

14.4 Provision of Childcare



INDEX

1. Introduction and Background	2
2. Relevant Legislation and Guidelines	3 – 4
3. Consultation and Engagement	5 - 6
a. Family Survey	7 - 10
b. Child Care Capacity	11 - 14
4. Summary	15
5. Identified Barriers	16
6. Building Refurbishment Summary	16
7. Recommendations	17
8. References	18
9. Attachments	19

14.4 Provision of Childcare

Authors	Senior Youth Officer and Senior Property Management Officer
Authorising Officer	Director Development Sustainability and Lifestyle
Disclosure of Interest	<p>The Senior Youth Officer declares impartiality as she has a child employed by Treloar Child Care and is employed by the YMCA as a Swimming Teacher</p> <p>The Authorising Officer and Senior Property Management Officer declare that that they do not have any conflict of interest in relation to the item</p>

Introduction and Background

Resulting from a report tabled at the Ordinary Council meeting on 24 October 2018, (CM201819/058) it was agreed that Council would;

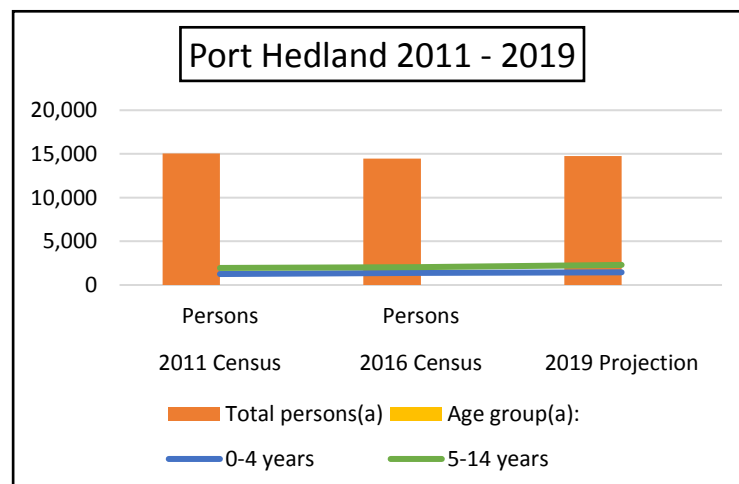
1. Consult with the community and complete a detailed analysis of current and future child care service demand;
2. Investigate the capability of existing providers and associated infrastructure to accommodate additional child care;
3. Provides further investigation into the capital refurbishment costs for:
 - South Hedland TAFE Campus child care building; and,
 - Port Hedland Library.
4. Compile the above information to create a business case recommending actions to address current and future child care service demand.

This report identifies the depth of the current child care place shortage and presents findings and recommendations to address the ongoing shortage of child care services within the town.

The report includes the potential to reactivate the defunct South Hedland TAFE Campus child care building and the repurposing of Port Hedland Library through lease arrangement.

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The 2016 Census and Projection reports commissioned by the Town of Port Hedland show that the median population has not fluctuated significantly over the past 10 years and that the population for 0 – 14 years has continued to rise over this period. Four Child Care providers have ceased operation in Hedland since 2014 (Hedland Play and Learn, YMCA After School Care, South Hedland, CSSU Family Day Care, Bright Stars Family Day Care, Port Hedland After School Care – Source: Pilbara Regional Development – Childcare Report 2014) which has been a major contributing factor to the child care place shortage.



Relevant Legislation and Guidelines

The majority of education and care services in Western Australia are covered by the:

- [Education and Care Services National Law \(WA\) Act 2012](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012](#)

The services covered are centre-based services including those previously known as long day care and outside school hours care. A small number of services in WA, including occasional (casual) care services, mobile services and services covered by the Australian Government's Budget Based Funding Program, are covered by:

- [Child Care Services Act 2007](#)
- [Child Care Services Regulations 2007](#)
- [Child Care Services \(Child Care\) Regulations 2006](#)

The acts and regulations aim to protect and promote the best interests of children who receive child care services. More details are at the [State Law Publisher](#).

