# BARWON NETWORK COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT
# ORIENTATION MANUAL



This Committee of Management orientation manual is intended to be used as a template. Members of the Barwon Network of Neighbourhood Centres are encouraged to add to, delete, or change any part of this manual in order to make it more relevant to their own organisation.

Barwon Network of Neighbourhood Centres Inc.
45 Heyers Road

Grovedale 3216

PH: 52 414810
Mobile: 0427 090 553

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The Barwon Network of Neighbourhood Centres would like to acknowledge the assistance provided by the following:

- City of Greater Geelong
- Department of Planning and Community Development
- Department of Human Services
- Ourcommunity.com
- VCOSS
- Spring Creek Community House Board

While all care has been taken in the preparation of this Manual, no responsibility is accepted by the Barwon Network of Neighbourhood Centres Inc., its officers or staff for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies. The information provided in this Manual is not intended to be a substitute for legal or industrial advice.

It is the responsibility of each Neighbourhood House to ensure that this manual is kept up to date with information relevant to your specific community. We suggest that the document is reviewed and updated after each Annual General Meeting.

Neighbourhood Houses are also known as Community Houses, Neighbourhood Centres or Community Centres.

The Committee of Management may also be called the Management Committee, Board, Governance Committee, Governing body or Council or abbreviated as CoM.

# CONTENTS

# <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

Dear Committee Member,

Welcome to the Neighbourhood House sector and particularly to the Network of Neighbourhood Centres in the Barwon Region.

This manual is designed to inform and support, however if the answer you are looking for is not here please ring the Barwon Networker:

> Christine Brooks
> Barwon Network of Neighbourhood Centres Inc.
> 45 Heyers Road
> Grovedale 3216
> PH: 52 414810
> Mobile: 0427 090 553

## The Mission of our Network

The mission of the Barwon Network of Neighbourhood Centres Inc. is to work within a community development framework to support the sustainability, development and growth of its members and the Neighbourhood House movement. The Network supports the diversity and autonomy of its members, whilst advocating for them individually and collectively.

## The Purpose of our Network

The Barwon Network of Neighbourhood Centres Inc will provide a collective voice and a sense of unity for its members by-:

- Communicating
- Representing
- Advocating
- Supporting all members
    - Networker
    - Co-ordinators/ Managers/ Executive officers
    - C.O.M
    - Volunteers
    - Centre users
    - Communities
- Sharing information and knowledge
- Resource sharing
- Linking houses
- Linking to other organisations
- Linking to the statewide NHLC sector (including ANHLC)

# ABOUT OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

Name of Neighbourhood House ......................................................

The list of information below is detailed in the following pages.

| | |
|---|---|
| About our organisation | Mission Statement |
| | A short history |
| | How we are funded |
| | Organisational flow chart |
| Committee Administration | List of Committee members |
| | Current Committee members contact list |
| | Committee of management meeting dates for the relevant year |
| | Useful information. |
| Committee roles and responsibilities. | Governance |
| | Chairperson/President |
| | Deputy chairperson/vice-president |
| | Secretary |
| | Treasurer |
| | Committee member |
| Staff | Coordinator/Manager |
| | Other staff |
| | Volunteers |
| Committee working papers | Strategic plan |
| | Annual Plan |
| | Annual budget |
| | Previous 6 months minutes and financial reports |
| Policies | Include a copy of all your organisation's policies. |
| Additional documents which are included in this manual | Constitution/Rules |
| | Guidelines and Procedures |
| | Annual report |
| | Sample of recent Newsletters and programs |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Sector framework document. |
| | DHS Funding Guidelines. |
| | Sector outcomes document. |
| | Neighbourhood House Coordination Program Guidelines |
| | Neighbourhood House Good Practice Guide |
| | Evacuation Plans |

# A short history of our organisation.

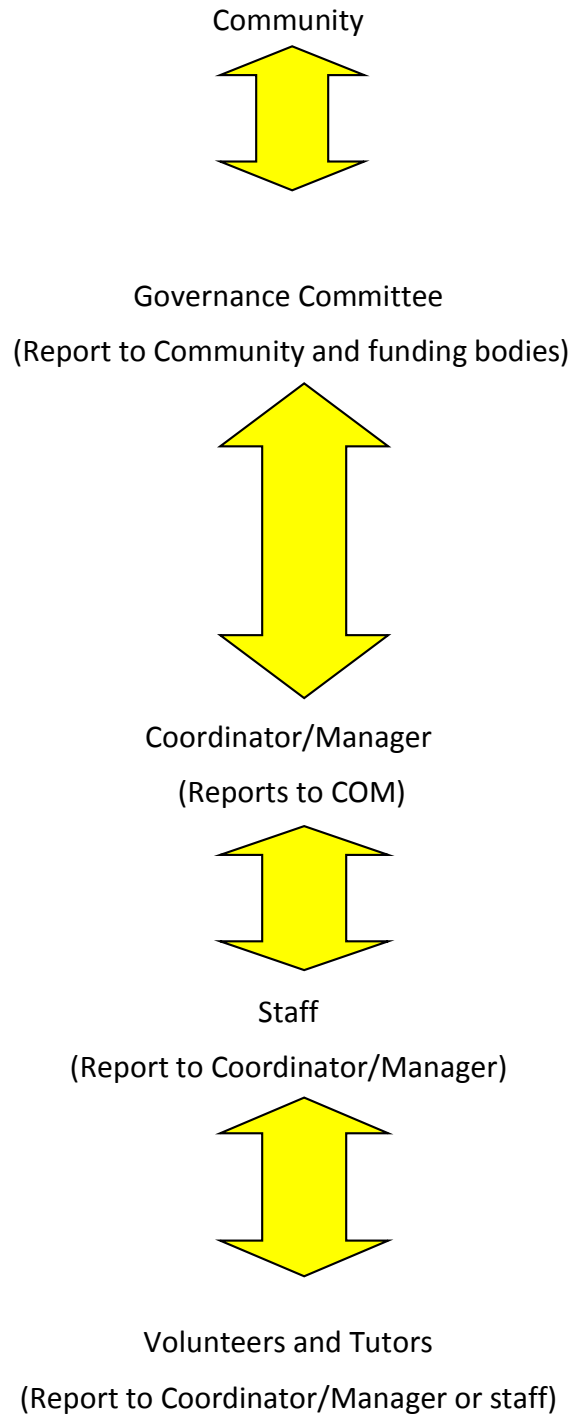Include here an outline of when and how your organisation began, and any highlights throughout the years.

