

Presentation with added  
commentary version



CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE  
*Rich in history and opportunity*

# Unlocking the Hidden Potential

**-The role of Culture in  
advancing communities**

*Presentation to: "Culture: A New  
Way of Thinking for Local  
Government" Conference*

*Chris Meddows-Taylor  
Melbourne, October, 2011*



# *Maryborough Station by night*



*“Culture encompasses-- our values and aspirations”*

*“All acts of public intervention (plans, policy, services, whatever) are fundamentally informed by sets of values”*

Jon Hawkes “The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability  
–Culture’s essential role in public planning  
Cultural Development Network (Vic)



# *Some real challenges*

- Regional manufacturing decline since the 1960ies
- Regional skills shortages favours larger cities
- Flat traditonal agriculture predictions
- Community resistance to change –”don’t fix it unless its broke”
- Substantial disadvantage gap –close to bottom of SEIFA index
- Financial sustainability and challenges for small councils – funding of new initiatives.



**VISION - Central Goldfields Shire Council-**

*"To add to our proud heritage a prosperous and sustainable future for all"*

**Where we want to be –an aspirational community of choice**

*A healthy, well educated, inclusive, strong and productive community that is active, creative, innovative and environmentally sustainable.*

**Long term place based solutions\***

**Cultural Development**

**Change Management**

**Closing the Gap**

**Social Distress**

**Economic Disadvantage**

**Significant Health Problems**

**Educational Under-Achievement**

**Current reality –near the bottom of the pack**

*Overwhelming disadvantage a barrier to prosperity and sustainability*

\*> 8-10 years –refer Vinson Report



# *Six key priorities*

- Population growth
- Disadvantage gap closure
- Diversified “new” economy and liveability
- Regional centre positioning
- Financial sustainability for small rural councils
- **Community culture change**

