

# **VBCC Policies (2017)**

## **Chapter 1. Governance policies**

<b>1. The rules</b>
<b>2. Summary of the rules</b>
<b>3. Roles and responsibilities of committee members</b>
<b>4. Conflict of interest</b>
<b>5. Delegations to the manager</b>
<b>6. Finance and budget</b>
<b>7. Strategic plan 2017-19</b>
<b>8. Acronyms used in this chapter</b>

### **Acronyms used in this chapter**

<b>VBCC</b>	Venus Bay Community Centre
<b>CAV</b>	Consumer Affairs Victoria
<b>SGSC</b>	South Gippsland Shire Council
<b>LGA</b>	Local Government Area e.g. SGSC is an LGA
<b>AGM</b>	Annual General Meeting
<b>NHCP</b>	Neighbourhood House Coordination Program
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
<b>NHVic</b>	Neighbourhood Houses Victoria
<b>TL, VB</b>	Tarwin Lower, Venus Bay
<b>CoG</b>	Committee of governance

## 1. The rules

<b>Importance</b>	<p>Our rules are the legal ground we stand on.</p> <p>They give us the power to control our own destiny inside set boundaries.</p> <p>They are our 'Bible'.</p>
<b>History</b>	<p>Prior to 2007 we were a 'Section 86 committee' of the South Gippsland Shire Council. Section 86 refers to the legislation that empowers local government agencies (LGA's for short). As a Section 86 committee the Shire appointed our committee members, monitored minutes of meetings, controlled our finances, applied for funds on our behalf, and employed any paid staff.</p> <p>In November 2007 a public meeting was held to consider replacing the Section 86 committee with an incorporated agency. Twelve people attended. There were 5 apologies. The meeting voted unanimously to incorporate and manage VBCC's affairs independently.</p> <p>A constitution was submitted to Consumer Affairs Victoria and approved by the government.</p> <p>The constitution was changed in 2009 to align with changes in the Associations Incorporation Act.</p> <p>The Associations Incorporation Act was changed again in 2013 and we adopted the model rules provided by the government – with a couple of small changes.</p>
<b>Language and detail</b>	<p>The rules are easy enough to understand but they run to more than 20 pages and are carefully worded in 'lawyer language.' They are not gripping reading.</p>
<b>The summary</b>	<p>Therefore, what follows is a summary of the full version of the rules. It's not a substitute for the rules but it does give quick access to the main rules we use on a regular basis - to run our meetings and do our business.</p>

## 2. Summary of the Rules

This summary is not a substitute for the full rules.

<b>Purposes of VBCC</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build a stronger community in the district of Venus Bay, Tarwin Lower and Walkerville</li> <li>2. Publish reliable and useful information for the community</li> <li>3. Generate and support programs and activities for all age groups that connect people and expand their knowledge, imagination, curiosity, skills and experience</li> <li>4. Offer services that meet expressed community needs</li> <li>5. Strive towards a sustainable community through energy saving, recycling and local food production</li> <li>6. Arrange, promote and engage in community discussions about matters that affect the future well-being of the district.</li> <li>7. Maintain and improve the building and grounds leased from South Gippsland Shire Council as safe places for the community</li> <li>8. Partner with other organisations and agencies on initiatives designed to strengthen the community</li> </ol>
<b>Financial year</b>	Each period of 12 months ending on 30 June
<b>Members</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There must be a minimum of 5 members.</li> <li>2. There is no fee although an AGM can introduce one.</li> <li>3. Any person over 15 who supports the purposes of VBCC is eligible for membership.</li> <li>4. Under 15s can be associate members without voting powers at general meetings</li> <li>5. Applicants for membership sign a simple form agreeing to VBCC's purposes and rules</li> <li>6. This application has to be approved by the committee.</li> <li>7. Members can attend, speak at, put items on the agenda of, and vote at all general meetings. They can inspect the register of members.</li> <li>8. Membership is on-going until resignation or death or failure to reconfirm membership after a written request from the secretary.</li> </ol>
<b>Disciplinary action</b>	This can be taken if a member 'engages in conduct prejudicial to the association'. The committee will form a subcommittee and will follow a fair process set out in detail in the rules. There is provision for an appeal.
<b>Grievance procedure</b>	This covers disputes that might arise between: members; a member and the committee; a member and VBCC as a whole. A mediator will be appointed. The process is set out in detail in the rule. If the mediation process does not resolve the dispute, the parties can take legal action.

<b>Annual and other general meetings</b>	<p>AGMs must be held within 5 months after the end of each financial year. The committee or a group of members can call a special general meeting. A member can appoint a proxy in writing for general meetings. If it's possible, members can be present via technology. The quorum for a general meeting is 10% of members - physically, by proxy or via technology. The chairperson has a second, or casting, vote if a vote is tied. Minutes must be kept, including names of all proxies</p>
<b>The committee</b>	<p>The committee can delegate any of its powers and functions in writing, excepting its power to delegate.</p> <p>Committee members must be VBCC members and aged over 18. They can nominate themselves or be nominated.</p> <p>All positions are declared vacant at the AGM and an election will be held if more than one person nominates for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer. The Committee consists of—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) a President; and</li> <li>(b) a Vice-President; and</li> <li>(c) a Secretary; and</li> <li>(d) a Treasurer; and</li> <li>(e) no more than 8 ordinary members elected under rule 53.</li> </ul> <p>See later for separate job descriptions for the role of the officers and ordinary members.</p> <p>If more than eight nominate as ordinary members an election is held.</p> <p>Resignations must be in writing to the committee. The committee can invite any member of their choosing to fill vacancies.</p> <p>The Committee must meet at least 8 times in each year. The quorum is one third of elected members.</p> <p>If a vote is taken the chairperson of the meeting has a second, or casting vote in the event of a tie.</p> <p>The Committee may grant a committee member leave of absence from committee meetings for a period not exceeding 3 months.</p>
<b>Conflict of interest</b>	<p>A committee member who has a material personal interest in a matter being considered at a committee meeting must disclose the nature and extent of that interest to the Committee.</p>

	<p>The member must not be present while the matter is being considered at the meeting and must not vote on the matter.</p>
<b>Financial matters</b>	<p>Funds can be derived from any sources approved by the Committee.</p> <p>Subject to any restrictions imposed by a general meeting, the Committee can approve expenditure on behalf of the Association.</p> <p>All cheques, drafts, bills of exchange, promissory notes and other negotiable instruments must be signed by one committee member and one staff member.</p> <p>All funds must be deposited into the financial account of the Association no later than 10 working days after receipt.</p> <p>VBCC must keep financial records that correctly record and explain its transactions, financial position and performance; and enable financial statements to be prepared as required by the Act.</p> <p>VBCC must retain the financial records for 7 years after the transactions covered by the records are completed.</p>
<b>General matters</b>	<p>VBCC can have a common seal. The postal address is determined by the committee</p> <p>Members may on request inspect free of charge—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the register of members;</li> <li>(b) the minutes of general meetings;</li> <li>(c) the financial records, books, securities and any other relevant document of the Association, including minutes of Committee meetings.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee must on request make copies of the full rules available to members and applicants for membership free of charge.</p> <p>VBCC may be wound up voluntarily by special resolution and surplus assets of the Association must not be distributed to any members or former members of the Association.</p> <p>These Rules may only be altered by special resolution of a general meeting. An alteration of these Rules has to be approved by the government's Registrar.</p>

### 3. Roles and responsibilities of Committee of Governance

#### Duties of all CoG members

<p><b>The rules say that a committee member must:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Know the rules and the incorporation legislation they come from</li> <li>2. Make sure the committee complies with the rules</li> <li>3. Act at all times with reasonable care and diligence</li> <li>4. Act at all times in good faith, in the best interests of VBCC, and for a proper purpose.</li> <li>5. Not make improper use of their position.</li> <li>6. Not use information they get from their committee work for personal gain, or to advantage any other person unfairly.</li> <li>7. Carry out tasks imposed on the committee by general meetings of members</li> </ol>
<p><b>VBCC- specific duties of committee members:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As a democratically elected representative of the community, take the interests of the community into account in all decisions</li> <li>2. Document all delegated authority to act on behalf of the committee between meetings</li> <li>3. Create and maintain a comprehensive set of policies</li> <li>4. Create and maintain a strategic plan</li> <li>5. Identify and guard VBCC's values and ethics</li> <li>6. Employ and care for skilled paid staff and volunteers</li> <li>7. Plan for succession</li> <li>8. Comply with all relevant legislation</li> <li>9. Demand high standards of book keeping and financial reporting</li> <li>10. Continually evaluate all aspects of the committee's work</li> <li>11. When paper are provided to the committee before a meeting – read them.</li> </ol>

## Duties of the President

(and Vice president in the absence of the President)

<b>The rules say that the President :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will chair any general meetings of VBCC members, and any committee meetings.</li> <li>2. If the President and the Vice-President are unable to chair a general meeting or a committee meeting, the chair must be elected by the other members present.</li> </ol>
<b>VBCC-specific duties. The President will:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have a strong understanding of our work</li> <li>2. Ensure meetings are well run, hardworking, and enjoyable</li> <li>3. Prepare agendas in consultation with the manager</li> <li>4. Represent us and speak on our behalf at a range of public meetings</li> <li>5. Write and sign correspondence as requested by the committee</li> <li>6. Chair the selection committee for the position of manager</li> <li>7. Act as a sounding board for the manager between meetings</li> <li>8. Carry out an annual performance review with the manager</li> </ol>
<b>As the chair of meetings the president will:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome and introduce members, observers, and guests</li> <li>2. Check that the agenda is agreed</li> <li>3. Make sure that the meeting is going to plan - that the agenda is being followed</li> <li>4. Guide the meeting so that it finishes in time</li> <li>5. Check that everyone who wants to has a chance to speak</li> <li>6. Call for discussion of items on the agenda</li> <li>7. Ask for a mover and seconder of motions</li> <li>8. Aim for consensus and call for a vote if consensus cannot be reached</li> <li>9. Be familiar with meeting procedure, particularly for more formal matters</li> <li>10. Check that proper notice has been given of meetings</li> <li>11. Make sure only matters appropriate to the meeting are discussed</li> <li>12. Initiate evaluations of meetings/processes from time to time</li> <li>13. Sign the minutes when they have been accepted</li> </ol>

## Duties of the Secretary

<p><b>The rules say that:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Secretary must perform any duty or function that the legislation requires.</li> <li>2. For example, under the Act, the secretary of an incorporated association is responsible for lodging information from the AGM with the Registrar at Consumer Affairs Victoria – e.g. date of AGM, number of members, total income, total expenditure, full value of assets.</li> <li>3. The Secretary must: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. maintain the register of members in accordance with rule 18;</li> <li>b. keep custody of the common seal (if any) of the Association and, except for the financial records referred to in rule 70(3), all books, documents and securities of the Association in accordance with rules 72 and 75; and</li> <li>c. subject to the Act and these Rules, provide members with access to the register of members, the minutes of general meetings and other books and documents; and</li> <li>d. perform any other duty or function imposed on the Secretary by these Rules.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. The Secretary must give to the Registrar notice of his or her appointment within 14 days after the appointment.</li> </ol>
<p><b>VBCC-specific duties of the secretary</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. make sure management committee members are sent a copy of the minutes of each meeting (delegated to the Manager)</li> <li>2. check that people at the meeting have the papers they need (delegated to the Manager)</li> <li>3. keep accurate minutes of what has been discussed and agreed, including the agreed words of each resolution, the name of the mover and seconder, and the date and time of the next meeting (delegated as appropriate)</li> <li>4. confirm the accuracy of the minutes with manager and president</li> <li>5. make sure copies of minutes, and other documents presented at meetings are pasted into the minute book (delegated to the Manager)</li> <li>6. Sign documents on behalf of the committee when required</li> </ol>



## Duties of the Treasurer

<p><b>As set out in the rules the treasurer will:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. receive all moneys paid to or received by THE CENTRE, VENUS BAY and issue receipts for those moneys in the name of THE CENTRE, VENUS BAY;</li> <li>2. ensure that all moneys received are paid into the accounts of THE CENTRE, VENUS BAY within 5 working days after receipt; an</li> <li>3. make any payments authorised by the Committee or by a general meeting of THE CENTRE, VENUS BAY from THE CENTRE, VENUS BAY's funds</li> <li>4. ensure cheques are signed by at least 2 committee members.</li> <li>5. ensure that financial records are kept in accordance with the Act</li> <li>6. coordinate the preparation of financial statements and their certification by the Committee prior to their submission to the annual general meeting .</li> <li>7. ensure that at least one other committee member has access to the accounts and financial records of the Association.</li> </ol> <p><b>VBCC delegates all seven duties set out above to the Manager</b></p>
<p><b>VBCC specific duties of the treasurer</b></p>	<p>Liaise with the manager and the committee to ensure that financial viability is protected through the annual budget planning processes.</p> <p>The treasurer can take on the job of writing letters on our behalf or signing letters which we have agreed to write.</p> <p>The treasurer can sign documents such as funding agreements or tenders if required.</p>