## How we are funded

| Funding body | What the $$ are for | Contact person |
|---|---|---|
| Department of Human Services Neighbourhood House Coordination Program (NHCP)<br><br>Our core funding. | Allocation of coordination hours for the employment of a coordinator to;<br>• Provide a balanced mix of delivery and community strengthening<br>• Promote participation by diverse community groups and individuals<br>• Be open for at least as many hours as NHCP funding provides for.<br>• Provide at least twice as many activity hours as NHCP funding.<br><br>Accountability:<br>• 3 year Funding and Service Agreement<br>• Annual financial accountability requirement (FAR)<br>• Annual Risk Attestation<br>• Annual Participants census and Activity and Outcomes Survey via ANHLC<br>• Provide Annual Report, including audited accounts (as required) to DHS within 20 days of the Annual General meeting.<br>• Must submit a Strategic Plan and associated work plans.<br>• Must participate in Regional Network. | Barwon/Southwest:<br><br>Client Outcomes<br>Geelong Office<br>Barwon-South Western<br><br>Department of Human Services<br>Cnr Fenwick & Little Malop Sts, Geelong, 3220<br>PO Box 760 Geelong, Victoria 3220<br><br><br>Community Participation Officer<br><br>Ph: 5226 4692 |
| Department of Human Services<br><br>(DHS) – Other Programs | e.g. Occasional care<br>    School holiday program | |
| Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE) | ACFE funds Adult Learning Classes, Adult Literacy and Numeracy, New Technologies and Accredited Courses. | Regional Manager<br>Ph. 5215 6001 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| [www.acfe.vic.gov.au](www.acfe.vic.gov.au) | ACFE expects the following accountability:<br><br>• Yearly audit<br><br>• Financial acquittal statements<br><br>• Statistical reports<br><br>• Service agreements | Project Officer<br>Ph. 5215 6080 |
| Local Government Grants | e.g.<br><br>Own and maintain building.<br><br>Annual grant<br><br>Expectation of annual acquittal of funds. | Contact details of relevant Local Government Authority. |
| Philanthropic Grants | e.g. Specific projects | |
| Federal Grants | e.g. Specific projects | |
| Fundraising | e.g. To purchase new equipment | |
| Local service clubs | e.g. To support newsletter | |
| Miscellaneous | e.g. One off donations | |

# Organisational flow chart /line of communication and responsibility

The following is an example.

Community

Governance Committee

(Report to Community and funding bodies)

Coordinator/Manager

(Reports to COM)

Staff

(Report to Coordinator/Manager)

Volunteers and Tutors

(Report to Coordinator/Manager or staff)

Your organisational flow chart should show a clear line of communication and responsibility. The Community is always at the top of everything we do – and communication is always two-way.

## Committee of Management of ……………………………………………….

**YEAR** ………………………………..  (Must be updated annually)

| Role | Name | First elected |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Chairperson/President | | |
| Deputy Chairperson / Vice-President | | |
| Treasurer | | |
| Secretary | | |
| General Committee | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
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| | | |
| | | |

## Current Committee members contact list

**CONFIDENTIAL and not for distribution without authority.**

**YEAR: ………………………..** (update annually)

| Name | Phone number | Address | Email |
|------|--------------|---------|-------|
|      |              |         |       |
|      |              |         |       |
|      |              |         |       |
|      |              |         |       |
|      |              |         |       |
|      |              |         |       |
|      |              |         |       |
|      |              |         |       |
|      |              |         |       |
|      |              |         |       |

# Committee of Management meeting dates

The committee meets at …..(time) on the …..(eg third Monday) of each month

**YEAR ………………………….**

| MONTH | DATE |
|---|---|
| January | |
| February | |
| March | |
| April | |
| May | |
| June | |
| July | |
| August | |
| September | |
| October | |
| November | |
| December | |
| **Sub-committee meetings** | |
| **Sub-committee** | **DATE** |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

# Useful Information

(update annually or as positions change)

## Staff members

| Name | Position | Working Days | Email |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | Coordinator/Manager/EO |  |  |
|  | Admin. worker |  |  |
|  | Adult Ed. officer |  |  |
|  | Bookkeeper |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## Office equipment

The photocopier, fax and phone are available for use of Committee members free for Committee business. Personal use of this equipment may be done and paid for at the rate listed.

## Telephones

To dial out… ……….

If a call for you has been placed on hold……………………

If messages are taken please ensure the relevant process if followed *(please detail process)*

## Computer

The computer located……………………is available for Committee use. If you are not confident, please ask staff for assistance. As the anti-virus is kept up to date we would appreciate your cooperation in scanning disks from external sources to maintain a "clean" virus free centre. Staff will assist in this process.