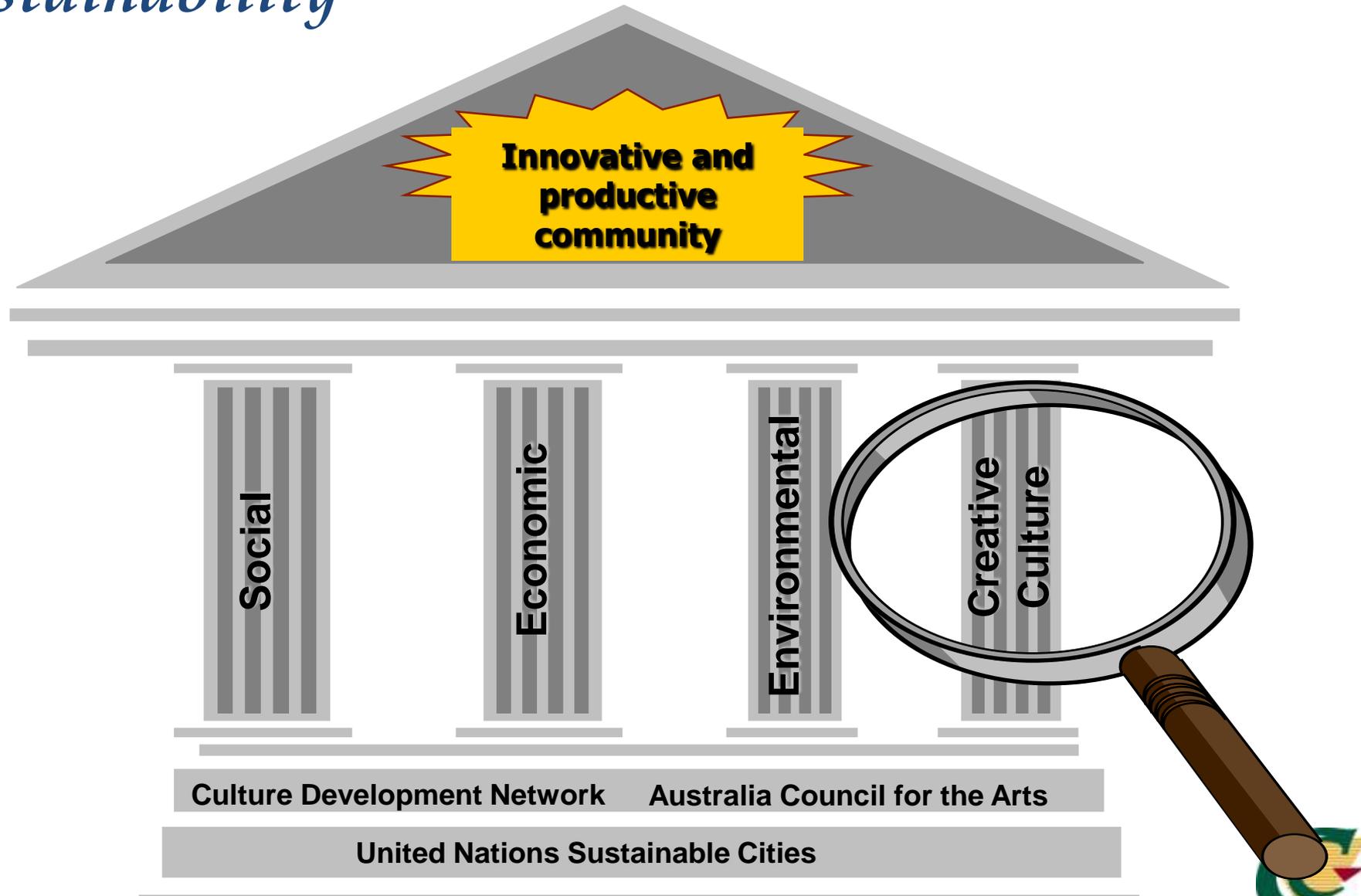


# *Key messages- Central Goldfields---*

- *–on the move*
- Great liveability and opportunity
- Rich and beautiful natural and built heritage
- Diversified local economy
- Tackling disadvantage head on –and succeeding
- Central locational positioning and connectivity
- A valuing of life long education, creativity, diversity, contribution and change
- Gearing up for substantial population growth
- **Committed to Culture advancing our Community**



# The importance of the Fourth Pillar of Sustainability



# Central Goldfields

## Transformational Agenda -outline

Time

**AWAKENING**

**Gold Prospects Report Go-for-Gold Strategy**

2007-08

**ENVISIONING**

2008-12

**REARCHITECTING**

- **Community:** Does this benefit the community?
- **Consultation:** Has there been adequate community input? 2008-12
- **Accountability:** Are risk management processes in place?



