



The Future Impact Group

The George Town Future Impact Group is an all-inclusive, whole-of-community movement that is creating pathways towards a better life for the people of our municipality. We came together several years ago as we identified a need in our community to speak as one voice. Our community said they want change, and this requires unique solutions and support so that everyone can thrive.

We work in partnership with the whole community, including business, services and government. We place community at the centre through consultation and co-designing solutions. We explore data

and information in meaningful ways - this enables us to build a true understanding of what is important and what is needed.

This is a journey, we have created a plan for the community, and it will take all of us to make the changes to improve lives.

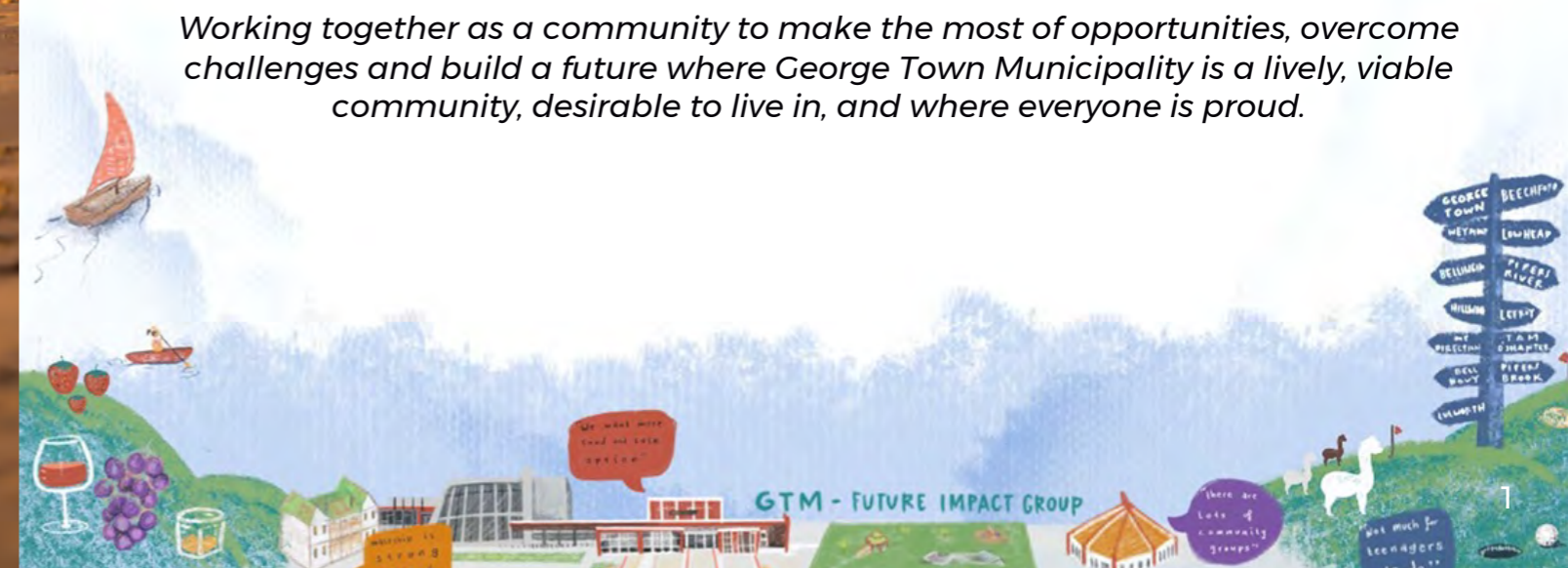
“The FIG is obviously not driven by some predetermined agenda or conviction. The emphasis is truly on finding out what people in the community think and genuinely want to know”

Vision & focus

The community have identified their priorities:

1. Community pride
2. Sustainable employment
3. Valuing education and life-long learning
4. Inclusive community
5. Wellness for all

Working together as a community to make the most of opportunities, overcome challenges and build a future where George Town Municipality is a lively, viable community, desirable to live in, and where everyone is proud.





- Local family enjoys the natural splendours



We just didn't seem to be getting ahead in George Town, no matter what we did. So we decided that we just had to do something, we picked three other people, had endless breakfast meetings, formalised our intentions and decided that we needed to bring a couple more key stakeholders into the group. We heard about the Collective Impact model and knew it was right for us...