## Kitchen

Tea, coffee and other drinks are available on a help yourself basis.  Everyone is asked to wash their own dishes and clean up after themselves please.

# Organisations we are involved with

(update this section as relevant)

| NAME | RELATIONSHIP |
|---|---|
| BNNC<br><br>Barwon Network of Neighbourhood Centres:<br><br>Networker:<br><br>45 Heyers Road,<br><br>Grovedale 3216<br><br>0427090553 / 52414810<br><br>Email: barwonet@gmail.com | Membership:<br><br>Attendance at regular meetings throughout the year.<br><br>Information and support for Committee members, Staff and Volunteers about any aspect of the Neighbourhood House sector.<br><br>Access to the Region wide Learning and Development Calendar<br><br>Opportunities to become a member of the BNNC Executive. |
| ANHLC<br><br>Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres<br><br>P (03) 9654 1104 \| F (03) 9654 1094 \|<br><br>anhlc@anhlc.asn.au<br><br>PO Box 423, Flinders Lane VIC 8009 | Membership<br><br>Information, support and advocacy for Neighbourhood Houses, and at a State level.<br><br>Opportunities to become a member of the ANHLC Board. |
| Barwon Health | e.g.Partnership |
| Glastonbury | |
| Residents Association | e.g.Use of facility |
| Primary school | |
| Kindergarten | |
| Karingal | |
| Aged care facility | e.g. Outreach |
| Local Churches | |
| Registered Training organisations. | |
| Job Network providers | e.g. Office hire |
| Jobs Australia – 9349 3699 | e.g. Membership |

| Bethany | |
|---|---|
| Australian Services Union | |
| What else? | |

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The following is taken directly from the DHS Neighbourhood House Co-ordination Program funding 2012 - 2015 guidelines Page 16.

"The Neighbourhood House community development style of practice is effective when it is practised consistently: with all individuals and groups within the organisation; in the administration, operation and governance of the house; in the delivery of programs and services; and when house staff or volunteers interact with the wider community, government and funding bodies.

Neighbourhood Houses contribute in a number of ways to strengthening their local communities, with the nature and type of activities they undertake varying according to local needs. They provide an important contribution to achieving the government's objective of building stronger communities through delivering community-strengthening programs and activities, planning and development.

## The Neighbourhood House community development model

The model of neighbourhood house community development practice can be described in six simple and generic steps. These steps enable houses to have a key role in local area planning to meet the needs of their local communities.

They are:

1. involving the community and encouraging participation and inclusion, and valuing diversity and difference at all levels of neighbourhood house operation

2. identifying community needs and aspirations

3. determining appropriate community programs, activities and services in response to those needs, ensuring that diversity and difference are valued

4. partnering with community organisations, businesses, government and philanthropic organisations to secure appropriate funding and support

5. delivering quality programs, activities and services

6. evaluating the effectiveness of all aspects of neighbourhood house operations, including programs, practice and governance."

# GOVERNANCE

The ANHLC Sector Framework Document Page 7 describes Governance as follows:

"As community-based and legally-constituted organisations, neighbourhood houses are governed by a voluntary management committee, collective, or board comprising elected members who live, work, or participate in the local community. The governing body is accountable to its membership base to endorse the strategic and policy framework of the organisation, ensuring the financial viability of the legal entity, and ensuring compliance with all legislative, statutory and contractual duties, obligations and requirements.

This form of governance gives validity to the concept of a community-based organisation, responsive and accountable to the local community through its membership base, and to the external bodies or authorities with whom it has formal working relationships or funding and service agreements.

The governance model is developmental, with the governing body working co-operatively and collaboratively with staff, volunteers, house participants and the wider community, thus generating a range of community benefits."

> **The BNNC is able to facilitate a workshop for Committees of Management around their responsibilities in Governance.**

## Committee of Management responsibilities



Strategic Planning: A strategic plan will allow the work of the organisation to be proactive and based on real community need. Strategic planning also involves regular monitoring of the effectiveness of all activities to ensure they are meeting the strategic directions of the organisation. All Committee members should participate in annual planning days in order to prioritise activities over the coming year.

Human Resources:  The Committee must ensure that HR policies are in place and actioned. These responsibilities include developing occupational health and safety guidelines, designing jobs, developing job descriptions, monitoring employee performance, and meeting all award conditions.  Management functions are undertaken by the co-ordinator or manager who is employed by the governing body. The management role is shaped by the governing body and, while distinct from the governance role, is responsible to advise and inform the governing body, and to manage the operations, internal processes, and day-to-day affairs and activities of the organisation. The Chairperson and the committee should ensure that the Coordinator and other staff receive regular training and professional development.

Policies, Procedures and Processes:  Policies are agreed sets of rules and procedures with a common purpose that are critical to good governance. Your organisation's policies should provide information about what you do and, in some cases, what you don't. Policies spell out what the organisation does and Procedures explain how it is done. The purpose of policies and procedures is to ensure a common understanding of all aspects of the organisation. The Committee should ensure a regular review cycle of all policies and procedures.

It is the responsibility of the Board to ensure that policies are developed that:

- reflect the values, belief and philosophy of your organisation;
- are relevant in terms of current legislation and regulation; and
- best meet the needs of your organisation's clients and staff.

Legal requirements: These include a range of federal, state and local government laws and regulations. e.g. The organisation's constitution/rules, the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012, insurance, permits, licenses, copyright, industrial relations, taxation, work cover, privacy, discrimination, childcare regulations, financial management and occupational health and safety.