# We believe investing in cultural development is critical

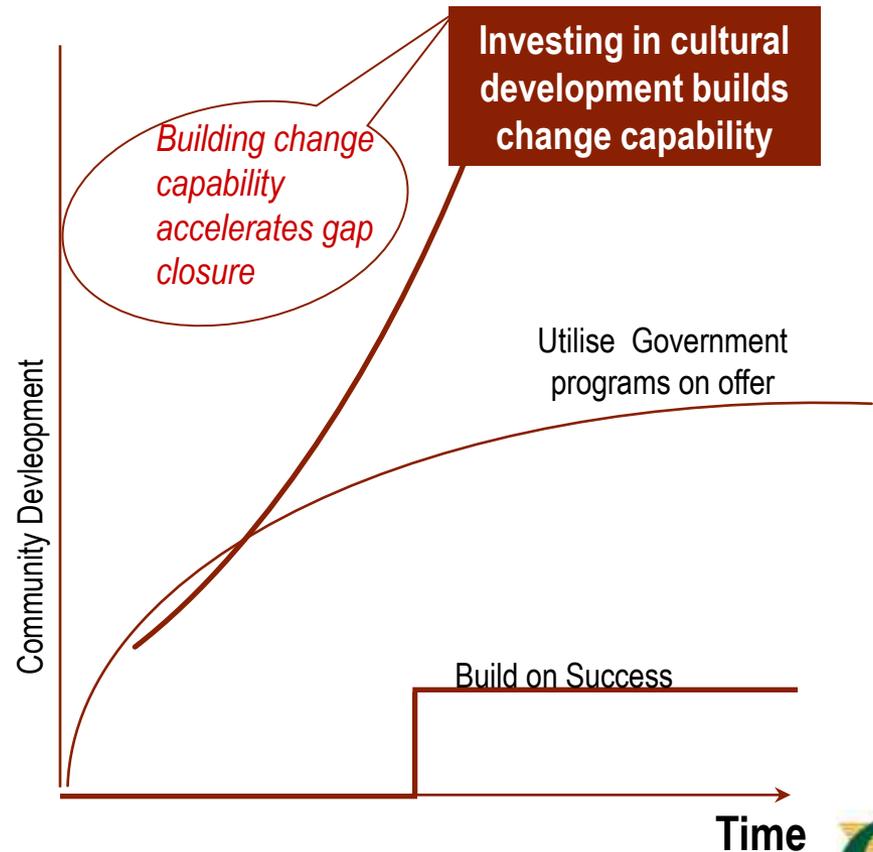
## Challenge to Local Government\*

- Become modern facilitators of sustainable regional economic development
- Develop new public - private partnerships in infrastructure and community service provision
- Build learning and knowledge based communities.
- Move well beyond their traditional roles