## Conflict of Interest

<b>What is a conflict of interest?</b>	<p>A conflict of interest happens when a CoG member's duty to VBCC clashes with their duties, obligations or interests elsewhere. These interests will usually be in one or other of these categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. The interests of another community organisation they belong to</li> <li>4. Their business or workplace interests</li> <li>5. The business interests of their family or friends.</li> </ol>
<b>Examples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A committee member argues for a community organisation of which they are a member, at the expense of VBCC</li> <li>• A staff member's family business is given a contract to do work without any other quotes being asked for</li> <li>• A committee member's sister bids for a VBCC contract and is successful, even though it's not the most competitive bid.</li> <li>• A member's son or daughter is given a paid job with VBCC, despite the position not being advertised.</li> <li>• A staff member's relative is employed to run an activity at the centre when someone more highly qualified is denied the opportunity to compete for the opportunity.</li> </ul>
<b>Consequences of failure to declare a conflict of interest:</b>	<p>Conflicts of interest aren't a bad thing per se – nearly every committee and staff member will have one at some point. The danger comes if people don't declare a conflict of interest and then take part in a decision that benefits their interests outside VBCC.</p> <p>Such situations will damage confidence in VBCC and the reputations of committee members – even of those committee members not directly involved in the conflict of interest.</p> <p>Failure to deal with a conflict of interest may not always be illegal, but it will almost always be unethical.</p>
<b>Declaration of a conflict of interest</b>	<p>Our committee and staff must avoid even the perception of a potential conflict of interest.</p> <p>A declaration of a potential conflict of interest is mandatory.</p>

<b>Declarations by committee members</b>	<p>Each committee member must declare any conflict of interest and the committee will decide whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the conflict warrants that person not participating in the decision</li> <li>• the person will be asked to be absent while that item is being discussed and decided on; or</li> <li>• some other course of action is necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>Declarations by staff members</b>	<p>In the case of staff members, if conflict of interest arises in the course of their work, the conflict will be referred to the President for a ruling, a file note will be written by the President to explain the course of action taken, and the decision will be reported to the next committee meeting. If the President is uncertain about the right course of action the matter will be referred to the whole committee.</p>
<b>Paid work opportunities</b>	<p>In the case of long term paid employment opportunities VBCC will normally use <i>Matter of Fact</i> and other publications to advertise employment opportunities in advance - to give all those with qualifications an opportunity to express interest.</p> <p>Short term and project work opportunities will be decided on by the committee on a case by case basis. For example, where funding is obtained to extend a project; and where funding is donated with specified limitations on how it can be spent.</p>

## 5. Delegations to the Manager

<p><b>The great divide between policy decisions and operations</b></p>	<p><b>Individual committee members can't make decisions about programs, policy, or expenditure. They can only make such decisions when they are together 'in session.'</b></p> <p>The role of the committee is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop policy</li> <li>• develop a strategic plan</li> <li>• attach a budget to the strategic plan</li> </ul> <p>Implementing policies, plans and budgets is the job of the manager. It's crucial that one person manages – i.e. knows about and approves - all decisions and activities between meetings. That person is the manager.</p> <p>Therefore the committee explicitly delegates a range of implementation tasks to the manager.</p>
<p><b>In relation to members of VBCC the manager is delegated to:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain the register of members in accordance with rule 18;</li> <li>2. Subject to the Act and these Rules, provide members with access to the register of members, the minutes of general meetings and other books and documents.</li> </ol>
<p><b>In relation to meetings the manager is delegated to:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain the written records of the business meetings of VBCC.</li> <li>2. make sure management committee members are sent a copy of the minutes of each meeting</li> <li>3. check that people at the meeting have the papers they need</li> <li>4. keep accurate minutes of what has been discussed and agreed, including the agreed words of each resolution, the name of the mover and seconder, and the date and time of the next meeting</li> <li>5. confirm the accuracy of the minutes with key stakeholders</li> <li>6. make sure copies of minutes, and other documents presented at meetings are pasted into the minute book</li> </ol>
<p><b>In relation to financial processes the manager is delegated to:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keep custody of the common seal</li> <li>2. Except for the financial records referred to in rule 70(3), keep custody of all books, documents and securities of the Association in accordance with rules 72 and 75</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Receive all moneys paid to or received by VBCC and issue receipts for those moneys in the name of VBCC; and</li> <li>4. ensure that all moneys received are paid into the accounts of VBCC within 10 working days after receipt</li> <li>5. Make any payments authorised by the Committee or by a general meeting of VBCC from VBCC's fund</li> <li>6. Ensure cheques are signed by one committee member and one member of staff.</li> <li>7. Ensure that financial records are kept in accordance with the Act</li> <li>8. Coordinate the preparation of financial statements and their certification by the Committee prior to their submission to the annual general meeting.</li> </ol>
<b>The manager is also delegated to:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manage the work of paid staff and volunteers between CoG meetings, including the work of committee members who are paid staff and/or volunteers;</li> <li>2. Make day to day decisions about the management of centre business, to ensure that the program and services are delivered, and the building and grounds are maintained in good order;</li> <li>3. Expend uncommitted VBCC funds on items up to \$800 provided that they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• within the written budget plan and/or conform to other policy guidelines,; and</li> <li>• are reported to the committee at the next meeting via financial reports.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Expend grant monies in accordance with the terms of the grant</li> </ol>

## Finance and Budget

<b>Duties of the committee</b>	<p>The committee of governance is accountable for all expenditure of funds. The committee must make sure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An annual budget is prepared</li> <li>• The books are audited prior to the AGM and the audited report is tabled at the AGM</li> <li>• financial systems are effective</li> <li>• bookkeeping is accurate and up to date</li> <li>• handling of money is honest and accountable</li> <li>• financial viability is maintained</li> <li>• the expenditure of funds is closely monitored</li> <li>• any committee member who may benefit financially from a decision stands aside from that decision.</li> </ul>
<b>Fraud</b>	<p>The VBCC committee is responsible for prevention and detection of fraud and must have processes in place to ensure effective internal controls. An example of an internal control is our policy that each financial transaction must have an invoice or receipt to go with it – a ‘paper trail’. All staff – paid and voluntary – are responsible to report any suspicion of fraudulent activity, either to the manager or president.</p>
<b>Process to follow if a complaint is made regarding possible fraud</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All complaints of possible fraudulent behaviour must be investigated whilst providing for the protection of individuals who make a complaint, and natural justice for those against whom a complaint is made.</li> <li>2. Where a prima facie case of fraud is established the matter will be referred to the police. Any action taken by police will be independent of any other processes instituted by VBCC.</li> <li>3. Recruitment strategies will incorporate fraud prevention including police checks where necessary, contacting of referees, validation of qualifications and other documents where necessary.</li> <li>4. Fraud prevention will be covered in orientation processes.</li> </ol>
<b>Financial duties of the manager</b>	<p>The Manager must—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• receive all moneys paid to or received by VBCC and issue receipts for those moneys in the name of VBCC;</li> <li>• ensure that all moneys received are paid into the accounts of VBCC within 10 working days after receipt;</li> <li>• make any payments authorised by the committee or by a general meeting of VBCC from VBCC's funds;</li> <li>• ensure cheques are signed by at least one committee member and one member of staff</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that financial records are kept in accordance with the Act</li> <li>• coordinate the preparation of financial statements and their certification by an auditor prior to their submission to the annual general meeting</li> </ul>
<b>Duties of the Treasurer</b>	<p>The Treasurer must ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance reports are presented to the Management Committee, normally at each meeting, by the staff responsible.</li> <li>• At least one other committee member as well as the Treasurer has access to the accounts and financial records if and when required.</li> <li>• He/she pays close attention to the detail of financial reports that come before the committee.</li> </ul>
<b>The Accounts</b>	<p>VBCC has three main accounts with the Bendigo Bank. They are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Trading</li> <li>b. Grants</li> <li>c. Term Deposit</li> </ol> <p>A daily limit of \$5000 applies to withdrawals.</p> <p>The committee has given the manager authority to operate a credit card attached to an account which can never hold more than \$500.</p> <p>Wherever possible the manager will establish accounts with local traders used frequently by VBCC using a pay monthly by invoice arrangement.</p>

## 7. The strategic plan

<b>A rolling three year strategic plan</b>	<p>We are required to have a strategic plan by the terms of our grant from the Department of Health and Human Services.</p> <p>We are also required to ‘consult with the community’ in the development of the plan.</p> <p>All actions listed in the plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Count towards our community development activities as required by the NHCP grant.</li> <li>2. Are consistent with, and governed by, all of our policies including the rules.</li> <li>3. Are our ‘to do’ list – the plan tries to capture everything we do.</li> </ol> <p>We use the three year plan as an annual plan.</p> <p>We review the plan at the end of each year to update the scope/content of what we plan to do, whilst retaining the basic framework.</p>
<b>Swot analysis</b>	<p>Generally speaking VBCC will take account of strengths; weaknesses; opportunities; and threats (SWOT analysis) in preparation of strategic plans. After the analysis we will discard the threats and weaknesses to focus on strengths and opportunities</p>
<b>Structure</b>	<p>Our plan will identify 4-6 main strategies and explain what they are. It will list all activities under one or more of these strategic approaches. These will be the few things we must do to be successful. For example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To connect with our local community and key agencies through consultation, partnerships, joint projects, alliances and links</li> <li>2. To generate a community strengthening program that helps individuals and groups</li> <li>3. To build our organisational strength and capacity</li> </ol> <p>Our plan will be simple, clear, measurable and realistic. At the end of each year it will be possible for the committee to quickly tick off what’s been done.</p>
<b>Implementation</b>	<p>The manager will develop operational plans to implement the strategic plan</p>



# Venus Bay Community Centre's Strategic Plan 2017-19

**Endorsed 3 December 2016**

<b>Vision</b> Our goal	<p><b>Venus Bay and district - a strong, healthy and connected community.</b></p> <p>This is the dynamic reason for our existence. This is the 'why' that drives our work.</p>
<b>Mission</b> How we'll reach the goal	<p>In our rules we have committed to 9 purposes or goals. We believe they will help our community to be stronger, healthier and more connected.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publish reliable and useful information for the community</li> <li>2. Generate and support programs and activities for all age groups that connect people and expand their knowledge, imagination, curiosity, skills and experience.</li> <li>3. Offer services that meet expressed community needs.</li> <li>4. Strive towards a sustainable community through energy saving, recycling and local food production.</li> <li>5. Arrange, promote and engage in community discussions about matters that affect the future well-being of the district.</li> <li>6. Maintain and improve the building and grounds as a safe place for the community.</li> <li>7. Partner with other organisations and agencies on initiatives designed to strengthen the community.</li> <li>8. Review and refine our internal processes and policies.</li> <li>9. Support and value our volunteers and staff.</li> </ol>
<b>VBCC's identity</b>	<p>We are the only generalist organisation in the district. Other organisations have a specialist focus: sport, community safety, religion, health and so forth. Our role is to promote and generate community development.</p>
<b>Consultation</b>	<p>Each year we receive funds for community development from the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program (NHCP). Every three years we are required by our NHCP funding agreement to consult with our community and prepare a new plan. To prepare the 2017-9 plan we:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Documented interviews with people in the shopping centre over Easter 2016;</li> <li>2. Conducted a monkey survey advertised to some hundreds of people on the Matter of Fact email list;</li> <li>3. Participated in a round table with other community organisations;</li> <li>4. Liaised with South Gippsland Shire Council.</li> </ol>

<b>Needs identified in consultation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• programs for the elderly</li> <li>• more music</li> <li>• best use of the old IGA</li> <li>• theatre for young people</li> <li>• transport options</li> <li>• job creation through entrepreneurship and social enterprises</li> <li>• more volunteers</li> <li>• more co-operation between organisations</li> <li>• more effective communication between and from organisations</li> <li>• greater community harmony</li> <li>• community creativity project/s</li> <li>• stronger community identity</li> <li>• stronger awareness of local history</li> <li>• need to address historical divisions between Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay</li> <li>• more celebration of the district's creative talents; and</li> <li>• greater tourist promotion of the district to generate a stronger economy.</li> </ul> <p>We can't tackle all of these needs immediately but all are 'on the table'.</p>
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## Strategy 1. We will advocate for our community

### Goals

### Activities

<b>1. Information</b> Reliable and useful information is a foundation stone of strong communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish Matter of Fact monthly</li> <li>• Maintain website</li> <li>• Facebook &amp; social media</li> <li>• Welcome to district brochures and fact sheets</li> <li>• Displays e.g. SGSC uses VBCC as a place to display planning information</li> </ul>
<b>2. Community discussions/forums</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As required about any issues that affect the well-being of the community</li> <li>• Annual round table with leaders of community organisations – under consideration</li> </ul>
<b>3. Community Campaigns</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going leadership re land sales</li> <li>• Koala campaign</li> </ul>
<b>4. Community-wide funding applications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Such as 'Common Ground'</li> </ul>

## Strategy 2. We will create programs and services to meet community needs

We can't predict all the programs that will emerge in this three year planning period. The programs listed here are on-going or under consideration.