The story so far...

George Town Municipality is situated in the North Eastern region of the Tamar River and is a place of exquisite beauty and opportunity; steeped in history, dotted with lighthouses and a spectacular coastline, and boasting fishing, sailing, wineries and whisky distilleries. The region offers a bustling industrial centre and enormous possibilities to explore breath-taking natural and cultural environment.

Over time, however, the community has experienced some pockets of disadvantage, despite being the focus of multiple strategic plans and interventions. This has impacted how the community sees itself and how it is seen externally.

In 2016, the community came together to discuss the situation in George Town Municipality and future quality of life expectations. There was a shared level of frustration that, while good things happened in the community, they often went unrecognised or uncelebrated. The community noted that services in

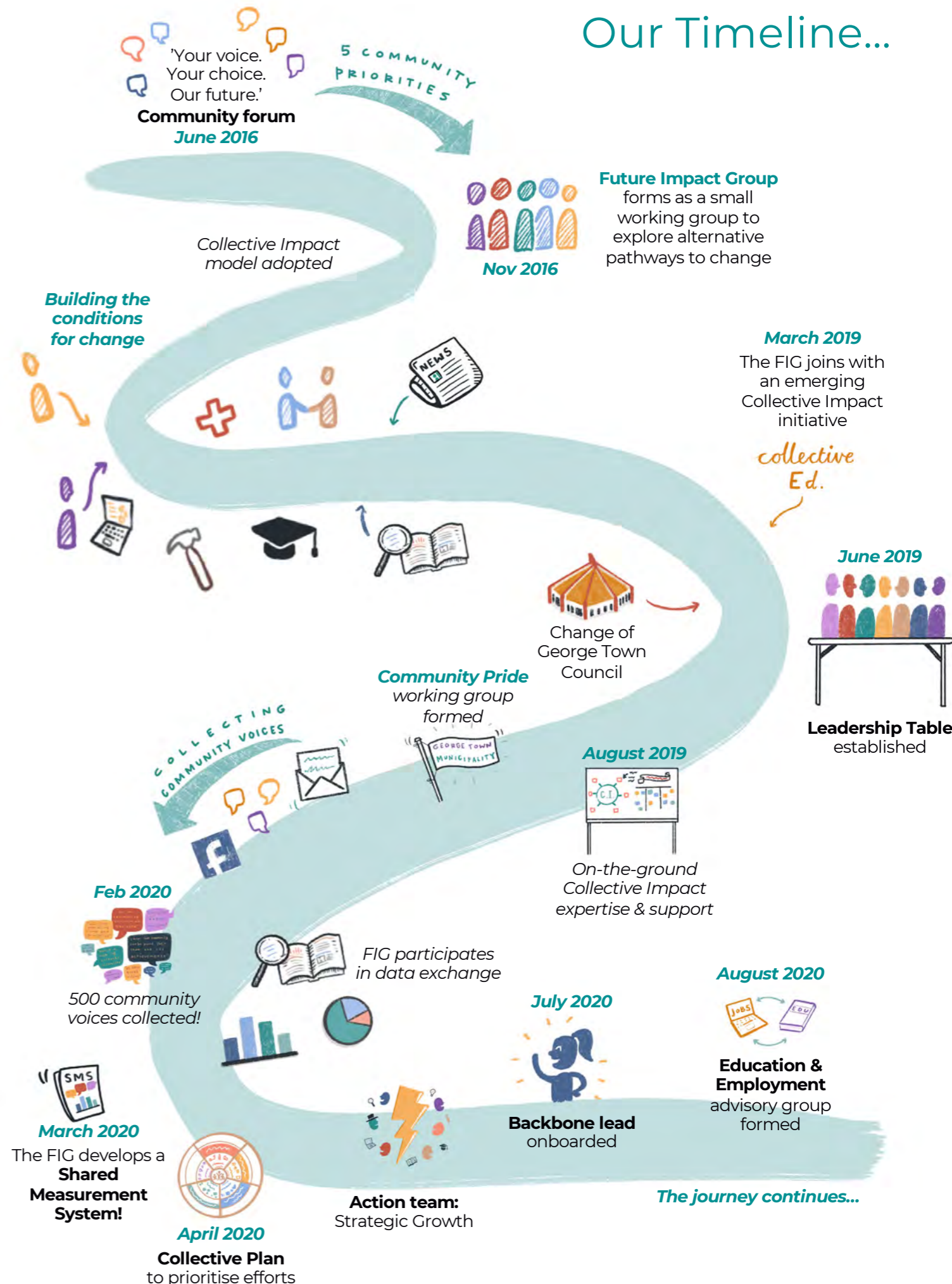
the municipality were not necessarily delivered where they were needed, and were offered in isolation from other services already in the region. They felt that those working together in the community brought professionalism and passion but were not able to make lasting positive changes. There was also a passionate belief that, as a community, we can do things better and make a change socially and economically.