Police Checks and Working with Children: Whilst not mandatory all Neighbourhood Houses are encouraged to develop a policy and procedure which requires all staff and volunteers to have a current Police Check and Working with Children Check. With the permission of the person involved, copies of these documents should be kept securely in each individual staff member and volunteer confidential personnel file.

Accountability to funding bodies: The responsibility of reporting and accountability to funding bodies lies ultimately with the Committee, even though the practical tasks are usually carried out by the Coordinator/Manager. Committee members should make themselves familiar with the relevant Funding Agreements.

Delegation: The Committee may delegate to a member of the Committee, a subcommittee or staff, any of its powers and functions. The delegation must be in writing and may be subject to the conditions and limitations the Committee considers appropriate. The Committee may, in writing, revoke a delegation at any time.

Premises and equipment: The Committee should make sure the premises, facilities and equipment are provided and maintained so that the organisation can provide services properly and safely.

Transparency: The Committee should involve and inform the wider Community about all aspects of the organisation. It also provides an opportunity for community feedback.

Promotion and Marketing: The success and credibility of the organisation within the Community, funding bodies and policy makers is largely reliant on effective promotion and marketing.

# Committee of Management roles

The Committee of Management is elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. Individual Committee members are also elected to take on the extra responsibilities of Chairperson (or President), Deputy Chairperson (or Vice-President), Treasurer and Secretary. The following is a summary of the duties that go with these positions.

# Chairperson

- The Chairperson requires strong leadership qualities, as well as a thorough understanding of the Governance and Management structures of the organisation.

- The Chairperson must be willing to take the lead, to allocate responsibility, to speak up, and to make tough decisions if necessary. This does not mean that the Chairperson has the right to impose their views.

- The Chairperson should be in touch with the feelings of the Committee members, to find a way to work through agenda items so that everybody is satisfied with the integrity of the process – if not the outcome.

- The Chairperson should facilitate debate, encourage compromise and limit confrontation.

- The Chairperson should lead by example and encourage impeccable ethical behavior.

- The Chairperson should take an interest in the activities of the House including the work of volunteers, and should encourage other Committee members to do the same.

In meetings

- The Chairperson chairs Committee meetings and the AGM and any other general meeting of members, and guides meetings through the agenda, ensuring that discussion is relevant and any decisions are clearly stated.

- The Chairperson ensures that everyone who wishes to speak is given the opportunity to do so, providing it is relevant, and encourages all who attend to participate. It is important that no one person is allowed to dominate any discussion.

- The Chairperson notes all motions and amendments and puts them to a vote.

- The Chairperson should sign the minutes after they have been confirmed as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.

- The Chairperson should make sure that the meeting is run in accordance with the organisation's Constitution.

- The Chairperson does not usually move a motion unless it is a formal congratulation or condolence motion or similar.

- The Chairperson has the right to vote on every motion and also has a casting vote if there is a tied vote.

- The Chairperson is the point of contact for the Coordinator/Manager should anything urgent occur between Committee meetings.

Outside meetings

- Act as Spokesperson. Traditionally this is the Chairperson's role although it can be any member of the Committee – as long as everyone is clear who it is and what the role means. It is a good idea to have a policy or some guidelines as to what can and cannot be said in any situation, especially in an emergency. A spokesperson should never engage in negative discussion about the organisation or individual members.

- The Chairperson should sign all funding agreements and changes to policy, after approval of the Committee, and letters concerning any important matters.

- The Chairperson should be involved enough to know about week to week happenings, and not just read the reports once a month. Where a good rapport exists between Chairperson, Committee, Coordinator and staff, the organisation is stronger more responsive to its community.

# Deputy Chairperson

- The Deputy Chair helps support the Chairperson and can take on responsibilities as negotiated with the Chairperson and the rest of the Committee.

- The Deputy Chair needs to be able to do the Chairperson's job if the Chair is unable to do it.

- The Deputy Chair is a back-up to the Chairperson in all areas of responsibility.

- The Deputy Chair can also work with sub-committees, or take responsibility for a specific sub-committee.

# Secretary

In meetings

- The Secretary writes up the agenda in consultation with Chairperson. Agenda items are placed in priority order and time is allowed for each, to ensure all items are covered.

- The Secretary takes the minutes, and then writes them up and distributes them to Committee members at least one week before the next meeting.

- The Secretary (together with the Coordinator/Manager) keeps a record of received and sent correspondence, and should point out any items that might be important or urgent at Committee meetings.

- The Secretary needs to become familiar with and meet other legal requirements under the constitution.

Outside meetings

- Keep the Seal of the incorporated organisation if one exists, and record all documents that are sealed.

- Complete and send the annual statement to Consumer Affairs Victoria within one month of the AGM.

- The Secretary should make sure that all correspondence is up to date.

- The Secretary should keep the register of members up to date, and inform Consumer Affairs Victoria and funding bodies of new office bearers.

- The Secretary should ensure that all relevant information is distributed to the appropriate people.

## Treasurer

- The Treasurer is responsible for the financial management of the organisation.

- The Treasurer should plan the finances in advance by preparing an annual budget. This process should involve the Committee of Management and the Coordinator.

- The Treasurer should make sure all financial records are up to date and in order, by keeping a proper record of all income, payments and receipts.

- The Treasurer must prepare a monthly financial report for each Committee meeting and circulate this to Committee members at least one week prior to the meeting.

- The financial reports should be able to be understood by all Committee members – this enables them to make informed financial decisions.

- All financial records should be available for any member to see at any time. There should be evidence of why money is paid out, and that any income received is banked.

- The Treasurer should organise and prepare the necessary information for the annual audit.

- The Treasurer should liaise with the Bookkeeper, or Coordinator/Manager as directed by the Committee of Management.