Categories	Activities
<b>1. Sustainability programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recycling shop</li> <li>• Indigenous plant knowledge, propagation and sales via the Community Garden Group using a hot house which is yet to be installed</li> </ul>
<b>2. Healthy living programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food culture group/orchard</li> <li>• Bike repair and bike hire</li> <li>• Exercise classes of some kind</li> <li>• Cook 'n Book play group</li> </ul>
<b>3. Creativity programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art</li> <li>• Craft group</li> <li>• Films</li> <li>• Book discussion group</li> </ul>
<b>4. Programs for young people</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School holiday programs</li> <li>• Drama</li> </ul>
<b>5. Community interaction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christmas Party</li> <li>• Live music</li> <li>• Auspice of Tour de Tarwin Organising Committee</li> </ul>
<b>6. Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer classes</li> </ul>
<b>7. Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student placements</li> <li>• Community orders</li> <li>• Photocopying access</li> <li>• Centrelink referrals</li> <li>• Internet access</li> </ul>

## Strategy 3. We will partner with government and local agencies

Funds, grants, our lease, conversations, exchange of ideas, planning, liaison, partnerships, being at meetings, representing the district on committees, are all part of our work in the complex web of relationships at local, regional and state-wide levels.

Categories	Activities
<b>1. Government agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Human Services Neighbourhood House Coordination Program</li> </ul>
<b>2. Neighbourhood house agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood Houses Victoria (NHVic) membership</li> <li>• Implementation of Collective Agreement</li> <li>• NHVic State Conference</li> <li>• Gippsland Regional Neighbourhood House Group</li> <li>• South Gippsland Neighbourhood House Cluster</li> </ul>
<b>3 Local agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men's Shed</li> <li>• Community Emergency Response Team</li> <li>• Tour de Tarwin</li> <li>• VB and TL Traders Association</li> <li>• TLVB Primary School</li> <li>• Friends of VB Peninsula</li> <li>• Venus Bay Surf Lifesaving Club</li> <li>• Venus Bay Angling Club</li> <li>• Uniting, Catholic, Anglican Churches</li> <li>• South Coast Health Services – TL Community Health Centre</li> </ul>

## Strategy 4. We will partner with South Gippsland Shire Council

Categories	Activities
<b>Maintain the building and grounds as safe and beautiful spaces for the community to use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiate a new lease during the period of this plan</li> </ul>
<b>Contribute to SGSC planning for local community and economic development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in all relevant SGSC policy and planning consultations with the community</li> <li>• Take up other opportunities to comment on and influence SGSC planning</li> </ul>
<b>Contribute to SGSC's community development projects for our district</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply for all available and relevant SGSC funds</li> </ul>
<b>Provide advice and information to SGSC about the work of neighbourhood houses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in regular meetings between SGSC and our cluster of four agencies that receive NHCP funding</li> </ul>
<b>Contribute to evaluation of council services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in SGSC initiated evaluations</li> <li>• Offer occasional comment on the impact of SGSC on our well-being</li> </ul>

## Strategy 5. We will strive for high standards of governance

### Categories

### Activities

<b>The work of the committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the 'great divide' – the manager does all the operational work, we do the policy, planning and budget</li> <li>• Continuous revision, updating and implementation of VBCC policy register, especially in the light of <i>Child Safe Standards</i></li> <li>• Annual planning</li> <li>• Minimum of 8 committee meetings</li> <li>• Annual General Meeting</li> <li>• Careful financial management</li> <li>• Up to date membership register</li> <li>• Consistent record keeping and data collection</li> <li>• Professional development for committee</li> </ul>
<b>The work of paid and voluntary staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job descriptions for all</li> <li>• Professional development for all</li> <li>• Performance advice/evaluation for all</li> </ul>
<b>Care for our building and grounds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interior building maintenance</li> <li>• Exterior building maintenance</li> <li>• Grounds – garden and lawn maintenance</li> </ul>

## Chapter 2

<b>1. Code of Conduct</b>
<b>2. Guidelines on physical contact</b>
<b>3. Child protection</b>
<b>4. Childsafe Policy</b>
<b>5. Childsafe code of conduct</b>
<b>6. Critical incidents</b>
<b>7. Occupational Health and Safety</b>

# 1. Code of Conduct

All VBCC committee members, and paid and unpaid staff, are required to sign this code of conduct. In doing so they undertake to:

<b>1. Respect for others</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Treat all people fairly, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, religion, marital status, age, political conviction or other attributes as protected by law</li> <li>2. Act in ways that support the reputation of paid and voluntary staff, participants in programs, and members of the community</li> <li>3. Protect the privacy of others and maintain appropriate confidentiality regarding personal and commercial matters; and</li> <li>4. Avoid behaviour which may constitute harassment, discrimination, bullying or intimidation.</li> </ol>
<b>2. Conscientious and ethical behaviour</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Uphold VBCC's determination to be accessible and friendly towards all participants, community members and partner organisations.</li> <li>2. Ensure any public comments made in the name of VBCC (including on Social Media) are authorised</li> <li>3. Responsibly control the use of substances that could adversely affect behaviour or performance</li> <li>4. Report fraud or corrupt conduct to the President and/or committee of governance</li> <li>5. Maintain a professional standard of personal presentation</li> <li>6. Behave at all times in a manner that is supportive of the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of the Venus Bay and district community</li> <li>7. Uphold the reputation of VBCC, support its goals and act in its best interests</li> <li>8. Safeguard, properly use, protect and care for, VBCC resources at all times</li> <li>9. Safeguard and protect the health and safety of all who make use of VBCC buildings, grounds and programs.</li> <li>10. Comply with VBCC's <u>Guidelines on Physical Contact</u></li> <li>11. Be courteous, honest and fair when dealing with others and when making decisions that impact others.</li> </ol>



<b>3. Avoidance of conflict of interest</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Disclose actual or potential conflict of interest and withdraw immediately from the situation giving rise to the conflict</li> <li>2. Never use the influence of a position to pursue personal, sexual or financial relationships with other staff, students or members of the community</li> <li>3. Declare private paid outside work, including directorships and board memberships.</li> </ol>
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<b>Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

<b>Name of manager</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

<b>Name of witness</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

## Guidelines on Physical Contact

<b>Needs and risks</b>	Children and adults need appropriate physical contact for their growth and well-being. But inappropriate physical contact can seriously harm their growth and well-being.
<b>Duty of care</b>	<p>Committee and staff of VBCC have a duty of care to minimise the risk of harm to another person involved in VBCC activities. This extends to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prompt and appropriate intervention that may involve physical contact when someone is at risk</li> <li>2. Reporting complaints by children or adults about inappropriate touching</li> <li>3. Never making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or adult, even in fun</li> <li>4. Never allowing children or adults to use inappropriate language unchallenged</li> <li>5. Administering first aid and comfort with others around</li> </ol>
<b>General principles that apply to all age groups</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be sensitive and sympathetic to the needs and wishes of the individual, and try to respond in a way which is neither patronising nor rejecting</li> <li>2. Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors</li> <li>3. Touch should be related to the child's or adult's needs, not the leader's or carer's</li> <li>4. Touch should be age appropriate</li> <li>5. Avoid all physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the child or the adult</li> <li>6. Children and adults have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances where they may need medical attention.</li> </ol>
<b>Reasonableness</b>	<p>Any physical intervention or contact must be reasonable considering the context of the situation - whether physical danger, a need for comfort, or welcome expressions of affection between equals is involved.</p> <p>Examples of reasonable behaviour include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holding back a child running towards a busy road</li> <li>• A hand-shake between friends</li> <li>• A hug between adult friends</li> <li>• Physical comfort for a child who has fallen and hurt them self</li> <li>• Restraining an angry child or adult about to hurt someone</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holding back two individuals engaged in a serious fight</li> </ul> <p>Only use physical restraint when it is necessary to prevent a child or adult from hurting themselves or others.</p> <p>Apply accountable and ethical decision making to the situation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Am I doing the right thing?</li> <li>2. How would others judge my actions?</li> <li>3. How could my actions impact on others? •</li> <li>4. Should I discuss this with someone else?</li> </ol>
<b>Appropriate physical contact between adults and children</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Always ensure there are other adults or responsible children around.</li> <li>2. Never show favour to individual children.</li> <li>3. Never touch a child in the area between the waist and mid-thigh or near the chest.</li> <li>4. Never touch a child in a way that could be mis-interpreted as being anything other than friendly appropriate adult-child support.</li> <li>5. Where a child tries to get closer than appropriate, the message should always be along the lines of, "I like you and I enjoy being with you, but I would rather you held my arm/hand like this".</li> <li>6. Cuddles should be short and side by side.</li> <li>7. Never kiss a child, and do not encourage children to kiss adults other than their parents.</li> <li>8. A child should only sit on an adult's knee for a short time and for a specific reason such as following an injury, and not too close to the body. If a child may need to sit on a member of staff's knee for longer term support, this must be written into the child's Care Plan.</li> <li>9. Tickling is not appropriate.</li> <li>10. For younger children such as those at Cook n Book appropriate relationships are still being established, and there is a greater need for a more nurturing environment where it may be more appropriate for closer physical contact during some activities. The above cautions still apply, except that sitting on a knee, or longer cuddles may be more acceptable until the child is established.</li> <li>11. Where children require help with changing or toileting, the dignity of the child must be maintained at all times. Great care must be taken to ensure that all physical contact is specifically and only for the purpose of the help being given.</li> <li>12. Never do things of a personal nature for children that they are able to do for themselves</li> </ol>

<b>Unlawful physical contact between adults</b>	<p>Unlawful physical contact between adults falls into two main categories – sexual harassment involving touch, and physical violence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Physical violence is any intentional act causing injury or trauma to another person by way of bodily contact.</li> <li>2. Sexual harassment of a physical nature is when a person is touched against his or her will, and which makes the person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment is not interaction, flirtation or friendship which is mutual or consensual.</li> </ol>
<b>Relationships of trust</b>	<p>Genuine relationships may occur between adults, one of whom is in a caring role with another who is more vulnerable. No intimate relationship should begin while the member of staff or voluntary worker is in a position of trust over them. The power and influence that a person in a position of trust has over someone attending a group or activity or in a counselling situation cannot be under-estimated; such an abuse of trust with a person under 18 years may be a criminal offence.</p> <p>This is the principle: any inequality should end before any sexual relationship begins.</p>

### Child Protection

<b>Rights</b>	VBCC supports the rights of the child and of young people who come to the Centre. We are committed to developing procedures and strategies to ensure a safe environment at all times.
<b>Definitions</b>	<i>Child</i> means any person under 18 years of age  <i>Abuse</i> means physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse.
<b>Guiding Principles</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a culture of safety and awareness among committee, activity leaders, paid staff and volunteers</li> <li>2. Ensure that reporting procedures for complaints and concerns are confidential, clear, prompt and sensitive.</li> <li>3. Continue to support the rights of teachers, administrative staff, volunteers and all participants.</li> <li>4. The Manager is the Child Protection Officer.</li> <li>5. Strengthen referral, reporting and support networks for VBCC.</li> <li>6. Ensure that all users but particularly children and young people know about their rights and protective behaviour strategies.</li> </ol>
<b>Legislation and regulations</b>	<p>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005.</p> <p>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.</p> <p>Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007</p>
<b>Policies and procedures</b>	<p>Health and Safety Policies and Procedures</p> <p>Youth Specific Procedures</p> <p>Duty of Care</p>

