004. Check with the State Electoral office for more information if you are part of the 10 former council areas below:

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| • Cooma - Monaro | • Quenbeyan |
| • Crookwell | • Tallagonda |
| • Goulburn | • Tumut |
| • Gunning | • Yarrowlunla |
| • Mulwaree | • Yass |

AIMS OF THIS CAMPAIGN

By supporting local action campaigns on youth issues YAPA aims to achieve the following outcomes –

- Council candidates will gain awareness of the realities facing young people and of possible strategies to address their issues.
- Candidates will have an awareness of local youth workers, youth services and the services they provide.
- Young people will find out more about candidates and their views before they vote on election day.
- Young people and youth workers will be informed about how local government works and the process of elections.
- Young people and local Youth Councils will participate in the campaign and increase their participation in Council's decision making.
- Members of the general community will increase their awareness of issues affecting local young people.
- Councillors and the community will recognise young people as equal and valued citizens.

HOW GOVERNMENT WORKS

Representative government

The system of democracy can be traced back to the days of the early Greek Empire. Democracy literally means “the rule of the people”. In those days, all citizens (note: this did not include women or slaves) actively participated in deciding the best for their people by voting on all major issues. This was practical at the time because the number of citizens was small enough for everyone to assemble in one place and at one time.

In this day and age, it would be very difficult and impractical for everyone to vote on every single issue so instead we elect one person who will represent us when these types of decisions are made. These elected people come together to form the decision making body known as the Parliament. This system of government is known as representative democracy.

In practice, when we vote we are not only choosing the best person for the job but we are also choosing someone who we feel can best represent our needs and views when decisions are made about what is best for the community.

Australia has three levels of government, they are – Federal, State and Local Government. Each level has specific responsibilities.

| FEDERAL GOVERNMENT | STATE GOVERNMENT | LOCAL GOVERNMENT |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Higher education | Hospitals | Parks |
| Immigration | Environment | Town Planning |
| Communications | School Education | Libraries |
| Defence | Police | New Buildings |
| Aboriginal Affairs | Transport | Local Roads |
| Currency | Urban Planning | Waste |
| Trade | Energy | Community Venues |
| Medicare | Tourism | Swimming Pools |
| Advertising | Juvenile Justice | Recreation |
| Imports & Exports | State Roads | Rates |
| Community Services | Community Services | Community Services |

Table 1

Role Of Councillors

Local Councils are managed by a group of elected people called Councillors, who are usually elected every four years at Council elections.

To be eligible to nominate and stand as a candidate, you must be at least 18 years of age and be enrolled to vote in the local area. Most Local Government Areas (LGAs) are divided into wards or districts with a set number of councillors elected from each ward. In other LGAs, the area is not divided into wards so all Councillors represent the whole LGA.

Councillors are responsible for making decisions about local issues in the area. Councils operate to meet the needs of all people in their community, not just ratepayers. In deciding what is best for the community, Councillors should consider the needs of all age groups and cultures. Council also has a role in attracting new businesses to invest in the area while providing a pleasant, safe and secure environment for local people. Councillors are not employed by Council. Most are employed in other businesses, study or carry out home duties in addition to their Council duties. They receive a small sum each year to help cover expenses in fulfilling their duties.

The Mayor

Each Council has a Mayor, who is either directly elected by voters, or by the other Councillors. The Mayor chairs the Council meetings and is responsible for Council affairs between meetings. He/She also acts as the public face of Council at official meetings and ceremonies. (It can be useful to think of the Councillors as a Management Committee and the Mayor acts in the role of Chairperson)

Council Meetings

Council meetings are held once or twice per month. They are open to the public and to the media. You can find out when your next Council meeting is by contacting your local Council or looking in your local paper under the council notice section.

How Council Manages Finances

Councils receive money from the following sources:

- Around one-third of revenue comes from rates (taxes paid on land each year by landowners and businesses)
- Council can charge fees for some of the services they provide, such as entry to swimming pools.
- Councils also receive grants from the State & Federal Governments. These grants may be for specific purposes such as building a child care centre or may be general purpose grants.
- Councils can borrow loans for major projects and repay debt over a number of years.

