

A background image showing several hands of different skin tones holding a torch with a woven handle. The scene is outdoors with green foliage in the background. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the title and project information.

LIGHTHOUSE EVALUATION REPORT

**Prepared for the Greater
Shepparton Lighthouse Project**

14 February 2020

A logo consisting of a grey circle with a white ring inside, resembling a stylized 'O' or a lens.

Clear Horizon

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Acronyms

CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
DET	Department of Education and Training
GSLP	Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project
KEQ	Key Evaluation Question
LGA	Local government area
LGBTIQA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and asexual
MSC	Most Significant Change
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
PBA	Place-Based Approach
SEAT	Sit, Eat and Talk
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
VCAL	Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning

Executive Summary

Background

The Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project (Lighthouse) was established in 2014 in direct response to community concern that children and young people were not faring as well as they could be. It was identified that there was a lack of community strategy that focused on shifting and measuring key outcomes for young people. It was recognised that no single organisation or part of the community could address the complex array of issues that affect children and young people. Lighthouse grew out of a community-led change movement and has a dedicated team that supports a range of projects and efforts via collaborative partnerships. Lighthouse's vision is that all young people in the Greater Shepparton area have the chance to realise their full potential and thrive.

One of the first pieces of work facilitated by Lighthouse was the 1000 Conversations project. This project involved deep consultation with the community of Greater Shepparton, providing the community with an opportunity to articulate the matters most important to them. The 1000 Conversations project informed the vision and strategic direction of Lighthouse and led to the development of a strategic plan.

The Lighthouse Project intends to contribute to their vision through four strategic outcomes:

1. All children have a good start to life and are healthy and ready for school
2. All children are learning and thriving in primary school
3. All children and young people are learning and thriving in secondary school
4. All young people are successfully transitioning to work or further study.

In addition to the strategic outcomes, the work of Lighthouse is also guided by a set of three core principles:

1. Head – using data and strategy to drive change
2. Heart – listening deeply, valuing empathy, and valuing relationships
3. Hands – responding to community need and being accountable.

While Lighthouse is involved in many initiatives, the main activity streams/projects delivered are:

- Strategic change leadership
- Facilitating a network of volunteers who perform a range of activities
- A secondary school focus
- The Haven Youth Centre
- Advocacy
- Community engagement and activation.

Lighthouse's strategic principles reflect its community values and underpin its way of working. As an organisation, Lighthouse puts the community voice at the centre, with all initiatives being heavily informed by local data. "The Lighthouse way" means adopting a 'whatever it takes' attitude and placing children and young people at the centre of the work. Ultimately, the project strives to see Greater Shepparton offer all young people in the region the chance to realise their full potential and thrive.

Purpose and methodology

The purpose of this evaluation was to examine the effectiveness of Lighthouse and make some preliminary findings about the outcomes that are emerging as a result of the project. This evaluation was conducted as part of Lighthouse's funding agreement with the Victorian Government's Department of Education and Training (DET). It covers the journey of Lighthouse from inception to November 2019. The primary audience for this evaluation is Lighthouse and DET. The secondary audience are the volunteers, businesses and young people who partner with Lighthouse and participate in Lighthouse activities. Clear Horizon was commissioned to conduct the evaluation by Lighthouse in June 2019 and the evaluation was undertaken between July and November 2019.

The evaluation applied a theory-based approach, which conformed with the specifications for evaluating systems change and place-based approaches as outlined in the Place-based Evaluation Framework (Dart, 2018¹). It was designed to build on the evaluation work already undertaken for this project and honours the local data expertise and knowledge of the Lighthouse team. In doing so, the evaluation methodology has been informed by the knowledge of people with deep experience of the initiative. Discussions were had during the planning phase regarding inclusive and ethical practice, and the outcomes of these discussions are reflected in the design of the evaluation plan.

The methodology utilised participatory methods, and the data collection and analysis process has been structured around a set of Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs). As part of the evaluation process, Clear Horizon delivered a series of workshops with the Core Group to ensure close engagement, capability building, and shared learning and reflection. The evaluation has involved extensive data collection via surveys, interviews, the Most Significant Change technique, focus groups, and document reviews. Multiple sources of information have been synthesised and triangulated to make evaluative judgements based on the KEQs. Data was analysed against the KEQs and the theories of change that were collaboratively developed by the evaluation team and the Lighthouse team at the beginning of the evaluation.

KEQs

Criteria	KEQ
Impact	1. What has changed for young people, volunteers and schools in the Greater Shepparton region as a result of Lighthouse?
Relevance	2. Is the approach utilised by Lighthouse relevant for addressing the identified needs of young people in the Greater Shepparton region?
Sustainability	3. If Lighthouse were to stop today, what would be its legacy?
Effectiveness	4. How is Lighthouse creating change for young people and children in the Greater Shepparton region?
Equity	5. What groups of people are most likely to experience change as a result of Lighthouse?
	6. What groups of people are most likely to become involved with Lighthouse?

¹ Dart, J. (2018). *Place-based Evaluation Framework: A guide for evaluation of place-based approaches*. Report commissioned by the Queensland Government Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (DCDSS) and the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS). Canberra: Department of Social Services.

Key findings

The key findings are outlined below against the KEQs.

KEQ1. What has changed for young people, volunteers, and schools in the Greater Shepparton region as a result of Lighthouse?

1. Lighthouse has contributed to a positive learning environment and culture at schools and to learning-related outcomes for some participating students as well as creating impact for the adults involved. The changes emerging in children do align with the shorter-term outcomes in the theory of change relating to improving learning conditions and creating opportunities for improving student literacy.
2. *Industry Links* is providing young people with the opportunity to understand different career opportunities and to grow aspirations. Volunteers who participated in *Industry Links* reported that they experienced personal satisfaction as a result of their involvement in the program.
3. The establishment of *The Haven* has provided the Greater Shepparton region with a safe and inclusive space for young people to attend. Young people who attend *The Haven* experience a range of changes in motivation and mindset, and increased aspiration. Young people have also experienced increased connections, increased access to work and learning opportunities, and positive behavioural changes.
4. Young people on the *Youth Leadership Table* value being on the table, value having their voices heard, and feel empowered and confident as a result of their participation. Members reported that they felt that they were making a key difference in the community as a result of their participation in the table.
5. Volunteers feel personal satisfaction, have a greater understanding of local disadvantage, advocate for Lighthouse and feel they are now part of a community that is taking greater ownership of local issues. Some volunteers reported that they felt that there has been a shift in Shepparton, with the community now taking greater ownership of local issues and using the community to address these issues. For volunteers who have had a longstanding interest in participation in community life, Lighthouse has provided opportunities for and enabled this participation.
6. School staff reported that volunteers were a valuable resource in classrooms. School staff also reported increased connection between schools and the community, which has helped to alleviate the stigma associated with schools who serve disadvantaged populations.
7. It was highlighted in the findings one of the key changes which has occurred as a result of Lighthouse is an increase in community connection. This includes connection between businesses and community, and between volunteers and young people and children.
8. Because Lighthouse operates according to a complex strategy with a networked approach, the activities it implements tend to have outcomes beyond the immediate intended recipient. For example, a reading program at school not only has benefits for the young person or child but also has flow-on benefits for school staff (who get classroom assistance) and for volunteers (who experience personal satisfaction). This is an intentional strategy of Lighthouse.
9. There is evidence of 'catalytic change' – meaning that changes seen among targeted cohorts lead to more changes. Evidence of such includes examples of schools beginning to design and implement innovations (which they attribute to being inspired by Lighthouse); and some volunteers are going out and connecting more with community and designing activities.

KEQ2: Is the approach utilised by Lighthouse relevant for addressing the identified needs of young people in the Greater Shepparton region?

Lighthouse's collective impact-informed delivery model is proving to be a relevant approach, as indicated by the positive feedback and data collected. The model applies a place-based sensitive approach where strategic activity is based on a process of listening to community needs and aspirations, as opposed to a 'top-down' approach. The organisation has developed a range of modalities that extend reach into various different cohorts of young people and children across the Greater Shepparton region. Largely, it has achieved outcomes that are aligned to the goals and outputs of the 1000 Conversations project. It has also demonstrated that the approach has been effective in mobilising partnerships and broader activity to contribute to the shared goals of Lighthouse.

KEQ3: If the Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project were to stop today, what would be its legacy?

There is evidence that a small number of volunteers and organisations are now highly motivated to continue to engage in change-making journeys. However, these connections and activations are still young, and dependent on the efforts of the core group who coordinate, manage resources, and mobilise.

KEQ4: How is Lighthouse creating change for young people and children in the Greater Shepparton region?

1. Lighthouse has become a trusted avenue for local volunteering and has been effective in mobilising a group of passionate volunteers, some of whom are creating further change.
2. Lighthouse's flexible model has leveraged to create an entry point for businesses wanting to give back to the community.
3. If Lighthouse could find a way to more effectively partner with high-quality service staff this would improve the connection of young people to much-needed services.
4. The interview respondents indicated that Lighthouse is filling a resource gap in schools, and in doing so has enabled schools to think with higher aspirations, and to foster new ideas and connections. Schools regard Lighthouse very highly, appreciating the project's responsive 'get it done' attitude.
5. The core group is responsive to stakeholders' needs, adaptive in addressing identified gaps and excellent at utilising its networks to solve problems. The interview respondents indicated that the core group behaviour aligns with their stated values and principles.
6. *The Haven* is an effective modality for engaging young people at risk and providing them with a safe, non-judgmental space where they can connect with people, services and opportunities.

***KEQ 5: What groups are most likely to experience change as a result of Lighthouse?
and***

KEQ 6: What kinds of people are most likely to become involved with Lighthouse?

1. Lighthouse has been successful in engaging young people and children from complex and disadvantaged backgrounds. The project does not currently target a specific cohort of young people and children, but it is suggested that Lighthouse engage young people and children to ask whether they believe a strategy that seeks to support specific cohorts of young people should be adopted.
2. Lighthouse has had great success in engaging volunteers with high social capital, who have largely been recruited through businesses. Because of Lighthouse's connection with vulnerable young people

and children and adults with high social capital, the project has connected groups of people in Shepparton across socioeconomic strata.

Recommendations

The recommendations presented below are written as suggestions about the 'next steps' that Lighthouse can take to both improve on the successful initiatives it has already introduced and address potential gaps highlighted by this evaluation. While not time-bound, these recommendations are relevant for Lighthouse's current context, and it is suggested that they be incorporated into 2020 annual planning priorities.

1. **Grow the function of the Youth Leadership Table** – There is a lot of potential within the *Youth Leadership Table* to both engage more young people to benefit from the program and increase the weight of the youth voice in decision-making within Lighthouse. Table members feel empowered as a result of being in the program, and it would be beneficial to grow the capacity of this table to have more input into broader Lighthouse decision-making mechanisms. It is recommended that Lighthouse look to strategise further around how it could leverage the success of this table, potentially co-designing strategy and initiatives with this table, including what their function could look like. The table could also benefit from more *Haven* representatives.
2. **Continue the successful core functions of Lighthouse** – It is recommended that Lighthouse continue concentrating on the things they know that they are good at: keep listening deeply to the community, continue to be reflexive and adaptive to identified gaps within the community, and continue to build linkages between the community, industry and schools.
3. **Strengthen and revise a monitoring framework** – It is recommended that Lighthouse's monitoring framework that captures outcomes for young people be strengthened and revised. This could include snapshot data of pre- and post-literacy testing and NAPLAN results against a control school; snapshot data of attendance records; and more detailed recording of work and learning outputs and outcomes for young people.
4. **Conduct inclusive research on the 'one size fits all' approach** – It is recommended that a research project be developed that involves speaking to young people about: a) whether Lighthouse should continue to adopt a 'one size fits all' approach or develop strategies to better reach specific cohorts; and b) what Lighthouse should be doing more of. Research should be peer-based and include the training of young people to help collect data. This research could also include interviewing culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) cohorts and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including a monetary payment for their participation.
5. **Spread the movement into the service sector** – It is recommended that relationships continue to be built, including by talking to sympathetic and supportive members of the service sector. It would also be valuable to conduct a listening tour, similar to the *1000 Conversations*, to understand what is happening. There is also a need to listen to what service workers have to say and why they experience constraints. It is recommended that the enthusiasm and fire that Lighthouse brings to all other facets of its work be leveraged to begin engaging with the service sector cohorts with which Lighthouse has not already engaged. The purpose of this is to engage in advocacy to further improve services for young people, and to work collaboratively with those working in the service sector who also want to see service sector reform.

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview of this report

This report has been prepared by Clear Horizon in consultation with the Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project and provides evidence of the impact and key outcomes across the following five areas of interest: the core Lighthouse team, schools, young people, volunteers and The Haven. The report is structured as follows:

- Section 1: Introduction, including the background and context of the movement
- Section 2: The approach taken during this evaluation
- Section 3: The methodology used in the evaluation
- Section 4: Key evaluation findings
- Section 5: Conclusion and recommendations
- Section 6: Appendices.

The Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project will be referred to as 'Lighthouse' throughout the report.

1.2 Background

About Shepparton

The Greater Shepparton region is historically known as an agricultural and manufacturing hub, located 180 km north-east of Melbourne. In recent times, Shepparton has undergone economic upheaval combined with changes in the demographic structure – both of which reflect wider population-level changes. The impacts of these upheavals have been inequitably distributed among the population, and there remain pockets of profound disadvantage in the area. According to the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Shepparton local government area (LGA) is the 13th most disadvantaged LGA in Victoria (out of 79 Victorian LGAs), with the most disadvantaged communities in the region concentrated geographically in pockets in the centre of Shepparton.

Since mid-last century, Shepparton has emerged as a culturally diverse region. Of the total population, 3.4% identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander – the largest cohort in Victoria. Since the 1990s, Shepparton has received large numbers of newly arrived migrants and refugees and today approximately 48 different languages are spoken Shepparton households. The region has been widely cited as a 'success story' in terms of cultural diversity and a positive example of a multicultural community.

Children and young people in Greater Shepparton are often well below the state average in relation to school readiness, wellbeing, literacy and numeracy levels, and transitions to work or further study.

About Lighthouse

The Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project was established in 2014 in direct response to community concern that children and young people in the region were not faring as well as they could be. It was identified that there was a lack of a community strategy focused on shifting and measuring key outcomes for young people. It was recognised that no single organisation or part of the community was able to address the complex array of issues affecting children and young people.

Lighthouse grew out of a community-led change movement and has a dedicated team that supports a range of projects and efforts via collaborative partnerships. Lighthouse's vision is that all young people in Shepparton have the chance to realise their full potential and to thrive. To contribute to this, the initiative aims to improve the wellbeing and educational outcomes of young people from conception to career.

One of the first pieces of work facilitated by Lighthouse was the *1000 Conversations* project. This involved deep consultation with the community of Shepparton, providing community members with an opportunity to articulate the matters most important to them. The 1000 Conversations project informed the vision and strategic direction of Lighthouse and contributed to the development of its strategic plan.

Lighthouse intends to contribute to its vision through four strategic outcomes:

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In addition to the strategic outcomes the work of Lighthouse is also guided by a set of three core principles:

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While there are many initiatives in which Lighthouse is involved, the main activity streams/projects delivered by Lighthouse are:

- Strategic change leadership
- Facilitating a network of volunteers who perform a range of activities
- Secondary School focus
- The Haven youth centre
- Advocacy
- Community engagement and activation

Lighthouse's delivery approach

Lighthouse operates using a 'Place-Based Approach' (PBA). The shape and scope of PBAs vary but most involve collaborative long-term approaches to build thriving communities, delivered in a defined geographic location. These approaches are usually characterised by partnering and shared design (with or by the community), shared stewardship, and shared accountability for outcomes and impact. PBAs are often used to respond to complex, interrelated or challenging issues – such as to address social issues impacting those experiencing, or at risk of, disadvantage, or for natural disasters.

Over the past 10–15 years, PBAs have gathered traction as a policy response targeting complex issues in communities, both in Australia and internationally. Research indicates that disadvantage is not spread evenly geographically, but rather tends to be concentrated in certain places. Place-based services are seen as a way to increase the effectiveness of services that are seeking to alleviate the symptoms of disadvantage in highly localised ways.

PBAs also aim to address the systemic issues that can typically impede the effectiveness of the community sector: siloed services, fragmented service delivery, and the historic lack of funding and policy drivers required to support effective, integrated response and delivery. PBAs are intended to increase the capacity and agency of the community to exert voice and control over the services they receive, as well as how resources flow and how power is shared across the community.

Because community services have historically been siloed and fractured in their service delivery, PBAs ask that services, investors, local actors and businesses engage in structural changes at the strategic, governance and service delivery levels so as to promote opportunities for greater accessibility and seamlessness for the communities they serve. The types of systemic changes needed to promote place-based responses span across structural (policy, funding, governance), operational (service policy, governance), service delivery (case management and referral), and relational (collaborative relationships within and between services) areas; and a shift in mindset and practice is required at all levels concurrently to embed successful PBAs. Given that the structural barriers to implementing PBAs can be so pervasive, many PBAs have significantly focused (and relied on) 'working differently together' to improve the informal and relational factors between stakeholders, with the view that increased collaboration is an enabler and precondition for sustained systems and population-level change.

Lighthouse's strategic direction

Lighthouse's strategic directions have been informed by its 1000 Conversations methodology. Lighthouse emphasises that it is a conduit for responding to stated community need, and therefore stated community need informs the project's strategic goals. The mechanism used to understand community need was the 1000 Conversations project, conducted in 2015 and again in 2018. To conduct the 1000 Conversations project, Lighthouse facilitated hundreds of focus groups with people across the Greater Shepparton region. Greater Shepparton residents were asked about what is important for young people, how the community can meet the needs of young people, and the barriers and enablers to meeting their needs. Lighthouse made a concerted effort to ensure that the rich and diverse community was represented in these conversations.

The 1000 Conversations project informed the development of Lighthouse's strategic direction document: *Greater Shepparton's community strategy for children and young people 2019-2023*. This document outlines the purpose of Lighthouse, its guiding plan, and its vision for the future. The strategic direction of Lighthouse is captured in its long term (20-year) theory of change.

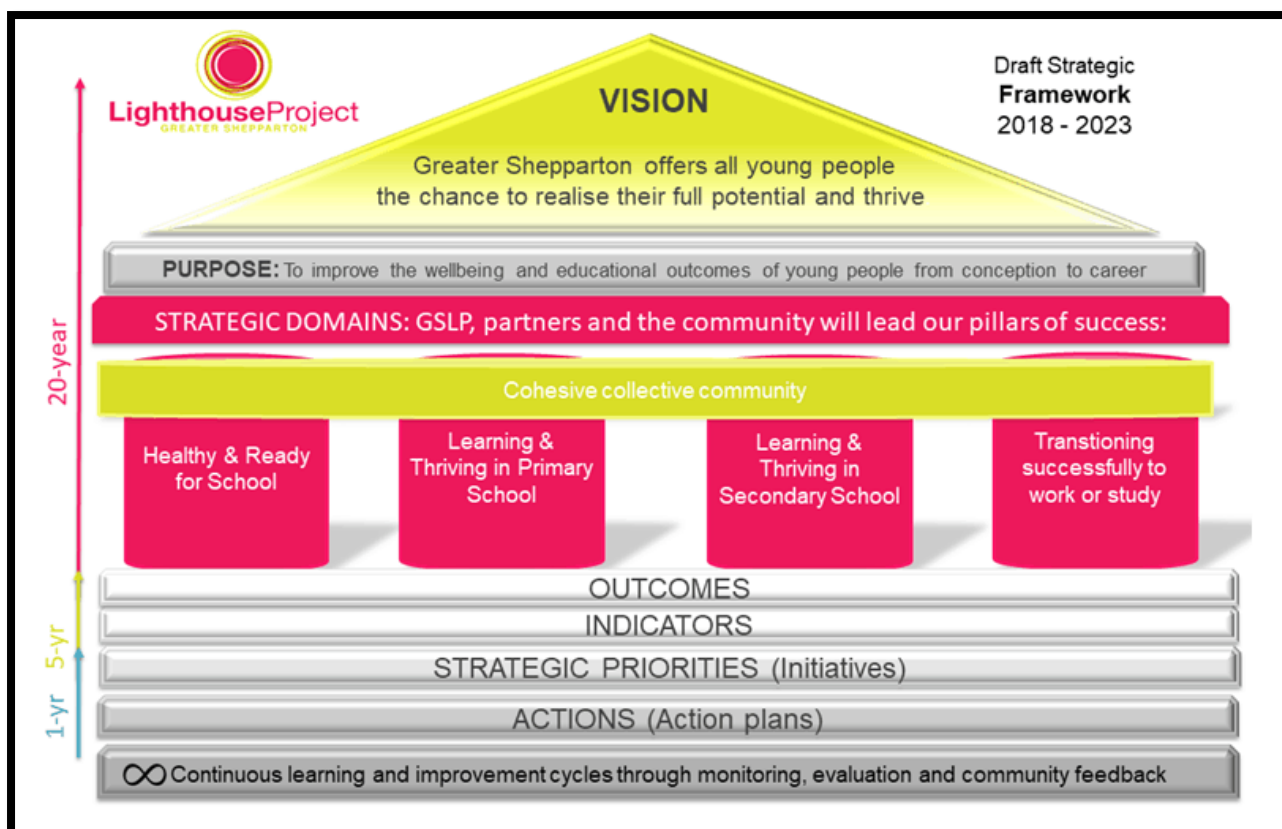


Figure 1: Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project strategic framework

The theory of change adopted for Lighthouse has a number of nested action plans that map the project's strategic priorities and explain how the work will contribute to the project's strategic goals.

The theory of change posits that in order to contribute to the broad goal that all young people have the chance to realise their full potential and thrive, they will need to achieve wellbeing and educational outcomes from conception to career. Children and young people will need to be healthy and ready for school; learning and thriving in primary school; learning and thriving in secondary school; and transitioning successfully to work or study. The action plans and strategic priorities of Lighthouse have been designed to contribute to outcomes along these change pathways.