## Childsafe Policy

<p><b>Commitment to child safety</b></p>	<p>VBCC is committed to obligations defined in the <i>United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</i> and will build on existing systems to embed and improve a culture of child safety throughout all levels of the organisation. We will implement the Childsafe standards.</p> <p>We will aim to improve the health and wellbeing of all children in our care. We are committed to the cultural safety of all children, including CALD background and Aboriginal children.</p> <p>VBCC has a zero tolerance of child abuse. All Glenroy NLC employees and volunteers are responsible for care and protection of children and for reporting information about child abuse.</p>
<p><b>Definitions</b></p>	<p><b>Child:</b> A person under the age of 18 years.</p> <p><b>Child abuse:</b> Any act committed against a child involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical violence</li> <li>• Sexual offences</li> <li>• Serious emotional or psychological abuses</li> <li>• Serious neglect.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grooming:</b> Purposely creating relationships with victims, their families or carers in order to create a situation where abuse could occur. Parents, carers or other family members may be targeted by perpetrators in order to gain access to a child.</p> <p><b>Cultural abuse:</b> Actions and attitudes that deliberately ignore, denigrate or attack the culture of a person or a community.</p> <p><b>Children from Cultural and/or linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds:</b> A child or young person who identifies as having a particular cultural or linguistic affiliation by virtue of place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home, or because of their parents' identification on a similar basis.</p> <p><b>Cultural safety for Aboriginal and CALD background children:</b> The positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity.</p>

<b>Guiding Principles</b>	<p><b>Risk prevention</b></p> <p>VBCC will implement strategies to prevent and manage child abuse risks, including risks presented by physical and online environments. These include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reporting and acting on any breaches of this code of conduct, and on any complaints or concerns brought to our attention</li> <li>2. Complying with our guidelines on physical contact with children</li> <li>3. Working with children openly and transparently in the presence of other adults</li> <li>4. Disclosing any suspicions of child abuse to the appropriate authority</li> <li>5. Not initiating unnecessary physical contact with children nor doing things for them that they can do themselves</li> <li>6. Showing no favouritism through special attention or gifts</li> <li>7. Not exchanging personal contact details with them such as a phone number or networking website</li> <li>8. Having no unauthorised contact with them online or by phone</li> </ol> <p><b>Continuous Improvement</b></p> <p>In undertaking our scheduled reviews of policies and procedures, the committee and manager will ensure that Childsafe standards are included and implemented.</p> <p><b>Rights to safety and participation</b></p> <p>We encourage children to express their views and make suggestions about decisions that affect them. We listen to them and encourage them to have a say about what affects them. We teach them what to say if they feel unsafe.</p> <p><b>Valuing diversity</b></p> <p>We welcome children from diverse backgrounds and seek to recruit adults who respect and/or reflect this diversity.</p>
<b>Implementation</b>	<p><b>Training</b></p> <p>VBCC will ensure that staff and volunteers know and understand this policy and the Childsafe standards. Induction and training in recognizing and responding to child abuse will be provided for staff and volunteers, including identifying grooming, what to do if an allegation is made or a concern is raised, or if staff observe abusive behaviour</p>

	<p>towards a child. Child safe Code of conduct will be included in induction material.</p> <p><b>Publicity</b></p> <p>VBCC will publicise that it is a child-safe organisation by displaying a Childsafe Charter in the centre, on our website. A statement regarding child safety will be included in the enrolment information given to students and parents of children.</p>
<b>Legislation and Regulations</b>	<p>United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</p> <p>Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005</p> <p>AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration Victorian</p> <p>The Victorian Childsafe standards (<a href="mailto:childsafestandards@dhs.vic.gov.au">childsafestandards@dhs.vic.gov.au</a>)</p>
<b>Relevant Policies and Procedures</b>	<p>Child safe Code of conduct for staff and volunteers (to be developed)</p> <p>Youth Specific Policies and Procedures (to be reviewed)</p> <p>Childcare Policies and procedures (to be reviewed)</p> <p>Incident Reports</p> <p>Mandatory Reporting Guidelines (to be developed)</p>



# Childsafe Code of Conduct

Venus Bay Community Centre aims to support children, enhance their learning and protect them from harm.

All committee members and staff are responsible for promoting the well-being of children and young people.

They are required to sign this code of conduct.

<b>Venus Bay Community Centre will treat all children with respect by:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listening to their ideas and opinions</li> <li>2. Welcoming all children, their carers and families</li> <li>3. Valuing their cultural, religious and political differences</li> <li>4. Preserving the privacy of children and their families, only disclosing information to people who have a need to know</li> <li>5. Refusing to discriminate against them on the basis of age, gender, race, sexual identity, culture or vulnerability</li> <li>6. Refusing to use prejudicial behaviour or language towards them</li> </ol>
<b>We will take all reasonable steps to protect them from harm by:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Adhering to our child safe and child protection policies</li> <li>10. Reporting and acting on any breaches of this code of conduct, and on any complaints or concerns brought to our attention</li> <li>11. Complying with our guidelines on physical contact with children</li> <li>12. Working with children openly and transparently in the presence of other adults</li> <li>13. Disclosing any suspicions of child abuse to the appropriate authority</li> <li>14. Not initiating unnecessary physical contact with children nor doing things for them that they can do themselves</li> <li>15. Showing no favouritism through special attention or gifts</li> <li>16. Not exchanging personal contact details with them such as a phone number or networking website</li> <li>17. Having no unauthorised contact with them online or by phone</li> </ol>
<b>Publicity</b>	We will post this charter of child safety on our website and noticeboards

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

<b>Name of manager</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

<b>Name of witness</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

## Critical Incidents

<b>Policy</b>	VBCC will ensure that it prepares for and responds swiftly and effectively to emergency situations, with the foremost goals of preserving life, protecting the organisation's property, and restoring operations as quickly as possible.
<b>Definitions</b>	<p><b>An emergency</b> is an unplanned or imminent event that affects or threatens the health, safety or welfare of people, property and infrastructure, and which requires a significant and coordinated response. The defining characteristic of an emergency event or situation is that usual resources are overwhelmed or have the potential to be overwhelmed. Emergency situations that may occur include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>fire</b></li> <li>▪ <b>gas or water leak</b></li> <li>▪ <b>vehicle and other accidents</b></li> <li>▪ <b>chemical, radiation or biological spill</b></li> <li>▪ <b>storm</b></li> <li>▪ <b>earthquake</b></li> <li>▪ <b>bomb threat</b></li> <li>▪ <b>civil disorder or illegal occupancy</b></li> <li>▪ <b>hostage or terrorist situation</b></li> <li>▪ <b>death</b></li> <li>▪ <b>robbery</b></li> <li>▪ <b>physical (including sexual) assaults.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>A critical incident</b> is an unexpected traumatic event, involving personal or professional threat, which evokes extreme stress, fear or injury. Providing appropriate supports following a critical incident is part of emergency management.</p> <p><b>Emergency management</b> is the coordination of an emergency response and management of recovery. The aim of emergency management is to minimize physical and psychological impacts on all parties and to minimise damage to assets, operations, reputation and staff productivity.</p>

<p><b>Guiding Principles</b></p>	<p><b>Protection</b></p> <p>The organisation is committed to the protection of consumers, staff, volunteers, Committee members, students and visitors during emergencies.</p> <p><b>Planning</b></p> <p>The Centre will implement procedures in the emergency management plan so that as far as possible, all stakeholders are prepared for events or incidents that stretch our ability to cope beyond normal day-today capacity. Through planning, every effort will be made to minimise the negative impacts of emergency situations and critical incidents.</p> <p><b>Risk Assessment</b></p> <p>Risk assessment processes will identify and control barriers to effective emergency management.</p> <p><b>Responsibility</b></p> <p>All Centre Users are expected to behave in a way which minimises the risk of emergencies occurring.</p> <p>The Manager or acting manager will have lead responsibility for implementation of emergency and critical incident procedures, including identification of potential situations, developing, documenting and communicating response plans, reporting on actual situations, and reviewing policy and procedures following a disaster or emergency situation.</p> <p><b>Training</b></p> <p>All staff and volunteers will be trained in disaster and emergency response procedures at induction. Emergency evacuation drills will be undertaken at all sites.</p> <p><b>Support</b></p> <p>Critical incidents can be a threatening experience and appropriate supports are required to minimise long term effects arising from exposure to the trauma. Critical incident debriefing will be organised. Where appropriate, supportive counselling will be arranged.</p>
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<p><b>Notifications to Worksafe</b></p>	<p>Worksafe must be notified of incidents occurring in the Centre resulting in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>the death of a person</b></li> <li>▪ <b>immediate medical treatment for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the separation of skin from underlying tissue</li> <li>○ the amputation of any part of the body</li> <li>○ a serious head injury or eye injury</li> <li>○ the loss of a bodily function</li> <li>○ serious lacerations</li> <li>○ an electric shock</li> <li>○ a spinal injury</li> <li>○ immediate medical treatment as an in-patient in a hospital</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Note: When only a medical diagnosis is given but no treatment, then there is no requirement to notify WorkSafe.<sup>i</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>medical treatment within forty-eight hours of exposure to a substance</b></li> <li>▪ <b>collapse, overturning, failure of, or damage to, any item of plant equipment that is required to be licensed</b></li> <li>▪ <b>the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation</b></li> <li>▪ <b>partial collapse of any part of a building or structure</b></li> <li>▪ <b>an implosion, explosion or fire the escape, spillage or leakage of any substance, including dangerous goods as defined in the Dangerous Goods Act 1985</b></li> <li>▪ <b>the fall or release from a height of any plant equipment, substance or object.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> The same obligations to notify of incidents and dangerous occurrences apply under the Equipment (Public Safety) (Incident Notification) Regulations 2007 such as amusement structures used by volunteers at a school fete or fair.</p>
<p><b>Relevant Legislation</b></p>	<p>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Commonwealth)</p> <p>Model Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (Commonwealth)</p>

## Occupational Health and Safety

<b>Legal responsibilities</b>	<p>The <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004</i> sets out key principles, duties and rights regarding workplace health and safety. VBCC has a legal obligation to make sure that all work and service delivery areas are safe and without risk to health. This duty extends to entrances and exits, and it applies to our paid staff and volunteers as well as the general public.</p> <p>We must eliminate any risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable. If it's not possible to eliminate the risks, we must reduce them so far as is reasonably practicable</p> <p>Those who take responsibility for VBCC activities are also responsible for maintaining the health and safety of all participants, and for minimising the risk of harm.</p> <p>All workers and participants have the right to say 'no', when they fear for their safety, and all have the right to support from professionals when harmed.</p>
<b>Procedures</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As much as is feasible, paid workers and volunteers will have access to health and safety training, and all must be informed about health and safety information, practices, procedures.</li> <li>2. As required by the OHS Act we will consult with employees when identifying and assessing hazards or risks, and making decisions about risk control.</li> <li>3. The range of Worksafe brochures and information relevant to community agencies is held in the VBCC office filing system.</li> <li>4. The office and meeting spaces will be kept safe and free from chemical and noise pollution.</li> <li>5. All workers and participants will have good quality seating, lighting, and ventilation.</li> </ol>

	<p>6. Two staff will be on duty at the centre whenever possible, and on the very rare occasions when one worker needs to be on the premises alone, the building will be secured so as to prevent unauthorised access.</p> <p>7. A Red Cross/CERT approved first aid kit will be kept in an accessible place on the premises.</p> <p>8. The CFA will be regularly asked for advice about fire safety measures - e.g. fire extinguishers and fire blankets – that affect the interior and exterior use of the building.</p> <p>9. Immunisation services available through e.g. the Tarwin Lower Community Health Centre will be made available to workers.</p> <p>10. Cleaning chemicals, weed sprays, and any other hazardous substances will be stored and used strictly in accordance with directions.</p> <p>11. All health related accidents and incidents that involve first aid treatment will be documented.</p> <p>12. A chair trolley is available. Stacked chairs can only be moved with the aid of the trolley.</p> <p>13. A defibrillator and training in its use are available</p>
<b>Communicable diseases</b>	<p>Risk taking behaviour - e.g. drug use involving shared intravenous needles - of people using the centre may put those around them at risk of communicable diseases - e.g. Chlamydia, herpes, hepatitis B/C, TB and HIV/AIDS.</p> <p>HIV/Aids is not a barrier to paid work or to volunteering at VBCC, and others do not have the right to know about a person's HIV/AIDS status.</p>