Each year Council will set down a budget for the next 12 months. To do this, Council estimates the cost of all ongoing and new or possible projects. They then decide in order of priority what things must be included in the budget (ie. rubbish collection), what things might be included or held off until another time and what proposals should be rejected. These decisions are made on the basis of priority and what the community needs. This program is set out in a Council Management Plan that is put on display for 28 days. After considering any submissions, Council adopts the Management Plan for the next financial year. Once Council has decided what tasks need to be carried out, it is Council staff who undertake the work.

Council Staff

Council staff are not elected. They are paid employees with experience, skills and qualifications to carry out the work of Council. Staff also provide expert advice on issues being debated at Council by presenting formal reports, which are presented at Council meetings. It is then up to the elected Councillors to make the final decisions.

There are over 600 types of jobs available in Local Government. Across Australia, over 140,000 people work for local councils. This accounts for 2.9% of the total workforce. The number of staff employed by Councils depends on their size and the amount of Council revenue. Council staff numbers range from 10 to 1,000 members.

General Manager

Although Council staff implements Council decisions, they are responsible to the General Manager. Council staff are accountable to the General Manager who is accountable to elected Councillors through a performance agreement.

The General Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of the council and is the link between the elected Councillors and the employees. Councillors cannot delegate tasks or give directions to staff in their normal activities. Councillors delegate tasks to the General Manager who in turn can delegate functions to other council staff.





Ideas For Action

FIRST STEPS

- Identify what you want to achieve by running a campaign for the local Government Election. Be clear about your aims and goals – be realistic. Identify what you hope the outcomes will be – be specific. You can use the guideline on the next page to help you do this. This will help you to evaluate your campaign when you have finished.
- Identify who is able to help you organise your campaign. It may be your local youth network, a specific working party, your management committee or young people in your local community. You need to know who is able to help you before you decide on your activities, so you can set realistic and achievable goals.
- Read through this kit to gain some ideas on activities you could try. Work out what activities will best help you meet your aims.
- Find out which local Government Area you are in and who the candidates are for your local area. This information is available from the NSW State Electoral Office – Ph – 1300 135 736
- Decide the priority youth issues you want to highlight in your campaign. If you do not have time to specifically consult with young people for this campaign, look at the needs already documented in past consultations, your local youth profile or social plan.
- Make a time frame for action that is realistic and achievable.

CAMPAIGN WORKSHEET

| AIM | STRATEGY | TIMELINE | MEASURE |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|--|
| What do we want to achieve? | How will we achieve it? | By when? | How will we know we have achieved our aim? |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

ENROLLING TO VOTE

Who is eligible to enrol to vote?

You are eligible to enrol for Federal and New South Wales State and Council elections if:

- you are 17 years of age or older; and
- you are an Australian citizen (or a British subject who was on a Commonwealth of Australia electoral roll before 25/1/84); and
- you have lived at your present address for at least the last month.

In order to vote your name must be on the electoral roll.

The electoral roll will close on the 16th Feb so get your enrolment form in

Do I have to vote?

Yes. Voting is compulsory in Federal, State and Council elections. You may be fined if you do not. If you are only 17 you cannot vote until you are 18, you can however apply for provisional enrolment. This means that your name will be placed on the roll and you will be able to vote in elections as soon as you turn 18.

How do I enrol to vote?

Just pick up an enrolment form from any Post Office, fill it in, and post it in the reply paid envelope provided. You can also download a form from the web at www.aec.gov.au/_content/what/enrolment/forms.htm

What happens after I send in my enrolment form?

The Australian Electoral Commission will update the electoral roll and send you an acknowledgment card showing your enrolment details. Your name will appear on the electoral roll used for Federal, State and Council elections.

What should I do if I change my address?

If you change your address you need to let the Australian Electoral Commission know. You can do this by simply filling in another enrolment form.

Where do I vote?

Most local government areas have a number of places where you can vote, these are called polling places. Polling places are normally located in places like schools or community halls. You can find out where your closest polling place is by looking in your local paper the week prior to the election or by phoning your Local Council.

What is a "how-to-vote" card?

On the day of an election, political party workers may gather outside a polling place, or "polling booth", and give you a "how-to-vote" card suggesting you vote for a particular candidate or party. You do not have to accept these cards. It is up to you how to vote.