It was also recognised that the inter-relation, scale and complexity of some social issues would require a different way of responding.



- Lou gives an update in a community pride VLOG

Our Timeline...



Building the conditions for change

George Town Municipality's Community achievement using a Collective Impact approach



High Leverage Actions

Identifying and implementing strategies that together add up to real impact

Social and Economic Growth:

- Renew George Town
- Launchpad (skills and enterprise hub)
- Digital Access Package

Community Pride:

- Community Pride Bumper Sticker Campaign
- 50 Gems of George Town Municipality
- Sustainability Capital of Australia
- Main Street Makeover
- Proud of Our Young People



Capacity Building

Developing the skills and mind sets to make change across the system. Creating a learning community, engaging in intensive learning to support:

- Digital literacy
- Collective impact
- Community engagement
- Key messaging and effective communications
- Adaptive governance
- A deep knowledge of community



Sustainability

Unlocking partnerships, resources and influence to create impact over the long term by:

- Maintaining connection with community as key to sustainability
- Influencing policy at state and local levels
- Attracting diverse funding partners
- Learning to adapt against changing conditions (e.g. maintaining relationships and momentum during the 2020 lockdown)
- Being future focused and actively building in sustainability through the High Leverage Actions

Container for Change



Connecting leaders behind a common purpose and creating a structure, culture and strategy for change building:

- A Cross-sectoral Leadership Table
- Action Teams
- A safe and supportive space for everyone to share their views
- A Collective Plan
- Mobilised partners and co-investors



Community Mobilisation

Building a whole of community momentum for change:

- Listening to and understanding the voice of community; 500 conversations analysed and built into the plan
- Building strong relationships across community
- Engaging the community in the work of social change
- Building a community movement for change



Strategic Learning

Collecting the right information and applying it in the right ways:

- Shared Measurement System: a common way of identifying success across the community
- Establishment of >200 indicators and baselines relevant to the region
- Establishing community voice as a central data source for decision-making
- Ongoing reflective practice

*Informed by Tamarack Collective Impact 3.0 (Cabaj and Weaver, 2017) and Collective ed., & CMM-Social Change

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- Lulu hands out flyers for a community pride bumper sticker competition

“ For me, the FIG is showing George Town that we can do things differently. What we have done is to build a collection of people who believe that change is possible. ”



Working to create Collective Impact

Since 2016, the FIG has worked to embed the principles of Collective Impact. The Collective Impact approach to social change aims to create resilient communities working in ways that ensure they are integral to creating improved outcomes.

Collective Impact builds...



Resilient, inclusive communities, whose residents share a sense of responsibility to create their own future together



Sustained population-level impact



Improved return on investment by joining the dots on community priorities, service provision and funding flows

- Gathering data through conversations, community forums and asset mapping



- FIG planning sessions, community roadshows and local volunteer groups

“ The FIG demonstrates the power of Collective Impact as a community-led effort; it's exemplary; it's challenging a lot of the systems in which we live. ”

Co-contribution

August 2019 - June 2020

Volunteer hours	2,000 hours
In-kind hours	2,500 hours
Community conversations	500
Co-investment & funding into community	\$3.5 million
Major Investors	8
Formalised partnerships	18 organisations
Current FIG-led initiatives addressing community wellbeing	10 initiatives
Community leaders (FIG Leadership Table membership)	22 members



3. Mobilised leaders & champions

From the outset in 2016, the FIG has been motivated by result-oriented community leaders and cross-sectoral champions, including business and government. There is a commitment from those at the Leadership Table to constantly question why they are there and what they are trying to do. The strategic direction which is developed from community voice, data and evidence is activated by the partners around the Leadership Table and within the community, with pooled resource flows following the functions identified by the group. There is an implicit responsibility for all Leadership Table members to raise the profile of the movement within their own agencies and across their community relationships.