	<p>The dangers of transmission in the course of work at VBCC are very slight.</p>
<b>Procedures</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. People with communicable diseases are entitled to confidentiality, respect, entry and participation. Statutory requirements regarding notification of illness must also be met.</li> <li>2. Information and training about communicable diseases, and preventative measures must be on hand and available to all paid staff and volunteers.</li> <li>3. Direct referrals to agencies offering health services relevant to communicable diseases may be made at the written request of users of VBCC.</li> </ol>
<b>Sexual harassment</b>	<p>Sexual harassment refers to unwelcome comments, advances and requests of a sexual nature. They are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.</p> <p>Examples of sexual harassment include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Persistent and unwelcome demands, or even subtle pressure for sexual favours</li> <li>○ Leering, patting, pinching, touching, or unnecessary familiarity</li> <li>○ Jokes, messages, emails, or telephone calls of an offensive sexual nature</li> <li>○ Distribution or display of material which is offensive to another</li> <li>○ Sexual assault which is a criminal offence</li> </ul> <p>Sexual harassment is illegal under the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (1984) and the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act (1984). It has nothing to do with mutual attraction or privately consenting relationships, whether sexual or otherwise.</p>

<b>Procedures</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We will provide written material and information about avenues for redress to all participants</li> <li>2. We will make sure all workers and users are treated fairly and equitably, without harassment, and no-one who makes a complaint about harassment will be victimised.</li> <li>3. All reports of sexual harassment will be treated seriously and investigated in confidence.</li> <li>4. Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who is found guilty of harassment in the context of VBCC activities.</li> </ol>
<b>Smoking</b>	Smoking is a significant health risk
<b>Procedures</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All rooms are designated smoke free areas</li> <li>2. No smoking signs are prominently displayed</li> <li>3. Smoking directly outside entrances and exits will be discouraged</li> <li>4. Smoking near children is not allowed.</li> </ol>
<b>Stress management</b>	<p>People may become stressed when faced with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities. Work related stress is often made worse when employees feel they have little support from supervisors and colleagues as well as little control over their work. While stress can build up over time, it can also occur following specific incidents involving bullying, violence and trauma.</p> <p>VBCC recognises that damage to paid staff and volunteers from 'burn out' due to over commitment and over work, is a common health risk in the community sector. All workers must monitor their own hours and levels of stress.</p>

<b>Procedures</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We will make sure that all workers – paid and voluntary – have support systems in place, including adequate supervision, well understood accountability structures and clear job descriptions.</li> <li>2. Workloads, work plans, and time lines must be realistic.</li> <li>3. Information and training around stress related issues will be available as needed.</li> <li>4. Early professional intervention will be sought if problems arise.</li> </ol>
<b>Unacceptable behaviour</b>	<p>This policy recognises that unacceptable behaviour can occur at work sites or in close proximity to them, Any behaviour that is threatening or discriminatory - from the passing on of uniformed and negative gossip, through to threats of physical violence/assault, abuse, actual violence, shouting, insults, attempts at self harm, harassment, refusal to leave when asked – is unacceptable.</p> <p>Strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour, to restrict the escalation of aggression and violence, and to defuse situations will be fostered.</p>
<b>Procedures</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. People at VBCC will respond to unacceptable behaviour with the same flexibility and understanding that would be expected in any other home or community environment.</li> <li>2. Workers will be encouraged to attend training in how to handle unacceptable behaviour.</li> <li>3. The physical environment will be arranged in ways that avoid frustration and danger from objects and instruments.</li> </ol>

	<p>4. Violent actions will be dealt with as behaviours to be managed. Persistent violent behaviours can lead to temporary withdrawal of services to the offending individual.</p> <p>5. In circumstances of physical violence, or threats for physical violence, the offending person will be requested to leave immediately or the worker/s should leave the situation immediately. Other workers must be alerted immediately verbally, or by a form of electronic communication, and if the offender refuses to leave all concerned must be advised that the police will be called.</p> <p>6. An incident form must be filled to record any unacceptable behaviour.</p> <p>7. The person subjected to violence must have access to counselling services within 24 hours of an incident.</p> <p>All incidents must be reviewed to work out what actually happened, why it happened, options open to the worker/user, what more can be done and what can be learnt.</p>
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## Chapter 3

### Relationships

<b>1. Community strengthening</b>
<b>2. Consultation</b>
<b>3. Networks and partnerships</b>
<b>4. Participants and User groups</b>
<b>5. Privacy and confidentiality</b>
<b>6. Conflict resolution</b>

## Community Strengthening

<b>Purpose of VBCC</b>	<p>In our plans we say VBCC's whole purpose for being is to</p> <p><b>build a stronger community in the district of Venus Bay, Tarwin Lower and Walkerville</b></p>
<b>To get there we:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publish reliable and useful information for the community</li> <li>2. Generate and support programs and activities for all age groups that connect people and expand their knowledge, imagination, curiosity, skills and experience</li> <li>3. Offer services that meet expressed community needs</li> <li>4. Strive towards a sustainable community through energy saving, recycling and local food production</li> <li>5. Arrange, promote and engage in community discussions about matters that affect the future well-being of the district.</li> <li>6. Maintain and improve the building and grounds leased from South Gippsland Shire Council as safe places for the community</li> <li>7. Partner with other organisations and agencies on initiatives designed to strengthen the community</li> </ol>
<b>A definition of community strengthening</b>	<p>Community development builds the five capitals of a community:</p> <p>physical,</p> <p>financial,</p> <p>human,</p> <p>social, and</p> <p>environmental.</p> <p>It is through participation in their community that people rethink problems and expand contacts and networks, building social capital.</p>

	<p>They learn new skills, building human capital. They develop new economic options, building physical and financial capital. They can also improve their environment.</p> <p>Jim Cavaye (2008)</p>
<b>How community strengthening works</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Our community has a problem.</li> <li>2. We talk to others about it.</li> <li>3. We gather a group to work on the problem</li> <li>4. Together we nut out a solution and a plan of action.</li> <li>5. Sometimes we succeed, sometimes we fail.</li> <li>6. Sometimes it's quick, sometimes it takes a long time.</li> <li>7. We always learn complex and sophisticated new skills.</li> <li>8. How do we communicate all this? Collecting good data is critical. But to show how our work has changed our community for the better, we have to tell stories as well.</li> </ol>
<b>A Partnership with South Gippsland Shire Council</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As a recipient of state government Neighbourhood House Coordination Funding (NHCP) funding VBCC's primary role is to promote community development.</li> <li>2. This puts us squarely inside the community strengthening strategies of SGSC and we use every chance to get more formal recognition of this relationship.</li> <li>3. Our ideas about community development for Tarwin Lower, Venus Bay and Walkerville include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more sharing and development of local knowledge and skills;</li> <li>• quality social connections, especially for those who are relatively isolated for whatever reasons</li> <li>• broader local involvement in decisions about sustainable land and water use, environmental protection, and urban development;</li> <li>• more coordinated contributions by our district to SGSC policy development;</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more local infrastructure assets, and new and better ways to use the assets we've already got, starting with our own building and grounds;</li> <li>• more collaboration and partnerships between the 25+ local agencies in the Tarwin Lower, Walkerville and Venus Bay district;</li> <li>• more chances for lifelong education, skill development and local enterprises;</li> <li>• continuous improvement in participatory and representative democracy in the governance skills of SGSC, ourselves, and other local agencies; and</li> <li>• a much bigger role in community strengthening by part time residents and their regular visitors - the majority of the population - who have immense skills and experience to contribute.</li> </ul>
<b>Community strengthening and SGSC Community Grants</b>	<p>Unlike most other LGAs, so far no Gippsland Local Government Authority provides annual top ups to the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program grant.</p> <p>Our district receives a disproportionately small proportion of SGSC's community grant funds. Neighbourhood houses in South Gippsland have a major community strengthening role.</p> <p>Using the same community development targets as the NHCP, SGSC could reasonably quarantine around \$40,000 pa of the annual community grants (around \$10,000 per house) for the work of neighbourhood houses in the Shire.</p>
<b>10 elements of community strengthening</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Know what the problem is; know what we want to change; be clear about your purpose and its bottom lines</li> <li>2. The impulse of good community development is democratic. Hence the terrific fit with the Associations Incorporation Act</li> <li>3. Advocate for our community/communities</li> <li>4. Work in groups whenever we can</li> </ol>



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Plan all the steps we have to take to get where we want to go</li> <li>6. Understand conflict resolution - processes, skills and received wisdom</li> <li>7. Be political but don't bring a political-party point of view to our work with others</li> <li>8. In partnerships with local and state governments - use a long spoon - with patience, persistence and purpose - and don't get divided</li> <li>9. Tell stories as a way of communicating and developing our identity</li> <li>10. If we fail do we will do our best to work out why</li> </ol>
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## Consultation

To consult is not to surrender our decision making to others. To consult is to gather intelligence from near and far and then make a decision.

<b>Reasons why VBCC will consult</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If people have a real say on issues that are important to them they feel more connected to their community, and their community is stronger.</li> <li>2. If we want people to feel comfortable about giving us advice and information we have to make sure they get good information from us as a basis for their advice.</li> <li>3. To consult means to ask for advice and seek information. We'll be better at planning and policy if we sift through a wide range of advice that's drawn from people and organisations with specialised knowledge and experience. The same applies to the manager in decision making about the program.</li> <li>4. When we report on how we use our Neighbourhood House Coordination Program grant we have to show evidence of consultation with our community about our annual plan.</li> </ol>
<b>Questions to ask about consultation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the process interesting and will those involved want to know the outcome?</li> <li>2. Have we framed the process as carefully as we can?</li> <li>3. Do those involved have a clear understanding of their role?</li> <li>4. Will there be a two-way exchange of information?</li> <li>5. How will those who take part know that we were influenced by what they said?</li> <li>6. How will contributions be acknowledged?</li> </ol>
<b>Some of the ways we will consult</b>	<p>A single method of consultation will never reach everyone, and different ways of consulting draw out different kinds of advice and information. Some people like to fill out questionnaires, some like to communicate one to one, and others like the stimulation of the interchange you get in meetings. Some like all three. Some can never get to meetings e.g. if there's no child care offered. To get a broad range of advice and information, we will use:</p>

	<p><b>1. Active, informal listening</b></p> <p>We will ask a lot of open ended questions: e.g. How's your class/activity going? Is there anything you'd like us to do that we aren't doing now?</p> <p><b>2. Articles in <i>Matter of Fact</i></b></p> <p>We will use <i>Matter of Fact</i> to lay out issues for people and invite responses. Articles might follow a well known formula for issues papers:</p> <p>Background/context Issues Options to resolve issues Questions and a process to respond, including timelines.</p> <p><b>3. Regular activities of centre users</b></p> <p>We will take advantage of centre activities to consult with participants and volunteers – especially about decisions that affect that activity.</p> <p><b>4. Three year planning cycle</b></p> <p>We will always use at least one community meeting to involve members, participants, and the wider community in the three year planning cycle. We will publish a report of the meeting and invite further comment before plans are adopted. Each annual plan will be published in <i>Matter of Fact</i> and comments will be invited, along the lines of Method 2 (above).</p> <p><b>5. Evaluation</b></p> <p>Where possible we will ask members, workers, participants, other agencies and the community to evaluate their experience of VBCC – at for example AGMs and the conclusion of activities.</p> <p><b>6. Questionnaires and surveys</b></p> <p>If we have sufficient resources and good reasons, we will run telephone surveys, or distribute questionnaires.</p>
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	<p><b>7. Community meetings and focus groups</b></p> <p>If we have good reasons to do so, we will use community meetings to test community opinion.</p> <p><b>8. Questions directed to specialist individuals, agencies and networks</b></p> <p>We will use this method when we want to initiate a new program or we encounter an issue we need to know more about.</p> <p><b>9. Research available on the internet and in published reports</b></p> <p>We will use the internet to get access to the experience of other individuals and agencies in our area of work e.g. <a href="http://www.ourcommunity.com">www.ourcommunity.com</a> and <i>Third Sector</i> type publications.</p>
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## Networks and Partnerships

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>We need networks and partners to get information, resources, money, new ideas, new skills, and long term support from people who want us to do well.</p> <p><i>Some of the world's most successful organizations stay small, sharing their load with like-minded, long-term partners. The success of these networked non-profits suggests that organizations should focus less on growing themselves and more on cultivating their networks. [Stanford Social Innovation Review]</i></p>
<b>Agencies that fund and support us</b>	<p><b>South Gippsland Shire Council (SGSC).</b> We sign a lease to manage the building and grounds of the Centre. Permits for changes to the grounds and buildings have to be obtained from Council and we share maintenance tasks with them. We want to have a positive relationship with Council and its staff. We appreciate the help we get from staff and our ward councillors, and we apply for SGSC community grants.</p> <p><b>Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).</b> Funds for the manager's position come from this state government department and VBCC has access to one-off grants from DHHS</p>
<b>Local agencies</b>	<p>VBCC keeps a register of community organisations in the Tarwin Lower, Walkerville and Venus Bay district. There are over 40 community agencies on the list. They are our local network and we work with them in a host of ways. Key organisations are listed in our three year plan.</p>
<b>Neighbourhood Houses</b>	<p>Because we are part of a network of around 530 neighbourhood houses and learning centres in Gippsland and Victoria, we have active relationships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Gippsland Regional Neighbourhood House Group (GRNHG)</b> – we attend networking meetings for mutual support and information, and to participate in statewide planning and policy development</li> <li>○ <b>Neighbourhood Houses Victoria (NHVic)</b> - through our membership we are linked to their statewide information and advice services.</li> <li>○ <b>Cluster.</b> We are part of the South Gippsland cluster of four neighbourhood houses</li> </ul>

