



\$2.5m youth hub

By **FRANCESCA BELPERIO**

A \$2.5 MILLION youth centre will be built in Tea Tree Gully, with councillors unanimously giving the project the green light in front of a vocal 150-strong crowd.

In an hour and a half presentation, the council heard from passionate teenagers and parents who supported the creation of a youth drop-in centre and loudly clapped and cheered when it was approved on Tuesday night (April 13).

The hub will act as a one-stop shop for youths aged 10 to 25 to access information, health services, further education and training, recreation and leisure programs.

It will include rooms for sexual and mental health counselling and support, music rehearsal, computer technology, a kitchen and outdoor garden.

It will be funded by the council and be built on the western side of the Civic Centre on Montague Rd.

Supporters at the meeting, who wore Youth Innovation Centre (YIC) badges spoke of the strong need for more services for the Gully's 20,000 strong youth population. The council's youth and cultural plan-



WIN: Rachel Paterson, Damian Checkley, Kiara Robins, Kim Ly and Sophie Maiorana at the site of the proposed Tea Tree Gully youth centre.

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ner, **Rachel Paterson**, said plans had been four years in the making.

"This vision was not conceived by consultants sipping wine overlooking the sea but this was created through a thorough process involving numerous stakeholders in our community ... and I think it speaks realms," she said.

Youth worker of 20 years, **Leslie Watson** said there were only 11 youth services in the northeast, compared with 30 in Playford and 19 in Salisbury council districts. She said the three council areas had similar percentages of youth within their populations -

averaging 19 per cent. "There is a lack of services for youth in the northeast compared with the neighbouring cities of Gawler, Playford and Salisbury who have invested substantial funds in youth facilities," Ms Watson said.

Gully crime prevention officer **Brett Woollacott** - a former police officer of 41 years - said the centre would help combat anti-social behaviour.

The council heard service providers, including Families SA and Service To Youth Council had given in principle support to moving into the centre.