



Shared Facility Partnerships

A Guide to Good Governance for Schools and the Community



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Ministers' Foreword.



Schools are at the heart of local communities and the Victorian Government is committed to opening the school gates even wider through shared-facility partnerships.

While creating outstanding learning opportunities will always remain the main focus of our schools; these partnerships will not only provide added facilities for schools but widespread benefits for local communities.

We are encouraging schools to join with councils, community organisations, businesses, sport and other education providers to forge a new future together. By combining funds and resources, they will be able to build facilities such as halls, libraries, performing arts spaces, technology and recreational centres and children's centres for all to use and enjoy.

It will also increase access to world-class amenities for a range of purposes at a single location. This will mean more efficient government investment without duplicating facilities within the community.

This Good Governance Guide will be a great help for schools, communities and local and state government agencies in planning for and maintaining successful partnerships.

We trust it will be of great assistance as we all work together to make our communities more vibrant and even better places to live.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bronwyn Pike".

Bronwyn Pike
Minister for Education

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Batchelor".

Peter Batchelor MP
Minister for Community Development

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Introduction.

“ Schools are a great community asset but too many are under-utilised outside normal school hours. We need to encourage greater sharing of infrastructure between schools and other community institutions to make schools the heart of their communities.

Premier John Brumby, Future of Schooling in Australia conference, 25 September 2007 ”



Schools are integral parts of our communities – physically, socially and culturally. They are places where young people develop the knowledge, skills and relationships to participate and contribute to their communities throughout their lives.

There is a long history in Victoria of schools and community partners working together to build and share facilities. Recently, this type of collaboration reflects the Victorian Government’s commitment to providing world-class learning environments and ensuring positive benefits for communities, while retaining education as the core business of schools.

Under the *Victorian Schools Plan*, the Government is rebuilding and modernising all Victorian government schools, including through a number of regeneration projects. The Government recognises the important contribution that school–community partnerships make not only to educational outcomes but also to strong and vibrant communities. As a result a key focus of the *Victorian Schools Plan* is encouraging the shared use of school facilities by the community and collaborating with partners in joint venture infrastructure projects to service a broader range of community needs at a single location. By combining funds and resources, such partnerships expand the possibilities available to schools and other community organisations.

The Government recognises that partnerships and collaborations are essential for the best delivery of early childhood education and care. This pledge has been spelled out in Victoria’s Plan to Improve Outcomes for Early Childhood Education. This includes a commitment to co-location on school sites.

Shared-facility partnerships offer an opportunity to bring together schools, local government and communities in developing facilities that provide widespread benefit. Different partners will have varying expectations of such partnerships, as well as different resources, skills and organisational requirements. Effective governance is framed by a shared vision and responsibilities, and is critical to the success of any shared-facility partnership.

This guide has been developed to assist schools, communities and local and state government agencies in planning for and maintaining successful partnerships through the establishment of effective governance arrangements. It describes recommended governance processes and structures for the three key phases of any shared-facility partnership (planning, development and management), with a particular focus on issues that relate to the operational management of the facility. The guide also provides links to tools and other sources of advice that can assist those involved in the development and management of partnership projects. It has been developed to complement the *Schools as Community Facilities: Policy Framework and Guidelines*.



Section A: Overview.

Shared-facility partnerships

What is a shared-facility partnership?

A shared-facility partnership is an association between a school and partner organisations for the use and development of facilities. Facilities that can be shared by schools and the broader community include:

- halls and meeting spaces
- recreation facilities and sporting facilities
- out of school hours care spaces
- technology and information technology centres
- libraries and resource centres
- health and other family support services
- performing arts spaces
- children's centres.

Shared-facility partnerships range from the relatively simple to the quite complex, depending on the number of partners involved, sources of funding, availability and ownership of land and the number of facility users.

Simple partnership projects typically involve a school and one partner building a facility, usually on school land. There is usually clarity from the outset about the sources of funding and about when the school and partner organisation have use of the facility, both within and outside of school hours. An example may be the building of a school gymnasium to be shared with a local gymnastics school.

Complex partnership projects involve a school and multiple-partner organisations developing a facility that is spread over a large area (or over different sites), with different functional spaces,

that involve multiple funding sources and diverse interest groups. An example is a children's centre (including kindergarten, child care, and maternal and child health) on or adjacent to school land.

Partnership projects can also encompass co-located facilities, which involve bringing together a range of services on one site. In these cases, the management structure that is adopted will either integrate all partners involved in providing the services, or enable each service to retain its own management structure.