The Leadership Table and working group members have been meeting weekly for hours across the course of one full year now, with significant effort being contributed in between meetings. The

Leadership Table members acknowledge and value the guidance and strength of leadership provided by the Community Chair, her deep commitment, sense of the 'big picture' and capacity to keep everyone fully focused. The group is activated and eager to create change.

"You have to be prepared in your own professional role to argue up and manage upward in your organisation. Big agencies sometimes don't want to know about something that's going on in the place-based effort. Making sure you are supported and also getting the operational part right- that is the hard part."

"You need to have community, industry, business and government working together. I don't think you can do it without all of those partners."



" I think [the FIG] has really highlighted community champions, there are some really fantastic people in the community that have given so much of their time because they are passionate about making a difference. "

4. Mind frames for change



The FIG leaders and supporters are building a learning community together*. They apply a growth mindset to their interactions and decisions, building capacity individually and collectively, and often stretching their thinking to the very edges of what they have personally known and held to be true over time. The result is a culture of hope and optimism for real change which is spreading across the Municipality.

Hope and belief

"What's great is being able to look at an overwhelmingly wicked problem and understand that going down another path is possible."

"It's a privilege. I feel like I'm learning a lot. And actually, it's just a really uplifting experience, like there is good stuff happening and it's really great."

Positivity

"In terms of motivation for me, it's the FIG's positive approach. It's so important. You turn up and it's probably the most positive group I've ever been involved in (and I am old!)"

"The FIG want to see real change. There are so many caring people that want to commit their time for a greater good"

Like-mindedness

"It's the actual formation of a group of committed, respectful like-minded people."