(source of information : Australian Electoral Commission)

YOUTH CONSULTATION

Workshop Idea

This workshop exercise is designed as a creative way for young people to express themselves about issues that concern them and explore possible solutions to their issues. These priority issues and strategies can then form the basis of your campaign.

The exercise is suitable for groups of 10 to 60 people. Start the workshop with any icebreaker game.

1. Break the group up into two teams. Give each team 2-5 minutes to think of as many answers as possible to the question - *What are important issues for young people?* This is best conducted as a relay race with butchers paper pinned up on the wall. Play some fast funky music to make your relay more interesting.
2. Ask someone from each team to read out loud to the larger group all their answers. Pin the butchers paper up on the wall. Ask everyone to have a look and think about what they see as **the** most important issue. Give everyone a A4 piece of paper and ask them to draw their issue. Once participants have finished they can put their drawing in the middle of the floor to form a long line of drawings.
3. Give the group a few minutes to walk up and down the line to look at the drawings. Then ask everyone to move the drawings into groups of issues of similar themes. Ask participants to sit in small group circles around their pictures, in issue groups.

4. Ask each issue group to discuss the following questions and write their answers on butchers paper. These questions should be written up beforehand on a whiteboard or butchers paper for everyone to see.

- *What is the issue? What is the problem and why is it a problem ?*
- *What needs to change?*
- *How could it change?*

Once everyone is finished, get the groups to present back to the larger group, allow time for discussion after each presentation. If you would like young people to get involved in working on these issues during the campaign, ask for names of interested people.

YOU WILL NEED : Butchers paper, pile of A4 paper, crayons, pencils, textas, blue tack, music, and yummy food!!

DEVELOPING AN INFORMATION KIT FOR CANDIDATES

Local candidates are often expected to have a comprehensive understanding of many diverse issues in the community.

You can assist candidates to develop their understanding of youth issues and appropriate policies by providing them with an information kit that covers -

- young people and the realities facing them
- local youth issues
- specific realistic strategies to address these issues
- an overview of local youth services and youth workers

Your kit should be based on these key themes.

Points to consider when developing your kit –

- **Keep it brief** - Candidates will be very busy in the lead up to an election and will not have time to read a large report. If your kit is too long there is a real risk that it will be discarded altogether. Keep your information summarised (<5pages) and let them know where they can go for more in-depth information.
- **Don't re-invent the wheel** - Make use of existing information you already have such as Youth Strategic Plans, Council Social Plans, Community Profiles, past consultations and Census information.

- **Demonstrate clearly how young people have identified local priority youth issues and strategies** - Candidates are more likely to support strategies if they know that young people and their parents have identified them. There may be a tendency to disbelieve information if it is seen to come solely from workers. You could ask young people to write an introduction letter explaining how they have been involved in identifying their own needs and asking candidates to consider the suggested strategies. Consider including some positive photos of young people being involved in local youth activities.
- **Be very clear about what you would like the candidates to do** - Be as clear and realistic as possible in explaining what strategies are needed and how they will address the issues. Focus only on a few key priority issues and ensure your network maintains a consistent voice.
- **Provide the kit to candidates as early as possible** - If the kit is provided early it is more likely that candidates will incorporate your suggestions into their policies and speak about them to the media.
- **Be positive** - The aim of the kit is to develop a positive relationship with candidates, not to be confrontational. Do not focus on past failures of particular parties but on possibilities and strategies for the future. Highlight the disadvantages facing young people while maintaining a focus on the positive contributions that young people make to the community.

ORGANISING A PUBLIC FORUM

Invite all the local candidates to a public forum where residents, including young people, can ask them questions and raise issues of concern with them.

Public forums can be a great opportunity to raise a positive profile for young people in the area and for large groups of people to gain an awareness of youth issues.

Choosing a venue

Public forums can be held in lots of different places, including:

- A local youth centre
- Community hall
- Local school
- Local shopping centre

As a working group discuss the pros and cons of each of these venues. The venue should be easily accessible, not too hard to find, welcoming and not too noisy.