The Department of Communities approves and monitors education and care services through the Education and Care Regulatory Unit.

The Education and Care Regulatory Unit:

- Assesses applications for provider approvals, service approvals and approvals for certified supervisors.
- Assesses education and care services against the [National Quality Standard](#).
- Supports and promotes continuous quality improvements in education and care services.
- Investigates incidents and complaints.
- Monitors and enforces compliance.

The [National Quality Framework](#) is in place for children's education and care services across Australia. The framework in WA is comprised of the:

- Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012
- [National Quality Standard](#)
- Rating and Assessment process.

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Priority for filling child care places:

The Australian Government has developed 'Priority of Access Guidelines'.

The guidelines only apply to Child Care Benefit (CCB) approved child care services and must be used when there is a waiting list for a service and a number of parents are applying for a limited number of vacant places, or if the service is full and a Priority 1 or 2 child requires child care.

Priorities

Priority 1: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect

Priority 2: a child of a single parent or parents who satisfy the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the 'A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999'

Priority 3: any other child.

Within these main categories, priority should also be given to the following children:

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- children in families which include a disabled person
- children in families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold of \$45,114 for 2017-18, or who or whose partner is on income support
- children in families from a non-English speaking background
- children in socially isolated families
- children of single parents.

A child care service may require a Priority 3 child to vacate a place to make room for a child in a higher priority group. They can only do so if the parents are:

- notified when their child first entered care that the service follows this policy
- given at least 14 days notice of the need for their child to vacate.

Outside School Hours Care is primarily for school children. A service may ask a child not yet in school to leave care if the parent of a child who is in school applies for a place.

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If a child care service is funded by an employer for their employees' children, the service can give priority to those children.

Source: <https://www.education.gov.au/priority-filling-child-care-places>

**YMCA, Treloar and Rose Nowers Priority Policy attached.*

Consultation and Engagement

The author has met with the following stakeholders and conducted numerous phone interviews and electronic correspondence throughout the course of the report being compiled.

All child care operators within the town cooperated with the provision of statistics related to their childcare service delivery. YMCA Early Learning Centre were not able to provide copies of their waitlists for confidentiality reasons. For this reason not all statistics will include YMCA data in effort to maintain the integrity of the data.

Consultation was also undertaken with industry leaders specifically in regard to potential solutions to the shortage of childcare places.

Throughout the reports development period consultation has included face to face meetings with individuals, groups and committees, email correspondence, desktop surveys and phone surveys of over 97 families on waitlists.

A full list of websites researched is available in the appendix and all sources are acknowledged throughout the report.

Key Stakeholders engaged and consulted throughout the process include;

One Tree Community Services
South Hedland
Family Day Care Coordinator/ Director

Ngala Bright Stars Family Day Care Service
Coordinator

14.4 Provision of Childcare

Rose Nowers Early Learning Centre

South Hedland

Coordinator

YMCA Early Learning Centre

Port Hedland

Acting Centre Director

General Manager – Early Learning and Children Services

One Tree - Len Taplin Children's Services

Port Hedland

Director

Treloar Child Care Centre

South Hedland

Centre Director

YIC

CEO (Deadly Hearts Program)

Child and Parent Centre

South Hedland

Early Years Coordinator

Mackillop Family Services

South Hedland

Coordinator Pilbara intervention Services

South Hedland Primary School

Cassia Primary School

Baler Primary School

Port Hedland Primary School

St Cecilia's Primary School

BHP Billiton

Fortescue Metal Group

Hedland Collective

14.4 Provision of Childcare

Town of Port Hedland

Development and Lands Officer & Senior Environmental Officer

97 Families currently on waitlists in Hedland surveyed both electronically and by direct contact

Family Survey

The family survey questions were aimed directly at families who are currently on waitlists in Hedland in an effort to ascertain exactly what the child care needs and preferences are of the community.

Families identified by Rose Nowers and Treloar were surveyed and interviewed directly. The survey was also posted on the Town of Port Hedland website and the JD Hardie youth Zone facebook page. Date of collection was from 20th December 2018 to the 14th January, 2019.