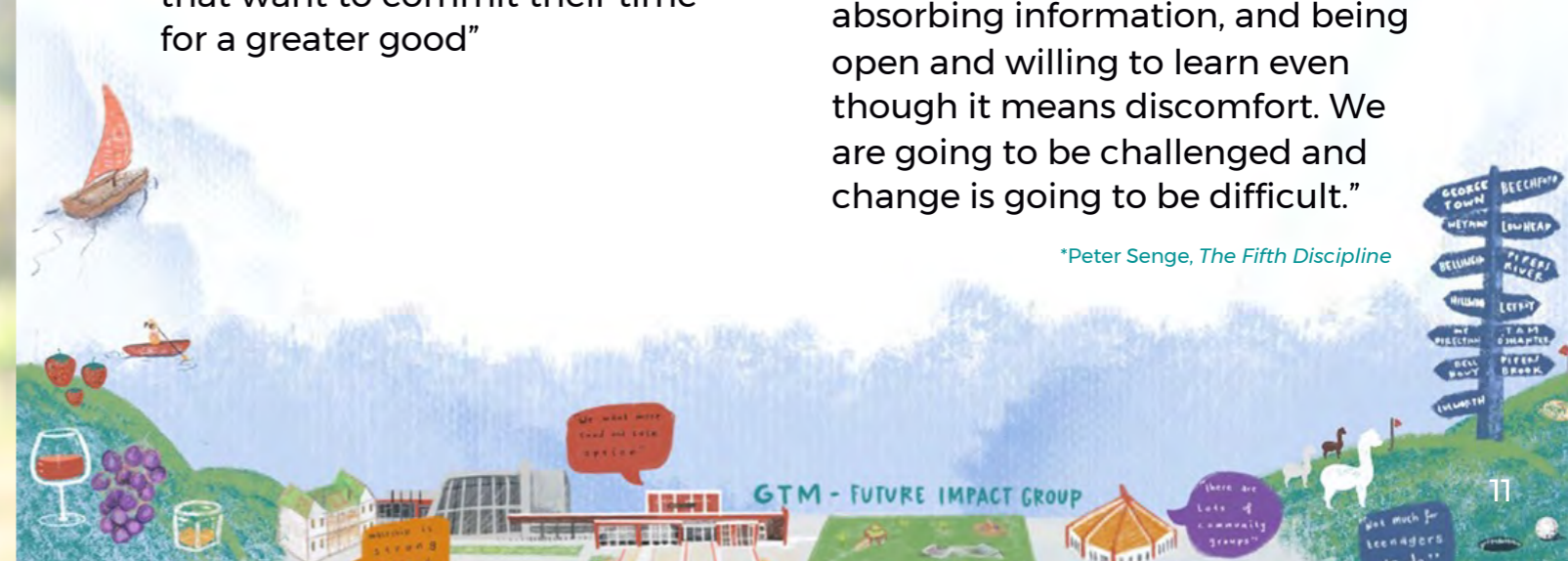
Growth mindset

"My advice to those just beginning this approach is to have trust. Have trust in something you may not know about yet. Your trust will grow as your journey grows and it's an experience that will be challenging and enriching."

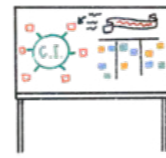
"There are enough people around the table that recognise that this is an unpredictable journey. And people are beginning to feel more comfortable with that."

"The FIG has been amazing in learning, understanding and absorbing information, and being open and willing to learn even though it means discomfort. We are going to be challenged and change is going to be difficult."

*Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*



5. Disciplined execution of Collective Impact approach



Over the years, the FIG members have invested in their own learning about the Collective Impact approach and have been rigorous and disciplined in their implementation of the way of working. Further to this learning journey, at the beginning of 2019, the FIG initiative began a period of reinvigoration. The strategic direction of the George Town Council shifted and the initiative was funded to contract a Backbone Lead.

Later in the journey, in August 2019, Collective ed. supported the FIG by offering in a Catalyst Team to further help reinvigorate and accelerate the initiative. The FIG recognises the importance of working to a robust framework and having the technical support early to mitigate the risk of early exploration and provide confidence to community and investors alike. In June 2020, the FIG was further funded by Collective ed. to contract an Executive Director to act as Backbone Lead for the initiative.

“I would say that having on-the-ground technical expertise in there from day one would be the way to go if you want to pull change off. We know we can move forward with momentum because we know we have that support.”

“The fact we’ve got so far in such a little time is in no small part due to having the embedded support. It’s not something you can do off the side of your desk - that’s how we now have changed a lot in such a short space of time.”



- The FIG chats to ABC radio outside the Community Hub

6. Explicit value exchange for funders & leaders

One of the key strengths of the initiative has been its capacity to enable partners, supporters and funders to recognise the value the FIG offers to other agencies and individuals, both personally and professionally. Stakeholders have identified opportunities for the FIG to deliver:

- The insights and priorities of community
- Knowledge about implementation of place-based collaboration
- Strong networks
- Impact

The results have meant strengthened partnerships for the FIG itself, heightened political interest and accelerated funding contributions.

“I think the networking means everyone has more contacts and I think it can bridge that divide in the area.”

“In terms of investment, it’s been significant and diverse from multiple sources: industry and government - for the COVID response, for the Backbone role, for the digital access. It’s significant.”

“I think it is important for the company that I work for that I am involved in the FIG. My agency can’t bury our head in the sand and not take notice of what’s going on around us in community.”

“You know it’s a growth opportunity for everyone involved, however they are involved.”



- The stunning local scenery in the George Town Municipality

“ From a funding perspective it is a massive achievement to have such robust baseline measures you can point to in terms of what you want to shift and how you will measure impact. I cannot overstate how positive that is. ”

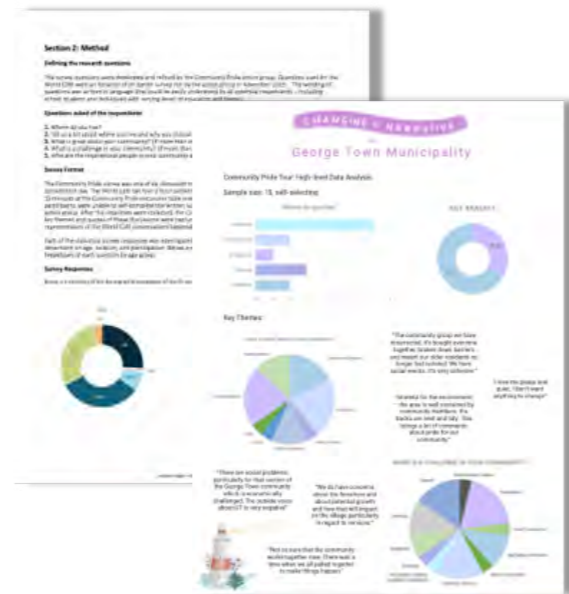
7. Data at the centre

Accountability & results focus

Foundational to the work of the FIG has been the collection of context and content data; the insights of community and the evidence base available through the exchange of quantitative data. There is a corresponding personal and collective accountability to achieve impact, rather than simply engaging in a flurry of activity.