## Sustainable Solutions



## Results

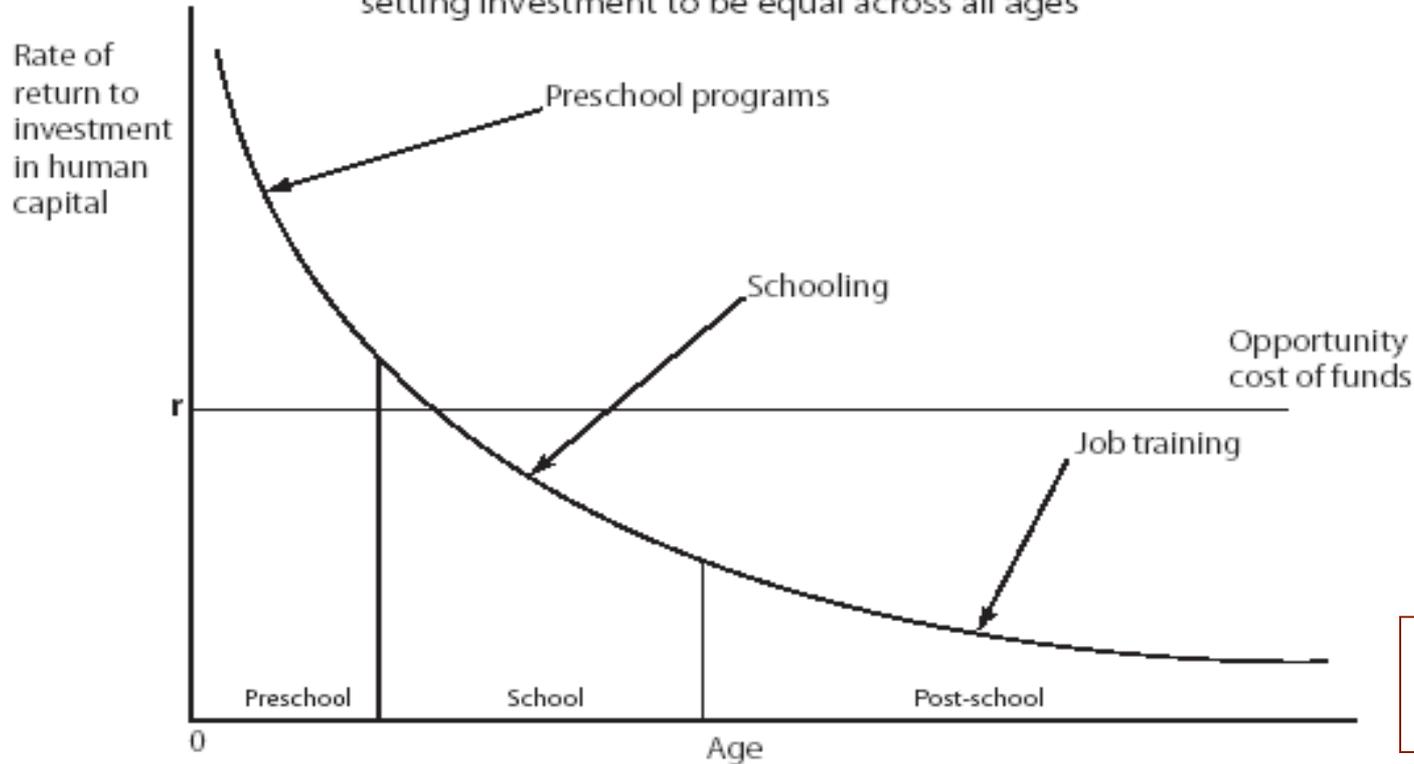


\*Source: ALGA- State of the Regions Report 2003



# Investment in the early years is critical

(a) Rates of return to human capital investment initially setting investment to be equal across all ages



Source: Centre for Community and Child Health

**“The most economically efficient way to remediate the disadvantage caused by adverse family environments is to invest in children when they are young”. (Heckman, 2000)**

# Go Goldfields - a \$2.5m place based investment

GO GOLDFIELDS  
DIRECTION,  
ADMINISTRATION,  
FACILITATION & PROGRAM  
EVALUATION

PARTICIPATE, ENGAGE  
& LEARN THROUGH  
COMMUNITY ARTS



DELIVERING  
EARLY LEARNING IS FUN  
(ELF) PROGRAM

ENSURING CHILDREN  
DEVELOP  
AMPLE SPEECH  
& COMMUNICATION SKILLS

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
YOUTH MENTORING  
AND GUIDANCE SERVICES

REVIEW OF MOTHER GOOSE  
LITERACY PROGRAM

FAMILY VIOLENCE  
STRATEGY

RECONNECTING  
YOUNG PEOPLE  
TO LEARNING & TRAINING

CHILDREN'S  
DEVELOPMENT  
FAMILY GROUP  
PARENTING PROGRAM

ENHANCED LIBRARY SERVICE  
FOR CHILDREN  
& YOUNG PEOPLE

POLICE REFERRAL SYSTEM

HOME-BASED  
PARENTING  
& DAILY LIVING SKILLS  
PROGRAM  
WITH RESPITE  
CARE

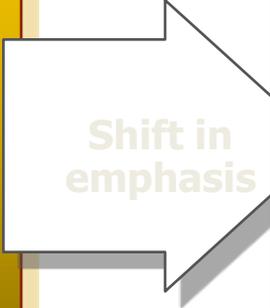
PROVIDING CHILDREN  
WITH QUALITY  
LIBRARY BOOKS & OTHER  
MEDIA RESOURCES



# *Community Culture Change- developing an aspirational culture*

## **Current**

- Resilient
- Conforming
- Take a fixed position
- Relationship driven
- Hands on and can do
- Earn your stripes
- Work within boundaries
- Maintain status quo
- Respond as necessary
- Employer “owns” training
- Accept what’s on offer
- Down-to-earth