Survey Results

A total of 97 responses were received with 100% completion rate.

1. How many child care facilities are you currently on the wait list for?

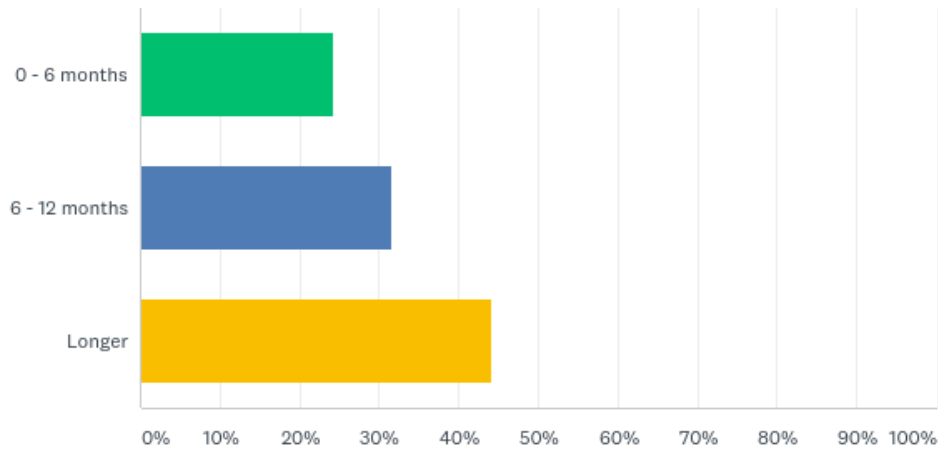
- 1 Waitlist = 24
- 2 Waitlist = 23
- 3 Waitlists = 20
- 4 Waitlists = 28

2 Respondents had applied for waitlists at Treloar who no longer accepted applications due to the length of wait period.

2. How long have you been on a waitlist?

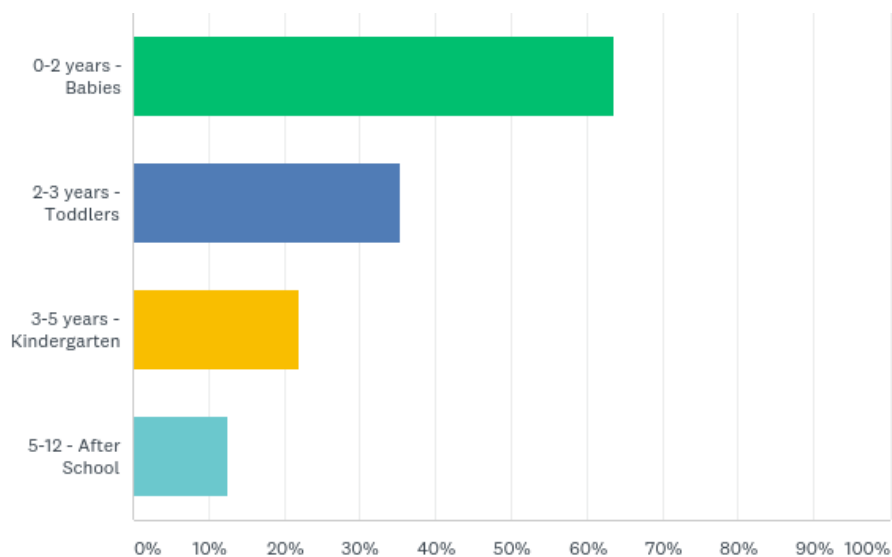
- a. 0 – 6 months = 24.21%
- b. 6 – 12 months = 34.58%
- c. Longer = 44.21%

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3. What are the Ages of the Children for your child care needs

- a. 0 -2 years – babies = 63.54%
- b. 2 – 3 years - toddlers = 35.42%
- c. 3 – 5 years – Kindergarten = 21.88%
- d. 5 – 12 years – After school = 12.50%