Each Leadership Table session commences with a consideration of the meaning behind the vision statement as well as the implementation and efficacy of the approach. Each meeting, too, requires a deep dive into the priority indicators and wellbeing domains with a results focus. The Shared Measurement System is considered the single most important artefact the initiative has created and the community voice sits firmly at the centre of this integral work. The FIG continually challenges itself by asking the question; ‘Despite the effort, how many lives are better off?’

“The FIG has a burning desire to harness the energies and intents of the community to do better. For so long we had seen the indicators and stats not change despite the money that was coming into George Town. And there is such a determination to keep on keeping on.”



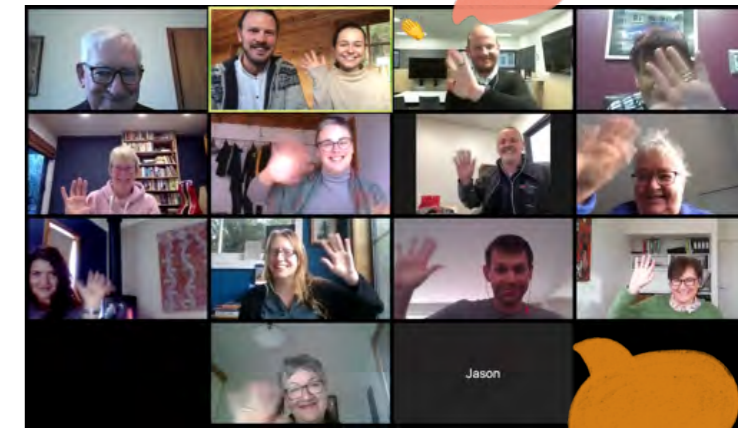
- Sharing a laugh on the Municipality tour

8. Creativity & fun

And the final magical ingredient...

FIG meetings are joyous! Amidst the serious side of creating change, every session is filled with laughter, friendship, creative suggestions and often, even a touch of singing! The Leadership Table is creating a culture which is sustainable and inclusive. They are channelling their passion enthusiastically through art, word and camaraderie. The world has long known the value and importance of the creative arts in achieving social change. The FIG is building an engaging and inclusive environment based on human-centred design principles and augmented by creative arts to support sense-making. Fun and creativity are seen as being core capacities of the FIG change makers.

“Talking about this work can be tricky, so when you are trying to communicate what the FIG is doing, sometimes talking is not enough. The pictures and the gems that the team helped with make people excited and they have said to me “this has never been done before”. Once I start sharing, people get excited!”