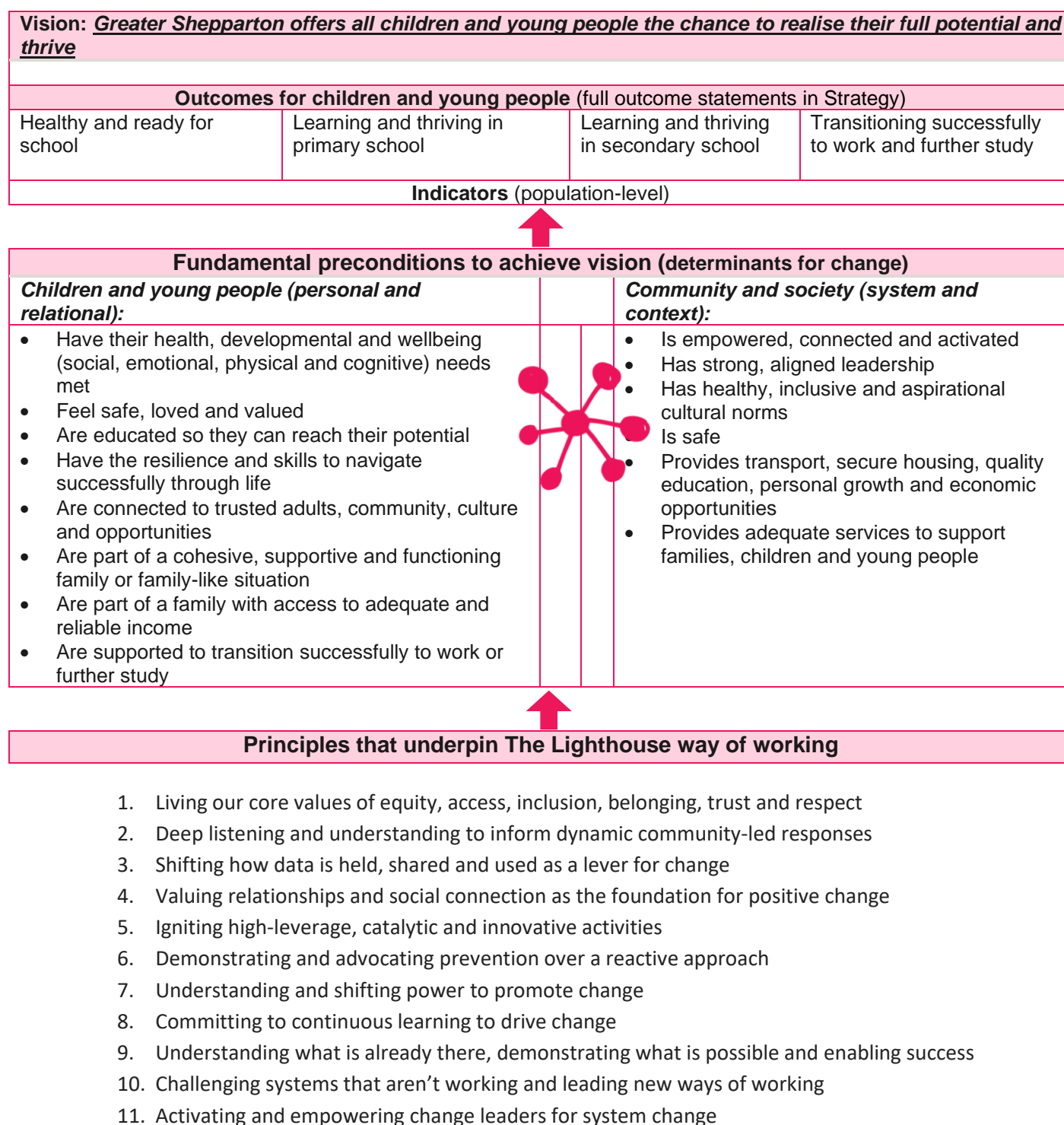


Figure 2: The theory of change for the Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project

How Lighthouse implements its work – ‘whatever it takes’

The Lighthouse way of working has evolved beyond any one type of ‘Collective Impact’ model to instead situate itself as working according to a number of strategic principles that guide the project’s ways of working.² Lighthouse has evolved since its inception, and has drawn inspiration from approaches including: Collective Impact, Head-Heart-Hands, PBAs, Co-design, Asset-based Community Development, values-driven approaches, systems thinking and Resilience Theory. The current ‘strategic principles’, which provide the framework for Lighthouse’s work, have been adapted from other frameworks including Tamarack, Opportunity Child, and Stanford.

Lighthouse’s strategic principles reflect its community values and underpin its way of working (see Figure 2). As a foundation these principles put community voice at the centre, with all initiatives being heavily informed by local data. The Lighthouse way means adopting a ‘whatever it takes’ attitude and placing children and young people at the centre of the work. Ultimately, Lighthouse strives to see Greater Shepparton offer all young people the chance to realise their full potential and thrive.

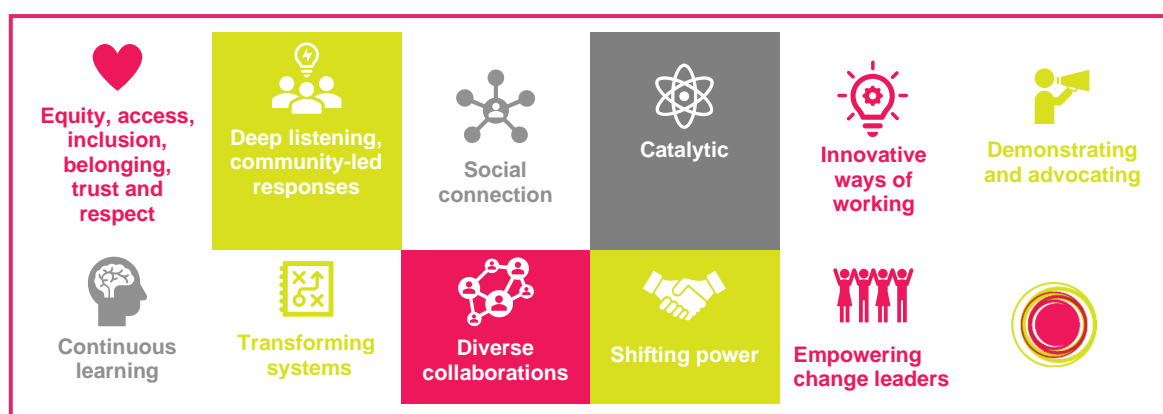


Figure 3: Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project strategic principles

Any success for Lighthouse is largely reliant on the people and organisations involved in the project, including the hundreds of volunteers and partners, the funders, and the individuals and organisations willing to change their practices and shift power to work in new ways on behalf of the children and young people in the Greater Shepparton region.

Decision-making and delivery – the Core Group and leadership tables

Core Group

As a collective PBA, Lighthouse does not follow a traditional program or project model in its work. The collective effort is supported and driven by a dedicated Core Group (akin to a backbone team), which delivers core activities and works with partners on strategic priorities. The staff in the Core Group see their role as being catalytic and enabling – this means that they invoke or spark actions, facilitate shared aspiration and commitment, play a convening role, as well as provide support for local organisations contributing to the work. The staff facilitate project governance, advocate for issues, facilitate and

² Collective Impact is one of the models used for PBAs. Collective Impact models are progressive, staged models designed to achieve a long-term social goal, via conditions such as shared agenda and aspiration, strategic learning and shared measurement, inclusive engagement, and a dedicated backbone structure or container for change.

support a network of volunteers, connect industry to young people and relevant organisations, and monitor and evaluate progress towards the strategic goals of the project.

Leadership tables

The Core Group facilitates the convening of leadership tables. As of October 2019, involved in these tables were 49 collaborative leadership table members, including 11 youth table members, who play an important role in identifying and supporting emerging priorities aligned to Lighthouse's vision and common agenda. There are three collaborative leadership tables – 1) early and primary years, 2) transitions, and 3) learning and thriving in secondary school – and one youth leadership table. The role of these tables includes identifying issues and gaps by drawing on the local wisdom of table members and implementing locally led solutions. These tables sit below the Lighthouse Board and form part of the governance of Lighthouse, providing oversight to the strategic priorities of the organisation. The mechanism of the tables is designed to drive diffused leadership and decision-making. Some of the activities of the leadership tables include:

- Reviewing local data on barriers and opportunities for children and young people to improve outcomes
- Creating specific goals and indicators on which they want to track progress over time
- Identifying short-, medium- and long-term actions they believe are required to shift the trajectories of some children and young people
- Identifying partners, skill sets and resources to address local issues
- Leading activities and overseeing evaluation to determine success or learnings
- Continuing to modify and adapt their work to align with community priorities and need
- Working within the overarching Lighthouse strategy and the 20-year timeframe set by Lighthouse in 2014.

Key Lighthouse functions

Strategic change leadership

Strategic change leadership is a key function of Lighthouse's Core Group and is integral to its way of working. In order to drive community change, Lighthouse makes deliberate, strategic decisions that foster this environment for change. This includes the following strategies:

- Identifying the needs within the community, using data provided by the community
- Aligning the organisational vision with the needs of the community
- Co-designing solutions to local problems with community members
- Drawing on existing local capacity as the catalyst for change
- Utilising relevant community members in relevant contexts – this includes maximising community leverage points and opportunities, and putting unlikely people in a room together to bring new solutions to old problems
- Strategically mobilising partners, funders and thought leaders throughout Lighthouse initiatives.

Facilitate a network of volunteers

The facilitation of a network of volunteers for Lighthouse, while being highly regarded in the community, is not the end goal for Lighthouse. Volunteering is instead used as a vehicle to create change within the Greater Shepparton region. Through the recruitment, placement and fostering of a volunteer network, connections are created that support the strategy and principles of Lighthouse. At December 2019, Lighthouse had facilitated the development of a group of 456 volunteers who have volunteered at over

21, mainly educational settings. The scale and diversity of the volunteer work is large and includes, but is not limited to, the following initiatives:

- Industry links (further details below)
- Conversations with children at preschools
- Reading programs (primary and secondary)
- Sit, Eat and Talk (SEAT) programs
- Homework club
- Job and career-focused presentations / experience sharing with youth people
- The Haven (further details below)
- The Family Haven (opened in November 2019)
- Audio program
- A range of life skills programs such as woodwork, finance

The Haven

Lighthouse runs The Haven for young people in Shepparton. The Haven provides a safe space for young people to meet. It also provides meals, informal support, and opportunities for young people to engage with events and excursions. This service tends to be visited by young people who are living in disadvantaged or vulnerable communities. In May 2019, 227 young people were registered as visitors of The Haven and, as of December 2019, 4,645 visitations were recorded for the year. The Haven also facilitates a leadership group, comprising young people who attend The Haven.

Early years and primary school focus

The purpose of Lighthouse's early and primary years strategies is to develop community wrap-around support for children, families and education providers. Lighthouse works with partners to trial and demonstrate innovative approaches that have potential for scalability. The activities carried out within the early and primary school focus years include:

- A SEAT trial, where Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) students provide healthy food for Grade 6 students
- Industry linking with Grade 6 students
- Reading and literacy programs in schools
- Establishment of the Family Haven.

Secondary school focus

Lighthouse works in partnership with local businesses, organisations and individuals to provide unique local solutions that improve educational and wellbeing outcomes for young people. The project offers a suite of initiatives in state secondary schools to support improved outcomes around, for example, school attendance and completion rates, and the numbers of young people transitioning to post-secondary education and work. Some of the offerings within secondary schools are listed below:

- Mentoring programs
- Camps
- VCAL offering
- Curriculum industry links
- Tailored career showcase events
- Leadership, resilience, and careers workshops.

One of the most prominent of these offerings is the Industry Links program, which involves Lighthouse facilitate the connection of local business to schools. During the school year up to October 2019, 870 secondary students participated in industry excursions and 87 teachers and careers advisors received

professional development and a deeper understanding of the array of local pathways for employment and further study available to young people.

Advocacy

The Core Group of the Lighthouse Project also engages in advocacy activities that contribute to its goal of improving the lives of young people in the Greater Shepparton region. Advocacy happens formally and informally. It involves day-to-day advocacy with services and institutions and connection with local, state and federal leaders.

Community engagement and activation

Lighthouse is heavily involved in community engagement and activation, in all areas of the Greater Shepparton region. An example of this work is creating linkages and mobilising people around local causes. At the time of this evaluation, in Shepparton's neighbouring suburb, Mooroopna, 464 people were engaged in community work through the Mooroopna Haven, the local Rotary Club, Mooroopna Park Primary School, early learning centres and local businesses.

2. Approach to the evaluation

2.1 Purpose, scope and audience

The purpose of this evaluation is to examine the effectiveness of the Lighthouse Project and identify some preliminary findings about outcomes that are emerging as a result of Lighthouse. This evaluation is being produced as part of Lighthouse's funding agreement with the Victorian Government's Department of Education and Training (DET). It covers the journey of the Lighthouse Project from inception to November 2019.

The primary audience for this evaluation report is Lighthouse and DET. The secondary audience is the volunteers, businesses and young people who partner with and participate in Lighthouse.

2.2 Background

Clear Horizon was commissioned to conduct the evaluation by Lighthouse in June 2019 and the evaluation was undertaken between July and November 2019.

2.3 What are we evaluating?

The consulting team worked with the Lighthouse Core Group to develop five theories of change. The theories of change comprise the evaluand, that is, what we intend to measure. The evaluation team and the Core Group developed theories of change for the following elements of the project:

- Lighthouse Core Group (Annex 1)
- Schools (Annex 2)
- Young people (Annex 3)
- Volunteers (Annex 4)
- The Haven (Annex 5).

Finally, there was a cross-cutting theme that we called 'heart'. 'Heart' describes the principles, values and approach that Lighthouse, its staff and its volunteers have used across all of the project activities.

2.4 Context and complexity – aware approach

In order to reflect the ethos of the community-led approach of Lighthouse as well as cater for the complex and emergent nature of the initiative, a participatory and tailored evaluation plan was designed in close consultation with the Lighthouse Core Group.

The evaluation approach applies a theory-based approach, which conforms with the specifications for evaluating systems change and PBAs as outlined in the Place-based Evaluation Framework (Dart, 2018³). It has been designed to build on the evaluation work already undertaken and honours the local data expertise and knowledge of the Core Group. In doing so, the evaluation methodology has been informed by the knowledge of people with deep experience of the initiative. Discussions were had during the planning phase regarding inclusive and ethical practice, and the outcomes of these discussions are reflected in the design of the evaluation plan.

³ Dart, J. (2018). *Place-based Evaluation Framework: A guide for evaluation of place-based approaches*. Report commissioned by the Queensland Government Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (DCDSS) and the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS). Canberra: The Department of Social Services.

The methodology utilises participatory methods, and the data collection and analysis process has been structured around a set of key evaluation questions (KEQs) (see subsequent sections below). As part of the evaluation process, Clear Horizon delivered a series of workshops with the Core Group to ensure close engagement, capability building, and shared learning and reflection. The evaluation has also involved developing five sub-theories of change and extensive data collection via surveys, interviews, the Most Significant Change (MSC) technique, focus groups and document reviews. Multiple sources of information have been synthesised and triangulated to make evaluative judgements based on the KEQs.

While shared reflection and sense-making with the Core Group has been an important aspect of the evaluation process, Clear Horizon has produced the final findings independently.

2.5 Guiding principles for the evaluation

The evaluation approach has been guided by the following principles:

1. Recognise the phased and emergent nature of PBAs.
2. Be culturally inclusive, appropriate and ethical.
3. Be user-friendly, clear and practical.
4. Enable strategic learning.
5. Use a mixture of credible qualitative and quantitative methods.
6. Be accessible to people of all ages and abilities.
7. Help communities and other stakeholders to understand what is changing and why.



2.6 KEQs

A planning workshop was held on 6 and 7 September 2019 with the Lighthouse Core Group. The group developed a range of evaluation sub-questions against five theories of change, which explored various elements of Lighthouse. These questions have been synthesised into a set of KEQs that are guiding the evaluation, and these can be found in Table 1 below. The evaluation sub-questions are outlined against the theories of change in section 2.3 and Annexes 1–5.

Table 1: Key Evaluation Questions

Criteria	KEQ
Impact	1. What has changed for young people, volunteers and schools in the Greater Shepparton region as a result of Lighthouse?
Relevance	2. Is the approach utilised by Lighthouse a relevant approach for addressing the identified needs of young people in the Greater Shepparton region?
Sustainability	3. If Lighthouse were to stop today, what would be the legacy of the project?
Effectiveness	4. How is Lighthouse creating change for young people in the Greater Shepparton region?
Equity	5. What groups of people are most likely to experience change as a result of Lighthouse?
	6. What groups of people are most likely to become involved with Lighthouse?

3. Methodology

This evaluation has combined relevant and appropriate qualitative and quantitative methods to answer the above KEQs. The methods used to collect data, and the data sources, are listed below.

3.1 Data collection methods

Document review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of feedback register• Review of existing case studies collected by the Lighthouse Project• Review of stakeholder register• Review of 1000 Conversation data• Review of Industry Links documents• Review of Lighthouse reporting to DET and other funders• Annual report• MSC stories (26)
Interviews/focus groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Haven staff (5)• School staff (teachers and principals) (15)• Leadership table members (11)• Youth leadership table (3)• Community leaders and supporters (people of influence in the community) (11)• Volunteers (12) <p>NB: Some of the above interviewees may fit into multiple categories, but for the sake of sample sizes they have only been categorised into what is considered as their 'main' category</p>
Case study of one school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of data from one selected school
Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11 survey responses received
Summit workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Core Group

3.2 Data analysis

Analysis conducted by evaluation team

Data analysis happened in three stages:

1. The evaluation team synthesised the evaluation data against two conceptual frameworks: the KEQs and five theories of change (see below for more details).
2. The evaluation team brought the synthesised data to the Core Group for interpretation, development of evaluative statements, and co-development of recommendations. This is known as an 'evaluation summit'.
3. Following the evaluation summit, the evaluation team performed a second round of data synthesis in which all data was summarised into an evidence table. This evidence table can be found at Annex 6.

Conceptual frameworks for data analysis

The evaluation team analysed the data against the following conceptual frameworks:

1. The KEQs
2. The theories of change (as an outcomes framework).

Qualitative data was collected and analysed using thematic coding and cluster analysis. Individual comments that were considered significant were captured and coded as one of the following:

- Community member (CM)
- School staff (SS)
- Leadership table member (LT)
- School volunteer (SV)
- Young person (YP)
- Haven volunteer (HV)
- Lighthouse staff (LS)

It is noted by the evaluation team that many respondents crossed multiple categories, and that in some focus group interviews there was a mix of groups in the one interview. It is also noted that in some cases there were multiple people in the one interview, but they are all marked under the same interview code.

Theory of change

As mentioned in the background section, the approach adopted by Lighthouse has evolved from a traditional Collective Impact framework to one that does ‘whatever it takes’ and is driven by a set of strategic principles. While the work of Lighthouse was inspired by Tamarack Institute’s Collective Impact 3.0 and a mix of other approaches, for the purposes of this evaluation a high-level, independent analysis of program initiatives and outcomes was performed against a framework developed by Lighthouse in 2017 that looks at the core function of the initiative. This framework can be found at Annex 7.

Evaluation summit

On 30 October 2019, the evaluation team met with the Core Group for the evaluation summit. An initial analysis of the findings identified by Clear Horizon was presented to the Core Group for review. The purpose of the summit was to facilitate a shared process of analysis and reflection, whereby:

- the summit participants reviewed the evaluation data, which was presented in draft, shorthand form
- based on the data, the summit participants were asked to respond to the KEQs and make a judgement about the progress and effectiveness of the initiative against the theories of change
- based on the evaluative judgements generated and discussed, the summit participants were asked what they would ‘drop’, what they would ‘keep’ and what they would ‘create’ for Lighthouse – to allow the group to explore ‘what next’
- a discussion was had around recommendations and necessary inclusions for this report.

3.3 Limitations

A key limitation of this report is the inability of the evaluation team to capture and report on all areas of Lighthouse’s work within the timeframe and scope of the evaluation. All data collected in the interviews was collected at a point in time, from a small sample size of interviewees, and only encompasses the available current and historical review documents. All findings of the evaluation reflect solely on this data collected, and by nature cannot be used to address issues that are outside this scope. The report does not attempt to re-state anecdotal information, but rather draws evaluative findings from the data collected through the process laid out in the Evaluation Plan produced in June 2019.

4. Key evaluation findings

4.1 What has changed for young people, volunteers and schools in the Greater Shepparton region as a result of Lighthouse? (KEQ1)

Summary of findings in relation to KEQ1:

1. Lighthouse has contributed to a positive learning environment and culture at schools and to learning-related outcomes for some participating students, as well as creating impact for the adults involved. The changes emerging in children do align with the shorter-term outcomes in the theory of change relating to improving learning conditions and creating opportunities for improving student literacy.
2. Industry Links is providing young people with the opportunity to understand different career opportunities and to grow aspirations. Volunteers who participated in Industry Links reported that they experienced personal satisfaction as a result of their involvement in the program.
3. The establishment of The Haven has provided young people in the Greater Shepparton region with a safe and inclusive space. Young people who attend The Haven have experienced a range of changes in motivation and mindset, and increased aspiration. Young people have also experienced increased connections, increased access to work and learning opportunities, and positive behavioural changes.
4. Young people on the Youth Leadership Table value being on the table, value having their voices heard and feel empowered and confident as a result of their participation. Members of this table reported feeling that they were making a key difference in the community as a result of their participation in the table.
5. Volunteers feel personal satisfaction, have a greater understanding of local disadvantage, advocate for Lighthouse and are part of a community that is now taking greater ownership of local issues. Some volunteers reported feeling that there has been a shift in Shepparton, with the community now taking greater ownership of local issues and drawing on community to address issues. For volunteers who have had longstanding interest in participation in community life, Lighthouse has provided opportunities for and enabled this participation.
6. School staff reported that volunteers were a valuable resource in classrooms. School staff also reported increased connection between schools and the community, which has helped to alleviate the stigma associated with schools who serve disadvantaged populations.

This section describes the changes that have occurred for children (under 12 years of age), young people, volunteers, the community and schools. The key findings for this question are summarised in the box above and discussed in detail throughout this section.

Changes observed in children (under 12)

The evaluation data provides evidence that Lighthouse has contributed to the learning environment and culture at participating schools and to learning-related outcomes for some participating students, as well as creating impact for the adults involved. While it is not expected at this stage of implementation that population-level changes in literacy would be evident, the changes emerging do align with the shorter-term outcomes in the theory of change related to improving learning conditions and creating opportunities for improving student literacy.