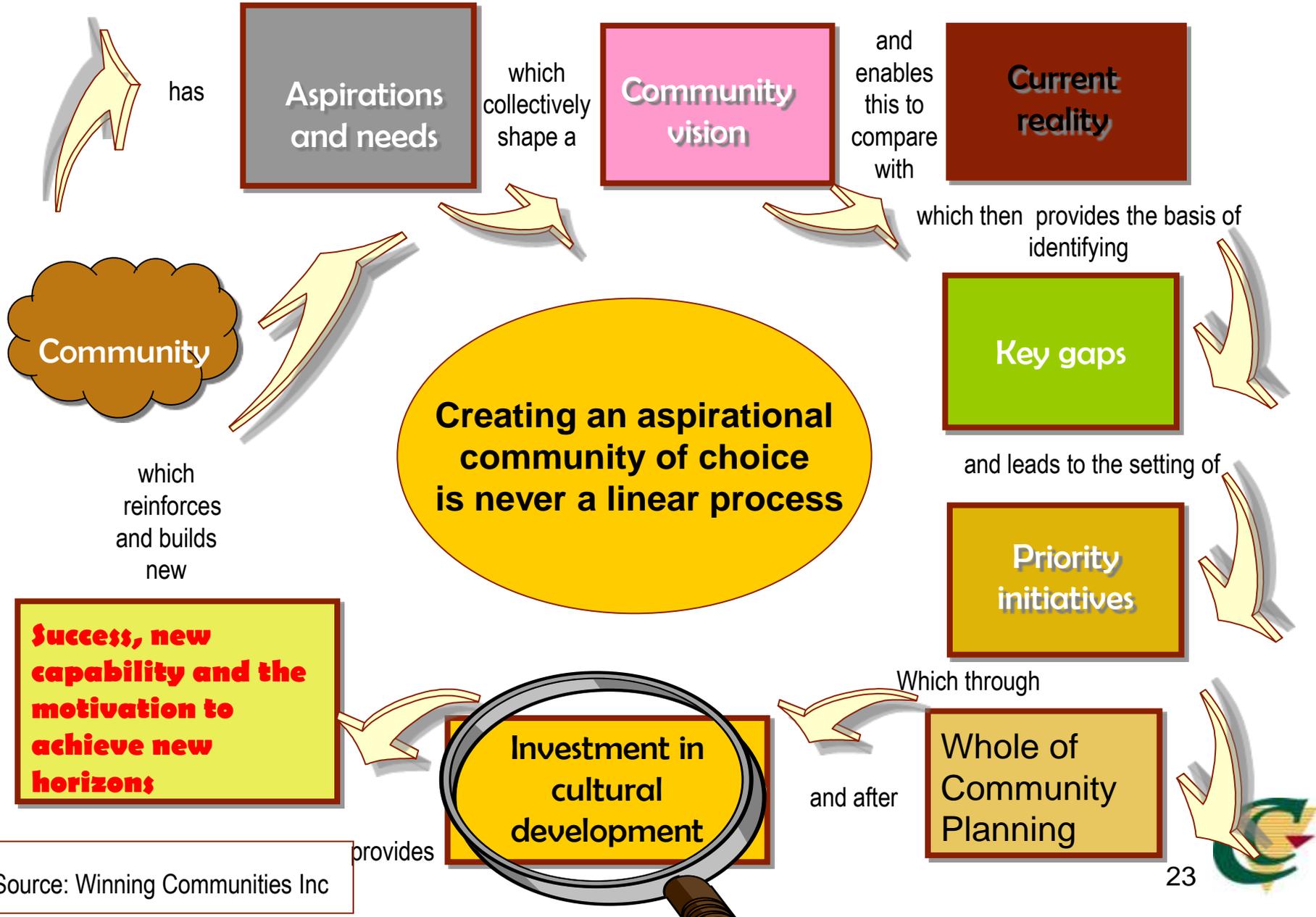


Shift in  
emphasis

## **Future**

- Adaptable
- Exploring
- Take a step forward
- Opportunity driven
- Discuss new possibilities
- Welcome new inputs
- Work across boundaries
- Improve whenever possible
- Capture opportunities
- Individual employability
- Only the best will do
- Go for gold