- The FIG quickly transitioned to online meetings during COVID-19

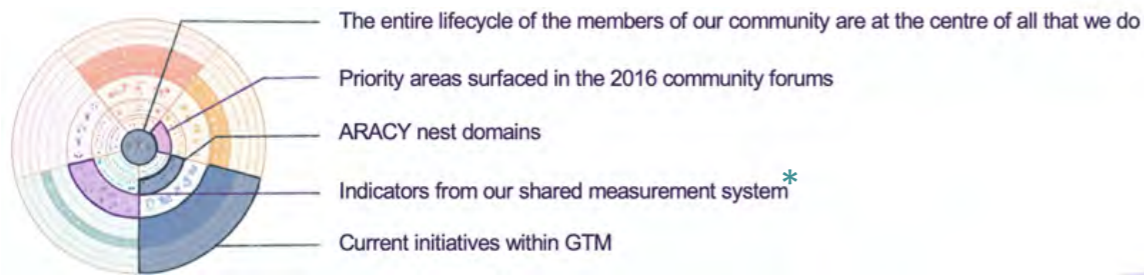
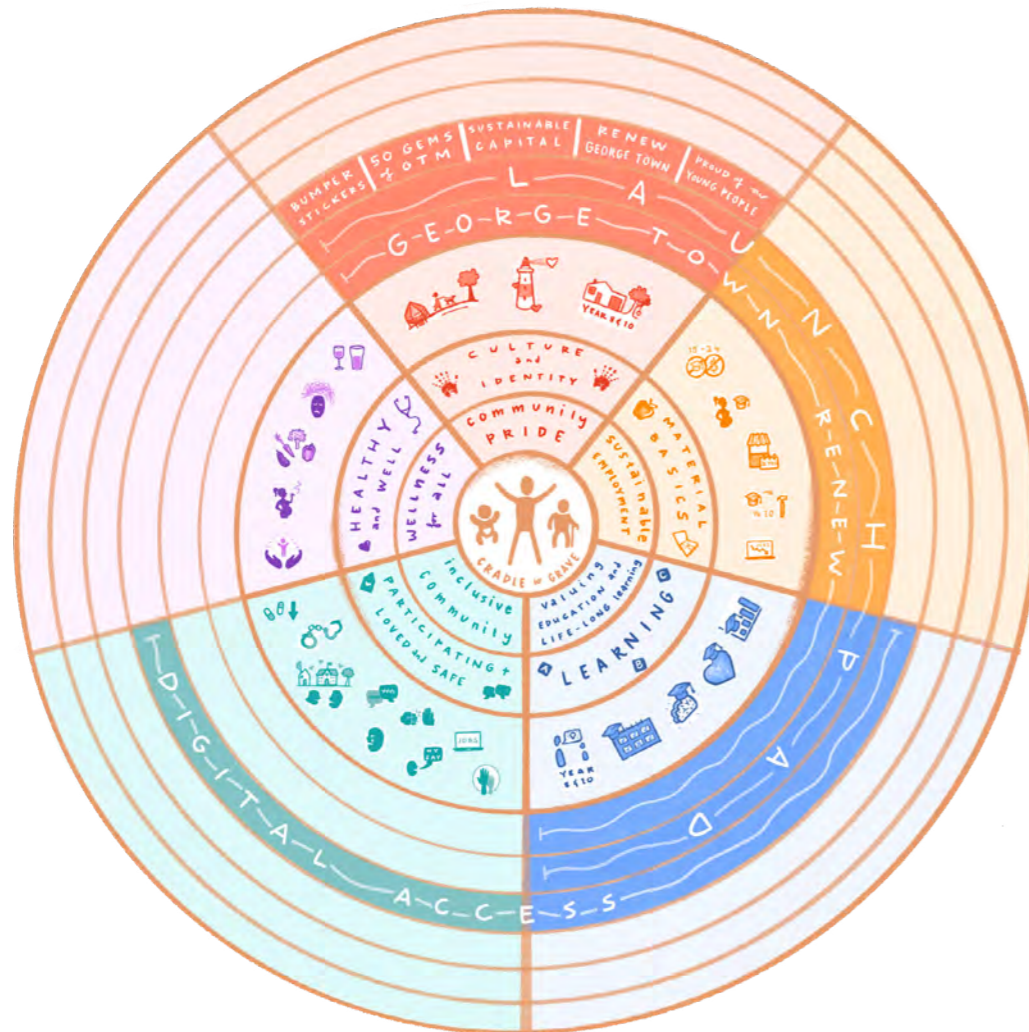
“People contribute because they enjoy it. I think the reason they keep going is that there is so much positive reinforcement from the group.”



- Having a bit of fun with data

Our Collective Plan

The Collective Plan allows us to "zoom out" and see the big picture. It helps us understand and articulate what work is currently underway across the whole of the municipality, how it maps to the ARACY nest and what community has told us is important to them. This is all anchored by the key indicators in the Shared Measurement System, which were informed by the voices of community and quantitative data from our municipality. A visual mapping also helps us to see what areas are currently under serviced and where best to direct our resources and efforts.



*Icons relate to priority indicators from our Shared Measurement System. For example:



% residents who mentioned dissatisfaction with the appearance of George Town's built environment as a critical focus for the region



Photography: Rob Burnett, Dan Rawlings and Susan Long.

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The Future Impact Group was founded by local members of the George Town Municipality and now has support from...