The interview data revealed changes not only for students but also for primary teachers, community members and schools, which together create enabling learning environments. The changes for these cohorts are discussed in greater detail later in this section (under the subsections 'Changes observed among volunteers and the community' and 'Changes observed in schools').

Dependent on need, the Lighthouse activities undertaken to develop this learning environment differed for each school. The range of activities in which schools have engaged include reading programs, woodwork classes, excursions, career presentations, mentoring, breakfast and lunch programs, and many opportunities for schools to link with community.

As a result of their involvement with Lighthouse, primary teachers and community members reported observing the following changes in students that have helped to strengthen this enabling environment:

- A large portion of primary teachers and community members reported that they thought children, especially those engaged in 1:1 learning, felt that they 'matter more' because of the efforts of community members to engage with them.

'I think things like that are making them actually feel like they matter. It's huge because if they feel good about themselves and if they feel like they're important, they'll engage more.' – Community member #10

- Some primary teachers reported that participating children are more engaged in school, and there was anecdotal reporting from several teachers that attendance has improved on the days on which the volunteers attend class. Primary teachers also reported that a small group of students were demonstrating a reduction in disruptive behaviour.

'So our attendance is good, engagement is really good. We still do have a lot of behaviour problems with certain kids but it's a smaller group of kids than it previously was.' – Teacher #2

- This evaluation did not assess the literacy of children prior to and following their engagement in the project activities, but primary teachers and students reported that students demonstrated increased confidence in reading and were likely to read more often after participating in a reading program. Some comments by students regarding their increased engagement with learning are outlined below.

'They helped me feel more confident in reading to people.' – Young person group interview #2

'I know how to pronounce more words, know more meanings to a few words.' – Young person group interview #2

'I'm feeling more confident in reading. I didn't really like reading with her until we started having more fun and I was able to read with her.' – Young person group interview #2

In addition to the changes reported for children under the age of 12, also notable were changes identified for participating community members and primary teachers. Beyond the early literacy and education-related changes reported by participating adults in Lighthouse's education-related activities, other outcomes emanating from the reading activities included that:

- Community members reported feeling increasing connections with young people.
- Primary teachers reported appreciating the support of community members. They felt that they could not attend to all children in class individually as much as they would like, and therefore that having volunteers in the classroom enabled the teacher to work collaboratively with the community to improve outcomes for the children.

- The program assisted businesses to connect with the community through the literacy and other programs.

A diverse range of outcomes, such as those mentioned above for the reading programs, are also apparent across other Lighthouse organised activities (such as excursions, presentations and breakfast programs) for children under 12. What is established through all of these activities is cyclical change whereby activities create an enabling environment for students, which the theory of change posits will lead to positive change for schools and the community, which then further enhances the enabling environment for students.

The findings from the evaluation data further validate the findings of a study that was completed by the University of Melbourne on the Gowrie Street reading program in 2016,⁴ in which researchers conducted data collection with students at the Gowrie Street Primary School. The researchers noted that teachers reported improved literacy and emotional and cognitive development in children. A review of formal classroom testing found that 64% of students (n=9) exceeded or attained their testing benchmarks, which was considered an extraordinary achievement by the teachers participating in the program. The principal at Gowrie Street also noted that volunteers had gained a greater understanding of the challenges and issues that young people living in disadvantaged communities experience.

Changes observed in young people (12+)

Lighthouse's interactions with young people in the Greater Shepparton region have broadly come from three main strategies: Industry Links, which connect young people to opportunities, information and excursions about work and learning (including 109 industry and business partners involved in secondary school years activities and 63 work experience placements as of September 2019); The Haven, a safe space for young people (227 registered in May 2019); and participation in the Youth Leadership Table (involving approximately 7–12 participants).

These three strategies have allowed young people to engage with Lighthouse through a range of differing modalities, dependent on the life circumstances of the young person. Lighthouse also provides leadership opportunities for young people through its Youth Leadership Table. Each strategy has resulted in evidence-based outcomes related to the engagement and participation of young people.

A defining feature of the changes for young people, irrespective of the modality of their engagement with Lighthouse, is an increased connection to community, and the sense of wellbeing and aspiration that young people can experience when they feel connected. These increased connections have also strengthened identity for young people, as a result of no longer being constrained by stigma and prejudice.

Changes observed as a result of Industry Links

Parts of the Greater Shepparton community experience intergenerational disadvantage. Intergenerational disadvantage is widely believed to be a key contributor to poor work and learning trajectories for some young people. Young people and children who have had a parent who was unemployed or has experienced some type of disadvantage are expected to be more likely to experience disruption to their own work and learning pathways.

⁴ Turnbull, M (2016) *The Gowrie Street CONVERSATIONS with KIDS program. An evaluation for Greater Shepparton Lighthouse*. Youth Research Centre. University of Melbourne.

The reasons for intergenerational disadvantage are complex but stigma and community attitudes to disadvantage play a role in shaping young people's attitudes to work and learning. Young people and children living in disadvantaged communities face a 'culture of low expectations' that impacts their motivation and capacity to seek out work and learning opportunities, or even to dream to desire of them.

Lighthouse's Industry Links program is intended to connect young people and children living in disadvantaged communities. Among a range of activities, it provides opportunities to learn about local industry, provides access to work and learning mentors through a mentor program, and conducts work readiness activities such as mock interviews.

'Well, Industry Links is providing aspiration and understanding of opportunities to students who wouldn't have had it otherwise. Vulnerable families, they don't understand we've got two or three generations of unemployed, we've got teachers who have gone to kinder, school, uni, back to school. They've provided kids with so many opportunities to actually experience a trucking company, know the variety of jobs that are available. They've opened that up.' – Community Member #6

Volunteers who were interviewed for this evaluation felt that the Industry Links program has been successful in providing access to learning about work and learning opportunities for young people who may not have had these experiences and opportunities otherwise. Volunteers also reported that young people who had participated in the program experienced increased aspirations to enter into further learning and work. In addition, volunteers reported that they themselves experienced personal satisfaction as a result of having a positive impact on a young person and they discussed the ways in which they felt more connected to their community as a result of their interaction with the program.

'Industry tours, having the opportunity to just take students out to see what jobs are out there that they would have absolutely no idea, has certainly made an impact with our students.' – Teacher #5

Finally, it was mentioned that Industry Links is available to all young people, not just young people experiencing disadvantage. This is important as young people who experience intergenerational disadvantage are being reached by a program that does not identify them as disadvantaged. They are therefore able to participate in the program without perceiving the support they received as further evidence of stigma or discrimination.

Changes observed as a result of The Haven

'Changes is just I don't know – I just don't have the same mindset as I did before coming here, just a different mindset and everything. I can't even be bothered going out and going stealing cars 'cause it shows you the better things in life that there is, instead of being locked up. It's changed my mindset in a lot of ways.' - Young person # 3

The establishment of The Haven filled a gap for disengaged youth in the Greater Shepparton region. The rationale behind The Haven was that there was a cohort of young people who were spending time in public areas of Greater Shepparton, getting into trouble and engaging in criminal activities. The community was distrustful of young people in public spaces and these young people also felt that they could not access services as a result of stigma and discrimination.

In this section, we describe four types of change that emerged for young people as a result of their attendance at The Haven. The first set of changes pertains to internal changes. The second set of changes pertains to changes in relation to connection. The third set of changes pertains to increased

access to work and learning opportunities. The fourth set of changes were evident in the behaviour of young people who attend The Haven.

Internal changes

The young people who were interviewed for this evaluation reported changes in motivation, changes in mindset (e.g. thinking more positively and expressing gratitude), and increased aspirations. Some of their comments illustrating these changes are outlined below:

- *[Before The Haven I was] 'sitting at home being a bum smoking blunts'. [I came to The Haven] 'so I got something to do.'* – Young person #3
- *[Before The Haven I was] 'just laying in my room on my phone all afternoon and night.'* – Young person #4
- *'I think of things like The Haven and the change in the young people when they do get to experience these amazing opportunities and have that gratitude there.'* – Teacher #6

Changes in connections

Reports from The Haven staff, young people and The Haven volunteers indicated that young people who attend The Haven feel connected into a community. This community is comprised of other young people, and the Haven staff and volunteers. It is most likely that from this increased connectedness to community have emerged increased aspirations and a desire to engage positively in the community. The Haven volunteers and staff reported that young people in Shepparton often experience stigma and discrimination in the community, and that attending The Haven provided them with a non-judgemental space in which to interact with adults in a positive environment.

'For me, even walking down the street, and I might see some of these people, or young people, in the hall and say hello to them, and "How are you going?" Whereas beforehand, maybe wondering why they're not at school. Whereas I might actually know some of these young people now.' – The Haven volunteer #5

Reporting data from The Haven outlines the efforts of the staff to engage young people with services. The staff engage in informal advocacy, based on the needs of the young person. They also engage with schools and learning organisations, employment services, legal services, and a range of welfare organisations on an as-needs basis. In addition, where needed, The Haven staff will attend court hearings with young people; and the lead staff member has attended court with young people on 10 occasions as well as visiting young people on remand at Parkville or Malmsbury 13 times in 2019.

Increased work and learning opportunities

To understand the success that The Haven has had with young people, it is important to recognise that The Haven is reaching a cohort of young people who experience complex issues and who are generally regarded as 'difficult to engage' when it comes to connecting into work and learning.

As of May 2019, The Haven recorded 227 young people registered and that it receives approximately 30 attendees on any given day. Of this total number registered, 54 were enrolled full-time and five enrolled part-time in mainstream schooling, while 29 were enrolled full-time and 4 enrolled part-time in alternative schools. The Haven staff reported that 18 of these young people were disengaged with education as a result of mental health and disability issues. Seventy-two of the young people registered had experienced some type of engagement with the legal system.

Reporting data collected by The Haven and Lighthouse reveals the following outputs in relation to young people attending The Haven⁵:

- Ten young people have received assistance to reconnect and re-enrol into school or alternative education.
- Twenty-eight young people have received support around employment. This support included assistance with resumés and interviewing, work placements, and apprenticeships.
- Ten young people have gained employment across the retail and hospitality sectors in Shepparton.

‘I know my friend, he wants to get a job here. And he wants to get a job and The Haven helps him out with that, so he puts in more of an effort to get his resumé done and, like, they did a RSA course which was pretty good.’ – Young person #5

Changes in behaviour

The most frequently cited change in behaviour was a decreased interest in engaging in criminal behaviour. It was not clear from the interviews why young people have felt less inclined to engage in criminal behaviour, but the evaluation team surmised that this decreased inclination stems from a complex interaction of increased connection, increased supportive and non-judgemental access to opportunities, and the feeling of being part of a community.

[The biggest change since coming to The Haven is that] ‘I stopped stealing shit ... Like I said before, it stopped me from stealing – it stopped most of us boys from stealing so, you should be proud of yourselves.’ – Young person #4

Stories of change provided by The Haven

The Haven provided case studies regarding individual instances of change, and these are included below (although the names have been changed).

Personal stories of change via The Haven

Kate

Kate’s father has a history of incarceration and her mother has a disability. The family has experienced financial strain compounded by the father’s gambling and consequently the family has experienced homelessness and unstable housing. Through this, The Haven has supported Kate to continue with her studies and with job seeking, providing assistance with resumé writing and interview preparation. Kate obtained a job at Subway and has returned to full-time mainstream schooling. She wants to be a doctor and the team got her a work placement in a hospital. She is active in the Lighthouse community and assists with Lighthouse fundraisers.

Shane

Shane was living in a residential facility for young people with mental health issues and was being supported to enter into independent living. Shane suffers from severe anxiety and is on the autism spectrum. When Shane first came to The Haven he was withdrawn and would not speak to anyone or make eye contact.

After a few visits the staff learned that Shane enjoyed table tennis so they used this as an opportunity to engage with Shane. He began slowly interacting with staff and then with other young people. Yet he

⁵ As of May 2019

was only able to speak to staff while playing table tennis. Shane has previously played in a local table tennis club, and staff encouraged Shane to start playing at the club.

Shane advised The Haven staff that he had obtained an interview with Woolworths, and the staff assisted Shane to prepare for the interview. He was offered the job and moved into independent housing. He does not visit The Haven as often as he used to but still returns occasionally for table tennis.

Roger

Roger was a very withdrawn young person. He was apparently abusive to his mother and there were frequent arguments at home. Roger's mother lived with mental health issues and experienced financial difficulties. The Haven supported Roger's family by providing them with food.

The Haven supported Roger by helping him to develop a range of life skills with which he had been struggling, such as improved hygiene, washing, and preparing and cooking easy meals. They also provided him with informal assistance with social skills and supported him to make connections with other young people at The Haven. The staff reported seeing improvements in Roger's confidence.

The Haven helped Roger to engage with supported accommodation. Roger is now enrolled in TAFE and has stable employment working with cars – his passion. His relationship with his mother has improved.

Changes observed among young people on the Youth Leadership Table

The Youth Leadership Table is one of the community tables that provides advice about strategic direction to the Core Group of the Lighthouse Project. The Youth Leadership Table is comprised of young people from the community, including from schools and The Haven.

The young people who participate in the table have really appreciated the opportunity to be part of a community initiative. These young people reported feeling personal satisfaction as a result of contributing to the community and reported feeling more connected to the community. They also reported experiencing increased confidence in taking opportunities and speaking with professionals, and felt pride at being on the table.

'I felt special, noticed, important. For me it means that I've stepped up; I'm not seen just as a kid by Konrad.' – Young person group Interview #1

'I can confidently say that the most significant change for me has been a more personal change. So, in Year 10 I was quite awkward, didn't really know how to communicate effectively with people, especially older people, more professional people. And through Lighthouse, it has further developed my communication skills, and I'm comfortable in an environment like this to be talking to you now, doing this.' – Young person group Interview #1

The members of the Youth Leadership Table also reported feeling that their participation in the table was not tokenistic or intended as a public relations strategy for the Lighthouse Project. They reported feeling like they were making a real difference to their community as a result of their participation in the table.

After Lighthouse facilitated a co-design process with the Youth Leadership Table it was decided that a kindness campaign would be the table's project focus. The kindness campaign involved the creation of an Instagram page that promoted positive messages for young people living in Shepparton. Members reported that they felt like they were making a real difference to their community as a result of their

participation in the table, and reported feeling more empathy, having more gratitude and feeling encouraged to be kinder as a result of the initiative that they designed together and delivered.

Ultimately, the young people on the Youth Leadership Table value being on the table, value having their voices heard and feel empowered and confident as a result of their participation.

'You could never really say that empowering youth, making youth more confident, isn't going to positively affect their futures. And especially with bringing voices to the decision-making, actually getting youth input seems to have a better, I guess, output in terms of overall strategy and positively influencing things. So it's more effective and more efficient.' – Young person group interview #1

Changes observed among volunteers and the community

Volunteers are predominantly recruited through their workplaces and other existing community service organisations and participate in a range of activities such as school reading and breakfast programs, the Industry Links program, and volunteering at The Haven. Volunteers reported increased personal satisfaction and an increased understanding of local issues and how disadvantage contributes to poor outcomes for young people and children. Because of their regard for Lighthouse, volunteers reported becoming passionate advocates for the project in their community. They also reported that there has been a shift in the Greater Shepparton region, with the community now taking greater ownership of local issues and using the skills and resources within the community to address issues.

Some volunteers who were interviewed reported having a longstanding interest in participating in community life but did not know how to go about this or did not have the opportunity to do so. Lighthouse has provided many people in the Greater Shepparton region with opportunities to engage in community activities.

Many volunteers reported personal satisfaction as a result of their participation in volunteer activities. The volunteer activities provided by Lighthouse are meaningful in that they provide real opportunities for connection with young people and children – many of whom live in disadvantaged communities. Volunteers have opportunities to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of the challenges young people face and how this intertwines with their experience of disadvantage.

'They loved going to the school, reading to the kids. They would be able to recall not all their names but a really bright kid, or just a really friendly kid, or a cheeky kid, or... So, they were sort of getting almost these little brief relationships, and I think they were getting a lot out of the fact that they were just helping out.' – School volunteer #5

'I see how ... well, there's a lot more problems in this community than I thought there was ... I had very little idea, it's floored me a bit because I've sort of worked, in hindsight anyway, in a select slice of the community. I've worked with farmers and landholders and public landowners and managers and stuff like that in my previous work, which I always thought was not affluent, but some parts had a degree of affluence ... So, I was pretty ignorant of what I'm experiencing now. So, it's been a real eye opener for me and it's been a concern that there's obviously a lot more issues.' – School volunteer #4

A volunteer who becomes involved in the activities of Lighthouse, and who then becomes active in engaging in activities and sharing information with others, is described as being 'activated'. There is evidence from the interviews that many volunteers are being 'activated' through their involvement in

Lighthouse. They are reporting a greater desire to engage in community activities, to identify and address local issues, and to engage others to help.

'There is a lot of volunteer pride that has resulted from the volunteer program. Many of the volunteers who get involved love it and it's widely spoken about in the communities that mostly volunteer.' – Community member #6

A volunteer who seeks to engage others and begins to identify issues and design activities and solutions for these issues as a result of their involvement in Lighthouse, is identified as engaging in 'catalytic change'. There is some evidence of volunteers engaging in 'catalytic change', including in schools, which is discussed in the next section.

Some volunteers believed that there is a shift taking place in the community insofar as the community is increasingly identifying local issues and then seeking solutions. Volunteers reported that they see the Lighthouse as a key contributor to this shift.

'So I would say the community leadership, if you like, is ticking over in a way that it hasn't for a long time and there's sort of a joint narrative about the city now that I haven't seen since probably the early 2000s.' – Community member #1

'I think seeing how the community can work together. So just the shift in view of, it's not so much silo working anymore, so it's my view on how things can operate and how we can work collectively to impact the greater community. Whereas a few years back, it was very much all these little silos and all these little pockets doing things. But now it's like everyone, we're now working more collectively, so it's changing that mindset of we can actually work as a group. We don't need to just go, "This is me and I'm only doing this." We work as a whole unit together to support them all, because at the end of the day they're all our community. It's just shifted that view.' – Teacher group interview #6

With regard to who is targeted for change, Lighthouse represents an interesting conceptual point of departure from many traditional programs. Many programs seeking to change outcomes for young people and children focus solely on changing young people and children. Lighthouse also focuses on changing adults with high social capital. Lighthouse's theory of change expects that if you change the perceptions and motivations of people who have power, then that will have a flow-on effect on the cohort intended as the ultimate beneficiary – the young person or child.

Changes observed in schools

Schools tend to have demanding deliverables, especially in relation to curriculum, and the time constraints and limited resources facing schools make it difficult for schools to respond to anything other than matters that relate directly to curriculum. Lighthouse has successfully engaged schools in this challenging context.

Volunteers, community members and school staff reported that volunteers were regarded as a valuable resource in classrooms. Some teachers reported that having volunteers present in the classroom allowed for greater one-on-one engagement with students, which teachers greatly appreciated.

Other changes reported by volunteers, community members and school staff spoke to increased connections between schools and communities, and as a result increased community regard for schools. This was important as some school staff reported that their schools experienced stigma in the community due to their school population being comprised of students from disadvantaged communities.

Engaging the community to participate in school life has helped to dispel the myths and stigma surrounding such schools.

All school staff who participated in the interviews spoke very highly of Lighthouse. They felt that Lighthouse was responsible for facilitating a range of innovations in schools. One example of this was the development of curriculum that linked learning goals to information about local industry through the Industry Links program. The curriculum delivered through this provided students with a greater appreciation and understanding of local business, and how local industry operates.

School staff also reported that Lighthouse has offered support with resource development, grant writing, and engaging local people of influence to provide resources for schools. Schools reported greater connections between schools and local business and industry. School staff also indicated that they viewed Lighthouse as a resource. They felt that they could come to Lighthouse with any request and that Lighthouse is incredibly responsive to school needs and willing to provide any assistance when requested. Consequently, school staff reported feeling that Lighthouse has become a part of their school.

'I think Lighthouse is just seen as an extra arm of Shepparton High School, and now the Greater Shepparton College moving forward.' – Teacher #5

There was evidence of 'catalytic change' (meaning that Lighthouse mobilises someone who then goes on to create further change). For instance, one school decided to establish a breakfast program. They attributed Lighthouse as being part of the inspiration for beginning the program. One school staff member indicated that, as a result of Lighthouse, they realised that they could reach out to the community and seek support to implement innovative programs. The result was increased access to nutritious breakfast for cohorts of students that are known to be less likely to eat breakfast, and the implementation of the breakfast program in itself led to increased connections between students, their teachers and the community, and increased positive associations with the participating schools.

Story of change example – Mooroopna Park Primary School food program

Below is the story of Mooroopna Park Primary School's engagement in Lighthouse. It provides insight into how Lighthouse pooled its resources and networks and provided support to enable change for a school in need.

'So, look at the Lighthouse ... the biggest thing they've contributed to our school is about this time last year I rang them and spoke to them about an idea I had with providing the kids lunch every day. Lisa McKenzie was the first one I spoke to and then she sent along a couple of ladies, Vicky and Sarah. They just listened to my idea. We have so many kids not bringing lunch every day. We're making sandwiches, we're going to the food bank each week and getting fruit and muesli bars and things like that. It's a bit depressing really. So, I had a bit of an idea that we could renovate our cleaning and sports shed, knock out a few walls and make it into a cafeteria.

So, they had me chase up and connect with different people they thought would be able to give me quotes and who they knew had worked in a community and worked with people. So we got some quotes, we got the building work done and then they had helped give input into what they think it should look like because some of the people involved from Lighthouse had been involved with businesses and kitchens and things like that, so she had some people give some advice, you know, "you need this" and "you need." And so that was really valuable...

I was pretty open about getting support from other people to make sure what I'm doing is the right thing. Lighthouse sort of came in and said, "Right, if we're going to do this, we need a business plan." And that's not my strength ... Where Vicky was really ... she really led that – "and this month we're

doing this, next month we're doing that". So, it was just wonderful. So, she started reaching out to community groups about who can volunteer and who can we get support for food from ... food-wise. They went and looked what orchards are out there to donate fruit. The FoodShare were already supporting us, but they were supporting us on a very small scale. As where now, we visit twice a week and they give us a carload of food every week, twice a week. They also helped us approach businesses to either donate money or food. Like American Bakery give us bread. And then we have monthly sponsors, where businesses choose a month to sponsor us. That came out of a fundraiser Lighthouse organised in August. So, they ran a fundraising day at Bill and Beats in Mooroopna. And we raised \$26,000.'