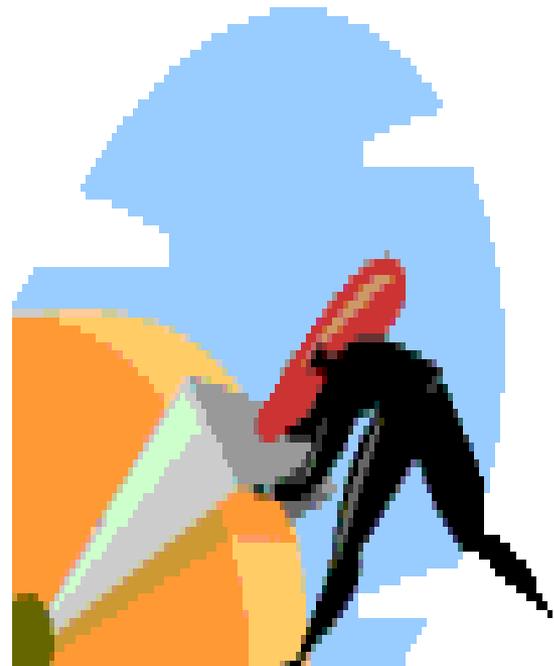
# We need to manage gap closure



# *Culture - 7 levers of opportunity*

- Education and training
- Communications and public affairs
- The constructed environment and public facilities
- Arts
- History and heritage
- Recreation and leisure
- Sport

Jon Hawkes "The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability  
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# *Education and training - strategies*

- Reinforce life long learning –cradle to grave
- Increase education and learning participation and opportunities within the Shire
- Development of an Early Years Childhood Services delivery model
- Tackle the needs of long term unemployed and build confidence, commitment and capability to re enter the workforce
- Promote the value of the teaching profession
- Provide youth mentoring and guidance
- Encourage the focus of workforce employability.



# *Communications and public affairs -strategies*

- Increase the opportunity for residents to participate in Council decision making through meaningful consultation and engagement
- Utilise working parties and task forces based around resident issues and priorities as a focus for added participation
- Actively seek not only to communicate information and developments but also opportunities for residents to reflect on the underlying issues and drivers of change.
- Explore a broader range of communication strategies including greater use of social networking.



# *The constructed environment and public facilities -strategies*

- Continue to protect and enhance a rich legacy of built heritage sites and find sustainable and viable uses for them
- Support the development of arts and tourism against this heritage backdrop as major community celebrations, added liveability and economic drivers
- Foster civic pride around key places and spaces as an opportunity to help develop an aspirational culture and build added ownership and commitment to the good maintenance and enhancement of community facilities
- Purchase by Council and sell in the community interest some key heritage sites attracting a national local government award.



# Some wonderful places and spaces



# *Arts -strategies*

- Promote the active development of the municipality as an important centre for the arts
- Enhance a strong legacy of bands –pipe and brass
- Utilise Central Goldfields Gallery exhibitions and Friends of the Gallery to build developing networks of supporters
- Utilise community arts –pantomime, choirs and dance to build community participation and engagement.
- **Work with the Cultural Development Network and other partners to seek Australia Council support for an investment in the arts linked to developed measures which will show the benefits of this investment in terms of advancing community culture change and tackling disadvantage.**



# *History and heritage - strategies*

- Unlock the secrets and stories of the Victorian Goldfields for residents and tourists by quality interpretive panels around the Shire
- Develop tourism to focus on high value adding cultural tourism events utilising the significant heritage within the Shire as a competitive advantage
- Promote the development of the Goldfields as Australia's First Heritage Region within regional strategic plans
- Lead the development of this 12 municipality project to seek major investment funding and increased awareness and visitation.



# *Recreation and leisure - strategies*

- Provide a range of facilities and programs across the municipality to increase participation in physical activity and address high levels of lifestyle disease
- Focus on engagement of children in the early years and their families in innovative and engaging ways such as Hunt for the Golden Shoe
- Capture the interest in cycling and develop bike paths utilising the villages, heritage and natural attractions
- Extend traditions such as the annual Highland Gathering – the longest running annual recreation event in Australia.



# *Sport -strategies*

- Extend and enhance a long standing and deep community involvement in sport
- Use sport to encourage youth participation and fitness and the aspirational culture competitive sport generates
- Develop leaders and use these leaders as youth mentors.



# Key messages

- Good communities are aspirational communities –and we all want our communities to be communities of choice
- Closing the gap between current reality and this objective is a critical task for local government
- As local government practitioners we need to manage change more strategically and recognise the opportunity that cultural development offers us to effect change
- Cultural development is a key strategy to close gaps and understanding this offers us new strategic levers or the opportunity to use existing levers in innovative and more productive ways
- We should all learn from and share our experiences in this journey.