- The Treasurer should liaise with any sub-committee as directed by the Committee of Management.

- The responsibility for all financial decisions lies with the whole Committee – it is the Treasurer's responsibility to keep financial records, and prepare and present reports so that the whole Committee can make informed financial decisions.

## Ordinary members of the Committee of Management

The responsibilities of the Committee of Management are shared by all Committee members. Once a resolution is passed by the Committee, it is expected that all members will abide by the decision.

All Committee members should become familiar with and abide by the organisation's constitution. Responsibilities include the following:

- Attend meetings of the Committee of Management.
- Take part in sub-committees and specific working groups.
- Be punctual.
- Read minutes, agendas, reports and background papers prior to Committee meetings.
- Report on areas of their responsibility.
- Keep informed about issues affecting the organisation.
- Be open and frank with ideas and information.
- Discuss and critique issues - not individuals.
- Listen to others' views.
- Support other Committee members in their work.
- Support the collective decisions of the Management Committee – even if they don't agree with them. Members may ask for their objections to be recorded in the minutes.
- Act as an ambassador for the organisation, and promote its activities within the Community.
- Be aware of the organisation's protocol for any public comment.
- Take part in delegations and lobbying.
- Attend training and development sessions as scheduled.
- Participate in strategic and other planning and evaluation processes as relevant to the future direction of the service.
- Liaise with other organisations as directed by the Committee of Management.
- Withdraw from any decision relating to a conflict of interest.

## Management, on the other hand...

Management functions are undertaken by the co-ordinator or manager who is employed by the governing body. The management role is shaped by the Committee and, while distinct from the governance role, is responsible to:

- Advise and inform the Committee.
- Manage the operations, internal processes, and day-to-day affairs and activities of the organisation.

## Coordinator/ Manager

The role of the Coordinator is to put the strategic plan, set by the Committee of Management, into action. Coordinators must know their community and respond to needs by providing a venue and support for activities and services. It means that the underlying motivation for service provision is to enhance the lives of members of the community.

Coordinators work closely with the Committee to ensure that strategic plans are developed, implemented and reviewed, that Funding and Service Agreements requirements are fulfilled and policies and procedures are developed and reviewed.

The Coordinator/Manager Position Description should outline the specific duties to be undertaken.

The primary work of the coordinator/manager is to implement the organisation's strategic plan.

On a day to day basis the Coordinator/Manager is responsible for the management of the centre. This includes:

- Recruiting, managing and supervising volunteers.
- Supervising other staff.
- Submission writing.
- Ensuring all programs and events reflect the organisation's strategic plan.
- Liaising with funding bodies and other organisations.
- Some administration.
- Consulting and reporting to the Committee.
- Consulting with other Neighbourhood Houses and the Network.

## Other Staff

*Include a brief description of the roles of any other staff, e.g.*

- Adult Ed. Worker
- Admin worker/Bookkeeper
- Childcare staff
- Cleaner

## Volunteers

Volunteering is an activity which always takes place through a not for profit organisation or project and is:

- of benefit to the community and the volunteer
- undertaken of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion
- done for no financial gain
- in a position not designated as paid
- underpinned by the 'Principles of Volunteering"

## Principles of Volunteering

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer.
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice.
- Volunteering is an activity that is unpaid and not undertaken for the receipt of salary, pension, government allowance or honorarium.
- Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community.
- Volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs.
- Volunteering is an activity performed in the not for profit sector.
- Volunteers do not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers.
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others.
- Volunteering promotes human rights and equality.

The contribution of volunteers to our organisation and the Neighbourhood House sector is invaluable. Volunteering empowers people to learn new skills and contribute to their community. In our organisation volunteers are encouraged to take on tasks they are interested in.  Our volunteers are a valued part of our team, and much of our success is a result of their efforts. Volunteers are unpaid staff. They work for free, but not for nothing!

For up-to-date resources for volunteers check the website:

www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au

## Police Checks and Working with Children Check

"We have a risk management plan relating to the selection of staff, volunteers and Committee of Management to ensure that only fit and proper persons hold positions of responsibility within our organisation."

A good way to ensure that everybody connected with your House is a 'fit and proper person' is to ask each person to apply for a police check and/or a working with children check. The Working with Children (WWC) Check and a Police Check are two different checks. Under *the Working with Children Act 2005* (the Act) if you are engaged in *child-related work* and not exempt, you must have a WWC Check even if you have undergone a Police Check. The WWC Check is an ongoing assessment of a person's suitability to work with children, examining relevant serious offences in a person's national criminal history.  The Police Check is a list of all offences up to the date of application, and helps to assess a person's suitability for work in the Neighbourhood House. Police Checks for volunteers may be obtained for a reduced fee if your House applies for a Community Fee Number. There is no fee for a volunteer to obtain a Working with Children Check.

Information and forms for these Checks are available online at:

www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=274

www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

## Governance – more information.

- What is governance?
- Governance structure
- Boards
- Policies, procedures and processes
- Financial Responsibility and Accountability
- Other governance resources

## What is governance?

"Good governance is not an outcome, it's a process; there is never a point of perfection as it organically ebbs and flows."

The term 'governance' refers to a not for profit community organisation's board and its collective legal responsibility as an incorporated association, company limited by guarantee or cooperative, according to the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 , and the organisation's rules.

Essential elements of good governance are:

- Good governance structure

- Good policies, processes and procedures

- The right mix of people on boards or committees of management

Your organisation needs good governance to remain viable and to address issues such as authority, accountability, leadership and direction.

There are many governance resources available, including websites, tools, templates, checklists, help sheets, how-to guides and handbooks, offered by government, community groups and fee-for-service providers.