Date of forum

You will need to give candidates, parents and young people as much notice as possible of when your forum will be held. Most candidates are employed during the day or carry out home duties, so your forum should be held during the early evening and finish not too late.

Involving young people

You could run a focus group before the forum for young people to discuss their issues, work out what they want to say and what questions they want answered by the candidates. Running a focus group leading up to the forum can also encourage young people to get actively involved in the campaign.

It is really important to get as many young people to attend on the night as possible, as this will send a positive message to candidates that youth issues are a top concern in the community. Every member of your task force needs to work towards encouraging young people to attend, for example, ask every youth worker to bring ten young people.

Inform local schools of the forum and have them include it in their newsletters for parents. Try to ensure that there are a broad range of young people attending, ie - students, job seekers, young people from diverse cultural backgrounds and ages.

Priority issues

The working party should decide before the forum what priority issues they would like to raise, it is also useful to have a list of questions prepared in advance.

Guest speakers

You may like to have a couple of guest speakers to start the evening off, for example, a youth worker can give an brief overview of young people in the area and local youth services. You could also ask a young person to speak about local youth issues.

Candidates

Introduce each candidate and give them a set time (2-5 minutes) to speak about what they see as the key issues for young people, possible solutions and their youth policies. Include guidelines in your letter so each candidate knows what is expected of them. In almost all cases candidates will try to speak beyond the time that has been allocated to them. It is the Chairperson's role to ensure that everyone sticks to the time limit and doesn't waffle on (be polite but firm). A bell or buzzer can help.

Conflict

Most of us have witnessed conflict at public meetings before. You need to work hard to maintain a positive focus to the evening and have an agreed plan of how to handle conflict should it occur. For example, if a participant at the forum has a number of questions or doesn't agree with the speaker, suggest they continue the discussion in the break.

Media

If you can get the media involved it is more likely that candidates will show up. It will also help you to raise a positive profile for young people and a community awareness of youth issues. See page 16 for a draft media release. You need to nominate media spokespeople and forward all media enquires to them. Send out a press release after the forum highlighting the major issues raised.

Advertising

Advertise the forum in local papers, community newsletters, notice boards, school newsletters, Parents & Citizens Associations, neighbourhood centres, local radio, ethnic radio, job networks and local youth centres.

Promoting your youth service

Use the forum as an opportunity to promote your service through artwork, photo displays, brochures, reports and info stalls at the venue.

WHAT IF WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO ORGANISE A FORUM?

If you don't have time to organise a forum you could organise for a delegation of workers and young people to attend other forums being held in your area.

The presence of young people itself at public forums can send a powerful message to candidates that they need to listen to the needs to all members of the community, not just those of voting age.



WRITE A LETTER TO THE CANDIDATES

Writing to political candidates can be a worthwhile exercise that is not as time consuming as other activities.

When writing to candidates be very clear on priority youth issues and how they affect local young people. Include case studies and examples to highlight your point. Keep your letter concise, highlighting the main points of concern – do not make it long-winded. This is also an activity that young people can do, where they can raise their own issues and questions with candidates. The youth network and/or your management committee may also want to send a letter to candidates raising issues affecting the whole area or the youth centre.

You can ask candidates to respond to questions raised in the letter and comment on the role they believe local government can play in the area of youth services. It may be useful for you to both outline your issues and concerns with possible strategies but also ask them for their policies and where they stand on issues that affect young people and the community.

Send the same letter to each of the candidates standing in your area and see what response you get back. Keep these letters, so that if they make any promises or commitments and are elected, you can remind them of their responsibility to fulfil their promises.

VOX POPS

Vox Pops are a creative way of getting young people involved in your campaign and giving them an opportunity to express themselves.

Hit the streets with a video camera and ask young people a couple of questions, like -

What is it like to be a young person living in this area?

What is good about it?

What needs to be improved? How could it change?

What are the most important issues for local young people?

If you were the Mayor/ Councillor for a week, what would you do?

Your finished video can be played at a public forum or be sent out to candidates along with an information package.

Preparing your video could even be run as part of your recreation or arts program. If possible get young people to do the interviewing themselves, have someone confident do an introduction about what the video is about. Put breaks in your footage with skate shots or scenes of a local band performing.