<b>Procedures</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Our budget for networking related travel is tiny, and costs of travel are very great. The committee will try to fund travel whenever possible.</li> <li>2. Authorisation to attend networking meetings and professional development will be minuted by the committee.</li> <li>3. We will draw up documents such as MOUs and project briefs to formalise relationships where there is an auspice role or shared responsibility for funding and/or assets.</li> </ol>
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## Participants and User Groups

<b>Participant's Rights</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access is open to all regardless of gender, race, beliefs, sexuality, language, health status, or ability.</li> <li>2. We respect the right of participants to make their own choices, and will support them as they choose from options available at VBCC</li> <li>3. All members of the community have a right to participate in the activities of the Centre in a safe and supportive environment.</li> <li>4. Participants will be consulted about decision making that affects their participation.</li> <li>5. We will protect their privacy – for example in regard to any personal records held by VBCC - as required by legislation and their expressed wishes.</li> <li>6. We will do our best to keep them informed about any matters that affect their participation.</li> <li>7. We support their right to make complaints and to have access to our grievance resolution processes.</li> <li>8. They have a right to feel welcome and valued.</li> </ol>
<b>Participant's Responsibilities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participants are expected to take responsibility for their own choices and to know about and assert their rights.</li> <li>2. They have a special responsibility to have respect for VBCC's members, the committee, paid staff and volunteers, and treat them with courtesy.</li> <li>3. Where a fee is charged they will pay on request.</li> </ol>
<b>User groups</b>	<p>VBCC has two kinds of ongoing user groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent user group</li> <li>• VBCC user group.</li> </ul> <p>Those that choose independent status will be responsible for maintaining their own list of contacts and informing members of changes in arrangements for the group.</p> <p>Those that choose VBCC status are responsible for providing the manager with up to date contact lists for group members. The manager will then ensure that members are advised of any cancellations or other changes in arrangements for user group meetings</p>

## Privacy and Confidentiality

<b>The Privacy Act 1988</b>	<p>All of us have legal rights to privacy. The Act says:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. You must be told why your personal information is being asked for, how it will be used, and if it will be given to anyone else. This is why we ask people who want to be members of VBCC to sign a form that gives us permission to make their name and address available to other members on request.</li> <li>2. You have the right to see your personal information and make corrections to it.</li> </ol> <p>Information about you must be stored securely and protected from unauthorised access</p>
<b>Privacy policy at VBCC</b>	<p>All identifying information, whether verbal or written, obtained about VBCC personnel including members, staff and committee, is confidential and will not be provided to anyone else without the prior permission of the organisation or individual concerned. This includes email addresses and phone numbers, but not information that is known to be in the public domain.</p> <p>Anyone providing information will be advised about its purpose, who has access, and how it will be used.</p> <p>Everyone associated with VBCC has the right to know about the way their privacy is protected by legislation.</p> <p>The committee, paid staff and volunteers of VBCC must respect the confidentiality of information about other people that comes to them in the course of their work.</p>
<b>Confidential conversations</b>	<p>In every work place many formal, and casual, conversations take place that are of a confidential nature. One formal example is performance appraisal.</p> <p>Quite often the person confiding information on an informal doesn't specify that their remarks, opinions and judgements are not to be passed on. Quite often keeping a confidence is a matter of judgement. If we ask ourselves questions like:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Am I sure it's true? Is it fair? Is it kind? Is it useful? Is it necessary? Will it do any damage?</p>



	<p>before we pass on something that was said to us, we will avoid a lot of problems.</p>
<b>Committee discussions</b>	<p>If a matter discussed by the committee is identified as confidential, committee members must not discuss that matter outside the committee. This will happen only rarely.</p> <p>Usually the business of the committee isn't confidential, but what someone says in discussion about it might well be. That person has to tell the committee that what they say is for the committee only and is not to be passed on.</p> <p>Our minutes are not confidential. The rules of incorporation say that they must be made available to any member of VBCC who asks to see them.</p>
<b>Documents</b>	<p>Any documents marked <b>confidential</b> must only be discussed with those to whom the document is circulated. A common example: documents used by interview panels. These are seen only by the interview panel and shredded at the end of the process.</p> <p>Any documents marked <b>draft</b> can often be considered confidential when circulated to committee members and other individuals. Drafts are written to iron out problems and get things right through a consultation process. If they are circulated to others a lot of misunderstanding, anxiety and trouble can follow.</p>

## Grievance and conflict resolution

<p><b>What VBCC's rules say about grievances:</b></p>	<p>In the event of a grievance it is essential to read the rules in full.</p> <p>What follows is a summary.</p> <p><b>The grievance procedure applies to disputes between:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a member and another member;</li> <li>• a member and the Committee;</li> <li>• a member and VBCC.</li> </ul> <p><b>Parties must attempt to resolve the dispute</b></p> <p>The parties to a dispute must attempt to resolve the dispute between themselves within 14 days of the dispute coming to the attention of each party.</p> <p><b>Appointment of mediator</b></p> <p>If the parties to a dispute are unable to resolve the dispute between themselves they have 10 days to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• notify the Committee of the dispute; and</li> <li>• agree to or request the appointment of a mediator; and</li> <li>• attempt in good faith to settle the dispute by mediation.</li> </ul> <p><b>The mediator</b></p> <p>The mediator must be chosen by agreement between the two parties or By the committee if a committee member isn't involved.</p> <p>If the dispute is between a member and the committee the mediator must be appointed or employed by the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria.</p> <p>A mediator appointed by the Committee may be a member or former member of VBCC but in any case must not have a personal interest in the dispute; or be biased in favour of or against any party.</p> <p><b>Mediation process</b></p> <p>The mediator to the dispute, in conducting the mediation, must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• give each party every opportunity to be heard;</li> <li>• allow due consideration by all parties of any written statement submitted by any party; and</li> <li>• ensure that natural justice is accorded to the parties throughout the mediation process.</li> </ul>
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	<p><b>Failure to resolve dispute by mediation</b></p> <p>If the mediation process does not resolve the dispute, the parties may seek to resolve the dispute in accordance with the Act or otherwise at law.</p>
<b>VBCC's principles for conflict resolution</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Observe the rules about grievance resolution set out in our rules – see above</li> <li>2. Take a pro-active approach to keep lines of communication open</li> <li>3. Act quickly at the level where a grievance or conflict occurs – e.g. 'Don't let anything go for more than a day.'</li> <li>4. Recognise that it's not easy for many to voice a grievance.</li> <li>5. Recognise that conflict often happens because of lack of clarity and/or information; misinterpretation of something that was said or of the intent of the speaker; poor planning and processes; overwork and stress; harassment, overbearing, or bullying behaviour; failure to listen; and failure to ask questions.</li> <li>6. Where possible avoid these causes by changing policies and processes.</li> <li>7. Make sure everyone knows their grievance will be heard at every level of VBCC and within the requirements of privacy legislation.</li> </ol>
<b>Common steps to conflict resolution</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The aggrieved person(s) will normally first talk directly to the other person(s) involved to see if they can resolve the issue.</li> <li>2. If the issue isn't resolved by the first step or if it isn't appropriate to speak to the person – e.g. in cases of sexual harassment or other forms of harassment – the aggrieved person can discuss the issue with the Manager or President. They can ask for an advocate to be present.</li> <li>3. The Manager/President can then suggest a process. This will provide all parties with support and negotiation.</li> <li>4. If still not resolved the aggrieved person(s) will be asked to put their issue in writing to the committee. A written response will be provided within 14 days.</li> <li>5. If still not resolved the issue can be taken to the Dispute Resolution Centre.</li> <li>6. If still not resolved the issue can be taken up in legal processes e.g. Fair Work Commission in the case of employees</li> </ol>

## Chapter Four

### Enterprise and risk

<b>1. Social enterprise</b>
<b>2. Risk Management</b>

# Social Enterprise

## How VBCC can be great

Inspiration for this policy came from a special supplement, published in *The Age* in November 2013, advertising a conference on innovation and creativity. The supplement reported on interviews with a few of the speakers. At \$2,500 per registration none of us could afford to go to the conference, so we took the best ideas from the supplement and turned them into two lists as a way of helping us to think about social enterprise.

Social enterprises make money and strengthen communities. They are run by not-for-profits like us so any income gets ploughed back into the community. Our recycling shop is a social enterprise. The first column is a set of hints about how to get new ideas up and running.

WHAT TO DO:	WHAT NOT TO DO:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Break out of our silos (towers, fortresses) with fresh thinking</li><li>2. Intersect - make more points of contact</li><li>3. Interact – act together all the time</li><li>4. Disagree</li><li>5. Disrupt</li><li>6. Stop controlling things</li><li>7. Stop being right all the time</li><li>8. Make mistakes</li><li>9. Confront our thinking habits</li><li>10. Be a bit pushy, bold</li><li>11. Think very, very big</li><li>12. Find the right other person(s) to help us, as fast as we can</li><li>13. Capture hearts and minds by truly standing for something</li><li>14. Be compelling enough to be talked about</li><li>15. Look for a smarter way to do everything</li><li>16. Involve everyone</li><li>17. Invest in the new</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Don't act like we know all the answers</li><li>2. Don't be lone wolves</li><li>3. Don't keep information to ourselves</li><li>4. Don't agree all the time</li><li>5. Don't play safe</li><li>6. Don't be a controller</li><li>7. Don't be afraid of mistakes</li><li>8. Don't let our minds run in a groove</li><li>9. Don't be humble or shy</li><li>10. Don't be afraid of big ideas</li><li>11. Don't sit in a corner moping</li><li>12. Don't be complacent and smug</li><li>13. Don't be vague about what we stand for</li><li>14. Don't accept any single bit of the status quo</li><li>15. Don't think we're not needed</li><li>16. Don't ignore the role of any single person associated with us</li><li>17. Don't recycle old ways of doing things</li></ol>

**What do we stand for? Is that compelling?**

**What have we done so far that's innovative and creative?**

**What does our community need? What's missing?**

**What social enterprises can we start up to generate more local employment?**

**Can we come up with money making ideas that are good for our community and can be franchised across the state? How can we make more money?**

# Risk Management

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>There's no such thing as a risk free existence. Risk is a part of everything we do in life.</p> <p>Risks are usually thought of as <i>dangers</i> that threaten what we own, what we do, and the people in our lives. But they are also a <i>force for good</i> because they spur us on to become:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• better at looking after resources;</li> <li>• more capable; and</li> <li>• wiser and more loving in our personal relationships.</li> </ul> <p>We manage risk when we name and analyse risks, and work out what to do about them. For example, we manage risk to property and people when we write bush fire plans for our Venus Bay households.</p>
<b>What is 'risk attestation'?</b>	<p>VBCC's funding agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services requires us to do 'risk attestation'. Such language! But it seems they simply want us to prove to them that we manage risk. That we have put policies in place to minimise risk is enough proof for them. But we should manage risk anyway.</p>
<b>What does risk management cover?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Governance.</b> Decision making, including values, policies and plans</li> <li>2. <b>People.</b> The safety and well-being of all who come through our doors: visitors, members, committee, children, participants in programs, paid staff and volunteers</li> <li>3. <b>Money.</b> Financial stability of VBCC</li> <li>4. <b>Assets.</b> Building, grounds, and equipment - whether leased or owned</li> <li>5. <b>Program.</b> The capacity of VBCC to provide a high quality program</li> <li>6. <b>Services.</b> The capacity of VBCC to provide high quality services</li> </ol> <p>We tackle these six areas in several other policies e.g. <u>Childsafe Policy</u>. In addition we have a specific risk management plan (see the following attachment).</p>

<b>Practical ways we manage risks:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Policies</li> <li>2. Plans</li> <li>3. Processes</li> <li>4. Verbal and written warnings/signs</li> <li>5. Insurance</li> <li>6. Regular evaluation and review</li> <li>7. Transparent decision making</li> <li>8. Consultation</li> <li>9. Communication and education about risk</li> <li>10. Communication about our aims and values</li> <li>11. Incident reporting</li> <li>12. Controls</li> <li>13. A risk aware culture</li> </ol>
<b>Who is responsible to manage risk?</b>	All who give leadership, and carry out work, at VBCC are responsible for anticipating risks. We try to do the best we can at everything, and minimise damage, through regular discussion and analysis of risks (see attached plan).