## Governance structure

"...the development of a board and its governance structure must be organic and aligned to the organisation's requirements and mission."

Some of the big governance structure issues to consider are:

- the legal structure of your organisation

- the development of an organisational constitution

- the development of an organisational charter

- The development of a Strategic Plan

The governing body of an incorporated association is sometimes called a 'Board', a 'Committee of Management' (CoM) or a 'Council'.

Where to find general information:   Refer to "Important Things for Committees to Know" section of this document for links to relevant governance websites.

# BARWON NETWORK OF NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES (BNNC)

## Support available for Committees of Management

The Barwon Network of Neighbourhood Centres Inc. encompasses 25 Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres, covering the local Government areas of, City of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast Shire, Queenscliffe Borough and Colac Otway Shire. The BNNC is funded to resource and support its members. A Committee made up of people from member Houses is elected annually to direct the activities of the Network, and ensure it remains responsive and relevant to all members.

The BNNC can offer the following services:

- Members meetings
- Forums and other networking opportunities for members,
- Confidential information and support,
- Referrals to appropriate resources and services,
- Assistance in reviewing and developing policies,
- Training for Committees and staff,
- Information and support on employment issues,
- Visits to members Houses,
- Representation and Advocacy,
- Independent advice
- Links to peak organisations

The BNNC Networker is available Mon, Tues and Wed 9-3pm. All members of the BNNC (Committee members, staff and volunteers) are welcome to make contact:

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**Barwon Network of Neighbourhood Centres Inc.**

45 Heyers Road, Grovedale 3216 - PH: 52 414810

Mobile: 0427 090 553

Email: barwonet@gmail.com

Website: www.bnnc.net.au

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The Network meets regularly to report to member Houses on issues relevant to the sector and to offer opportunities for information sharing, support and professional development for Committees, volunteers and staff.

# IMPORTANT THINGS FOR COMMITTEES TO KNOW

An essential resource for all involved in the Neighbourhood House sector is the Neighbourhood House Good Practice Guide and Web Library and can be accessed by Committee members, volunteers and staff via:

www.nhweblibrary.org.au

## Incorporation

Incorporation is governed by the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. This Act is managed by Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV). The Compliance Branch of CAV has inspectors who:

- Provide liaison and information about incorporation

- Investigate complaints

- Can supervise elections at AGMs etc. on request.

There may be occasions when we might want to call on their help, for example when there is public concern about whether a Neighbourhood House is acting in the public interest.


Some of the key requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act are:

- The constitution of the organisation has been drawn up with reference to the Model Rules of Incorporation and adapted to suit its individual circumstances.

- An AGM is held annually in which statements of the organisation income, expenditure, assets and liabilities are presented to members.

- The AGM is held within 5 months from the end of the organisations financial year – normally, 30 June.

- The Secretary must lodge annual statements and inform Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) of any changes to the rules or the makeup of the Committee of the Association.

- The organisation must first apply to CAV if they wish to make changes to their constitution.

- The annual statement must be received by CAV in the prescribed form within one month of the AGM.

- Incorporated Associations must have a registered address (which cannot be a Post Office Box), and must notify the Registrar of any change of address or contact details.

- An incorporated association's name address and phone number must appear on its business documents.

- The rules of the incorporated association must set out a grievance procedure for dealing with disputes between members and members and the association. In the absence of a grievance procedure in the association's constitution, the grievance procedure in the Model Rules applies.

<u>Resources and Contacts for Incorporation</u>

- Incorporation kit available from VCOSS contains disc with sample forms etc PH.1800 133 340.

- You can download the Model Rules for Incorporation and forms from the CAV website. www.consumer.vic.gov.au

- Consumer Affairs Victoria PO Box 123, Melbourne 3000.

## Charitable institutions

The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) is the independent national regulator of charities. The ACNC has been set up to achieve the following objects:

- maintain, protect and enhance public trust and confidence in the sector through increased accountability and transparency
- support and sustain a robust, vibrant, independent and innovative not-for-profit sector
- promote the reduction of unnecessary regulatory obligations on the sector.
- To achieve their objectives, the ACNC:
- registers organisations as charities
- helps charities understand and meet their obligations through information, guidance, advice and other support
- maintains a free and searchable public register so that anyone can look up information about registered charities
- is working with state and territory governments (as well as individual federal, state and territory government agencies) to develop a 'report-once, use-often' reporting framework for charities.

For additional information contact: http://www.acnc.gov.au/

## Mediation and Dispute Resolution

The Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria in the Department of Justice provides trained mediators that can assist in the settlement of disputes. When you phone the Disputes Settlement Centre, staff can:

- Talk with you about the problem and discuss possible ways you can resolve it yourself;

- or, with your permission and if suitable, arrange a mediation between you and the other person/s at a time and place convenient to all involved; and

- Provide relevant information and/or referral at no cost.

Website: www.justice.vic.gov.au

Click on dispute resolution/mediation

## Fundraising Act 1998

Public fundraising undertaken by Neighbourhood Houses is subject to the Fundraising Act 1998.  If you think your fundraising activity will come under the Act or you are unsure seek clarification from Consumer Affairs Victoria. Website: www.consumer.vic.gov.au

Raffles and bingo permits require a separate permit from the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation (VCGLR)

Website: www.vcglr.vic.gov.au

Ph: 1300 182 457.