YOU WILL NEED: Video camera, video cassette, time to shoot and edit your footage.

LOG OF CLAIMS FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

Following on from a youth focus group, young people can get together and write to candidates about the key youth issues and a list of things that need to change for local young people. The package can be written in very basic terms, but young people need to be very clear about what they want an elected council to do about an issue.

Get media support and set up a photo opportunity of young people posting copies of the log of claims or hand delivering them to candidates.

Give the candidates a set time to respond and get the media to cover the responses in the local paper as part of their election coverage.

MEETING THE CANDIDATES INDIVIDUALLY

If you have enough time consider meeting with each candidate individually, organise a delegation of about 5 people (including young people) to meet the candidate. You could hold the meeting at your youth service and show them around the centre.

The delegation must meet before hand to work out their strategies for the meeting. Each member must be clear as to what they want to achieve from the meeting with the candidate. Role playing the meeting before hand can give everyone a clear idea of what should happen and help calm nerves.

You may want to prepare a brief discussion paper to present to the candidate. This paper may also have your points of concern and case studies that illustrate the issue. The discussion paper is a good tool as it helps you stay focused in the meeting as well as giving the candidates something they can go away and read, to develop their own policies and strategies. At the end of the meeting you may need to meet briefly to debrief

and discuss and write down what happened and the implications if this candidate is elected.

Be very clear as to what the issues are and what the candidates need to do to make things better. Politicians want to hear the concerns of their constituents (people in your local Government area), so getting residents, parents and young people to state their case is best.

Do not make the meeting a confrontation. The purpose of having the meeting is to raise your concerns and inform the candidate of their responsibilities to young people in the community if and when they are elected. Meeting candidates will help you develop a positive profile with them prior to their election.

If you are able to get key commitments from candidates prior to election, you will then be able to follow up on these commitments once they are elected to Council and hold regular review meetings to see if these commitments are being met.

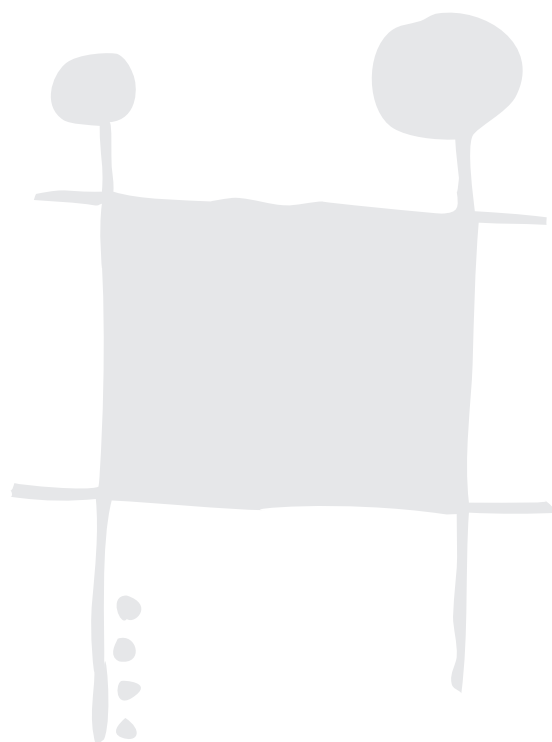
DRAFT QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

These questions should be used as a guide only, use local examples and current issues

1. What is your general view about the role of young people in our local community?
2. What do they need?
3. What is your understanding of the issues facing young people in this area?
4. If elected, how would you work towards addressing these issues?
5. What is your view about the level of consultation needed for local government decision making?
6. How would you ensure young people's views are heard and represented in decisions made by you and the government?
7. If elected how will you demonstrate your accountability to the community?
8. Do you think there are enough facilities/activities for local young people? Why/Why not?
9. Recently there has been some media/community attention on the issue of young people congregating at _____. What is your opinion of this? Why is it happening? What could local government do to address this issue?
10. What is your understanding of the best ways of addressing social disadvantage? For example – youth homelessness, mental health, drug and alcohol,

youth crime issues etc.

11. Why are you standing as a candidate?
12. Could you please give us an overview of your policies/views?
13. If elected would you be willing to meet quarterly with a delegation of youth workers and young people to discuss your progress on addressing youth issues?