<p><b>Some results of poor risk management</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Theft of funds and assets</li> <li>2. Failure of financial investments</li> <li>3. Failure to meet objectives of agencies that fund us</li> <li>4. Loss of assets, loss of lease</li> <li>5. Spread of infectious diseases</li> <li>6. Physical injury to people from attacks by other people and accidents</li> <li>7. Invasion by those who seek to do harm</li> <li>8. Vandalism of the building and grounds</li> <li>9. Damage from natural events</li> <li>10. Loss of respect in the community</li> <li>11. Loss of people who contribute to the centre</li> </ol>	<p><b>Some results of good risk management</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No theft or fraud</li> <li>2. High quality paid and voluntary staff who enjoy their work</li> <li>3. Programs and services that exceed the requirements of funding agencies</li> <li>4. Assets in good condition and good working order</li> <li>5. Health benefits for those who come through the doors</li> <li>6. Community respect, and self-respect</li> <li>7. No vandalism</li> <li>8. Productive working relationships with other agencies</li> <li>9. Growth and development of program and services</li> </ol>
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# VBCC's Risk Management Plan

Risk area	Analysis	Actions in place to manage risk
Finances	<p>Theft</p> <p>Over spending</p> <p>Failure to collect/ invoice amounts owing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ VBCC's <i>Rules</i> have the fundamentals in place</li> <li>○ A supplementary <i>Finance Policy</i> sets out financial systems and safeguards</li> <li>○ User groups money held in locked area until collected by staff member responsible</li> <li>○ Budget approved by committee</li> <li>○ Staff provide a financial report to all committee meetings</li> <li>○ Manager to oversee all expenditure within budget</li> <li>○ Two to sign each cheque, at least one to be a committee member</li> <li>○ No signing of blank cheques</li> <li>○ Manager's spending without reference to committee is limited to \$800 and must conform to 3 year plan and all policies</li> <li>○ Annual audit conducted by independent auditor for AGM</li> <li>○ Manager and book keeper document and monitor all invoices and receipts</li> <li>○ All cash to be paid into the bank within 10 working days of receipt</li> </ul>
Health and safety	Accidents in the grounds and building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Insurance covers are in place</li> <li>○ <i>H&amp;S policy</i> in place</li> </ul>



	<p>Accidents whilst travelling</p> <p>Safety of children</p> <p>Stress of staff/committee due to overwork</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Insurance covers are in place</li> <li>○ Vehicles are safe, drivers are qualified</li> <li>○ We have a child safety policy and a child safety code of conduct</li> <li>○ Manager and President are responsible to monitor welfare of staff and committee</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership/governance</b>	<p>Badly informed committee</p> <p>Lack of good policy</p> <p>Unrepresentative membership of committee</p> <p>Poorly run meetings with chaotic discussion</p> <p>Confusion about policy and planning role of committee and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reports are a part of all committee meetings</li> <li>○ Policies are comprehensive. They are well researched, revised as required, and held in a policy register/bank on drop box</li> <li>○ Committee represents the geographical and demographical spread of the district of Venus Bay, Tarwin Lower and Walkerville</li> <li>○ Agendas are sent out prior to all meetings. Meetings have a timekeeper and evaluator.</li> <li>○ President is responsible for chairing meetings. President's tasks as chair are clearly set out.</li> <li>○ Papers including manager's report and financial report, and policies are sent out before each meeting</li> <li>○ Meetings are well documented and committee documents are carefully archived</li> <li>○ Roles are often mentioned in meetings and set out in position descriptions for office bearers,</li> </ul>

	<p>operational role of manager</p> <p>Unable to attract new members</p> <p>Poor planning creates a lack of focus on agreed directions and activities</p>	<p>ordinary committee members and Manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ All committee members and staff alert to potential new members of the committee and make a point of mentioning committee work to them</li> <li>○ VBCC has identified a stronger community as its reason for existence and has articulated a set of strategies in the three year plan which aim to strengthen the community</li> </ul>
<b>Legislative compliance</b>	Ignorance of relevant legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Manager and committee responsible for ensuring compliance</li> <li>○ Relevant legislation listed on policies (Yet to be done)</li> </ul>
<b>Lease and funding obligations</b>	<p>Failure to meet requirements</p> <p>Failure to provide reports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Manager responsible for matching spending with terms of the grants and achieving specified outcomes, committee monitors this through manager's monthly report</li> <li>○ An anomaly in the terms set out in our planning permit created a requirement re noise which was higher than EPA standards and unrealistic. This was resolved at VCAT.</li> <li>○ Manager is responsible to ensure reports are submitted. Committee monitors this through manager's monthly reports.</li> </ul>

<b>Planning</b>	Poor quality, non-existent, irrelevant, overly ambitious, unrealistic, un-costed, not sufficiently comprehensive planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Organisational planning covers overall strategy, planning of individual projects, is short term and longer term</li> <li>○ Template for project briefs is comprehensive and up to date</li> <li>○ Staff members have individual work plans as basis for performance evaluation that relate to organisational plans</li> <li>○ Committee has a three year planning cycle and updates the plan on an annual basis</li> </ul>
<b>Program and services</b>	<p>Poor quality leadership of programs and services</p> <p>Programs fail to attract participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evaluation of teachers/leaders in place</li> <li>○ Evaluation of relevance, costs and advertising in place</li> </ul>
<b>Staff – paid and voluntary</b>	<p>Conflict between individuals due to lack of clarity about work, available resources and supervision</p> <p>Stress from overwork</p> <p>Lack of sufficient challenge and work satisfaction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Job descriptions for all</li> <li>○ Reporting and supervision for all work is made clear and documented</li> <li>○ Grievance policy in place</li> <li>○ Volunteers Rights and Responsibilities Policy in place</li> <li>○ Monitored by supervisor and all are required to self-monitor</li> <li>○ Performance evaluation policy is in place. PE is conducted every 12 months. Includes review of job satisfaction and professional development</li> <li>○ Position descriptions updated regularly</li> </ul>

	Inappropriate appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Employment policy in place</li> </ul>
<b>Working relationships with other agencies</b>	Conflict due to no MOU or other agreed structure in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lease with SGSC</li> <li>○ Funding agreements with FRRR, DOHA and NHCP</li> <li>○ We have a project brief template which includes risk management for each project. Project briefs for all partnerships are in place to clarify responsibilities</li> <li>○ Our consultation policy and networking and relationships policy set out the range of strategies we use to keep working relationships with other agencies in good order.</li> </ul>
<b>Reputation</b>	<p>Our work not transparent to the community</p> <p>Hostility to what we are doing</p> <p>Lack of dispute resolution skills</p> <p>Our connection to and understanding of community needs grows weak</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ MoF a key element of communication with community</li> <li>○ Consultation with the community around our three plan</li> <li>○ Culture of 'undefensive listening' to the community is encouraged.</li> <li>○ Culture of 'moving on' from past conflict is encouraged.</li> <li>○ Professional development run by Vic'n Disputes Resolution Centre – record available</li> <li>○ Regular working partnerships with other community agencies are a feature of our operation</li> <li>○ VBCC staff and volunteers are involved in many other local agencies</li> </ul>

<b>Assets</b>	Vandalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lights on at night around building</li> <li>○ Insurance cover in place</li> <li>○ We deliberately foster community ownership of the centre</li> <li>○ We foster community involvement</li> </ul>
	Burglary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Key register is kept</li> <li>○ Processes and responsibility for locking up are clear</li> </ul>

<http://www.vmia.vic.gov.au/Risk-Management/Guides-and-publications/Information-sheets.aspx>

Guides on this site are mostly too complex for small organisations like us, although neighbourhood houses do get a mention.

## Chapter Five

### Staffing

<b>1. Employment</b>
<b>2. A suggested process for the recruitment of a new manager</b>
<b>3. Manager's position description</b>
<b>4. Volunteers</b>
<b>5. How are the staff going in their work? A suggested format is attached</b>

# Employment

<b>Importance of employment policies</b>	<p>VBCC's goals can only be effectively realised through cooperative relationships between the committee, manager, other paid staff and volunteers. The quality of what we do depends on the skills and experience of those who contribute, and on the quality of our relationships with one another. All of our policies are directed towards this.</p> <p>This employment policy aims to create a clear and unambiguous framework for the development of effective relationships.</p> <p>This policy supplements the conditions of relevant awards – e.g. the termination of employment – and the requirements of industrial legislation.</p>
<b>General principles</b>	<p>Each person who contributes work to VBCC, paid and voluntary, will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ be formally endorsed as a contributor to our work in the minutes of the committee</li> <li>○ have a job description</li> <li>○ have opportunities to receive supportive performance evaluation – see <i>Performance Evaluation</i> policy</li> <li>○ have a job that is a good fit with their strengths, skills, experience and qualifications</li> <li>○ be expected to commit to the structures, policies, and goals of VBCC</li> <li>○ get opportunities to develop their skills and experience</li> <li>○ feel supported if they choose to belong to the relevant union</li> <li>○ be encouraged to get involved in policy and planning development processes and other decision making that affects their participation</li> </ul>
<b>Recruitment Principles</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recruitment of all personnel – committee members, paid and voluntary staff - is one of VBCC's most important activities.</li> <li>2. Processes will be carefully planned, apply equal opportunity principles, and be consistent with our commitment to community development.</li> <li>3. Recruitment and selection will be open and transparent with the exception of confidentiality for applicants.</li> <li>4. Selection must be based on skills, experience, and qualifications that best fit the requirements of the position description.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Police checks are necessary when the recruited person will work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.</li> <li>6. All recruitment processes for paid staff are at the discretion of the manager but must observe the principles of this policy, and an account of processes used must be included in the manager's monthly report. In certain circumstances (e.g. recruitment of a youth worker) a selection panel of 2-3 members might be appointed by the manager and might include a representative of the committee.</li> <li>7. Where applications for funding, or donations, specify in advance those who are to be employed, submission of the application and/or acceptance of the funds will constitute approval to appoint those named.</li> <li>8. The employment contract for paid positions will specify a three month probation period during which both parties will assess whether the right decision has been made.</li> <li>9. Job descriptions are policy documents. The committee is responsible for the job description of the manager and the manager is responsible for preparing, reviewing and updating all other job descriptions, together with relevant selection criteria, salaries and conditions.</li> </ol>
<b>Recruitment of the manager</b>	<p>The manager will be recruited by the committee. The committee will appoint a selection panel to undertake the recruitment and the selection panel will determine its own processes unless otherwise directed by the committee.</p> <p>The selection panel will usually be chaired by the President. If possible the panel will have a member with experience of managing a neighbourhood house/learning centre. The selection panel may have an external member if the committee decides that this person will add value to the process. A suggested process for recruitment of the manager is attached but the panel may make changes to it as they deem fit.</p> <p>However the panel must bring their recommendation for an appointment to the committee for endorsement.</p>
<b>Reporting arrangements</b>	<p>The manager is employed by the committee. The committee is responsible for the manager's welfare <i>and</i> for ensuring that the</p>

	<p>requirements of the manager's position description are met. The manager reports to the committee at each monthly meeting by means of a written report. This means committee members need to be aware of the contents of the manager's position description. When the manager's report is adopted it is pasted into the minutes book as an attachment to the minutes. Between meetings the manager reports to the President.</p> <p>Other paid staff, and volunteers including the President and other committee members who do voluntary work between meetings, report to the manager. For further information about this aspect of the employment policy see <i>10 committee responsibilities</i>.</p>
<b>Expression of committee concerns about performance</b>	<p>Any committee member who has concerns about any aspect of the performance of the manager or other staff must raise them with the President, <i>not</i> the manager. If the President is unable to reassure the committee member during the initial discussion, and the committee member agrees, the issue will be taken up by the President with the manager in performance evaluation discussions. The President will then report back to the committee member who raised the concern. If the concern is not allayed then the matter will be considered by the committee <i>in camera</i>. VBCC's <i>Grievance Policy</i> may be activated or another course of action decided upon.</p>
<b>The distinction between paid work and voluntary work</b>	<p>VBCC makes a clear distinction between paid work and voluntary work. There is no expectation that paid staff will extend their hours in order to fulfil the requirements of their paid work. Paid staff are required to observe the terms and conditions of their contract - and this will always include a set number of paid hours.</p> <p>Paid staff may volunteer additional hours if they choose to do so, but not to fulfil the requirements of their position description.</p>



## Suggested recruitment process for the position of manager

The following steps are recommendations only, on the understanding that selection panels must have flexibility to respond to different circumstances. In any case, all VBCC selection panels are bound by the principles of the Employment Policy.