4.2 Is the approach utilised by Lighthouse relevant for addressing the identified needs of young people in the Greater Shepparton region? (KEQ 2)

Summary of findings in relation to KEQ2:

Lighthouse's Collective Impact–informed delivery model is proving to be a relevant approach, as indicated by the positive feedback and data collected. The model applies a sensitive PBA where strategic activity is based on a process of listening to community needs and aspirations, as opposed to a 'top-down' approach. The organisation has developed a range of modalities that extend reach into various cohorts of young people and children across the Greater Shepparton region. Overall, it has achieved outcomes that are aligned to the goals and outputs from the 1000 Conversations project. It has also demonstrated that the approach has been effective in mobilising partnerships and broader activity to contribute to the shared goals of Lighthouse.

In this section, we explore the extent to which Lighthouse is a project that is relevant. We use a few different lenses to explore relevance:

- First, we describe the key areas of achievement and implementation of Lighthouse's PBA to date (since inception).
- Second, we consider the relevance of the Lighthouse model to the unique context of the Greater Shepparton region.
- Third, we explore the relevance of Lighthouse as an organisation that focuses on the articulated needs of the community.
- Finally, we explore the relevance of Lighthouse to children and young people.

This section concludes with a discussion of how Lighthouse's alignment with PBAs interacts with and ensures its relevance to Shepparton, to the community, and to children and young people.

Relevance as a PBA

Lighthouse draws on place-based frameworks and Collective Impact approaches to identify community issues and develop networks to collectively work towards alleviation of the identified issues. In particular, Lighthouse uses two Collective Impact approaches. The first is the Collective Impact core functions framework developed by Lighthouse in 2017, which the project uses to shape its reporting to its funder; and the second is their own framework that draws inspiration from the work of Tamarack, Stanford and Opportunity Child.

Below, we have summarised the achievements of Lighthouse against the Collective Impact core functions framework developed by Lighthouse in 2017. This framework identifies six core functions,

which are listed in the left-hand column. The evaluation team's high-level assessment of progress against each core function is outlined in the right-hand column.

The team's overall assessment is that the progress and achievements of the Lighthouse Project are aligned to the Collective Impact model.

Core function	Assessment against framework
INSPIRE <i>guide vision and strategy</i>	<p>Key finding: Lighthouse has recently developed a community strategy that sets the strategic direction of Lighthouse and is based on consultation, data and input from the leadership tables. Some improvements could be made to the formal functioning of the leadership tables.</p> <p>Informally, many interview respondents reported feeling inspired by Lighthouse. There is evidence that some volunteers have become advocates for Lighthouse and share information about Lighthouse and its goals with the community.</p> <p>Formally, Lighthouse has engaged in the 1000 Conversations project in 2015 and 2018. On both times, the outputs of these conversations provided a mandate for action and a cohesive approach to the work of Lighthouse. Recently, a lot of time and effort has been invested into the investigation into, consultation around and development of the community strategy and associated documents. This work is ongoing and will continue to evolve moving forward.</p> <p>The other formal strategic engagement is through the convening of the leadership tables. Lighthouse has four leadership tables, including a Youth Leadership Table. The purpose of these tables is to facilitate diffused decision-making and engage a diverse range of people in the community. Lighthouse provides data packs to the leadership tables (provided by Seer Data and Analytics) to inform decision-making. The output is to develop a community-initiated understanding of local issues and a shared strategic vision for Lighthouse.</p> <p>Members of the leadership tables appreciated the opportunity to participate in them, and young people in particular felt very empowered through their involvement. Many table members interviewed could not clearly articulate their role in providing strategic guidance for Lighthouse or point to examples where the tables influenced the direction of the organisation. Two table members reported that they felt that the tables could benefit from a clearer process for utilisation of data, decision-making, and feedback on the outcomes of decisions.</p>
FACILITATE <i>support aligned activities</i>	<p>Key finding: Lighthouse has had enormous success aligning with businesses and schools but less success aligning with the service sector.</p> <p>Lighthouse has facilitated connection between businesses and community members into opportunities in schools and at The Haven. Lighthouse has also collaborated with schools, and schools have reported the benefits they have experienced from partnering with Lighthouse. Lighthouse has had less progress in engaging with the service sector (this is discussed in further detail under KEQ 4).</p>
MEASURE <i>establish shared measurement practices</i>	<p>Key finding: Lighthouse has spent considerable time and investment on the development of two rounds of 1000 Conversations. Lighthouse has undertaken great efforts towards developing comprehensive internal measurement frameworks. Lighthouse could make future progress in</p>

	<p>developing shared measurement frameworks with schools, businesses and the service sector to aid the collection of more data about outcomes for young people.</p> <p>Lighthouse spent considerable time and investment on collecting data from the community through the 1000 Conversations project conducted in 2015 and 2018. This data has been effectively used to generate an understanding of the context and community, both past and current state. Lighthouse has also collaborated on the co-design of the SEER data platform to use data about the community to inform decisions.</p> <p>Lighthouse has extensive monitoring and evaluation practices including: a community feedback register; surveys of volunteers and students; an activity register for Industry Links; Haven registrations; a stakeholder register; and a weekly wins register.</p> <p>Lighthouse has begun to make progress towards a shared measurement framework, with its community strategy providing the foundation for this work.</p>
ENGAGE <i>build public will</i>	<p>Key findings: Lighthouse has engaged community members and businesses who have been looking for opportunities to engage in community life.</p> <p>Lighthouse has engaged with elements of the community and has had success building good will with some businesses and local leaders. Interview respondents indicated that they felt that Lighthouse has engaged a large cohort of community members who are now wanting to tackle social issues.</p>
ADVOCATE <i>advance policy</i>	<p>Key finding: Lighthouse undertakes advocacy activities strategically and opportunistically and sees the value of advocacy in contributing to outcomes for young people.</p> <p>In 2019, Lighthouse wrote submissions on the mental health system, Vocational Education and Training, and careers and industry. . It made 12 presentations at schools, conferences and events. The organisation participated in interviews, attended a range of events across Victoria, and visited the Department of Social Services and the Australian Bureau of Statistics in Canberra as well as engaging with a large number of politicians.</p>
SUSTAIN <i>mobilise resources</i>	<p>Key finding: Lighthouse has had success mobilising resources from the community, government and philanthropic partners. Early evidence suggests that some volunteers are being reached through Lighthouse's catalytic change model.</p> <p>Lighthouse has had success in mobilising resources from the community. It has received donations from individuals, philanthropists, local businesses and service clubs, and has spent considerable time on community fundraising activities.</p> <p>Lighthouse has a 'catalytic change' model that seeks to activate community members so that they then identify community issues and design and implement solutions to such issues. There is some evidence of this 'catalytic change' occurring among a small number of volunteers and in schools.</p>

Relevance to regional community experiencing inequality

The Greater Shepparton region has undergone economic upheaval combined with changes in the demographic structure – both of which reflect wider population-level changes. The impacts of these upheavals have been inequitably distributed among the population, and there remain pockets of profound disadvantage in the area. According to the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), the Greater Shepparton LGA is the 13th most disadvantaged LGA in Victoria (out of a total of 79), with the most disadvantaged communities in the region concentrated geographically in pockets in the centre of Shepparton and Mooroopna. Greater Shepparton's experience of economic upheaval and demographic change echoes that of other regional centres across Australia.

Interviews with participants revealed an opinion that Shepparton is a region that has been forgotten by the people in power. Respondents indicated that this has resulted in two issues of significance: first, it is believed that the Greater Shepparton region has historically been underserved by government services and resources; and second, it has created a community that it focused on attending to its own community issues with little outside assistance. This has created an enabling environment for Lighthouse in two ways: first, the Greater Shepparton region is a community that is able to own and identify its issues; and second, the Greater Shepparton region is a community that has precedence in taking responsibility for local issues.

'Yeah. If you could bottle it, oh my goodness, it's amazing. So, I came from another regional area, so not from the Shepparton region, but I came from another regional area, which had a very different vibe to what's going on here. Because when you come here in Shepparton nobody goes, "There isn't an issue here." No one will look at you and go, "No problem here." Everyone's willing to go, "There is a problem here, and we are willing to have a crack at fixing it." ... You talk to people every day and they're all passionate about solving something. If I could answer that question, my goodness, we'd just be able to solve all the problems everywhere, because whatever it is that's going on here, it is phenomenal.' – Leadership table member #5

Relevance as an organisation that orients around what the community says, rather than what experts say

Lighthouse has invested time and resources into understanding what is important to the community. The key activity to this end has been the 1000 Conversations (using a unique model developed by Lighthouse), which were conducted in 2015 and again in 2018. In both cycles Lighthouse listened to 1000 community members about what was important to them. The desire for increased connections, love, belonging and cultural identity was highlighted as the most significant finding. Several dimensions of connection were identified, including human connection (and connection through sport and art), connection through improved public transport, and improved connections with institutions and services.

This evaluation has observed changes among various cohorts of the community and young people and children that strongly speak to improved connections, indicating that Lighthouse has been working towards outcomes that are desired by the community. Community members say they feel more connected to young people and children. School staff, The Haven staff and volunteers report that young people and children feel more connected to each other and to the community. Schools report feeling more connected to the community as a result of their interactions with Lighthouse. The community perceives that Lighthouse is oriented towards relational approaches that seek to build a grassroots network of people who work collectively on local issues.

'People, they're not necessarily looking for clinical or a systemised response, what they're looking for is to be part of the community and feel welcome, valued, a sense of belonging and being given a hand up rather than being told what's wrong with them. So, it's more what's strong, not what's wrong is sort of our approach which is finding out it's an ethics-based community development approach. It's finding out what the community wants, it's listening at the heart of it. So listening is at the heart of our theory of change along with connection because what we discovered was there's a lot of assumptions and some arrogance about what people thought people needed.' – Lighthouse staff member #1

Interview data with community members and volunteers reveals that Lighthouse is perceived as an organisation that responds to community need rather than tells the community what it needs.

'Lighthouse identifies the need of community by talking to the community. Most of the guys have really good networks and they can hear and see where the issues are arising. It's not the fact that you go, "Everyone is thirsty you need to have a drink", it's listening to what people need as opposed to telling them what they need. Not just from the 1000 Conversations, it's from talking to children at The Haven, at the schools, their networks.' – Community member #2

The responsive nature of Lighthouse was particularly prominent at schools. School staff and teachers were particularly passionate when speaking about the way in which Lighthouse responds to requests. Some teachers reported to the evaluation team that they would contact Lighthouse with a request, and the next day the staff would be making efforts to meet the requests of the school. The teachers who provided this information stated that they had never experienced this type of responsiveness from an external organisation before. Examples of requests that Lighthouse responded to include material requests for goods, assistance with the recruitment of staff, organised excursions and presented, and arranging mentors for schools.

Relevance to children and young people

Shepparton has been identified in the literature as a region where many young people experience low levels of literacy and numeracy, with cohorts of young people and children experiencing poor educational and school-to-work transition outcomes. These issues were confirmed through the 1000 Conversations. Another key theme arising from the 2018 round of 1000 Conversations was support for young people and their careers, including support for meaningful education and improved school-to-work transitions.

The changes observed by the evaluation team indicate that Lighthouse is creating an enabling environment whereby young people and children have equitable opportunities to participate in work and learning. Lighthouse has expanded its reach to young people and children by having differing modalities through which to reach them at different ages and in various contexts:

- Lighthouse reaches children under the age of 12 through a range of programs including, but not limited to
 - Conversations with kids
 - Reading programs
 - Industry Links – incursions and excursions
 - Bike programs
 - Life skills programs
 - A Year 6 leadership program
 - Breakfast programs
 - SEAT
 - The food program at Mooroopna Park Primary School

- Homework clubs
- Lighthouse reaches both advantaged and disadvantaged young people in secondary schools through the Industry Links program and other initiatives including
 - Mentoring programs
 - Camps
 - VCAL offering
 - Curriculum Industry Links
 - Tailored career showcase events
 - Leadership, resilience and careers workshops.
- Lighthouse reaches young people who are disengaged or at risk of disengagement from school through The Haven.

By utilising these various modalities, Lighthouse is reaching a range of young people and children. All modalities have some kind of focus on literacy, connection to work and learning, or connection to schools and services. All its initiatives also focus on connection, between young people and children; between young people, children and old people; and between young people, children and the community – in line with the key insights gained from the 1000 Conversations project.

Conclusions about relevance

The Greater Shepparton region is a regional centre with a centralised community that has experienced economic upheaval and demographic change. Interview respondents indicated that, historically, the region has felt marginalised from external political processes and consequently the community has perceived itself as a leader in addressing its own community issues. Lighthouse has come in to address some of the community's longstanding issues and has been able to leverage this longstanding community commitment.

The Greater Shepparton context makes it well-suited to the utilisation of a PBA because this approach draws on community knowledge and commitment and addresses locally identified issues.

Lighthouse aligns with the Collective Impact core functions framework, which it developed in 2017, in the following ways:

- It has developed strategic goals based on the articulated needs of the community.
- It has had success in aligning with local businesses and schools.
- It has had success in engaging community members.
- It understands the need to engage in advocacy to build a wider enabling environment for children and young people.
- It has had success in mobilising resources (financial and human).

Our conclusion is that Lighthouse is relevant to the community because it has used PBAs to listen to community needs and act in accordance with these needs, rather than take an expert 'top-down' approach. The organisation has developed a range of modalities that extend reach into numerous different cohorts of young people and children across the Greater Shepparton region. Overall, it has achieved outcomes that are aligned to the goals and outputs of the 1000 Conversations project.

It is hoped that the community strategy will provide the foundation for the development of a shared measurement framework that focuses on outcomes for young people and children, using the leadership tables to drive a structured advocacy strategy, and explores opportunities for ongoing engagement with supportive elements of the service sector.

4.3 If the Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project were to stop today, what would be its legacy? (KEQ 3)

Summary of findings in relation to KEQ3:

There is evidence that a small number of volunteers and organisations are now highly motivated to continue to engage in change-making journeys. These connections and activations are still young, and dependent on the efforts of the Core Group who coordinate, manage resources and mobilise.

This section explores the responses from interviewees regarding the perceived sustainability of the project.

The critical first steps in all that Lighthouse does is the mobilisation of volunteers, connection to community opportunities, and then the activation of community organisations and individual volunteers. The core question in relation to sustainability is: will volunteers continue to be mobilised, will community organisations continue to be able to connect to volunteers, and how many volunteers and community organisations are currently activated to the extent that they will be able to continue their work should the Lighthouse Core Group cease operating?

Interview respondents indicated that the mobilisation of volunteers and connection to community organisations would likely sharply decline and most likely stop should the Core Group cease operations. A small group of volunteers would likely continue their work, but most interview respondents believed that Lighthouse keeps the spirit of volunteering alive. The Core Group plays a vital role in the ongoing mobilisation of volunteers, and support for volunteers is often required over the life of their engagement.

Activation is an important part of Lighthouse's approach, and while there is evidence that a small number of volunteers and organisations are now highly motivated to continue to engage in change-making journeys, these connections and activations are still nascent, and hugely benefit from the assistance provided by the Core Group, who coordinate, manage resources and mobilise.

'But it's really the factor of whether there is an organisation that is organising the community people to get behind it. That's the problem. Whether there's somebody within the school ... and in a lot of cases, someone who's been employed to do that and so they have the time to do that on the day-to-day basis. We need someone reminding us this is daily basis, this is where we're at.' – Community member #10

4.4 How is Lighthouse creating change for young people in the Greater Shepparton region? (KEQ 4)

Summary of findings in relation to KEQ4:

1. Lighthouse is a trusted avenue for local volunteering and has been effective in mobilising a group of passionate volunteers, some of whom are creating further change.
2. Lighthouse's flexible model has leveraged and created an entry point for businesses wanting to give back to the community.
3. There is some perceived tension between Lighthouse and the service sector. If Lighthouse could find a way to further effectively partner with high-quality service staff this would improve the connection of young people with much-needed services.

4. Interview respondents indicated that Lighthouse is filling a resource gap in schools, and in doing this has enabled schools to think with higher aspirations, enabling the development of new ideas and connections. Schools regard Lighthouse very highly, appreciating its responsiveness and 'get it done' attitude.
5. The Core Group is responsive to stakeholders' needs, adaptive in addressing identified gaps and excellent at utilising its networks to solve problems. Interview respondents indicated that the Core Group behaviour and approach aligns with its stated values and principles.
6. The Haven is an effective modality for engaging young people at risk and providing them with a safe, non-judgmental space where they can connect with people, services and opportunities.

Lighthouse has ambitious goals. It intends to create a movement of people, focused on the region of Greater Shepparton, who will identify entrenched issues, tackle difficult problems, and work collectively to improve outcomes for young people and children in the Greater Shepparton region. In the course of the evaluation journey, Lighthouse's Core Group often mentioned the complexity of these ambitions, and the complex and interwoven efforts required to mobilise communities of people who work together towards a common goal. The challenge, from an evaluation perspective, is how to assess effectiveness within this complexity.

In order to provide a readable and succinct summary of effectiveness, we have broken down analysis of effectiveness into a range of discrete parts. These are:

- Volunteers – describing how Lighthouse effectively engages volunteers.
- Businesses – describing how Lighthouse effectively engages the business community.
- Schools – describing how Lighthouse works with schools and how schools have benefited.
- Core Group – examining how the Core Group's ways of working contribute to effectiveness.
- The Haven – examining how The Haven effectively engages young people.
- Service sector – examining how Lighthouse effectively engages the service sector

Volunteers

As mentioned in the background section of this report, volunteering for Lighthouse has been a vehicle for creating change in the Greater Shepparton region. Volunteering has enabled problem sharing, mutually beneficial collaborations, the untapping of available community resources and the development of local solutions to community problems. As this is such an important avenue for change for Lighthouse, our key findings regarding the effectiveness of Lighthouse's volunteer mobilisation are outlined below.

Lighthouse has successfully mobilised a group of proud volunteers who advocate for Lighthouse

The capacity of Lighthouse to engage with and recruit and mobilise volunteers is a point of success for the project. A relational network of volunteers has grown to 456 active volunteers (December 2019) over the past five years, whose pride, passion and advocacy are critical to the success of Lighthouse. These volunteers are dedicated, enthusiastic and spreading the word among their friends.

'We've tapped into that ... it's created a force of like-minded people who have turned their attention to addressing the most wicked issue in our community which is poor educational outcomes and the vulnerable part of our community particularly ... children.' – Lighthouse staff member #1

Lighthouse has positioned itself as a flexible, trusted and preferred avenue for volunteering in the Greater Shepparton region

Lighthouse has been successful in positioning itself as a preferred, trusted and adaptive mobiliser of volunteers, creating the space for flexible volunteer opportunities, regardless of capacity or time constraints. This requires significant 'behind the scenes' coordination by the Core Group to *'connect volunteers with positions and schools they wouldn't have had the thought or had the opportunity to before.'* – Community member #6

The enthusiastic and dedicated Core Group activates and mobilises these volunteers, coordinating mentoring, reading programs, careers days, excursions and many more tailored opportunities that suit both the volunteer or business and the end user. The flexibility of the Core Group is pivotal to the effectiveness of volunteering for Lighthouse, opening opportunities to a wider network of people, businesses and skills.

'There's also space for people who have a less regular capacity to commit but are still welcome to be a part of it. I just think that there are so many people out there who want to do something that don't know where to go and Lighthouse has made that provision.' – School volunteer #7

There is evidence of volunteer catalytic change

There is evidence of a small group of volunteers generating new ideas and taking leadership in implementing them. When Lighthouse refers to catalytic change, it is referring to actors who begin coming up with their own solutions to problems and implementing them. For example, a staff member from Goulburn Valley Water created the idea of a book drive for St George's Road Primary School after realising through the reading program that the quality and number of books at the school were limited. This staff member did this *'off his own bat'* (school volunteer #5) but it stemmed from the volunteering experience he had with Lighthouse, and the value that Goulburn Valley Water and its staff members placed on giving back to their community.

Lighthouse is aware of issues with volunteer coordination

There are a small group of volunteers who report that the coordination of the placement of volunteers could be improved. For instance, some volunteers reported turning up to schools on in-service days or sports days. Some volunteers reported that they would like to have their volunteer placements better integrated with existing classroom activities and curriculum. This point was brought up in the discussion at the evaluation summit for this evaluation report, where it was acknowledged that this was sometimes an issue resulting from a lack of ownership of the volunteer program by a particular teacher or the school.

Businesses

The business community in the Greater Shepparton region is invested in improving outcomes for young people and children in the region and wants to give back in an interpersonal way. As one company commented, *'It's great to hand the cheque over, but we actually wanted everyone to be part of something'* (school volunteer #6).

Lighthouse has been effective in mobilising local businesses who want to contribute to the community but who have not yet found a model that aligns with their workloads, skills and interests. Local businesses have an interest in community work and want to connect to opportunities but are not exactly

sure how. A good example of this is ANZ, who ‘were looking to do some kind of community work before Lighthouse came around’ (LT1). Through their connections with Lighthouse’s CEO, ANZ sought her out for some volunteering opportunities.

Lighthouse has been effective in providing opportunities for businesses to contribute to the community. Coordinating meaningful volunteer opportunities for businesses, who have particular and specific needs, while ensuring that these opportunities also align with school needs and occur at times that are convenient for young people and children, has required a huge amount of time and effort from the Core Group. The Core Group is heavily involved in finding ways for businesses that lack the capacity to volunteer in work hours to be able to contribute to the cause through, for example, offering breakfast programs, scholarships and sports practice help.

‘It’s been able to engage with the wider community and industry, and say to them, “Yeah, we’ve got an entry point for you to come in and help in some way.” And Lisa and yourself and the others involved have found ways to engage so many people. And it is bringing the village in to raise the children that allows that to happen.’ – Haven volunteer #4

Largely, businesses who were interviewed acknowledged the critical role that Lighthouse has played in providing community opportunities for business.