DRAFT LETTER TO CANDIDATES

letterhead

13th February 2003

Dear Ms Smith,

I am writing to you on behalf of _____ Youth Network to formally invite you to an upcoming **Meet the Candidates Night - Youth Forum**.

The _____ Youth Network is comprised of representatives from local youth, employment, recreation, legal and accommodation services across the _____ area. The network aims to raise awareness about youth issues in our community and work collaboratively in developing programs to meet the identified needs of young people aged 12-25 years.

On **Wednesday 1st March** we will be hosting a community forum for young people, parents and others at the _____ **Town Hall** from **7pm - 9pm**. This forum will be an opportunity for young voters to meet candidates and hear their views on community issues and for candidates to have an opportunity to hear first hand the issues affecting local young people.

There will be _____ first time voters in the _____ Council elections (Young people aged 18-22 who have not voted in the Council elections before) and they could play an important role in deciding the outcome of the election.

All local candidates have been invited to attend the forum and will be given the opportunity to speak for 5 minutes on their views and answer questions from the floor. The Forum will be advertised extensively through media releases, school newsletters and community flyers and journalists from _____ will be present at the event.

We have enclosed a brief information package outlining relevant youth issues and youth services in our local area.

We do hope that you are able to attend and show your support for young people in our community. Please notify the _____ Youth Network if you are able to attend, on the following number 0123456789.

Regards,

Ms Bloggs
on behalf of
The _____ Youth Network

MAKING THE MEDIA WORK FOR YOU

Writing a Media Release

When writing a media release, forget everything you ever learned at school about writing. A media release is short and simple with all or most of the information in the first paragraph. The ideal length is one page, but definitely no more than two. It must include a contact person and their telephone number/s (no more than two) that they can be contacted on.

1. Work out exactly what it is you want to say and **keep it brief**. A media release is not a document to prove how many words you can string together in one sentence. The simpler the better.
2. Consider all the aspects of the story and pick the best points that are always the strongest and clearest.
3. Write as an observer. Do not get emotional in a press release.
4. Make it relevant to the audience you are trying to reach. What would they want to know about the issue?
5. Give it a headline.
6. Forget about a beginning, middle and end to the story. For a media release, you go straight to the end.
7. The most important facts go in the first paragraph - who, what, where, when and how.
8. Always, always, always check your facts, dates, places, people's names, titles and **all** spelling.
9. Put the name of the person first then their title.

Media Release Presentation

1. Type and double space on one side of the page only.
2. Leave a wide margin on both sides of the page.
3. Present it on a letterhead. If you do not have a letterhead, type the full name, address, telephone, fax and mobile numbers at the top of the page.
4. Write "MEDIA RELEASE" under the mast of your letterhead.
5. Date it. If you want to embargo the release put the date and time for release.
6. Always include a contact name and telephone number for journalists.
7. Make sure you don't send the press release too early or too late.

(The above material is from : *The Real Useful Media Kit* and *Now the News in Detail*)



DRAFT MEDIA RELEASES

YOUNG PEOPLE SEND LOG OF CLAIMS TO ASPIRING CANDIDATES

An active group of local young people are making use of the upcoming Council Elections by sending a log of claims to each of the aspiring local candidates.

Group spokesperson and local young person Ms Jane Bloggs said, “Young people make up ___% of our local community and we want to let the candidates know what young people are expecting from them. We are sending a log of claims to tell them about important issues facing young people and what strategies we recommend for addressing these issues.”

The log of claims has been formed after extensive consultation with young people who have prioritised their needs through a series of youth forums and surveys.

Among the group’s claims is _____

The priority issue is highlighted as being _____

Local young person Tom Bloggs said, “We have spoken to many other young people in the community about this issue, we firmly believe that this proposal would go a long way to providing for the social and recreational needs of young people in _____.”

The group has given candidates two weeks to reply to the log of claims. Candidates replies will be made available to the media, on display at the local library and at upcoming *Meet the Candidate Nights* throughout the local area.

YOUNG PEOPLE TARGET LOCAL CANDIDATES

Local residents will soon have an opportunity to quiz their local candidates at an upcoming *Meet the Candidates Night – Youth Forum*. The Forum will be held on Wednesday 1st March at the _____ Town Hall from 7pm–9pm.