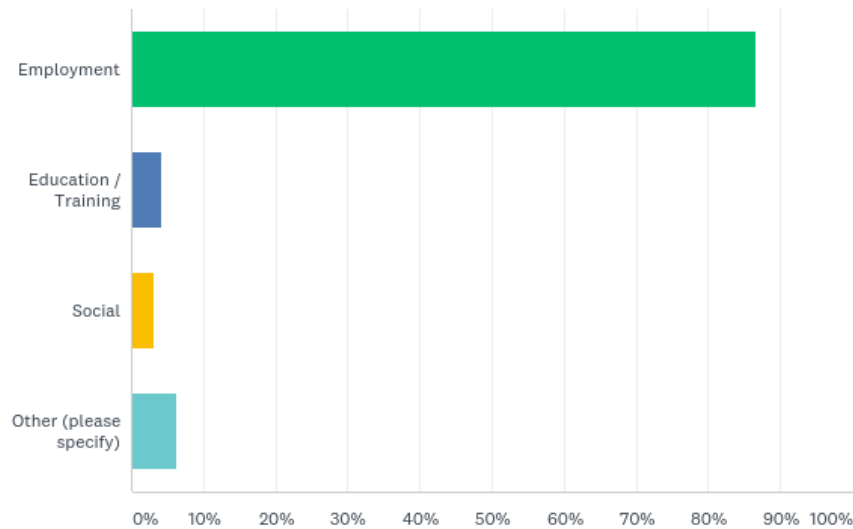


4. What is your main reason for seeking a childcare placement?

- a. Employment = 86.6%
- b. Education/ Training = 4.12%
- c. Social = 3.09%

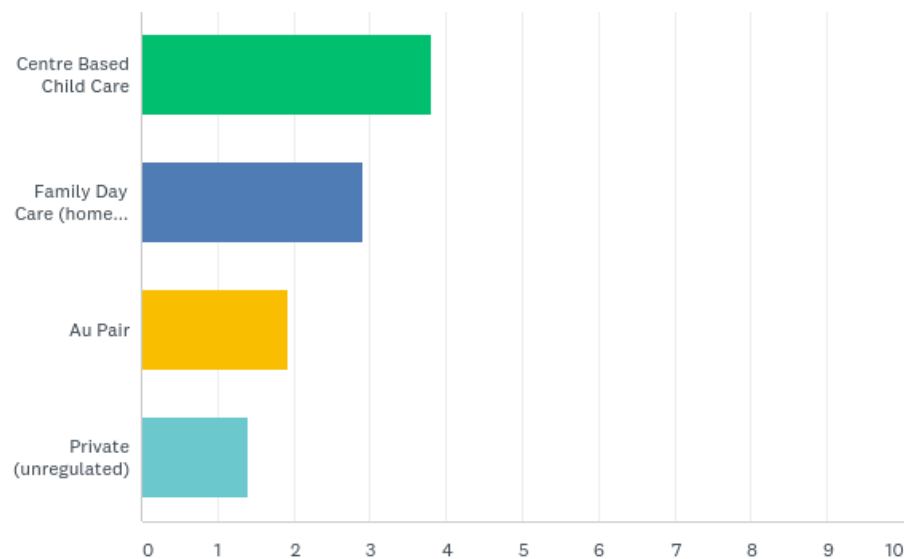
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- d. Other = 6.19% - 5 stated combination of education and employment. One stated that they had lost their job due to not being able to child care