A number of businesses have taken up these volunteer opportunities and there is evidence of businesses connecting with schools and beginning their own initiatives. Examples of business-led volunteering initiatives include:

- offering work experience placements for students
- writing business plans for schools
- involvement in leadership programs, scholarships, mentoring, awards, career days and reading programs
- giving up staff billable hours in place of volunteering opportunities
- replacing a \$15,000 Christmas party with a volunteering opportunity suggested by Lighthouse.

At one-point Goulburn Valley Water had more than 50 volunteers working with Lighthouse, many of whom were initiating their own initiatives within schools.

Service sector

The ‘service sector’ refers to a network of NGO and government-run organisations that focus on a range of community and welfare activities. While Lighthouse’s main focus is not to engage with the service sector, but rather to establish a leadership framework designed to enable the best outcomes for children and young people, Lighthouse does maintain many relationships within the service sector with whom it partners on a daily basis. Some of these partnerships include with services such as Berry St, Beyond Housing, Centrelink, Primary Care Connect and Save the Children.

Although Lighthouse has many strong and positive relationships with the service sector, the data collected suggests that these relationships are not as strong as those with schools and businesses. Seven respondents commented that they had heard through their networks or workplaces that there had previously been tensions between Lighthouse and service sector, and four of these respondents indicated that Lighthouse could be partnering more effectively with the service sector.

Opinions from interview respondents as to why this was the case were varied, but some respondents stated that there is some perception that there is competition between services, and that the sector has been resistant because Lighthouse is seen as somewhat radical in its approaches. Conversely, some respondents reported that Lighthouse has not been driven to engage with services.

'People could challenge this, but people I trust talk to me and tell me that they see Lighthouse as just sort of wanting to go it alone a little bit and early on Lighthouse were probably really critical of other organisations, and that needs to be a nuanced discussion, and I don't know how nuanced it was.' – Community member #7

'If you can get them to turn up to a meeting together (and if) they are threatened by the competing process for service provision, that's not Lighthouse's fault.' – Community member #5

Lighthouse provides much needed and valuable support to a range of young people who experience complex and challenging needs. If Lighthouse could find a way to have a more effective partnership with high-quality service staff this could improve the connection of young people into these much-needed services.

'I think they have to build a sense of trust ... as they have with vulnerable communities ... I think they have to do the same with the partners in the community. I think they have to rebuild that trust and will.' – Community member #6

There is evidence that the relationships with the service sector are improving from previous points in time. One staff member from The Haven commented that *'Relationships with other youth services are getting better as they stopped seeing our program as a threat'* (LS2). In addition, around 30% of leadership table members work in the service sector and, as mentioned previously, Lighthouse has established a number of healthy partnerships with many organisations including the Youth Foyer, GV Health and DECA.

While partnering with the service sector forms an important part of the work of Lighthouse, the project's leadership framework means that it engages the most relevant community resources available in order to obtain the best outcomes for children and young people. This is conducive to the services with which Lighthouse currently engages and there is also further opportunity for growth in this area.

Schools

Lighthouse has engaged with schools and connected volunteers to schools. Lighthouse has been very effective in linking schools to industry and mobilising industry networks and resources in order to coordinate a range of activities such as excursions, career days and work experience opportunities.

School staff who were interviewed for this evaluation spoke very highly of Lighthouse. Staff indicated that Lighthouse was incredibly responsive. Some indicated that they would often contact Lighthouse staff, requesting assistance, and that the staff would respond to whatever request was made and deliver whatever was requested. Such requests included for material assistance, volunteer requests or technical support.

Schools reported that they have found it a relief working with Lighthouse, with many commenting how tasks that would previously have been difficult are now not as hard since they have the support of Lighthouse. Whereas previously schools may have thought, *'Oh God, I can't do it. It's another thing. I haven't got time. I can't do the paperwork. I can't book the buses!'* (Teacher #7), Lighthouse has relieved this stress and given schools the confidence to be able to implement their own ideas (see Mooroopna Park Primary School 'Story of change example' on p. 30).

Through the Industry Links program young people and children have been exposed to significant industries with which they would otherwise not have been able to connect, including banking, manufacturing, transport logistics, science, law and health.

'Well I think firstly it's been a much kind of quicker conduit for any one of us to sit there and contact that number of people – that's a job in itself. You know brokering those connections in a school on a day-to-day basis, that's a difficult thing to do. Just the scope of what's possible through Lighthouse is far, far greater than what we could do individually. Because Lighthouse have such great relationships with such a breadth of the community and schools generally tend to go to where they know. Fiona will say things like, "Dream big". I give kind of a broad idea and then she is able to say, "Oh, have you thought about this or we know some people that do this, does that fit?" So, because of Lighthouse's knowledge of the community, they have been able to add things that maybe we didn't even know that existed in Shepparton.' – Teachers group interview #3

With the support of Lighthouse, schools are now able to implement a range of innovations. Examples include the development of a breakfast program and of a school curriculum that links into teaching about local businesses and industry.

'We spoke with Lisa from Lighthouse and asked how could we make that happen? Lisa found us a member of staff from Lighthouse to come and sit in my office at school a couple of days a week, and we started the process of linking that staff member with our staff to look through the curriculum and see where we could embed industry.' – Teacher group interview #1

There is evidence of 'catalytic change' – meaning that some schools are identifying issues within their school and then implementing their own solutions. An example of this is seen at Mooroopna Primary School, which had a woodwork volunteer placement organised by Lighthouse. The success of the volunteer placement has brought about some momentum, with Lighthouse facilitating the donation of tools and a staff member then finding the money needed to build a shed where the volunteer placement can continue.

There has been a mindset shift within schools towards thinking more collectively. School cohorts especially reported how working with Lighthouse has opened up their ability to think and work collectively, and that they no longer feel they have to face these problems on their own.

'Probably the way I've thought about planning a unit has changed. Like I put more thought, broader and not just what's in the curriculum but more adjacent and attached somehow. Like let's get others in and let's broaden our students. We're thinking about where you can access experiences that go alongside that. So, thinking a little bit more collaboratively maybe.' – Teacher group interview #3

Core Group

People interviewed for this evaluation reported positive experiences when working with the Core Group. Respondents found the Core Group reliable, responsive, flexible and adaptive.

- *'Nothing's too big or too small. You never get "Well, that's ridiculous".'* – Teacher #1
- *'If you've got an idea, they will help you. They'll give you as much support as you need if they think it's worthwhile.'* – Teacher #2
- *'Look, I love them, they're awesome. They're just bubbly and helpful and nothing's too much.'* – Teacher #2

Interview respondents also indicated that the members of the Core Group are all excellent networkers, and connectors of groups and organisations.

'Vicki is incredibly passionate about what she does, she is everywhere and all the time, and she's a "go out and doer".' – Leadership table member #5

Interview respondents indicated that the Lighthouse Core Group is effective at identifying gaps and needs in the community, and then rapidly identifying solutions to gaps. Many respondents reported that the Core Group is agile and innovative and will facilitate interventions as needed.

'Lighthouse identified that there were young people walking from Mooroopna to The Haven in Shepparton [5+ km] and the Lighthouse 'pooled their resources and got a bus to do a pickup and drop-off from Mooroopna to and from The Haven.' – Community member #3

'If something isn't working the Lighthouse tend to change it. They merged two leadership tables. They're not afraid of change and are agile when it has to happen.' – Leadership table member #1

One example of how Lighthouse adapts to change involves the coming merger of the four Greater Shepparton government secondary schools into Greater Shepparton Secondary College. Ever since the Shepparton Education Plan was introduced, Lighthouse has been adapting and angling its networks and programs towards helping the implementation of the Greater Shepparton Secondary College. The Greater Shepparton Secondary College was announced by the state government in May 2019, and Lighthouse has since quickly mobilised its networks and resources to help with this implementation.

'So, I've known of Lighthouse in that role for a while. But I'm new to how good Lighthouse is this year, because of my involvement regarding the transition process. Because we're merging and kids are moving all over the place, Lighthouse have been exceptionally supportive of that. And I'm actually blown away by how supportive they have been.' – Teacher group interview #1

In order to create change for young people in the Greater Shepparton region the Core Group also follows a set of principles that underpin its way of working, which they refer to as 'Heart'. Heart consists of the following elements:

- Inspirational leadership
- Listening and understanding
- Equity and social justice
- Care, kindness, love of others and self
- Self-awareness
- Connection to community and place
- Making a decision to act
- Commitment
- Authenticity.

Interview respondents confirmed that, in their experience, the Core Group worked in line with its principles. They reported that the members of the group were all inspirational leaders who listened to the community, applied equity principles in their work, and acted when needed.

'Lighthouse identifies the needs of community by talking to the community. Most of the guys have really good networks and they can hear and see where the issues are arising. It's listening to what people need as opposed to telling them what they need. Not just from the 1000 Conversations, it's from talking to children at The Haven, at the schools, their networks.' – Community member #2

'So, they want to listen to you. They want to find out your issues and then just support that in the best way they can and if that's making connections with other agencies, community groups, volunteers, so be it.' – Teacher #2

However, some interview respondents (LT5, CM6, CM7) indicated that at times Lighthouse's Core Group has not been receptive to feedback or criticism and has been selective about what feedback it wants to take on board.

'There's a lot of passionate people over there and you know when you really believe, it's hard to hear through the criticism. I don't know if they take criticism that well. From their perspective communication means to listen as well as to tell. I think the telling is really good, but the listening could be better.' – Community member #7

The Haven

Interview respondents indicated that The Haven has been very effective at engaging young people at risk, or who have complex needs, and in providing a safe and trusted space for them. Young people who attend The Haven reported feeling welcome, safe and unjudged.

The Haven's programmatic philosophy avoids conventional notions of service delivery. Service staff state that their intention is for The Haven to act in a similar way to a family. In practice, this means that young people are free to visit The Haven at any time, without any expectation that they engage with services, work towards any goals or be asked to engage in any service-oriented activities. The rationale for this approach is that the young people frequently disengage from services because of the expectations of services that they engage in certain activities and work towards certain goals for which the young person may not be ready. The Haven wants to continue to engage with young people and so allows for more time to get to know the young person, and works with them in a much more indirect, relational and non-transactional manner. This non-transactional, relational approach is likely to be a key factor in The Haven's successful engagement of young people.

'The Haven is my go-to. When I have nowhere that I want to be, or if there's something going on or if I need to let go, this is where I come. Even if it's to do schoolwork, even if it's just to vent to Konrad. This is my go-to.' – Young person #9

'It's like a home away from home, like for me they treat it as their own and they feel – I feel as though they feel safe. They know where it is, and when it is. Being open all hours and being able to get a meal or get some food, or catch up with other friends'. – Haven volunteer #5

'We are not here to tick boxes, we are here to be that social, recreational, deep and meaningful connection and relationship. There is no pressure on the young people to conform to our expectation, and that gives them the freedom.' – Haven staff member

'In this space, we are a family, we respect and love each other every day, and these are our expectations and what we believe.' – Haven staff member

The Haven can also double as a social setting for some young people, and so has the ability to attract and draw a wider range of young people, potentially including those who would not consider entering a mainstream service. Many Haven respondents mentioned their friends as first inviting them to come along. Attending The Haven may then open them up to getting the support that they had not yet realised they needed.

'The Haven is making inroads with hard-to-reach young people. We're getting 50 kids there and people don't understand, and this is my industry experience. To get kids to sit down and eat a meal is sometimes really, really challenging. But when you turn up and you see 50 kids eating a meal, sitting down, talking, doing that social stuff, it's just like, damn. We had The Haven opening and to watch some of these kids lead some of the most influential people in Shep around and they were so proud of that.' – Leadership table member #4

Like a family would, The Haven provides a range of opportunities for people to get involved in local events and activities. Examples include excursions to Luna Park, fishing, swimming and fundraisers, which the young people interviewed begrudgingly admitted they enjoyed:

'I thought that was going to be really boring, but we went out there and we planted 400-odd trees on a Saturday morning when we could have been doing whatever we wanted to do. And we broke a record, and we finished earlier than anyone else that they had planted with before. I'm sitting there and I'm like, "This isn't actually pretty bad", so I really liked that.' – Young person #9

'And, for example, not long ago we went to the Numurkah Food Bowl [Festival] and we went and helped pack up, and that wasn't even that bad, that was actually a good day out.' – Young person #9

To assist with these types of activities, The Haven engages volunteers who are mobilised through Lighthouse. Volunteers who have worked at The Haven have reported feeling a greater sense of connection to young people as a result of their involvement.

4.5 What groups are most likely to experience change as a result of Lighthouse? (KEQ 5) + What kinds of people are most likely to become involved with Lighthouse? (KEQ 6)

Summary of findings in relation to KEQs 5 and 6:

1. Lighthouse has been successful in engaging young people and children from complex and disadvantaged backgrounds. Lighthouse does not currently target a specific cohort of young people and children and it is suggested that Lighthouse ask young people and children about their opinion on whether strategies that seek to support specific cohorts of young people should be adopted.
2. Lighthouse has had great success in engaging volunteers with high social capital who are largely recruited through businesses. Because of Lighthouse's connection with vulnerable young people and children, and adults with high social capital, the project has connected groups of people in Shepparton across socioeconomic strata.

KEQs 5 and 6 are here answered together. In this section, we describe the types of young people and volunteers who are most likely to participate in Lighthouse and experience change as a result of this participation.

Young people and children

Lighthouse has engaged young people from complex and disadvantaged backgrounds. Due to its different modalities, it has been able to reach a range of young people and children from disadvantaged communities in primary schools, in high schools, and also through The Haven, by reaching young people who are disengaged from work and learning.

'So if I go to [other youth services], they're funded to work with young people, but the real young people who are in crisis are no way near going into an agency and filling out those forms. Lighthouse are doing all of that community development work with those vulnerable families to give them the confidence and self-efficacy to access these services.' – Community member #6

One of the exciting opportunities for reflection about the model going forward is to continue to examine the extent to which Lighthouse delivers activities that are open to everyone regardless of background, or the extent to which Lighthouse begins delivering activities that are targeted at specific cohorts of young people, such as people with a disability, people from CALD groups, people from LGBTIQA+ groups, and young people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

There are arguments for and against approaches that seek to engage specific cohorts. The argument against having targeted engagement activities is that Lighthouse wants young people and children to be able to experience participation in an activity without having to discuss their identity. They can be treated as a person outside their socially prescribed identity. This could be a freeing experience for a young person.

'I think providing opportunities to young people in the area, regardless of the adversity that they've had growing up. It's not just pigeonholed to the kids that have had hard lives, it's also giving opportunities to those kids that have just the normal day-to-day life as well. It's just giving the opportunities to all, but giving extra support when needed to those more vulnerable kids as well to be able to use those same opportunities.' – Teacher #6

Currently, on average, 60% of The Haven visitors each night are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. They see The Haven as a safe space. Given that no efforts have been made to specifically engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples this is a staggering result and speaks to the capacity of The Haven staff to provide a safe and welcoming environment.

The argument for having approaches that specifically target cohorts is that, unless special attention is paid to understanding the needs of certain cohorts, implementers risk being blind to issues or making the wrong assumptions about what is happening for cohorts of people.

Ultimately, our recommendation is that Lighthouse spend some time engaging in listening to young people about the issue of whether to build engagement strategies for specific cohorts or whether to keep its 'one size fits all' policy, take on board the recommendations of young people, and then act on these recommendations.

Volunteers

Lighthouse has been successful in engaging volunteers with high social capital. This is attributed to two key reasons. First, the Lighthouse Core Group represents a cohort of people in the Greater Shepparton region who possess high social capital, and consequently are able to tap into their networks. Second, Lighthouse has had great success in engaging with businesses, who are seeking opportunities to participate in community life.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Overall changes

While specific changes are described further below, there are a number of overall changes that have occurred as a result of Lighthouse's work.

Increased community connection – It was highlighted in the findings that one of the key changes that have occurred as a result of Lighthouse is an increase in community connection. This includes connection between businesses and community, and between volunteers, young people and children.

The ripple effect – Because Lighthouse operates according to a complex strategy with a networked approach, the activities it implements tend to have outcomes beyond the immediate intended recipient. For example, a reading program at school not only has benefits for the young person or child but also has flow-on benefits for school staff (who get classroom assistance) and for volunteers (who experience personal satisfaction). This is an intentional strategy of Lighthouse.

Catalytic change – There is evidence of 'catalytic change' – meaning that changes among targeted cohorts lead to more changes. This evidence includes examples of schools beginning to design and implement their own innovations (which they attribute to being inspired by Lighthouse). Some volunteers are going out and connecting more with the community and designing activities.

Changes for children

There are a number of changes that have affected both children and those who engage with children. Lighthouse has contributed to a learning environment where children can learn and thrive in schools, and respondents can view the ripple effects of this. The Lighthouse volunteers also feel more connected to the community and have developed genuine connections with the children they engage with, which in turn leads to the outcome of children feeling like they matter more. The teachers and volunteers reported that students feel more connected to school and to their community, and have an increased interest in reading and learning.

Changes for young people

Lighthouse has developed a range of modalities through which participants can experience Lighthouse activities: through secondary school, through Industry Links, or through the Youth Leadership Table. This has increased engagement with young people. Young people who have been reached by Lighthouse are reporting increased connection to community and increasing aspiration.

Industry Links

The Industry Links program has been effective in providing access to work and learning opportunities for young people and children who may not have had access to these opportunities otherwise. There is evidence that young people have increased aspirations as a result of their involvement in Industry Links, and that young people are being connected into work opportunities.

The Haven

The Haven has filled a gap in Shepparton. Young people who attend The Haven appear to be experiencing a range of changes, including increased motivation and aspiration, and increased

connections to other young people, adults and other services. There is also evidence of increased access to work and learning opportunities through attendance at The Haven.

Youth Leadership Table

Young people who have participated in the Youth Leadership Table really appreciate the opportunity to do so. They feel that their participation is not tokenistic and that they make a valued contribution to Lighthouse. They reported enjoying opportunities to interact with adults and professionals as part of their duties.

Changes for volunteers and community

Volunteers have reported great satisfaction as a result of their involvement in Lighthouse. They reported increased personal satisfaction and increased understanding of local issues through their engagement in volunteering. This is important insofar as Lighthouse aims to bridge the gap between those with high and low social capital. An interesting aspect of the Lighthouse model is that, in order to see benefits for young people and children, Lighthouse focuses its efforts on working with volunteers to change mindsets, rather than expecting young people or children to change – and the findings reflect this change in mindset among the volunteers. There is evidence that volunteers have become passionate advocates for Lighthouse, with Lighthouse as an organisation being known for its part in taking ownership of local, community issues.

Changes in schools

Schools have really appreciated the support provided by Lighthouse and has seen a change in the way their ideas can be supported and actioned. There is evidence that Lighthouse has been responsive to the needs of schools and that schools feel like Lighthouse is a part of the school community. Schools reported increased connections between the school and the community, with many schools now understanding how to embed industry into their curriculum. Schools in disadvantaged communities reported less community stigma surrounding the school. There is evidence of catalytic change, such that schools are now starting to identify issues and seek solutions, and are reporting this shift in the level of their involvement with Lighthouse.

Relevance

Lighthouse uses PBAs, which draws on local knowledge to develop local solutions to issues. Lighthouse adheres to place-based principles and works with the community to identify needs and act in accordance with those needs rather than taking a top-down approach. The context in Shepparton (a regional community with a history of community mobilisation and ongoing inequality) makes it well-suited to the use of a PBA.

Sustainability

The interview respondents indicated that, while some volunteers would likely remain active, in order to continue the scope and pace of growth and activities, the Lighthouse Core Group is still needed to sustain the implementation of strategies.

Effectiveness

The Lighthouse Core Group has a set of principles that it calls 'Heart'. The interview respondents largely agreed that the Core Group acts in accordance with these principles and that this approach is critical to the project's success. The Core Group is responsive and agile, and its efforts are greatly appreciated by

volunteers, businesses and schools. It is perceived that there is some tension between the project and the service sector, but noted that Lighthouse's current partnerships are successful, and lending themselves to improving outcomes for children and young people. The members of the Core Group themselves are also successful networkers, utilising their networks across all social capital levels in the community.

The Haven has a family-oriented approach to programming that is warm, inclusive, non-judgemental and non-transactional. Young people find this approach very appealing and so the project has had great success in reaching hard-to-engage young people.

Equity

As mentioned above, the programmatic philosophy and family-oriented approach of The Haven are particularly attractive to young people who face complex social issues and have begun to disengage from the community. Within this safe, family-like environment The Haven takes a 'no expectations' approach, meaning that it is attractive to young people who are disengaged, and do not feel welcome or comfortable reaching out to other services. There is a question regarding appropriate approaches for vulnerable cohorts (e.g. LGBTIQ+, CALD groups, people with a disability), considering that Lighthouse prefers an open approach so that anyone can feel welcome regardless of their background. But these approaches can have drawbacks because mainstream communities can be blind to barriers to engagement for vulnerable cohorts. Lighthouse has been especially successful in mobilisation of volunteers from high social capital groups.

5.2 Recommendations

The below recommendations are written as suggestions about 'next steps' that Lighthouse can take to both improve on the successful initiatives that they already have and address potential gaps highlighted by this evaluation. Whilst not time bound, these recommendations are relevant for Lighthouse's current context, and it is suggested that they be incorporated into 2020 annual planning priorities.

1. **Grow the function of the Youth Leadership Table** – There is a lot of potential in the within the Youth Leadership Table to both engage more young people to benefit from the program, and increase the weight of youth voice in decision making within Lighthouse. Table members feel empowered as a result of being in the program, and it would be beneficial to grow the capacity of this table to have more input into broader Lighthouse decision making mechanisms. It is recommended that Lighthouse look to strategise further how they could leverage the success of this table, potentially co-designing strategy and initiatives with this table, including what their function could look like. The table could also benefit with more Haven representatives.
2. **Continue the successful core functions of Lighthouse** – It is recommended that Lighthouse continue concentrating on the things they know that they are good at. Keep listening deeply to community, continue to be reflexive and adaptive to gaps that are identified within the community and continue to build linkages between the community, industry and schools.
3. **Strengthen and revise a monitoring framework** – It is recommended to strengthen and revise Lighthouse's monitoring framework that captures outcomes for young people. This could include: snapshot data of pre and post literacy and NAPLAN results against a control school. Snapshot data of attendance records. More detailed recording of work and learning outputs and outcomes for young people.