## Insurance

The State Government, through Dept of Human Services supply public liability insurance to all funded Neighbourhood Houses. The insurance is delivered by Victorian Managed Insurance Authority -VMIA

The coverage includes:

- Public/Products Liability
- Professional Indemnity
- Directors' and Officers' Liability
- Association Liability
- Medical Indemnity  and, Personal Accident   -covering the following groups of people;
- Members of the Committee of Management
- Employees
- Voluntary workers
- Work experience participants
- Work training participants
- Job seekers
- Tutors

### Who is not insured

It is important for coordinators and committees of management to be clear about the limitations of this cover. Only those activities under the direct financial and administrative control of the organisation's committee of management are covered by this insurance. An activity group will be covered by the insurance only if the funded house/centre has full administrative and financial responsibility for the group. Groups who do not fall into this category are required to provide their own insurance cover.

Those who hire or use your facilities and/or resources are also not included in this cover. For example, where your centre is hired by a third party (who may or may not be a member of your organisation) for a birthday party or similar function, the policy protects your organisation, but unless provision has been made, does not insure the hirer, guests, customers or participants of the hirer using your facilities.

In addition, the insurance program will not indemnify agencies for a range of extreme activities such as gliding.

**Contact**

> Insurance Adviser, Healthcare & CSO
>
> VMIA | Risk Management & Insurance
>
> P 03 9270 6900 F 03 9270 6949
>
> Level 10 South, 161 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000
>
> PO Box 18409, Collins St East, Vic 8003
>
> Website: www.**vmia**.vic.gov.au

**Contents insurance**

Some Neighbourhood Houses have their own contents insurance arrangements; however, the ANHLC has an arrangement with GUILD Insurance as preferred provider of contents insurance. Guild can also provide insurance for Neighbourhood House buildings which are not owned by Councils.

GUILD has regional representatives who can come out to Houses to assess insurance needs and design specific cover, for example;

- Business interruption
- Burglary
- Property
- Electronic equipment loss
- Merchandise/stock in transit
- Money on premises/in transit

**Contact** www.guildifs.com.au

> 1800 810 213

# Fraud

In many organisations public and private alike, having the right methodology to identify and prevent fraud is essential. Ten principles that may be applied in developing your fraud control plan are noted below.

1. **Committee of Management and staff buy-in:** Strong support and direction from the team is essential.

2. **Risk assessment:** Conduct an organisation-wide assessment to determine high risk fraud areas.

3. **Planning:** Put a fraud control plan into place to prevent and detect fraud.

4. **Communication:** Ensure the entire organisation is aware of responsibilities to prevent and detect fraud.

5. **Education:** Educate staff on how to prevent and detect fraud.

6. **Reporting:** Make it easy for employees to report suspected fraud.

7. **Confidentiality:** The confidentiality of employees who report fraud should be protected.

8. **Code of conduct:** Comply with the code of conduct for the Victorian Public Sector.

9. **Investigate:** Call in the experts to investigate fraud.

10. **Zero tolerance:** Let employees, suppliers, contractors and clients know that fraud will not be tolerated.

Areas of fraudulent activity might be:

- Misappropriation of cash
- Payroll fraud
- Misappropriation of stock/equipment
- Acceptance by staff of bribes
- Cheque fraud
- Unauthorised loans
- Unauthorised use of credit cards
- Unauthorised use of equipment
- Travel expense falsification
- Unauthorised use/misappropriation of funds
- False declarations to obtain property/credit
- False invoices/supplier overcharging

Support for suspected cases of fraud can be accessed through VMIA

**Contact**

Insurance Adviser, Healthcare & CSO
VMIA | Risk Management & Insurance
P 03 9270 6900   F 03 9270 6949
Level 10 South, 161 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000
PO Box 18409, Collins St East, Vic 8003
Website: www.**vmia**.vic.gov.au

# Employment

Employees in Victoria can be under awards, collective employment agreements or individual employment contracts.

Most co-ordinators in the neighbourhood house sector are employed under the Social and Community Services Award (SACS) 2000.

Education staff members, including tutors, are likely to be employed under the Professional Administrative Clerical Computing and Technical (PACCT) Staff Award 1999.

Child care staff members are usually covered under the Children Services (Victoria) Award 1998. Many Neighbourhood Houses have opted in to the Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres Collective agreement, which was designed to preserve these award conditions.

**Contact and Resources**

Through its subscription to *Jobs Australia* the Network provides regular updates on changes to these awards including pay rates. Details regarding changes to pay rates and awards are sent out to coordinators as they are received. Jobs Australia represents the interests of employers.

Neighbourhood Houses are encouraged to become members of Jobs Australia

Jobs Australia website: http://ja.com.au/

OR

Contact Jobs Australia via:

**By Post**
PO Box 299,
Carlton South
Victoria 3053

**By Phone**
03 9349 3699
1800 331 915 Jobs Australia members

**By Fax**
03 9349 3655

**By Email**
ja@ja.com.au

- Wageline has details of wages and employment conditions

  ph 1300 363 264 or go to their website www.wagenet.gov.au

- The Australian Services Union. Membership of the union gives staff access to professional service, advice and representation on all industrial and employment issues.   Ph: 1800 133 096   Website: www.asuvic.asn.au

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

An essential resource for all involved in the Neighbourhood House sector is the Neighbourhood House Good Practice Guide and Web Library and can be accessed by Committee members, volunteers and staff via:

www.nhweblibrary.org.au

The following is a list of recommended policies and procedures for Neighbourhood Houses. Sample copies are available from the Barwon Networker and the Neighbourhood House web library.

Your Neighbourhood House may also have policies and procedures specific to the needs of its community.