5. What is your preferred child care option?

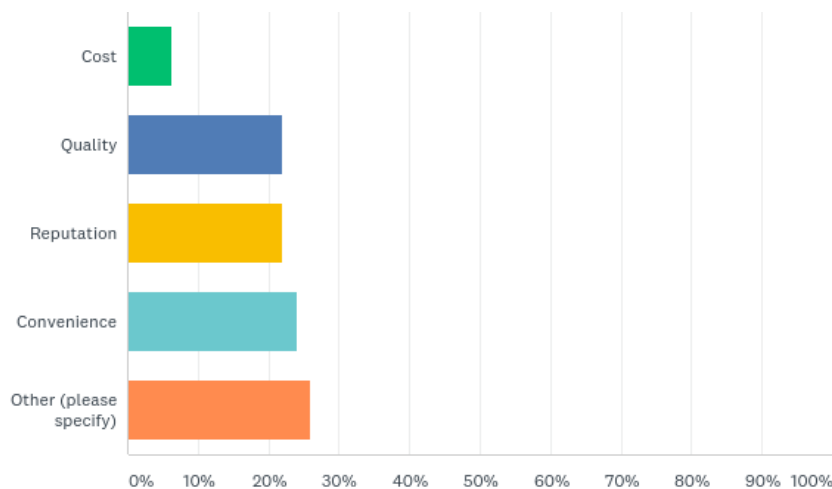
- a. Centre Based Child Care = 85.42% as first choice
b. Family Day Care (home based – regulated) = 11.96% as first choice
c. Au Pair = 3.33% as first choice
d. Private (unregulated) = 0% as first choice



14.4 Provision of Childcare

6. Reason for your preference

- a. Cost = 6.25%
- b. Quality = 21.88%
- c. Reputation = 21.88%
- d. Convenience = 23.96%
- e. Other = 26.04% - Most sited a combination – first in - not picky



7. Would you be interested in becoming a Family Day Care provider in your come?

Nine respondents answered 'Yes' that they would be interested in becoming a family day care provider. At the respondents request their contact details have been forwarded to the local Family Day Care Provider – One Tree.

Additional Feedback from Families interviewed:

- Centre Based service provides more secure care (if other educators/ carers are not available)
- Centre based care offer more engaging program
- BHP employees given priority for places x 6
- Priority list discriminatory and unfair x 2
- Difficult as a women to re-enter the workforce
- Too expensive – even with rebates x 7
- Too expensive on a single income

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- 9 respondents expressed interest in learning more about becoming a FDC
- 1 Responded said she had enquired however their property has a pool and did not pass inspection
- Lack of child care places limits women's opportunity to re-enter the work force
- Given up on child care through regulated, waited over 12 months
- BHP housing policy prevents families from becoming FDC operators x 2

*Note BHP Housing policy

6.7. Home Businesses

The local council authority has jurisdiction over operating a business from a residential Property and approval to work or run a business from home has to be obtained from that authority. Written permission to work or run a business from home must also be given by NPI Housing.

- Waiting over 2 years and continually get bumped down the list.
- Just been accepted after a two year wait.
- Had to withdraw my girls from after school care because even with the rebate could not afford it as a single parent. Girls now stay at home alone until I can get home, which is terrifying
- I am potentially going to lose my housing as it comes with my job, maternity leave is coming to an end and I have nowhere to send my child who has been on the list since before they were born.
- 6 stated they have had their child on a waitlist since before birth.

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Current Child Care Centres Capacity:



Len Taplin Children's Service
Dempster St, Port Hedland
Director Claire Bennett
Monday – Friday – 7am – 5:30pm

Licenced	66
Vacancies	0
Registered	66
Waitlist	156
Current Staff	18
Diploma	8
Working Towards Cert III	5
Degree	
Cert III	3

One Tree Len Taplin have expressed interest in expanding to the Port Hedland Library site this would potentially increase their capacity by 29.

The Library space would potentially become the after school and Holiday program space allowing for the expansion of the baby, toddler and kindy space in the existing building. (Len Taplin Business Case attached)

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**We believe in the power
of inspired young people.**

YMCA Early Learning Centre

Keesing Street, Port Hedland
Acting Director Shonnelle Henry

Monday – Friday – 7am – 5:30pm

Licenced	112
Vacancies	35
Registered	77
Waitlist	TBC
Current Staff	19
Diploma	3
Working Towards Cert III	6
Degree	3
Cert III	7

The YMCA has 35 spaces available and has the physical capacity within the existing space to take addition children but is unable to currently fill them due to lack of qualified staff. (Waitlist may potentially be reduced to 92 with new room structures and additional staffing)

- YMCA were not prepared to provide copies of waitlists for the purposes of the report citing confidentiality reasons. For this reason we are unable to ascertain duplicates on waitlists there for summary reports will exclude YMCA figures to maintain the integrity of the data



Rose Nowers Early Learning Centre

Boronia Close, South Hedland
Manager – Cynthia Dornelles

Monday – Friday – 7am – 5:30pm

Licenced	43
Vacancies	0
Registered	43
Waitlist	138 (-33 duplicate registration=106)
Current Staff	14
Diploma	4 + 2 working towards

14.4 Provision of Childcare

Working Towards Cert III	2
Degree	2
Cert III	4

Rose Nowers does not currently offer nor have the capacity for After School Care.