4. **Conduct inclusive research on the 'one size fits all' approach** - Develop a research project that involves speaking to young people about a) whether Lighthouse should continue to adopt a 'one size fits all' approach or develop strategies to better reach cohorts. b) What the Lighthouse should be doing more of. Research should be peer-based and include the training young people to help collect data. This research could also include CALD cohorts interviewing CALD cohorts, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders interviewing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and could include a monetary payment for their participation.
5. **Spread the movement into the service sector** – Continue building relationships, and talking to sympathetic and supportive members of the service sector. Do a listening tour, similar to the 1000 Conversations, to understand what is happening. Listen to what service workers have to say and why they experience constraints. Bring the enthusiasm and fire that Lighthouse brings to all other facets of its work and begin engaging with service sector cohorts that Lighthouse are not already engaged with. The purpose of this is to engage in advocacy to further improve services for young people, and to work collaboratively with those working in the service sector who also want to see service sector reform.

6. Annexes

Annex 1: Lighthouse Core Group – theory of change

Level of logic	Questions	Methods
Principles and values Heart Big picture thinking	Does the Core Group implement activities in line with its principles and values? (Refer to questions in heart section)	Review of feedback forms Review of existing case studies
Activities Taking time to understand community Inspirational leadership Brokering relationships	What was the community like before Lighthouse? What does Lighthouse do? Is our response appropriate? Does the community feel heard by Lighthouse? Does Lighthouse take the time to understand the community correctly? Has listening led to change (and how)? Has Lighthouse allowed all voices to be heard?	Interviews: The Haven staff School staff Leadership tables Community leaders Survey: Community leaders Volunteers
Immediate outcomes Connection	How is Lighthouse contributing to improved connections? Are people reporting increased connections because of Lighthouse? Who is being connected to who as a result of Lighthouse? Who has been influenced as a result of Lighthouse? Have any unexpected changes occurred?	Teachers Supporters Young people Review of the progress of the Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project against the progress mapping tool
Intermediate outcomes Ripple effect: people influencing others	Is Lighthouse influencing systems in Greater Shepparton? Who is influencing changes in systems in Greater Shepparton? What are some examples of how systems in Shepparton have changed? How sustainable is the volunteering model?	
Goal Change in community perspective	How does Lighthouse inspire community?	

Annex 2: Schools – theory of change

Level of logic	Questions	Methods
Principles and values Heart (see heart section) Being open about issues and acknowledging how things can improve School is open and ready for collaboration	Why did the school connect to Lighthouse?	Review of data from one school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School attendance records • School behaviour records • Literacy and numeracy • NAPLAN Feedback register Survey: Volunteers Parents Principals Teachers Interviews: Volunteers Principals Teachers
Activities Lighthouse and its volunteers are empowering and supporting Schools are connecting to a range of volunteers	Does the school feel supported by Lighthouse and its volunteers?	
Immediate outcomes Increased connection to community Increased connection to resources Increased understanding of what is available to support schools Increased willingness to discuss issues and identify solutions	Does the school feel that Lighthouse and its volunteers add value to the school? What does the Lighthouse Core Group do that empowers schools and volunteers to be willing to engage with issues? How is the interaction between Lighthouse, the volunteers and the school contributing to changes in attitudes in the school?	
Intermediate outcomes Schools and volunteers identifying solutions to issues in schools and developing innovative solutions Schools are reaching out for assistance from a range of people (community, experts, leaders, funders)	Are Lighthouse and its volunteers correctly identifying and understanding the issues that schools face? What is the role of experts in assisting with the identification of school solutions? What issues and solutions are being identified by schools and volunteers?	
Goal		

<p>School community is inclusive of community</p> <p>Students' experience of school is changing and attendance is increasing</p> <p>Teachers and school staff have a positive experience of school</p> <p>Community perception of school is improving</p>	<p>Are parents and teachers seeing changes in students? What changes are they seeing?</p> <p>Is attendance increasing at school and what is the identified trigger to increased attendance?</p> <p>How is community perception of the school changing?</p>	
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Annex 3: Young people – theory of change

Level of logic	Questions	Methods
Principles and values Heart (refer to heart section)	What complexities are these young people facing? What gives young people joy and happiness?	Industry Links Review register Review of DET reporting Interviews: Teachers Parents Volunteers Principals Survey: Teachers Parents Principals Volunteers
Activities Deep listening to young people's needs Development of responses to needs identified by young people	Is Lighthouse correctly identifying the needs of young people? Is the response of Lighthouse and its volunteers the best response? Do young people feel heard? How do young people feel about Lighthouse? Do young people perceive Lighthouse differently from other interventions?	
Immediate outcomes Basic needs are met Feel safe, trust and connection with adults Get access and opportunity Improved self-awareness	Do young people feel that their basic needs are being met? Do young people who engage with Lighthouse and its volunteers feel safe? Are young people noticing any changes in their friends?	
Intermediate outcomes Increased connection with community Feeling empowered to take up opportunities	Do young people feel that they have increased access to opportunities? Is the way that young people view their future changing? Do young people report increased connection to community? Are young people's attitudes changing?	
Goal Increased access to education Increased access to employment opportunities Improved stability	What are young people doing now that is different from what they were doing before?	

Annex 4: Volunteers – theory of change

Level of logic	Questions	Methods
Principles and values Activities with volunteers focus on connection Volunteers are values-oriented (see: heart section)	Why and how is the Lighthouse Core Group's efforts on connection critical to the success of the project? Why did people start volunteering?	Case study of one school involving interviews and review of following data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NAPLAN - Attendance records - Literacy and numeracy records Review of feedback register Review of stakeholder register
Activities Take up opportunities and participate	What is the benefit that volunteers bring to schools, community and The Haven? What is different about volunteering for Lighthouse as opposed to volunteering for other organisations? How long are people volunteering, on average? How can Lighthouse attract more volunteers?	
Immediate outcomes Investing in others Connecting people across class Change in mindset Increased community knowledge	How has the volunteers' view of the Greater Shepparton region changed? Do volunteers feel more connected to others as a result of their participation? How has the volunteers' view of the problems in the Greater Shepparton region changed?	1000 Conversations data Focus groups/interviews: Teachers Students Parents Volunteers Local council staff State government staff Survey: Teachers Students Parents Volunteers
Intermediate outcomes Ownership of Lighthouse goals Coming up with ideas and solutions and implementing them Showing leadership and adaptability in implementation of activities	What changes have happened for young people as a result of the volunteers? How many volunteers are coming up with ideas and implementing them? How does Lighthouse empower volunteers to begin implementing their own solutions to identified problems?	
Goal Group in community who has a commitment to long-term outcomes in the region	What would happen if the Lighthouse Core Group stopped? What is the impact of volunteers on the lives of young people?	

Annex 5: The Haven – theory of change

Level of logic	Questions	Methods
Principles and values Safe space	What is the contribution of volunteers to the creation of a safe space? What does a safe space look like and how do safe enable this?	Case review of young people, completed by staff Interviews with staff
Activities Provide opportunities and experiences Creation of community	Is The Haven attracting the right young people? What do young people feel is the best part of The Haven? What do young people need from The Haven? Is The Haven seeing regular attendance from young people? How do young people feel when they are at The Haven? What keeps young people coming back? Who else needs to be involved?	
Immediate outcomes Connection and inclusion Community Basic needs met Connection to opportunities	Has the way that young people engage with The Haven, with each other and with the community changed as a result of The Haven? What is the contribution of volunteers to the outcomes for young people at The Haven?	
Intermediate outcomes Personal growth Increased aspiration Increased self-awareness Sense of purpose Experiencing gratitude and practising kindness Thinking about others	What practical life skills are young people developing? What changes are young people seeing in their friends who attend The Haven? What changes are young people reporting in regard to personal development?	

Goal Improved social and emotional wellbeing Improved engagement in learning and employment Reduction in crime	In what timeframe can we expect to see this level of change? How do we make The Haven sustainable?	

Annex 6: Evidence table

KEQ/Summary of finding (overall)	Summary finding (sub-theme)	Sub-theme	Evidence
KEQ1: What has changed for young people in the Greater Shepparton region as a result of the Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project?			
		Changes observed in children (under 12)	<p>Young children (under 12) experience a range of benefits as a result of Lighthouse initiatives, as do school staff and community members.</p> <p>When exploring the interview data, which revealed changes for children under the age of 12, what was notable was that a single set of activities resulted in a range of benefits and outcomes not only for children but also for community members and teachers.</p> <p>For instance, Lighthouse coordinates the mobilisation of businesses and volunteers to read to students. The intended outcome is that children who are part of this reading program will have increased literacy. This evaluation did not assess the literacy of children prior and subsequent to their engagement in this activity. However, the reporting from adults, and a small number of reports from children, revealed a range of outcomes which, while not directly related to literacy, create an enabling environment for children to thrive in their learning. Examples of outcomes emanating from the reading activities included:</p> <p>Community members (and young people) reported feeling increasing connections with young people: <i>'I'm feeling more confident in reading. I didn't really like reading with her until we started having more fun and I was able to read with her' (YP2). 'When I first used to go, she wouldn't engage with anybody, hide in the corner and slowly she started to build it out and talk to me' (SV10).</i></p> <p>Teachers reported that children are more engaged in school, and there was anecdotal reporting from several teachers that attendance has improved on the days that the volunteers attend class (SS2, SS3, SV4). <i>'So our attendance is good, engagement is really good. We still do have a lot of behaviour problems with certain kids but it's a smaller group of kids than it previously was' (SS2).</i></p> <p>Teachers and community members reported that children felt that they 'matter more' because of the efforts of community members to engage with them. <i>'I think things like that are making them actually feel like they matter. It's huge because if they feel good about themselves and if they feel like they're important, they'll engage more' (CM10).</i></p> <p>Teachers reported appreciating the support of community members. They felt that they could not attend to all children in class individually as much as they would like and that having volunteers in the classroom allowed the teacher to work collaboratively with the community to enable outcomes. The program assisted businesses to connect with the community through the literacy program. Among reports from volunteers and school teachers commenting on the increase in literacy confidence, there has also been some reports from young people on the impact that the literacy programs have had.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>'They helped me feel more confident in reading to people.'</i><i>'I know how to pronounce more words, know more meanings to a few words.'</i><i>'I'm feeling more confident in reading. I didn't really like reading with her until we started having more fun and I was able to read with her.'</i> <p>There was evidence of 'catalytic change' (meaning that Lighthouse mobilises someone who then goes on to create new change). For instance, one school decided to establish a breakfast program in their school. They attributed Lighthouse as being part of the inspiration for beginning the program. One school staff member indicated that, as a result of the Lighthouse, they realised that they could reach out to the community and seek support, and implement innovative programs.</p> <p>These changes are discussed in greater detail in the 'Schools' section. However, from the perspective of the children, what resulted was increased access to nutritious breakfast for cohorts of students that are known to be less likely to eat breakfast, and the implementation of the breakfast program in itself anecdotally led to increases in engagement and learning and a decrease in behavioural incidents.</p> <p><i>'Yeah so we probably have less behaviour in instances. We record our instances when kids are mucking up so we probably have less recorded incidents than previously so that's good.'</i> (SS2)</p> <p>Ultimately this means that there are changes in increased connections between students and their teachers and the community and increased positive associations with schools.</p> <p>Other changes observed in children included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased aspirations, and understanding of career pathways from Industry Links support and excursions (SS3, SV3, SV4). 'A lot of them have actually started asking career-based questions rather than just like, "How much money do you earn?" They actually ask, "How did you become that?" or "What subjects at school did you learn?" So the kids actually like learning the journey to become these different things' (SS3).Growth in confidence in dealing with adults (SS2, SS3, SV4).Less behavioural issues and engagement (SV4, SS2).

		Changes observed in young people (12+)	<p>Industry Links – Young people have an increased exposure to potential career pathways through the Industry Links program.</p> <p>Volunteers who were interviewees for this evaluation felt that the Industry Links program has been successful in providing access to learning about work and learning opportunities for young people who may not have had these experiences otherwise. Volunteers also reported that young people who had participated in the program experienced increased aspirations to enter into further learning and work. Finally, volunteers also reported that they themselves experienced personal satisfaction as a result of having a positive impact on a young person and they discussed the ways in which they felt more connected to their community as a result of their interaction with the program. (Please see volunteer impact section)</p> <p><i>'Industry tours, having the opportunity to just take students out to see what jobs are out there that they would have absolutely no idea, has certainly made an impact with our students.'</i> (SS5)</p> <p>Finally, it was mentioned that Industry Links is available to all young people, not just young people experiencing disadvantage. This is important as young people who experience intergenerational disadvantage are being reached by a program that does not identify them as experiencing disadvantaged. They are able to participate in the program without any risk of the young person interpreting the support received as further evidence of stigma or discrimination.</p> <p><i>'Well Industry Links is providing aspiration and understanding of opportunities to students who wouldn't have had it otherwise. Vulnerable families, they don't understand we've got two or three generations of unemployed, we've got teachers who have gone to kinder, school, uni, back to school. They've provided kids with so many opportunities to actually experience a trucking company, know the variety of jobs that are available. They've opened that up.'</i> (CM6)</p> <p><i>'in subject selection counselling with Year 10s, I was talking to a young boy and I said, "Well, where did this come from?" And, he said, "Oh when we went down to the Metro Rail." So, that had an impact on him that he was now thinking of doing civil engineering or something in that field, that he hadn't really thought about before. So, he had done a lot of background work before he'd come and actually sat with his parents and me, about what subjects he would need to do. And, I wouldn't have thought that kid was really that. I sort of had to twist his arm to go. But, like I said, "Oh, it will be a fantastic ... I wish I was going, you know.'</i> (SS1)</p> <p>Young people who visit The Haven feel increased aspirations and desire to engage positively in the community.</p> <p>The establishment of The Haven filled a gap for youth service delivery in the Greater Shepparton area. The rationale for the establishment of The Haven was that there was a cohort of young people who were disengaged in school, spending time in public areas of Shepparton and who were getting into trouble and engaging in criminal activities. The community was distrustful of young people in public spaces and these young people also felt that they could not access services as this cohort of young people tended to experience stigma and discrimination.</p> <p>[Before The Haven I was] 'sitting at home being a bum smoking blunts.' [I came to The Haven] 'so I got something to do.' (YP3) [Before The Haven I was] 'just laying in my room on my phone all afternoon and night.' (YP4)</p> <p>Reports from The Haven staff, young people, and The Haven volunteers indicated that they feel more connected into a community. This community is comprised of other young people, The Haven staff, and the volunteers. And probably as a result of this increased connectedness into community comes increased aspirations and desire to engage positively in the community. Reporting from young people indicates that they are less likely to engage in criminal behaviour as a result of their engagement in The Haven.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection – <i>'For me, even walking down the street, and I might see some of these people, or young people, in the hall and say hello to them, and "How are you going?" Whereas beforehand, maybe wondering why they're not at school. Whereas I might actually know some of these young people now'</i> (HV5). • Aspiration – <i>'I know my friend, he wants to get a job here. And, he wants to get a job and The Haven helps him out with that, so he puts in more of an effort to get his resumé done and like, they did a RSA course which was pretty good'</i> (YP5). • Reduction in crime – <i>(Biggest change since coming to the Haven) 'I stopped stealing shit ... Like I said before, it stopped me from stealing – it stopped most of us boys from stealing so, you should be proud of yourselves'</i> (YP4). • <i>'I think of things like The Haven and the change in the young people when they do get to experience these amazing opportunities and have that gratitude there'</i> (SS6). <p>Young people experienced changes in mindset.</p> <p><i>'Changes is just I don't know – I just don't have the same mindset as I did before coming here, just a different mindset and everything. I can't even be bothered going out and going stealing cars 'cause it shows you the better things in life that there is, instead of being locked up. It's changed my mindset in a lot of ways.'</i> (YP3 + 4 +5)</p> <p><i>'Yeah, a lot of them, especially of my mates. From where they come from – the same place as me – and watching them all like, yeah, it's good. [I: So like, what type of changes?] Basically the same, [not] going out, playing up, doing crime – yeah, different mindsets'</i> (YP3+4+5). <i>'A couple of people I've seen have sort of realised ... that the party life that they were involved with just isn't good. They've sort of realised they need to get out of that and start focusing on life.'</i> (YP8)</p>
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		Changes observed in volunteers	<p>These changes include changes in self, knowledge, attitudes and behaviour.</p> <p>Volunteer experience bringing personal satisfaction.</p> <p>Many volunteers, both those volunteering directly with young people or on leadership tables, reported high levels of personal satisfaction and fulfillment from volunteering (SV3, SV5). This includes two table members feeling like they ‘get more out of [being a table member] than they put in’ (LT2, LT4) and a high proportion of volunteers who have interaction with young people reporting that ‘volunteers get as much out of it as the kids, or the groups that we're volunteering for’ (LT5, CM1). Many volunteers commented that they feel connected to the young people they volunteer with (SV2), their skills are valued as a volunteer, and that they feel an increased sense of community (LT5), and ownership over community issues.</p> <p><i>‘They loved going to the school, reading to the kids. They would be able to recall not all their names but a really bright kid, or just a really friendly kid, or a cheeky kid, or... So they were sort of getting almost these little brief relationships, and I think they were getting a lot out of the fact that they were just helping out.’ (SV5)</i></p> <p>Volunteering is increasing community understanding of local disadvantage.</p> <p>One of the most commonly reported changes for volunteers is their change in knowledge, expressing how they now have a deeper understanding of local issues and disadvantage, with many reporting how volunteering has been an ‘eye-opening experience’ (CM2), and that their empathy has increased as a result.</p> <p><i>‘I see how ... well, there's a lot more problems in this community than I thought there was ... I had very little idea, it's floored me a bit because I've sort of worked in hindsight anyway in a select slice of the community. I've worked with farmers and landholders and public landowners and managers and stuff like that in my previous work which I always thought was not affluent but some parts had a degree of affluence ... So I was pretty ignorant of what I'm experiencing now. So it's been a real eye opener for me and it's been a concern that there's obviously a lot more issues.’ (SV4)</i></p> <p>Volunteers are advocating for Lighthouse and their values.</p> <p>Changes in behaviour for volunteers include volunteers taking further actions outside their volunteering role, including talking about Lighthouse to their friends (CM6, LT5), teaching their children about judgement, (SV1) and using volunteering with Lighthouse as a topic in their university essays (SV4).</p>

			<p><i>'There is a lot of volunteer pride that has resulted from the volunteer program. Many of the volunteers who get involved love it and it's widely spoken about in the communities that mostly volunteer.'</i> (CM6)</p> <p>All of these changes observed in volunteers work towards the goal of having an activated community who are committed to long-term outcomes in the region.</p>
		Changes observed in the community	<p>There is a shift in the community taking ownership over its own problems and Lighthouse is a key mechanism for and strong contributor to this shift.</p> <p>Many people who were interviewed commented that over the past five years the community has shifted from being a 'victim' (LT5), a community that was aware of the issues of disadvantage in the region but not taking any action, to a community who is <i>'find[ing] their own ways of fixing the problem'</i> (SV5) thanks to strong community leadership, including that of Lighthouse.</p> <p><i>'So I would say the community leadership, if you like, is ticking over in a way that it hasn't for a long time and there's sort of a joint narrative about the city now that I haven't seen since probably the early 2000s.'</i> (CM1)</p> <p><i>'I think seeing how the community can work together. So just the shift in view of, it's not so much silo working anymore, so it's my view on how things can operate and how we can work collectively to impact the greater community. Whereas a few years back, it was very much all these little silos and all these little pockets doing things. But now it's like everyone, we're now working more collectively, so it's changing that mindset of we can actually work as a group. We don't need to just go, "This is me and I'm only doing this." We work as a whole unit together to support them all, because at the end of the day they're all our community. It's just shifted that view.'</i> (SS6)</p> <p>While some people interviewed consider the community as already being activated prior to Lighthouse (CM4, CM5), there were no reports against the argument that Lighthouse has been a mechanism for and a strong contributor to the community taking action to address its own state of disadvantage through the activation of volunteers, leadership and collective way of working.</p> <p><i>'But there needs to be a mechanism to put that good intention and the person who needs some assistance ... and Lighthouse seems to have been that mechanism.'</i> CM7</p>
		Changes observed in schools	<p>Another area where change is expected among 'next users' in order to create change for young people in the Greater Shepparton region relates to the changes identified within schools.</p> <p>School staff see Lighthouse as a resource they can draw on, and hence feel empowered to implement new programs.</p> <p>School staff are enthusiastic about Lighthouse and its volunteers, and have seen them as a real support across multiple activities including curriculum development (involving linking curriculum to industry) (SS1), grant writing and business planning. There are multiple accounts of schools feeling empowered and supported to implement new programs and Lighthouse has played a pivotal role in brokering relationships, activating volunteers and mobilising resources (SS2, SS6). Some of these programs are also reported to have increased attendance at school.</p> <p><u>Case study – Mooroopna Park Primary School food program</u></p> <p><i>'So look the Lighthouse ... the biggest thing they've contributed to our school is about this time last year I rang them and spoke to them about an idea I had with providing the kids lunch every day. Lisa McKenzie was the first one I spoke to and then she sent along a couple of ladies, Vicky and Sarah. They just listened to my idea. We have so many kids not bringing lunch every day. We're making sandwiches, we're going to the food bank each week and getting fruit and muesli bars and things like that. It's a bit depressing really. So I had a bit of an idea that we could renovate our cleaning and sports shed, knock out a few walls and make it into a cafeteria.</i></p> <p><i>So they had me chase up and connect with different people they thought would be able to give me quotes and who they knew had worked in a community and worked with people. So we got some quotes, we got the building work done and then they had helped give input into what they think it should look like because some of the people involved from Lighthouse had been involved with businesses and kitchens and things like that, so she had some people give some advice, you know, "You need this" and "you need." and so that was really valuable</i></p> <p>...</p> <p><i>I was pretty open about getting support from other people to make sure what I'm doing is the right thing. Lighthouse sort of came in and said, "Right if we're going to do this we need a business plan." And that's not my strength ... Where Vicky was really ... she really led that – "And this month we're doing this, next month we're doing that". So it was just wonderful. So she started reaching out to community groups about who can volunteer and who can we get support for food from ... food-wise. They went and looked what orchards are out there to donate fruit. The Food Bank were already supporting us, but they were supporting us on a very small scale. As where now, we visit twice a week and they give us a carload of food every week, twice a week. They also helped us approach businesses to either donate money or food. Like American Bakery give us bread. And then we have monthly sponsors, where businesses choose a month to sponsor us. That came out of a fundraiser Lighthouse organised in August. So they ran a fundraising day at Bill and Beats in Mooroopna. And we raised 26,000.'</i></p> <p>There are now better linkages between schools and business/industry. The biggest change reported by schools is that they feel there is now a better connection, and better linkages between schools and businesses (CM4, CM6, CM7, CM9, SS1, SS3, SS5, SS7).</p>