### **1. Advertisement**

Advertise internally and externally, with a closing date at least two weeks from the date of publication.

### **2. Information for applicants and panel**

Supply all applicants with a copy of the position description prior to submitting their application, and treat submitted applications with the utmost confidentiality. Each member of the selection panel receives a copy of each application for consideration as soon as possible, again using privacy principles. The chairperson of the panel will usually be the President.

### **3. Next steps**

Meet to shortlist as soon as possible, and contact the short listed applicants to offer interview times. Work out a set of interview questions and devise any other methods they will use to assess applicants, based on the selection criteria for the position.

Take care to avoid potential conflicts of interest. Any member of the selection panel with a conflict of interest declares that to the chairperson of the panel and stands aside where necessary. See *Conflict of Interest* policy.

After interviews, contact referees and make police checks where applicable.

Make a recommendation to the next committee meeting.

### ***Offer of employment***

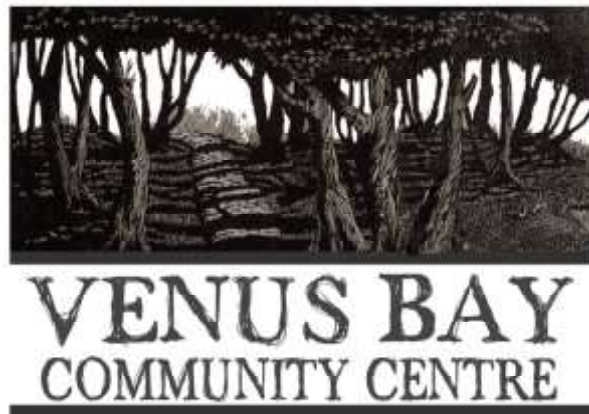
After committee approval, the chair contacts the successful applicant by telephone and – on acceptance – sends a letter of appointment that confirms the starting date and conditions, together with an employment agreement to be signed and returned prior to commencement.

### ***5. Unsuccessful applicants***

Unsuccessful applicants are notified by letter as soon as possible after the successful applicant has accepted the position in writing, and are offered an opportunity to debrief if they so desire. Other paid and volunteer staff are advised of the final outcome of the selection process.

### ***6. Records***

The chairperson gathers all written information from the selection panel. The successful applicant's details are placed on her/his personnel file, and all other documents related to the unsuccessful applications are destroyed – around three months after the appointment has been confirmed and the probation period has expired. Three months allows time for any appeals or other issues to arise that might require reference to the documents.



## Manager's Position Description

### **Classification**

NHLC Workplace Agreement 2007. Community Development Worker Class 3.

### **Conditions**

20 hours per week. Up to 3 additional hours may be worked each week and taken off as time off in lieu or paid out at the ordinary rate. The maximum time off in lieu that can be accumulated is 15 hours.

### **Accountability, Authority and Decision-Making**

The position reports to the management committee.

Between meetings the Manager liaises with/reports to the President, including for an annual performance review.

The management committee has delegated overall operational decision making to the Manager. This includes delegation of the responsibility to ensure that VBCC:

- meets the terms of contracts, the lease, and the constitution;
- complies with registration standards e.g those of the Department of Human Services;
- operates within State and Federal legislation;
- operates within policy, including the plan, that is endorsed by the management committee.

When operational tasks are delegated to committee members, these committee members, including the President, report to the Manager in carrying out the tasks between meetings.

## **Key Result Areas**

### **1. Implement the plan**

1. Involve stakeholders in developing a 3 year plan
2. Ensure the plan is implemented

### **2. Support the democratic decision-making of the committee**

1. Support the committee to fulfill its function as governing body of VBCC
2. Provide relevant, timely and accurate reports to the management committee and any of its subcommittees and working parties
3. Liaise with the President to provide executive and administrative support to the committee of management
4. Encourage education and professional development of committee members
5. Arrange general meetings including the AGM
6. Draft policies for management committee consideration
7. Connect the committee to other agencies such as SGSC, GRNHG, ANHLC

### **3. Develop the program**

1. Plan and provide quality programs and services for children, young people and adults, including support for volunteers and contractors involved in delivery of the program
2. Monitor demographics and community needs in light of existing program and community debate
3. Ensure effective promotion and marketing, including production of *Matter of Fact*
4. Negotiate contracts and performance agreements with funding agencies, and submit accountability statistics and documentation on time
5. Maintain effective links with major funding bodies including attending approximately one in every three GRNHG meetings

### **4. Employ and manage staff**

1. Employ and manage all staff, including volunteers
2. Support staff and involve staff and committee in a process of continuous improvement
3. Prepare position descriptions for all paid/contracted and voluntary staff
4. Develop an annual professional development plan for all staff, paid and voluntary
5. Conduct performance appraisal for all staff against work plans and/or position descriptions at least every 2 years

## 5. Manage records and administrative systems

### *Financial Resource Management*

1. Manage all financial expenditure in accordance with strategic plans, priorities and funding requirements
2. Develop an annual budget and budget updates, and ensure that book keeping methods allow the committee to monitor expenditure against budget
3. Ensure that effective financial management systems such as book keeping are developed and reviewed regularly
4. Write/coordinate tender applications and funding submissions to secure funding of programs and services in line with the goals of the plan
5. Liaise with the treasurer and auditor and ensure a financial report to the management committee at each meeting

### *Organisational administration*

1. Continuously improve administrative systems, including office procedures, reception, data processing, fees payment and records

## Volunteers

<p><b>Why volunteer at VBCC?</b></p>	<p>Volunteering is unpaid community work, freely chosen. Volunteers often say that they want to ‘give something back to the community’, or that they want to ‘connect up with other people in the community’ by working alongside them. Happiness and wellbeing research shows that volunteers often have more meaning and purpose in their lives. The work of volunteers certainly creates a stronger and better connected community.</p>
<p><b>What sort of voluntary work is available at VBCC?</b></p>	<p>We try to match the work with your skills and interests. You can work on an individual project or as part of a small team. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the school holiday children’s program;</li> <li>○ the management committee;</li> <li>○ the recycle shop</li> <li>○ organising or teaching or leading an activity;</li> <li>○ a team that organises and caters for events;</li> <li>○ fund raising;</li> <li>○ a working group;</li> <li>○ administration such as reception, filing and photocopying;</li> <li>○ articles for Matter of Fact, delivering copies to outlets;</li> <li>○ doing repairs to the building and equipment;</li> <li>○ the garden - watering, weeding, pruning and so forth;</li> <li>○ shopping in Leongatha or Wonthaggi</li> </ul>
<p><b>What’s the process for getting involved?</b></p>	<p>VBCC advertises for volunteers; seeks out people who might be interested and asks them to be involved; and suggests volunteerism to people who come to activities at the Centre.</p> <p>Sometimes people have a vision for what the Centre can do and they approach us with an idea they’d like to try. E.g. <i>Matter of Fact</i></p>

	<p>You'll be asked to fill in a form that gives us your contact details and lists your main interests. We keep a register of our volunteers. All registered volunteers are endorsed by the committee and are covered by our insurance policy.</p> <p>Some forms of voluntary work require a police check. Usually volunteers will be members of VBCC so we will ask you to join if you aren't already a member. If you need and want training for your task we'll do all we can to make sure you get this.</p>
<b>Role of the manager</b>	<p>At VBCC all volunteers, including members of the committee who do voluntary work in between committee meetings, negotiate with, and report to the manager. This doesn't mean that the manager is always there supervising, but we are all accountable to the manager for the way we do our voluntary jobs. The manager will make sure you have a clear, written job description and that you have the proper resources and support for the work. The manager will consult with you about anything that affects your work and you'll be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses that have been approved</p>

<p><b>Volunteers have the right to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Information about VBCC's policies and procedures</li> <li>2. A position description with lines of accountability</li> <li>3. Know who to turn to for help and support when needed and be willing to ask</li> <li>4. Be part of the staff team</li> <li>5. Training when they start work, and on-going training as needed</li> <li>6. Know that their work is valued and acknowledged through constructive</li> </ol>	<p><b>Volunteers are responsible to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commit to VBCC's aims and values</li> <li>2. Be informed about, and follow, VBCC's policies and processes</li> <li>3. Respect confidentiality</li> <li>4. Respect and uphold the rights of co-workers</li> <li>5. Represent and protect the interests of VBCC to the wider public</li> <li>6. Be reliable and on time for work</li> <li>7. Notify a co-worker in good time if they are unavailable for work</li> </ol>
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<p>feedback such as performance evaluation</p> <p>7. Be safe on the job and have insurance cover</p> <p>8. Choices, including the right to say no without guilt</p> <p>9. Not be exploited</p> <p>10. Be trusted with relevant confidential information</p> <p>11. Be consulted on all matters that affect their work</p> <p>12. Reimbursement for approved expenses necessarily incurred on the job</p>	<p>8. Carry out the agreed duties of their job description</p> <p>9. Give and accept constructive, supportive criticism</p> <p>10. Recognise personal limitations</p> <p>11. Acknowledge and accept management by those authorized by VBCC to carry out management roles</p> <p>12. Attend training arranged for them</p> <p>13. Act to resolve conflict</p>
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## How are the staff going in their work?

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>VBCC's performance discussion process gives staff the chance to measure how they are going - in a private conversation with the person they report to. It's part of professional development and aims to encourage staff towards the best they can do, knowing they have the support of VBCC.</p> <p>Good performance evaluation is best done with honesty and kindness on both sides. It reassures the staff member that their work is acknowledged and valued.</p> <p>Performance evaluation is done every 6-12 months:</p>
<b>The manager's performance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The committee is responsible for the manager's evaluation – not a perfect situation because committee members aren't around on a day-to-day basis. The committee delegates this task to the President.</li> <li>2. The manager writes a work plan that aligns with VBCC's plans and policies, and is realistic and achievable. The President signs it off. This is the main document used in performance evaluation.</li> <li>3. At the end of each 6-12 month period a discussion takes place. See the sample format for this on the next page.</li> </ol>



<b>Other staff, paid and voluntary</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 The manager will usually be in the best position to evaluate and support other paid and volunteer staff. Unless separate arrangements are put in place by the committee, the manager, will <i>judiciously</i> initiate performance evaluation with other centre staff. This will usually be informal, and might even be casual. Or it can take the form of a discussion along the lines of the sample format for the manager.</li> <li>2 If committee members have concerns about the performance of the manager or any other staff, these must be raised with the President in the first instance, not the manager.</li> <li>3 If committee member concerns are not resolved after raising them with the President, further action must follow grievance procedures.</li> </ol>
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**Sample format for a discussion to weigh up a year's work (attached)**

It can be adapted for use by the manager in performance discussions with other staff

Manager's preparation and action	President's preparation and action
<p>Manager to think about these questions:</p> <p><b>The Job</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are you best at in your job? What are your strengths? Which areas have gone very well in the past 12 months?</li> <li>• What are you not so good at? Which areas have been most difficult lately?</li> <li>• How might your work change/develop in the next 12 months?</li> </ul> <p><b>Working relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are your main work contacts? Who most affects how you do your job? Who is most affected by how you do your job?</li> <li>• What support and assistance do you receive/give to them? Where does this work well and less well?</li> <li>• How would you like to see your working relationships change over the next 12 months?</li> </ul> <p><b>Our centre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you feel about working here?</li> <li>• How do you see your future here?</li> </ul> <p><b>Other matters</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there anything you want to raise not covered so far?</li> </ul> <p><b>Follow up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What would you like me/the committee to do as a result of this talk?</li> <li>• What will you do yourself as a result of this talk?</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Manager writes new work plan.</li> </ul>	<p>Choose a quiet comfortable setting</p> <p>Have a copy of the manager's position description and work plan on hand to consult during the meeting.</p> <p>Allow 40 minutes to go through most of the questions in column 1. No need to follow them slavishly. Aim for a good long talk.</p> <p>Use active listening and take brief notes.</p> <p>Make sure other professional development is considered in the discussion.</p> <p>Read all documents before the meeting.</p> <p><b>Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Write notes that summarise the discussion.</li> <li>○ Get the manager to countersign the notes.</li> <li>○ If there are changes to the job description, or there's a recommendation for a new classification of the position, bring these issues to the committee and report that performance evaluation has happened.</li> <li>○ Sign off manager's new work plan.</li> </ul>

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