Rose Nowers are currently working on their Strategic Plan which includes investigating the possibility of expanding on current site, however this is a long term solution

Rose Nowers has also identified the ongoing staffing issues and the possibility exploring a collective approach to training and recruitment of childcare staff across the town.

Rose Nowers and Treloar have generously shared their waitlist for the purposes of this report. Approximately 100 families on the waitlists participated in a survey conducted for the report.



Treloar Child Care Centre
Treloar Close, South Hedland.
Director – Ebony Sanders
Monday – Friday – 7am – 5:30pm

Licenced	71
Vacancies	0
Registered	71
Waitlist	176 (-33 duplicate registration=143)
Current Staff	17
Diploma	4 + 2 working towards
Degree	1
Cert III	9 or working towards

Treloar have stated that at this time they are not looking to expand, primarily due to staffing requirements of expanding and costs associated.

Treloar closed off their waitlists in October for the year as there was no possible way that additional spaces would be made available.

14.4 Provision of Childcare



One Tree Community Services
South Hedland
Family Day Care Coordinator/ Director



Ngala Bright Stars family Day Care Services
Geraldton/ South Hedland
Coordinator

Family Day Care (FDC) is flexible education and care for children aged 0 – 12 years, operated by a registered educator in their own home. FDC has the potential to offer longer hours and evenings, overnight and weekend care.

FDC operators may care for up to 7 children at one time, 4 children aged 0 – kindy and 3 primary school age children.

FDC operates under the same government framework as all other forms of child care including centre based.

All FDC businesses are required by law to be employed by or subcontracted to a Family Day Care Service.

FDC providers manage their own marketing and waitlists

One Tree is the only Provider and currently has 2 educators with a goal of reaching a minimum of 10 in 6 months. One tree currently has the potential to take on 40 educators in Hedland which would equate to up to 280 childcare places.

Bright Stars currently has 2 educators registered in South Hedland, one commences in February and the second in March.

Ngala Bright Stars have the capacity to take an additional 10 Educators at this time. (70 places) They have expressed an interest in building their business and would increase staffing levels to cater for any growth beyond this.

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Alternative Child Care Options - Unregulated

YIC – Deadly Hearts – 5 – 10 years, offers after school programs and activities, average of 30 – 40 per session

Au Pair Services

Private Baby Sitting (unregulated)

Mackillop Family Day Care – up to 15 places for children in care (priority 1) commencing 2019

14.4 Provision of Childcare

SUMMARY

Centre Based Current Capacity:

Total Child care Facility Licence Capacity in Hedland - 277

Total Waitlist – 373 places (excluding YMCA waitlist)

Town of Port Hedland Child Care Capacity 2018		
		Staff Ratio
Babies 0 - 2years		1 to 4
Capacity	44	
Current	40	
Vacancy	4	
Waitlist	155	Excluding YMCA
Toddlers Room 2 - 3 years		1 to 5
Capacity	76	
Current	70	
Vacancy	6	
Waitlist	75	Excluding YMCA
Kindy 3-5 years		1 to 10
Capacity	91	
Current	91	
Vacancy	0	
Waitlist	115	Excluding YMCA
After School Care 5 - 12 years		1 to 13 1 – 10 if kindergarten children in attendance
Capacity	66	
Current	66	
Vacancy	0	
Waitlist	28	Excluding YMCA
TOTAL		
Capacity	277	
Places Filled	267	
Vacancies	10	
Total Waitlist for 3 Centres	373	Removing duplicates and excluding YMCA