			<p><i>'I have seen industry embrace schools more and students. I've seen that there's been that link between the schools, it's not just me ringing industry now and being a pain in the neck to them. It's they can see the relevance and a structure and why we need industry to assist us, industry and community to assist us with our students. There's just been that better communication between industry and community to the schools through Lighthouse.'</i> (SS5)</p> <p>Schools reported that Lighthouse has been successful in 'closing the gap' (SS1) between schools and industry and this is highlighted through Industry Links, excursions and career days, with some schools also reporting that they now have a broader understanding of the opportunities to connect with industry.</p> <p>Some schools consider Lighthouse as being embedded in their school.</p> <p>Ultimately, a large portion of both the primary and secondary schools with which Lighthouse partners see Lighthouse as being embedded in their school, their curriculum, and with the opening of the Greater Shepparton college in 2020, even in the architecture with one interviewee commenting that <i>'the architects have been well and truly spoken to about the connections with Lighthouse at industry meetings ... so I think they've got offices'</i> (SS1).</p> <p><i>'I think Lighthouse is just seen as an extra arm of Shepparton High School, and now the Greater Shepparton College moving forward.'</i> (SS5)</p>
KEQ2: Is the approach utilised by the GSLP relevant for addressing the identified needs of young people in the Greater Shepparton region?			
		Relevance to regional community experiencing inequality	<p>Lighthouse is an organisation who is relevant for the Greater Shepparton region.</p> <p>Shepparton is a regional town in a state of change and upheaval, who perceived that <i>'the decision-makers and politicians had little interest'</i> (CM7) in the social disadvantage of the region. The community is dedicated, with two respondents commenting that they have come from other regional areas, and that the dedication of the community in Shepparton is stronger than that in their previous residence (LT4, LT5).</p> <p><i>'Yeah. If you could bottle it, oh my goodness, it's amazing. So I came from another regional area, so not from the Shepparton region, but I came from another regional area, which had a very different vibe to what's going on here. Because when you come here in Shepparton nobody goes, "There isn't an issue here." No one will look at you and go, "No problem here." Everyone's willing to go, "There is a problem here, and we are willing to have a crack at fixing it." ... You talk to people every day and they're all passionate about solving something. If I could answer that question, my goodness, we'd just be able to solve all the problems everywhere, because whatever it is that's going on here, it is phenomenal.'</i> (LT5)</p> <p>The combination of a dedicated community and some active leaders in the community played a large role in Shepparton taking ownership over its own social problems, including through the creation of Lighthouse, the creation of the community for Greater Shepparton, and successfully getting a new independent member of parliament (CM1, CM2, CM4, CM7).</p> <p>As this 'vibe' within the community, businesses and philanthropy to address disadvantage has been so strong (LT1, SV1, CM4, CM7), Lighthouse has been of relevance to community members who want to contribute to identifying and responding to local community issues but have not had the opportunity to do so through other avenues, prior to Lighthouse.</p>
		Relevance as an organisation that orients around what the community says, rather than what policy or 'experts' say	<p>Lighthouse orients its work around what the community says, rather than what policy or 'experts' say.</p> <p>The community perceives that Lighthouse is oriented towards relational and connective approaches that seek to build a grassroots network of people who support each other. This is the community development approach and it is probably the reason why Lighthouse has been successful in mobilising such high numbers of participants. Lighthouse is perceived as an organisation that acts on requests from the community rather than tells the community what it needs.</p> <p><i>'People, they're not necessarily looking for clinical or a systemised response, what they're looking for is to be part of the community and feel welcome, value, a sense of belonging and being given a hand up rather than being told what's wrong with them. So, it's more what's strong, not what's wrong is sort of our approach, which is finding out it's an ethics-based community development approach. It's finding out what the community is listening at the heart of it. So, listening is at the heart of our theory of change along with connection because what we discovered was there's a lot of assumptions and some arrogance about what people thought people needed.'</i> (LS1)</p> <p><i>'But then through our engagement, we changed our thinking with that because of what community was telling us. They were telling us that it's family – they feel that there needs to be this building of capacity, building of hope, people not feeling connected so, how do we make something where people can feel connected, where maybe they can come talk in a nice environment with others that are probably experiencing some similar challenges, but we're offering them a place where we're trying to give them hope, and we're trying to do it in a really safe, positive, nurturing and caring way. It's not a service, it's a place where you can go that you might be a mum, with little kids at home, you might feel along – this gives you an opportunity to maybe get out and meet some other people, but in a nice setting, not from an aesthetics perspective, I mean comfortable – a comfortable, non-judgmental setting.'</i> (SV8)</p> <p>Shifting power – The 'deep listening' data-driven approach used by Lighthouse is relevant because Lighthouse initiatives respond to data/ideas from 'end users'.</p>

			<p>Over 60% of people interviewed for this evaluation understood that many of the decisions made by Lighthouse were based on local data, either collected at the population level (Seer), the regional level (the two rounds of 1000 Conversations) or the interpersonal level (through the staff's daily interactions with the community). (CM7, CM10, SS1, CM3, LT1, SV2 + more)</p> <p>'The jargon is place-based but basically trying to work out what a solution is and then get the government just to fund, not to say, "Here's something we developed in Spring Street. We're going to roll it out with you guys ... Those 1000 Conversations, that was really important for us to understand the problem ... They're using data and evidence to make good strategic decisions. They've had different data collection methods ... and they've given themselves the space to go back and confirm those findings.' (CM7)</p> <p>'Lighthouse identifies the needs of community by talking to the community. Most of the guys have really good networks and they can hear and see where the issues are arising. It's not the fact that you go, "Everyone is thirsty you need to have a drink", it's listening to what people need as opposed to telling them what they need. Not just from the 1000 Conversations, it's from talking to children at The Haven, at the schools, their networks.' (CM2)</p> <p>This results in the community feeling listened to, issues and gaps within the community being identified, and the approaches adopted by Lighthouse being highly relevant for the region. Another main finding is that there is a group of people who are using an empowerment model, flipping the notion of 'expert', positioning the end user as the expert of their own problems and solutions. This is a key finding that goes against the regular notion of a top-down, bureaucratic program or service.</p> <p>'The same people who probably have the answers, that can be part of the solution, so why not allow a whole lot of people participate including the people that we're designing for. So, what we've seen is a change in that will to participate around the table for people who weren't comfortable discussing their specific expertise with people who you know young mother or a farmer. There's a deep listening, there's a connection, there is a sense of belonging. There's that many voices being part of the equation I think that's the beginning of the framework that makes the foundation of it.' (LS1)</p> <p>'We were often told it is dangerous, we're the experts and you shouldn't be asking the people- we know that they need. This is about shifting power all of that, the whole model is about shifting power over it's actually about me and others using our social capital in our position to challenge status quo authority and failing systems.' (LS1)</p>
		Relevance to children and young people	<p>The models developed by Lighthouse, which focus on connecting young people to community, are really relevant to supporting young people. The models – in schools, youth leadership tables, The Haven and other initiatives – focus on connection and care between adults and young people. Adults reported that young people really respond to this. As schools are also receiving tailored initiatives designed for them, the relevance to young people in this school cohort is also very strong.</p> <p>Relevance to socially isolated cohorts with low levels of literacy and numeracy.</p> <p>As population-level research, 1000 Conversations and the local-level data collection revealed that many young people were entering primary and secondary school with extremely low levels of literacy and numeracy, and high levels of social isolation As many respondents reported (SS2, CM1, SS3, SV3, SV4), this cohort of students thus do not receive the opportunity to be read to at home, may not have much interaction with their caregiver at home and as a result are entering school behind average education levels, and are not catching up during their primary schooling. This knowledge first sparked the volunteers in schools model to increase both communication abilities and exposure to potential role models. This model has increasingly grown, in line with school needs, to include breakfast programs, one-on-one mentoring, excursions and many forms of volunteering including reading volunteers and maths tutors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'So, based on the gaps that we found particularly in early childhood and kids being not school ready but also not secondary school ready, that led to the volunteering program in primary schools, initially of just getting people to read to kids whose literacy and numeracy levels are pretty appalling in late primary school because you know, nobody has ever read to them.' (CM1) 'So when they come into foundation they have really low levels of language which impacts incredibly on literacy skills. So many of our kids don't have people that read to them.' (SS3) <p>The intervention of mentors and volunteers is said to have made an impact on NAPLAN results in some schools is said to have increased literary confidence, and increased a connection between students and community.</p> <p>'I know how to pronounce more words, know more meanings to a few words.' (YP2) 'I'm feeling more confident in reading. I didn't really like reading with her until we started having more fun and I was able to read with her.' (YP2)</p> <p>The Haven model as catering to the needs of attendees.</p> <p>As previously there was no youth service like The Haven in the Shepparton region, The Haven has opened up an avenue for young people who were previously disengaged from the community and schooling to connect with opportunities to feel safe, and to re-engage with learning and employment opportunities. The Haven is a place that, along with the Lighthouse model, will deliver whatever kind of support the attendee is looking for. This support may be in the form of a meal, a social setting, or it may be looking to help young people re-enter schooling or employment. In both respects, The Haven has been very successful. It has created a space that feels safe for young people who are in need of that support and created a space that can lead to further opportunities to re-engage if that is what the attendee is after. This is a significant finding for the cohort of young people who attend The Haven as many young people who attend are looking for ways to re-engage, but are not sure of a pathway to do so.</p>

		<p>'I love the Lighthouse mainly because of The Haven. The Haven was a space Shepparton really needed for the troubled kids and the Lighthouse made that happen. I guess it's changed me in a way being there.' (YP8)</p> <p>'I was just looking to better myself – really like any opportunity to, if there's a place that can help, instead of pushing all them places away just find one and get help from it.' (YP4)</p> <p><i>Learning opportunities</i></p> <p>The Haven does a lot of work with young people who want to re-enter the schooling system and, as mentioned above, by May 2019 there were 15 instances of young people entering into further learning or returning to school as a result of their engagement with The Haven.</p> <p>At The Haven a person was connected to a learning opportunity 12 times (accumulation of Haven statistics, Haven wins, + Haven quotes docs). At The Haven a person entered into further learning or returned to school 15 times (accumulation of Haven stats, Haven wins, + Haven quotes docs).</p> <p><i>'I went to MCP and Konrad was my teacher, and he helped me and he told me about The Haven and everything and I came down and had a geez. We started off behind Primary Care Connect in a tiny little room, but now we've got this big place. They helped me get back into school and everything and they helped me while I was at school helping me with things that triggered me in classrooms, like things that set me off. They'd help me with and it and they'd talk to me about it and they'd set up plans. Then when I came to The Haven I'd see the environment and how you guys worked and I kind of saw that I wanted to be a bit more like that than where I was at.'</i> (YP9)</p> <p><i>Employment opportunities</i></p> <p>The Haven has also utilised its networks to help young people get exposure to employment opportunities.</p> <p>At The Haven a person was connected to a work opportunity 28 times (according to Haven Stats document) – (this includes help with job applications, interviews, exposure to a potential job opportunity, etc.). At The Haven a person entered into employment 10 times (according to Haven Stats document).</p> <p><i>'We have good communication with the lighthouse staff [employment aspect], exchange ideas, we use the same partnerships. Helped young people apply for different jobs [40–50 applications].'</i> LS2</p> <p><i>'I know my friend, he wants to get a job here. And he wants to get a job and The Haven helps him out with that, so he puts in more of an effort to get his resumé done and like, they did a RSA course which was pretty good.'</i> (YP5)</p>								
	Relevance to schools (co-design, targeted and bespoke responsiveness)	<p>The bespoke, tailored support given to schools is highly relevant and valued by schools.</p> <p>One highly relevant aspect of the Lighthouse model is the way it interacts with schools, and the bespoke support it provides to schools. Through conversations with schools on their identified needs, Lighthouse brainstorm, and collectively build a response with the schools to the problem that they are facing. As many respondents mentioned, the needs vary greatly across schools, requiring a tailored response. Some examples of bespoke responses and support provided by Lighthouse include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Organising a washing machine and a dryer for a school that uses lots of second-hand uniforms for children coming to school without clean clothes (SS2)2. Organising position descriptions, and sitting in on interviews for a chef, which was a skill gap identified for a school (SS2)3. Designing a resilience program – that has said to increase attendance at a school (SS1)4. Organising industry-based excursions and presenters that relate back to school curriculum (SS1, SS3, SS5)5. Organising tailored mentors and volunteers in areas including literacy, numeracy, leadership and woodwork (SS1, SS2, SS3, SS5, SV4)6. Mentoring at Shepparton High (as requested by the school) – data shows that the majority of students who received mentoring in Year 7 in 2017 achieved medium growth in their NAPLAN results in Year 9. <div><p>Year 7-9 NAPLAN Reading Relative Growth for Mentored Students</p><p>2017-2019 Cohort</p><table><tr><th>Growth Category</th><th>Relative Growth (Approx.)</th></tr><tr><td>Low Growth</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Medium Growth</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>High Growth</td><td>1</td></tr></table></div>	Growth Category	Relative Growth (Approx.)	Low Growth	3	Medium Growth	11	High Growth	1
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		Relevance to Collective impact models	<p>Lighthouse is progressing well against the Collective Impact core functions framework developed by Lighthouse in 2017. There is ongoing work and supplementary work that could be done across some of the core functions, but overall the project is tracking well.</p> <p>Throughout the implementation of Lighthouse initiatives and strategies, the project has broadly followed two Collective Impact frameworks: Tamarack Institute’s ‘Collective Impact 3.0’ and the Collective Impact core functions framework developed by Lighthouse in 2017. For this report we will be analysing progress against the Collective Impact core functions framework developed by Lighthouse in 2017, that can be found at Annex 7.</p> <table><tr><th>Core Function</th><th>Finding</th><th>ACTIONS as per work plan</th></tr><tr><td>INSPIRE</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">Having the leadership table model of diffused decision-making has been successful in engaging a diverse range of people within the community (including service representatives) and has been a mechanism for driving a common understanding of the problem and a shared vision for tables that is then fed up to Lighthouse.Many table members interviewed could not clearly articulate that their role was to help drive the shared vision and strategy for Lighthouse, with two table members commenting that they felt sometimes that the tables were not functioning as effectively as they could, and that they felt the table had a lack of strategy. 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			<div><div>SUSTAIN</div><div>Mobilise resources</div></div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Lighthouse has been successful in mobilising resources for the people they work with, and there has been instances of catalytic change where community members have developed new initiatives that align with the common agenda.Please see sustainability section for further details.</div> <div><i>The Backbone seeks to sustain its operations on an ongoing basis. It supports the community of change to seek and secure resources to extend existing or develop new initiatives and programs that align with our common agenda.</i></div>
KEQ3: If GSLP were to stop today, what would be the legacy of the project?			
		Sustainability of the movement	<div>Lighthouse’s role in ensuring coordination, mobilisation and activation of volunteers, schools and businesses is pivotal to the sustainability of the movement.</div> <div>Lighthouse has made positive and valued contributions to the Greater Shepparton region and its role in mobilising and enabling community connection is essential to the sustainability of the movement. Many respondents commented on the will and passion of the community to continue doing this work, but that Lighthouse's role is pivotal in ensuring coordination, mobilisation and activation of volunteers, schools and businesses.</div> <div><i>‘But it’s really the factor of whether there is an organisation that is organising the community people to get behind it. That’s the problem. Whether there’s somebody within the school ... and in a lot of cases, someone who’s been employed to do that and so they have the time to do that on the day-to-day basis. You having their support that does get back in mind, you know, goes to the back of mind. We need someone reminding us this on a daily basis, this is where we’re at.’ (CM10)</i></div> <div>An important legacy that respondents mentioned, with some directly contributing this legacy to Lighthouse working with their staff, is a shift in mindset and a ‘way of working’ (LS1) within the community in coming up with collective, systems-focused solutions to problems. School cohorts especially reported how working with Lighthouse has opened up their ability to think and work collectively, and that they no longer feel they have to face these problems on their own. As, from a behavioural perspective, shifts in mindsets are more sustainable than shifts in resources or access, this is a significant finding, one that could be expected to grow with continued Lighthouse support.</div> <div>People want to see the lighthouse continue: <i>‘And I think that if they cease to exist, I think that we will be in strife.’ (SS1)</i></div> <div><i>‘So it’s changing that mindset of we can actually work as a group. We don’t need to just go, "This is me and I’m only doing this." We work as a whole unit together to support them all, because at the end of the day they’re all our community. It’s just shifted that view.’ (SS6)</i></div> <div>Although there has been reports of a shift in mindset for some groups, ultimately, Lighthouse is still currently holding the thread between schools, businesses and community and, without this relationship brokering, it would be much harder for Lighthouse stakeholders to continue the movement if Lighthouse ceased to exist.</div>
		Sustainability of the volunteer program	<div>There are small numbers of school volunteers who reported that their volunteering in schools would continue beyond the life of Lighthouse, but the majority of school staff and school volunteers commented on the key role Lighthouse plays.</div> <div><i>‘I think because those same people keep coming back that that would continue but you know like if they decided to stop then I’m not 100% sure whether I’ll keep getting consistent volunteer support. So yeah it’s a lot easier with them that’s for sure.’ (SS2)</i></div>
KEQ4: How is the GSLP creating change for young people in the Greater Shepparton region?			
		Volunteers	<div>Lighthouse has successfully mobilised a group of proud volunteers who advocate for the movement.</div> <div>The capacity of Lighthouse to engage with and recruit and mobilise volunteers is a point of significant success for Lighthouse. A relational network of volunteers has grown to reach 500 people over the past five years whose pride, passion and advocacy are critical to the success of Lighthouse. These volunteers are dedicated, enthusiastic and spreading the word among their friends (HV3, HV4, CM6, LS1).</div> <div><i>‘We’ve tapped into that ... it’s created a force of like-minded people who have turned their attention to addressing the most wicked issue in our community which is poor educational outcomes and the vulnerability part of our community particular in ... children.’ (LS1)</i></div> <div>Lighthouse has positioned itself as a flexible, trusted and preferred volunteer program provider.</div> <div>Lighthouse has been successful in positioning itself as a preferred, trusted and adaptive volunteer program, creating the space for flexible volunteering opportunities, regardless of capacity and time constraints. This program is not a regular volunteer placement program, requiring a lot of behind-the-scenes coordination by the Core Group, <i>‘connecting volunteers with positions and schools they wouldn’t have had the thought or had the opportunity to before’ (CM6).</i></div> <div>The enthusiastic and dedicated Core Group activates and mobilises these volunteers, coordinating mentoring, reading programs, careers days, excursions and many more tailored opportunities that suit both the volunteer or business and the end user. The flexibility of the volunteer program is pivotal to how effective volunteering is for Lighthouse, opening opportunities to a wider network of people, businesses and skills.</div>

			<p><i>‘There’s also space for people who have a less regular capacity to commit, but are still welcome to be a part of it. I just think that there are so many people out there who want to do something that don’t know where to go and Lighthouse has made that provision.’ (SV7)</i></p> <p>There is evidence of volunteer catalytic change.</p> <p>There is evidence of a small group of volunteers who are generating new ideas and taking leadership in implementing them. When Lighthouse refers to catalytic change, it is referring to actors who begin coming up with their own solutions to problems and implementing them. For example, a staff member from Goulburn Valley Water created the idea of a book drive for St George’s Road Primary School after realising through the reading program that the quality and number of books at the school were limited (SV5). This staff member did this <i>‘off his own bat’</i> (SV5) but it stemmed from the volunteering experience that he had, and the value that Goulburn Valley Water and its staff members placed on giving back to their community. There is evidence that a small group of volunteers are doing this.</p> <p>Lighthouse is aware of issues with volunteer coordination.</p> <p>There are a small group of volunteers who report that the coordination of volunteer placement could be improved. For instance, some volunteers reported turning up to schools on in-service days or sports days. Some volunteers reported that they would like to have their volunteer placements better integrated with existing classroom activities and curriculum. This point was brought up in the discussion at the evaluation summit for this report and it was acknowledged that this was sometimes an issue when there was a lack of ownership of the volunteer program by the school.</p>
		Businesses	<p>Lighthouse has been very effective at mobilising local businesses, in a way that works for them.</p> <p>Lighthouse has been very effective at mobilising local businesses who want to contribute to the community but have not yet found a model that aligns with their workloads, skills and interests. This is not an insignificant finding, because it demonstrates that local businesses have an interest in community work and want to connect to opportunities but are not exactly sure how. A good example of this is ANZ, who ‘were looking to do some kind of community work before Lighthouse came around’ (LT1) and through their connections with Lighthouse’s CEO sought her out for some volunteering opportunities. Lighthouse has filled a gap for this cohort and furthermore has helped these businesses find unique ways of making volunteering work within their organisation.</p> <p><i>‘It’s been able to engage with the wider community and industry, and say to them, “Yeah, we’ve got an entry point for you to come in and help in some way.” And Lisa and yourself and the others involved have found ways to engage so many people. And it is bringing the village in to raise the children that allows that to happen.’ (HV3+HV4)</i></p> <p>Local businesses value their community and are keen to help in any way they can.</p> <p>Another key finding is that the business community within the Greater Shepparton region is invested in improving outcomes for young people in the region, and wants to give back in an interpersonal way. As one company commented, <i>‘It’s great to hand the cheque over, but we actually wanted everyone to be part of something’</i> (SV6). Many companies reported giving up their staff’s billable hours in place of volunteering opportunities, with one company replacing its \$15,000 client Christmas party with a Lighthouse-suggested volunteering opportunity, which cost the same as approximately two people leaving the office for an hour during the school term (SV6).</p> <p>Other businesses have gained a lot out of their work experience students (CM9), helping to write business plans for schools (SV3), leadership programs, scholarship arrangements, mentoring, awards, careers days and reading programs. Goulburn Valley Water at one point had more than 50 volunteers volunteering through Lighthouse, many of whom were driving their own initiatives within schools (SV5).</p> <p>Mobilising businesses is resource- and time-intensive.</p> <p>Lighthouse has been effective in providing opportunities for businesses to contribute to the community and in the evaluation summit it was acknowledged that this has required a huge amount of effort from the Core Group around building a volunteering framework that works within and around school hours and school needs. The Core Group is heavily involved in finding ways for businesses that lack the capacity to volunteer in work hours to be able to contribute to the cause by offering breakfast programs, scholarships, and sports practice help, among other opportunities.</p> <p>The critical role that Lighthouse plays in linking business and schools, students and opportunities.</p> <p>Two businesses that were interviewed commented that they were already involved in community work prior to the inception of Lighthouse, with one commenting that <i>‘we do a lot of social stuff here and there’s not a lot of room for more’</i> (CM5) and another commenting that the business community may have eventually done some of this work connecting with schools if Lighthouse did not exist (CM4). However, ultimately, all respondents commented on the critical role played by Lighthouse in linking business and schools, students and opportunities.</p>
		Service Sector	<p>Lighthouse has experienced some challenges in connecting with the service sector.</p> <p>There is some perception that there is competition between services, and that the sector has been resistant because Lighthouse is seen as somewhat radical in its approaches (CM1, CM6, CM7, SV1).</p> <p>Seven respondents commented that they had heard through their networks or workplaces that tension has previously existed, or still exists, within the service sector, with four of these respondents indicating that Lighthouse could be partnering more effectively with this sector (CM7, CM4, LT5 (2)).</p>