The aim of the forum is for young people and their families to find out more about local candidates and their views before they vote on election day and for candidates to gain an awareness of the realities facing local young people and of possible strategies to address these issues.

The forum is being hosted by the _____ Youth Network. Ms Bloggs, Chairperson of the network said, “There will be _____ first time voters in the council election and they could play an important role in deciding the outcome of the election. This Forum is an opportunity for the community to find out how candidates intend to work in the best interests of young people and treat them as equal and valued citizens.”

The forum will feature young people speaking on a variety of topics and youth performances. All local candidates will be given the opportunity to speak for 5 minutes on their views and answer questions from the floor. A free supper will be provided afterwards.

Information stalls will also be held to provide information on local youth services and activities. The Forum is open to all local residents. Young people and their parents are strongly encouraged to attend. For further information please phone Ms Bloggs at the _____ Youth Network on **01234567899**.



Wrapping Up

LIFE AFTER 27th MARCH

Government decisions have a big impact on young people. As youth advocates it is important to develop and maintain positive contact with Councillors and encourage them to make positive decisions on youth issues. You can do this regardless of whether or not you were able to run a pre-election campaign.

Here are a few ideas -

- Write a letter to the successful candidates who were elected for your area and congratulate them on their success. Use the letter as an opportunity to provide an overview of your service.
- Request a quarterly briefing session where they can update you and young people on their progress on youth issues. This is an opportunity to hold them accountable for their pre-election promises.
- Invite Councillors to attend or speak at your AGM or other important functions, this will help them raise their public profile.
- Get media coverage on your service and on local youth issues. Most Councillors will read local media to get a feel for what is happening in the community.
- Wherever possible encourage young people to work in partnership with workers in lobbying decision-makers.

EVALUATING YOUR CAMPAIGN

Why bother to evaluate?

Evaluations will –

- give you a chance to reflect on your work
- generate ideas for improvement
- provide a space to focus on and improve your strengths and weaknesses both as an individual and as a group
- demonstrate the achievements and successes in your work

- help develop your teamwork & communication skills and have a sense of purpose and direction to your work
- provide documentation that can be used as a future planning tool
- give a sense of recognition and completion

How to evaluate your campaign

You can carry out your evaluation together as a group brainstorm, or each worker can write down their responses individually and one person can volunteer to collate the answers.

Remember life is full of surprises, it's OK if everything doesn't work out exactly as you had planned, as long as you can learn from it.

Did you meet your expected outcomes?

Look back at the outcome section of your Campaign Worksheet –

- Did you achieve everything you hoped to?
- Did you achieve other things you did not expect to?

Questions to think about. For each activity look at -

What worked well and why?

What didn't work well and why?

What opportunities did we make use of?

What were the threats and how did we respond to them?

What did we learn from this?

What kind of feedback did we receive?

If we had to do this campaign again what would we do differently?

Any other points to remember for the future?

Keep all of your answers written in a file along with any newspaper clippings, flyers or any other documentation. This is a good resource for the future so you don't have to re-invent the wheel.

Finally, take some time out to celebrate the end of the campaign, have a yummy cake, go out to dinner as a network or give yourself a treat for your hard work!

MORE ABOUT YAPA

This Kit has been produced by the Youth Action & Policy Association (YAPA). YAPA is the peak community group working in the interests of young people and youth services in NSW. YAPA aims to achieve social justice for young people, including the appropriate provision of services to young people.

We are guided by the views, ideas and opinions of young people and youth services who are consulted and involved in all aspects of our operation.

The role of YAPA is to –

- Monitor and respond to government policies and proposals affecting young people
- Promote and advocate on issues affecting young people and youth services
- Bring young people and youth workers together to act on issues affecting them
- Work to raise a positive profile of young people in the media and in the community
- Provide training, forums and conferences for young people and youth workers
- Provide information and referrals
- Produce a range of newsletters

If you would like to become a member of YAPA or would like more information on any of our activities please email info@yapa.org.au or phone **02 9319 1100** or **1800 627 323** (State Office) or **02 9687 1466** (Western Sydney Office).





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