14.4 Provision of Childcare

**Statistics were accurate at Dec 2018, variations will have occurred over the January period with Children exiting for school and graduating into different rooms*

Identified Barriers:

- Staffing Levels – Centre based and FDC
- Retention of staff
- Staff qualifications
- Low incentive levels to enter childcare work force with comparable industries
- Facility capacity
- FDC establishment fees/ costs
- FDC Mining Housing limitations
- Study Costs
- Priority lists
- Public Perception vs Legislation (Priority lists)
- Communication between the sector/ industry and public
- Au pair availability – gaps in service

Building Refurbishment Summary (report attached)

South Hedland TAFE		
Item	Cost	Timeframe
HVAC Replacement	\$ 160,000.00	3-6 Months from RFQ award
Building works	\$ 93,000.00	4-6 weeks from RFQ award
Replacement kitchen	\$ 75,000.00	4-6 weeks from RFQ award
Full Clean	\$ 10,000.00	1 week from RFQ award
TOTAL	\$ 338,000.00	

14.4 Provision of Childcare

Port Hedland Library		
Item	Cost	Timeframe
Building works	\$ 70,000.00	4-6 weeks form RFQ award
Fencing	\$ 22,000.00	4-6 weeks form RFQ award
Gardening	\$ 25,000.00	4-6 weeks form RFQ award
TOTAL	\$ 117,000.00	

Please note these costs are indicative only and completion of the Town's procurement process would need to be done in order to request suitable contractor to complete the works so we proceed.

Recommendations:

That Council:

1. Note the results of the child care waiting list audit and associated report;
2. Endorse the following short-term measures to reduce the current childcare waiting lists in Port Hedland:
 - a. Re-activation of the South Hedland TAFE childcare centre subject to successful tenure negotiations and the receipt of external partnership funding to deliver the required capital works;
 - b. Subject to the provision of a detailed business case, conversion the Port Hedland Library to childcare spaces;
 - c. Preparation of a local planning policy that exempts Family Day Care businesses from the requirement to obtain a Home Business planning approval from the Town where the Family Day Care proposal meets the following criteria:
 - I. Complies with all Education and Care National regulations 2012

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- II. Does not display any advertising signage greater than 0.2m²
 - III. Does not employ any persons that do not live at the property
 - IV. Does not operate outside of 7am – 7pm Monday – Saturday in line with Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997
 - V. Involves pickup / drop-off areas located wholly within lot boundaries of the property
- d. Investigation of the viability for the Town to deliver after school programming and activities for primary school aged children;
 - e. Work with key industry stakeholders and the community to develop and implement Town of Port Hedland Childcare strategic plan.
3. Investigate long term childcare infrastructure options as part of the MacGregor Park and JD Hardie master planning processes.

(Approx.210 places short to medium term)

References

- Child Care Services Act 2007
- Child Care Services Regulations 2007
- Child Care Services (Child Care) Regulations 2006
- <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about>
- National Quality Framework
- <https://www.education.gov.au/priority-filling-child-care-places>
- Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012
- <http://www.rdapilbara.org.au/resources/>
- <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/educator-to-child-ratios>
- <http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au>

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The desktop review also included scanning of organisations websites. These organisations included amongst others:

- <http://wacoss.org.au/>
- <https://www.steinereducation.edu.au/steiner-education/early-childhood/>
- <https://docs.education.gov.au/collections/information-families-using-child-care-fact-sheets>
- <http://playlearn.com.au/kalgoorlie/>
- <https://www.aifs.com.au/aupair-australia/fees-and-costs/>
- <http://www.karratha.wa.gov.au/>

Attachments

1. Priority of Access Policies
 - Rose Nowers Early Learning Centre
 - Treloar Child Centre
 - YMCA early Learning Centre
2. Capital Refurbishment Report – Tanya Reid
3. Town of Port Hedland Child Care Waitlist Survey - Full Results
4. Len Taplin Business Case – Port Hedland Library Site.
5. Hedland Collective Letter of Support
6. Library draft report for increasing of the efficiency of library services through the closure of the Port Hedland Library (August 2018)