*(Include a copy of each of your organisation's policies.)*

Code of Ethics

Access and Equity

Freedom from Harassment & Discrimination

Complaints and Grievances

Privacy

Risk Management and Strategic Planning

Emergency Management

Auspice arrangements

Finances

- Management & Accountability

- Fundraising

- Assets

- Insurance

- Expenditures

- Fraud Prevention

Facility

- Room Hire
- Office Operation & Services
- Computer & Internet Use
- Emergency Procedures
- 

Programs & Services

- Planning & Evaluation
- Enrolments
- Fees, Concessions & Refunds

Employment

- Equal Opportunity
- Staff Recruitment, Selection & Management
- Performance Appraisal
- Occupational Health & Safety
- Tutors and Contractors
- Disciplinary Action

Volunteers

Police Checks and Working with Children Checks

Policy Development

Playgroup

# <u>DOCUMENTS</u>

Your House can include a copy of the following documents with this orientation manual:

- Constitution
- Mission Statement
- Strategic Plan
- Annual Plan
- Annual Budget
- Previous Annual report
- Previous minutes and financial reports
- Sample of recent newsletters and activity programs
- Sector Framework Document
- DHS Funding Guidelines.

All Committee members can have access to the documents listed. They are vital to assist with informed decision making.

# ORIENTATION CHECK LIST

# BARWON NETWORK OF NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES

# COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Every new Committee of Management member can complete the Orientation Checklist with a copy kept on their file.

**NAME:** ...........................................

**ROLE ON COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT:** ...........................................

**DATE:** ...........................................

**Date each item when you have read it or understand its relevance.**

| ITEM | LOCATION | DATE COMPLETED |
|---|---|---|
| **ORGANISATION OVERVIEW** | | |
| Mission, vision and values | | |
| Philosophical basis of your organisation | | |
| Information about incorporation, compliance and legal responsibilities | | |
| Business Plan and Strategic Plan | | |
| Government policies and documents | | |
| Financial position, including sources of funds and liabilities | | |
| Committee Members' roles and responsibilities | | |
| Policies that relate to governance role | | |
| Decision making processes | | |
| Meeting arrangement and processes | | |
| Sector framework documents | | |
| Current activities and groups | | |
| Your NH policies and procedures | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Organisation structure | | |
| Evacuation plan | | 40 |
| Tour of the House/Centre | | |
| Met with all CoM members and NH staff | | |
| List of all CoM members | | |
| Calendar of events | | |
| Handover of previous CoM members files | | |
| Key information | | |
| Emergency procedures and assistance | | |
| Internal meetings | | |
| Risk register | | |
| First aid kit | | |
| Fire safety procedures | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| **DIRECT WORK WITH TARGET GROUPS** | | |
| Priority target groups | | |
| Positive discrimination policies for disadvantaged groups | | |
| Major referral organisations | | |
| Consumer policies eg. Confidentiality, conflict resolution | | |
| | | |
| **HR – paid and unpaid employees** | | |
| Employee expectations eg. Dress requirements, home contacts etc | | |
| Conflict resolution policy & procedure | | |
| Team work | | |
| Lines of accountability | | |
| Lines of communication | | |
| Supervision processes | | |
| Staff support processes | | |
| Staff room and facilities | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Training opportunities and policies | | |
| Performance appraisal procedures | | 41 |
| Staff meetings eg. Time, responsibilities, decision making, authority | | |
| Planning and evaluation procedures | | |
| | | |
| **INDUSTRIAL ISSUES** | | |
| Employment contracts | | |
| Information about levels of pay, pay day method of payment | | |
| Union memberships | | |
| Compulsory superannuation information | | |
| Time sheets/attendance records | | |
| Sick leave procedures | | |
| Time accrued and overtime procedures | | |
| Award coverage and the location of the Award plus workplace agreements | | |
| Occupational Health and Safety information | | |
| Accident register | | |
| Risk register | | |
| Grievance and disciplinary procedures | | |
| Employee records | | |
| Personnel files | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| **ADMINISTRATION SYSTEMS** | | |
| Office security | | |
| Using and booking equipment eg. Data projector, camera. Computers | | |
| Client records | | |
| Statistics | | |
| Log books | | |
| Filing cabinets | | |
| Ordering and using stationery | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Postage and mailing | | |
| Incoming mail | | 42 |
| Computer access | | |
| Using the phone and phone messages | | |
| Reception procedures | | |
| Appointments | | |
| Room bookings | | |
| Relevant admin policies | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| **FINANCIAL SYSTEMS** | | |
| Cheques and signatories | | |
| Petty cash | | |
| Private vehicle travel claims | | |
| Budget information | | |
| Authority for financial decisions | | |
| Budgets | | |
| Funding submissions | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| **MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES AND PERSONNEL** | | |
| Committee/board structure | | |
| Subcommittees | | |
| Office bearers | | |
| Role of the management group | | |
| Role of the senior staff | | |
| Role of other staff | | |
| Resourcing committees | | |
| Staff representation on Committees | | |
| Delegation of decision making | | |
| | | |
| | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS** | | |
| Relationships with clients and self help groups | | 43 |
| Relationships with funding bodies | | |
| Relationships with govt departments and policy makers | | |
| Relationships with other service providers and community organisations | | |
| Relationships with co-ordinating and peak bodies | | |
| Representation on external bodies | | |
| Useful networks and forums | | |
| Procedures for media announcements | | |
| Current issues facing the organisation eg policy or funding changes | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| **INSURANCES** | | |
| Public liability insurance policy | | |
| Building /Content insurance policy | | |
| Workcover provider information | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| **FOLLOW UP** | | |
| Next orientation session | | |
| Performance review | | |
| Next meeting | | |
| Contact for further information | | |
| Ongoing support person | | |
| Social events | | |
| Issues which need clarification | | |
| | | |