			<p><i>'People could challenge this, but people I trust talk to me and tell me that they see Lighthouse as just sort of wanting to go it alone a little bit and early on, they were probably really critical of other organisations and that needs to be a nuanced discussion, and I don't know how nuanced it was. But really if it was to be ... there's some people who have a view that Lighthouse was supposed to collect the effort.'</i> (CM7)</p> <p><i>'I think they have to build a sense of trust ... as they have with vulnerable communities ... I think they have to do the same with the partners in community. I think they have to rebuild that trust and will.'</i> (CM6)</p> <p>Conversely, the sector is sometimes difficult to partner with and Lighthouse does have some great relationships with service partners.</p> <p>Some respondents also thought that the service sector is inherently difficult to partner with for Lighthouse (CM5, LT4, LT5), and <i>'if you can get them to turn up to a meeting together [and if] they are threatened by the competing process for service provision, that's not Lighthouse's fault'</i> (CM5).</p> <p>Other evidence collected shows that there are good partnerships with the education sector, with a Haven spokesperson commenting that <i>'Relationships with other youth services are getting better as they stopped seeing our program as a threat'</i> (LS2). In addition, 30% of leadership table members work in the service sector and Lighthouse has established a number of healthy partnerships with organisations including Youth Foyer, GV Health and DECA.</p>
		Schools	<p>Lighthouse is having significant success in engaging with schools.</p> <p>Schools and volunteers are the big success story for Lighthouse. Lighthouse has had significant success in engaging school staff, positioning itself as a trusted conduit that links business to industry and provides resources to make ideas happen. All respondents commented on feeling supported, not just through financial means, but also through many different avenues.</p> <p><i>'They're not always chasing money off everybody. They just want to provide opportunities for mainly kids but it's not always kids but provide better opportunities for people in the community and part of that's volunteers, other part of it is people donating time and all that is volunteering but don't have time or money or resources I suppose. And such as food for us.'</i> (SS2)</p> <p>Schools have found it a relief working with Lighthouse, with many commenting on how tasks that were previously difficult are now not as hard since they have the support of Lighthouse. Whereas previously schools may have thought, 'Oh God, I can't do it. It's another thing. I haven't got time. I can't do the paperwork. I can't book the buses!' (SS7), Lighthouse has relieved this stress and given schools the confidence to implement their own ideas.</p> <p><i>'But they were actually able to do it, because they actually had the resources, the funding... The resources, the funding, all of the networks to actually bring the whole thing together, and can coordinate all of that to do it. So, it had been on the back burner for 12, 18 months, but I couldn't do that alone.'</i> (SS1)</p> <p>Lighthouse has been very effective at linking schools to industry, especially through Industry Links.</p> <p>Lighthouse has been extremely effective at linking schools to industry and mobilising its networks and resources in order to organise excursions, career days and work experience. Through the Industry Links program young people have been exposed to significant industries with which they would otherwise have not been able to connect, including banking, manufacturing, transport logistics, science, law and health (SS1, SV6, SS3, LT1).</p> <p>There is a cultural shift appearing in some schools – both catalytic and mindset.</p> <p>There is evidence of 'catalytic change' – that is, of some schools identifying their own issues and then implementing solutions. An example of this is seen at Mooroopna Primary School, where a woodwork volunteer placement was organised by Lighthouse. The success of the volunteer placement has brought about some momentum, with Lighthouse contributing to the donation of machinery parts, and then a staff member using his own money to build a shed where the volunteer placement can continue (SS2).</p> <p>Another shift (mentioned in KEQ 5 below) is the mindset shift within schools around thinking collectively. School cohorts especially reported how working with Lighthouse has opened up their ability to think and work collectively, and that they no longer feel they have to face these problems on their own (SS1, SS6, SS3).</p> <p><i>'Probably the way I've thought about planning a unit's changed. Like I put more thought, broader and not just what's in the curriculum but more adjacent and attached somehow. Like let's get them in and let's broaden our students ... We're thinking about where you can access experiences that go alongside that. So, thinking a little bit more collaboratively maybe.'</i> SS3</p> <p>Both of these shifts are significant cultural shifts for schools.</p>
		Core Group	<p>Volunteers and schools appreciate the enthusiasm and responsiveness of the Core Group – the 'whatever it takes' attitude.</p> <p>All volunteers and school staff respondents spoke very highly of the Core Group and the motivation and passion with which it carried out its work. Many mentioned the Core Group's 'nothing's too much' attitude. Many schools, in particular, commented on the responsiveness of the Core Group in moving forward with ideas and using initiative to solve problems (SS1, SV2, SV3, S4, SV7).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>'Nothing's too big or too small. You don't get, "Well, that's ridiculous what your sort of suggesting?".'</i> (SS1) <i>'If you've got an idea, they will help you. They'll give you as much support as you need if they think it's worthwhile.'</i> (SS2)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'Look I love them, they're awesome. They're just bubbly and helpful and nothing's too much.'</i> (SS2) • <i>'We were sitting in the staff room at recess talking about it and they're just like, "How do we fix it?" The initiative is that three-day camp at Dookie. What would you like and I'd go, "I'd love some yogurt in the morning so kids can ... And, they're like, "Right, we'll find the yogurt." Seriously, they just ... everything ... They're just on board, like you said. Like as you face it, it's never a no. They always think outside the box. They think differently to tradition.'</i> • <i>'I know that I can ring up Amy and go, I've got three kids that wanna do work experience in hospitality, one in building, one in this and staff at Lighthouse will organise the work experience within the week and there is always fantastic people to have the young people go to.'</i> (LT2) <p>The Core Group is trusted and reliable in following up with contacts, suggestions and partnerships, and three respondents (LT4, SS2, LT2) commented that everyone with whom Lighthouse has put them into contact (Lighthouse's contacts) have also been reputable and have delivered high-quality products, services or linkages.</p> <p><i>'You know that you can rely on that, if they say they've done it, they've done it. Yeah, they follow through, and they're very prompt at following through I've found.'</i> (SS1)</p> <p>The Core Group is very good at identifying gaps and responding with agility and initiative.</p> <p>Lighthouse is very good at identifying gaps and needs within the community and working towards filling those gaps (SV2). Many groups commented that the Core Group is agile and adaptive to emerging issues and opportunities, facilitating an intervention when it has identified these emerging gaps. A few examples of this include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ever since the super school was introduced Lighthouse has been adapting and angling its networks and programs towards helping the implementation of the super school (CM2, SS1). The super school was announced by the state government in May 2019, and Lighthouse has quickly mobilised its networks and resources to help with this implementation. <i>'So, I've known of Lighthouse in that role for a while. But I'm new to how good Lighthouse is this year, because of my involvement regarding the transition process. Because we're merging and kids are moving all over the place, Lighthouse have been exceptionally supportive of that. And I'm actually blown away by how supportive they have been.'</i> (SS1) 2. Lighthouse identified that there were young people walking from Mooroopna to The Haven in Shepparton (5+ km) and Lighthouse <i>'pooled their resources and got a bus to do a pickup and drop-off from Mooroopna to and from The Haven'</i> (CM3). 3. The Core Group has also been agile in merging leadership tables. <i>'If something isn't working the Lighthouse tend to change it. They merged two leadership tables. They're not afraid of change and are agile when it has to happen'</i>. (LT1) <p>People within the community are also aware of this agility and flexibility and see it as helping speed up the process of getting things done.</p> <p><i>'Yeah, a lot quicker and you get action and as I said, creativity and flexibility, nimble. I see some of the people who are working over at Lighthouse are a bit more like that ... I don't know if it's been the strategy or if it's been luck, I don't know what it is. But for whatever reason – I think those people do a very good job in terms of trying to be nimble, quick, flexible, creative.'</i> (CM7)</p> <p>Lighthouse is very good at identifying gaps and needs within the community and working towards filling those gaps (SV2).</p> <p>The Core Group staff have great networks and create an enabling environment for ideas to happen with their connections.</p> <p>Lighthouse provides an enabling environment so that when ideas and innovations arise from volunteers, table members or businesses they can connect their networks and resources to make these things happen. Lighthouse has also been effective at recruiting staff who are well networked or very effective at mobilising networks to get ideas off the ground (CM2, SV2, LT5, CM3, SS1, CM6, SS5, SS7, LT2). Some of the main examples of this include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The breakfast program at Mooroopna Park) (SS2) 2. The newly opened Mooroopna Haven. Lighthouse has pooled its networks and resources to be able to get the ideas of the people at the Anglican church happening in the build. For example, the Anglican church had the idea of moving the industrial kitchen from the back of the church to The Haven, and Lighthouse has facilitated a network of volunteers and tradespeople throughout the build (CM3). 3. Embedding a Lighthouse member in a school for a couple of days a week so that they could link industry in with curriculum (SS5). <p>Ultimately, the recruitment of Lighthouse has been successful, and these staff members are good networkers and good relationship builders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'She's very useful. Vicki is incredibly passionate about what she does, she is everywhere and all the time, and she's a go out and doer. So that is a really useful way for us to stay in touch.'</i> (LT5) • <i>'Lots of the Lighthouse team being really good at what they do. Community engagement, community development, Vicky is a good example.'</i> (CM6) • <i>'I went out there with Amy and introduced her to Linda and the next thing I know there was a lot happening between Lighthouse and McGuire.'</i> (SS1) • <i>'So, we work with Vicki Scott from Lighthouse and she has got us in contact and she helps the Rotary members organise exactly what we're doing or the activity and then they come along and support. Yeah, they kind of just split it.'</i> (S3) • <i>'Speaking with Lisa from Lighthouse, how could we make that happen? Lisa found us a member of staff from Lighthouse to come and sit in my office at school a couple of days a week, and we started the process of linking that staff member with our staff to look through the curriculum and see where we could embed industry.'</i> SS5 <p>There are mixed reviews about how Lighthouse receives feedback.</p> <p>Some respondents (LT5, CM7, CM6) indicated that they felt that at times the Core Group has not taken feedback or criticism on board, and has been selective about what feedback it wants to take, while a number of other respondents viewed Lighthouse as very open to feedback and suggestions.</p>
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			<p><i>'There's a lot of passionate people over there and you know when you really believe, it's hard to hear through the criticism. I don't feel, I don't know if they take criticism that well ... Yes, from their perspective because communication means to listen as well as to tell. I think the telling is really good, but the listening could be better.'</i> (CM7)</p>
		Haven	<p>The Haven provides a safe space for young people and is successful at engaging young people.</p> <p>There is a common perception that The Haven has been very effective at engaging young people at risk and in providing a safe space. There is no other service of this kind in Shepparton, and it is clear that The Haven has filled a gap. Young people feel welcomed, safe and unjudged, and there is evidence that The Haven has kept 81 (Haven stats document) at-risk young people off the streets. The programmatic philosophy is interesting. They avoid conventional notions of service delivery, preferring to act 'like a family'. The therapeutic value of this model is unstated but shows enormous long-term potential in a way that traditional service delivery does not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'The Haven is my go-to. When I have nowhere that I want to be, or if there's something going on or if I need to let go, this is where I come. Even if it's to do schoolwork, even if it's just to vent to Konrad. This is my go-to.'</i> YP9 • <i>'It's like a home away from home, like for me they treat it as their own and they feel – I feel as though they feel safe. They know where it is, and when it is. Being open all hours and being able to get a meal or get some food, or catch up with other friends.'</i> HV5 • <i>'come and connect with friends and becomes like a little family.'</i> (Haven video) • <i>'sense of family, love, feels like family.'</i> (Haven video) • <i>'family vibe, a second home.'</i> (Haven video) <p>The Haven also provides a range of opportunities for young people to engage with the community for those interested, opening their opportunities to meet new people, spark areas of interest and give them something pro-social to be involved in. There is evidence that young people have entered into and enjoyed activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree planting YP9 – <i>'I thought that was going to be really boring, but we went out there and we planted 400-odd trees on a Saturday morning when we could have been doing whatever we wanted to do. And we broke a record, and we finished earlier than anyone else that they had planted with before. I'm sitting there and I'm like, "This isn't actually pretty bad", so I really liked that.'</i> (YP9) • Attending the Numurkah Food Bowl festival and enjoying it – <i>'And, for example, not long ago we went to the Numurkah Food Bowl [Festival] and we went and helped pack up, and that wasn't even that bad, that was actually a good day out.'</i> YP9 • Fundraisers • Volunteering in the new Mooroopna Haven build • Attending NAIDOC March • Excursions to Luna Park • Laser tagging • Fishing excursions • Swimming <p>The outcomes of providing a safe space, the creation of community, and providing opportunities and experiences for young people to this extent have been very successful and there is evidence that the young people attending The Haven are feeling the positive effects of its programmatic philosophy. Young people who attend The Haven feel <i>'looked after'</i> and feel it's a place you can <i>'be yourself'</i>, which has helped people <i>'come out of their shell'</i> (Haven video).</p> <p><i>'We are not here to tick boxes we are here to be that social, recreational, deep and meaningful connection and relationship.'</i> LS2 <i>'There is no pressure on the young people to conform to our expectation, and that gives them the freedom.'</i> LS2 <i>'In this space, we are a family, we respect and love each other every day and these are our expectations and what we believe.'</i> LS2</p>
		Heart (listening deeply, valuing empathy, valuing relationships) Ways of working – leave no one behind	<p>Lighthouse listens deeply to what the community needs.</p> <p>In order to create change for young people in the Greater Shepparton region the Core Group follows a set of principles that underpin its way of working. Among these ways of working are elements of 'Heart', many of which came out in the interviews. Throughout the interview process the main elements of Heart captured included having inspirational leaders, deeply listening and understanding, equity and social justice and making a decision to act. The main element that was captured was Lighthouse's ability to deeply listen to the community. The concept of listening to the community was mentioned by approximately one third of all people interviewed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'The Lighthouse identifies the need of community by talking to the community. Most of the guys have really good networks and they can hear and see where the issues are arising. It's not the fact that you go, "Everyone is thirsty you need to have a drink", it's listening to what people need as opposed to telling them what they need. Not just from the 1000 Conversations, it's from talking to children at The Haven, at the schools, their networks.'</i> (CM2) • <i>'I guess just having a really deep understanding and awareness of what is going on in our community.'</i> CM8 • <i>'So, they want to listen to you. They want to find out your issues and then just support that in the best way they can and if that's making connections with other agencies, community groups, volunteers, so be it.'</i> (SS2) <p>There is a recognition within Lighthouse that <i>'the same people who probably have the answers, that can be part of the solution, so why not allow a whole lot of people to participate including the people that we're designing for.'</i> LS1</p>
KEQ5: What groups of people are most likely to experience change as a result of the GSLP?			
		Through The Haven and other initiatives,	Through The Haven and other initiatives, Lighthouse has been successful in reaching young people in a way that traditional service models do not.

		<p>Lighthouse has been successful in reaching young people in a way that traditional service models do not</p>	<p>There is a perception that The Haven is one of the only places in the region where young people (and families) who don't yet have the self-efficacy to use available services can feel safe and accepted without fear of judgement or authority over them. This includes young people in and out of the youth justice system, and those in times of family crisis (LT4, CM6, LT5, YP7). Some respondents acknowledged that other services <i>'want to help in this area, but how young people want help is very different to what we think help should be'</i> (LS2).</p> <p><i>'So if I go to [other youth services], they're funded to work with young people, but the real young people who are in crisis are no way near going into an agency and filling out those forms ... the Lighthouse are doing all of that community development work with those vulnerable families to give them the confidence and self-efficacy to access to these services.'</i> (CM6)</p> <p><i>'The Haven is making inroads with hard-to-reach young people – We're getting 50 kids there and people don't understand, and this is my industry experience. To get kids to sit down and eat a meal is sometimes really, really challenging. But when you turn up and you see 50 kids eating a meal, sitting down, talking, doing that social stuff, it's just like, damn. We had The Haven opening and to watch some of these kids lead some of the most influential people in Shep around and they were so proud of that.'</i> (LT4)</p> <p>As The Haven can double as a social setting for some young people, it also has the ability to attract and draw a wider range of young people, potentially including those who would not consider entering a mainstream service. Many Haven respondents mentioned their friends as first inviting them to come along. Attending The Haven may open them up to getting the support they may not yet realise they need (YP3, YP4, YP5).</p> <p><i>'I was just looking to better myself – really like any opportunity to, if there's a place that can help, instead of pushing all them places away just find one and get help from it.'</i> YP3 (Haven attendee)</p> <p>Young people on the Youth Leadership Table commented that other youth programs in the area <i>'have good intentions but they're missing the mark entirely on how to get kids to show up, how to get kids interested. You'd clearly know that it's some middle-aged person who just wants to be nice but really doesn't know how to appeal to young people in any way, shape, or form.'</i> YP8</p>
		<p>The model is not explicitly designed for specific cohorts of young people (because of the 'leave no one behind' attitude)</p>	<p>The model is not explicitly designed for specific cohorts of young people because of the 'leave no one behind' attitude of the team.</p> <p>There was no discussion in the interviews regarding the ways in which cohorts within disadvantaged communities need to be explicitly engaged. For instance, young people from CALD backgrounds, young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, young people with a disability, and young people from LGBTIQA+ backgrounds are not explicitly acknowledged in strategies and activities. Even though the model is not designed for particular groups, on average, 60–70% of people who visit The Haven each night are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and many Haven attendees see The Haven as a 'safe space'.</p> <p>During the evaluation summit it was commented that the model is not designed for specific cohorts of young people because of the 'leave no one behind' attitude with which Lighthouse do their work.</p> <p><i>'I think providing opportunities to young people in the area, regardless of the adversity that they've had growing up. It's not just pigeonholed to the kids that have had hard lives, it's also giving opportunities to those kids that have just the normal day-to-day life as well. It's just giving the opportunities to all but giving extra support when needed to those more vulnerable kids as well to be able to use those same opportunities.'</i> SS6</p> <p>This is not to say that an intersectional lens should not be applied while delivering Lighthouse strategies. As research suggests, applying an intersectional lens to strategies will only lead to more good than harm for end users.</p>
KEQ6: What groups of people are most likely to become involved with the GSLP?			
		<p>The volunteer program has been a successful way of mobilising people with high social capital</p>	<p>The volunteer program has been a successful way of mobilising people with high social capital.</p> <p>Volunteers with high social capital are one of the most prominent groups likely to experience change (CM5, SS3, SV5) as a result of Lighthouse. This comes from their changing perception of disadvantage and the feeling that they are doing something helpful within the community. This is an interesting model, because many programs and projects tend to expect change from people who are disadvantaged in some way, but Lighthouse activates people who have high social capital and the end product is usually some kind of change in the way that they understand disadvantage in the region. This is a significant conceptual point of departure from how most programs work.</p> <p><i>'I've sort of worked in hindsight anyway in a select slice of the community. I've worked with farmers and landholders and public landowners and managers and stuff like that in my previous work which I always thought was not affluent but some parts had a degree of affluence ... So I was pretty ignorant of what I'm experiencing now so it's been a real eye opener for me and it's been a concern that there's obviously a lot more issues ... It's changed my attitude. My behaviour.'</i> SV4</p> <p>There was only a small portion of interviewees who mentioned becoming involved with Lighthouse by chance (e.g. by a flyer - HV1), with the majority of interviewees either having a connection with someone at Lighthouse or getting involved through a word-of-mouth connection. Four respondents commented that they got involved after attending the end-of-year showcase, mentioning the inspiring speakers and impressive presentations they saw.</p>

Annex 7: Collective Impact core functions framework developed by Lighthouse in 2017

CORE FUNCTION	ACTIONS as per work plan
INSPIRE guide vision and strategy	Facilitate and support the creation of a shared vision and strategy of change informed by the Greater Shepparton community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A common understanding of the problem • A shared agenda and joint approach to solving it through agreed actions • Continuing to refine this vision and strategy as new lessons and priorities emerge
FACILITATE support aligned activities	The Backbone will continue to map work to support existing initiatives to be coordinated and connected (wherever possible), through agreed plans that supports multiple actions. It will also support the collaborative development of new approaches and initiatives.
MEASURE establish shared measurement practices	The Backbone explores datasets that relate to community outcomes in the Greater Shepparton region. It facilitates the identification and agreement of key indicators that relate to GSLP's intended outcomes. The Backbone will support the development and implementation of shared measurement and evaluation practices across our community of change.
ENGAGE build public will	The Backbone implements and supports new channels, methods and initiatives for engaging and mobilising the Greater Shepparton community throughout the life of the project.
ADVOCATE advance policy	The Backbone supports and leads efforts to understand, lobby and advocate for changes to public policy that adversely impact our endeavours to lead change, to achieve our intended outcomes. We also actively promote lessons learned so that they may inform the development of new public policy; nationally and internationally.
SUSTAIN mobilise resources	The Backbone seeks to sustain its operations on an ongoing basis. It supports the community of change to seek and secure resources to extend existing or develop new initiatives and programs that align with our common agenda.