The sharing of facilities between schools and the community is usually formalised in a legal agreement to ensure that all parties know their responsibilities and obligations. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) has developed standard agreements to support the sharing of facilities on school land. These include:

- hire agreements (when a school facility is used on a one-off basis by the community),
- licence agreements (when a school facility is used by the community on a regular basis) and
- development and joint-use agreement (when a school and one or more partner organisations come together to plan, build and in some cases jointly manage a facility that is to be used both by the school and by community groups or organisations).

Further information on how to establish all of these agreements is available in the *Schools as Community Facilities: Policy Framework and Guidelines*.



Shared-facility partnerships allow the community to come together and take responsibility for facility developments that meet local needs. Many facilities would not exist without partnerships having been established.

Peter Henry, Assistant Regional Director, Grampians Region, DEECD

What are the benefits of shared-facility partnerships?

Many Victorian schools and communities benefit from the educational, economic and broader community advantages that flow from shared-facility partnerships, including:

- new or improved and more fit-for-purpose facilities through the pooling of resources and expertise
- more efficient government investment and better asset utilisation without duplicating facilities within the same community
- increased access to quality facilities for a range of purposes at a single location
- stronger social networks and greater community involvement in school activities and student learning
- enhanced reputation of schools within the community and a shared sense of pride in local schools
- improved school security as a result of the increased use of school premises out of school hours
- a greater sense of community through the shared ownership, operation and maintenance of facilities.

Who can become a partner in a shared facility?

There are many different bodies that can partner with schools to develop and share facilities, including:

- local councils
- community organisations and local businesses
- commercial organisations
- sport and recreation providers
- other education and training providers, including non-government schools
- not-for-profit organisations.

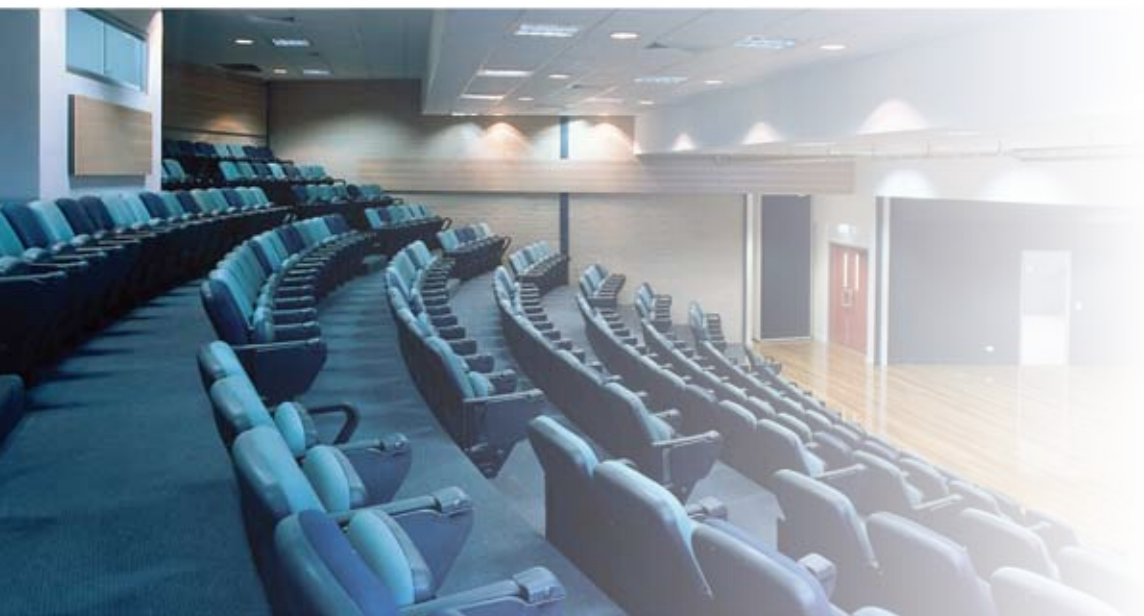
Local councils are developing closer working relationships with school networks and the regional offices of DEECD to enhance service planning and provision to communities.

Likewise, partnerships can be established between schools and other local organisations, promoting economic efficiencies in support provision at the local level, and building mutual purpose and understanding.

What makes a shared-facility partnership work?

Successful partnerships share a number of key characteristics, including:

- a clear benefit to both the school and community
- a genuinely collective vision between the partners, the community and other stakeholders that fosters a sense of shared ownership of the facility
- entrepreneurial local leadership and a willingness to make things happen
- strong cooperative relationships between partners
- recognition of the long-term planning required at the school, local council and community levels and alignment with existing or planned service delivery models
- a sound knowledge of the legal and financial responsibilities of developing and maintaining shared facilities
- a clear and shared understanding among all partners of how the facility will be managed and improved throughout its lifecycle
- a detailed legal agreement that documents the roles and responsibilities of all partners and appropriate dispute-resolution processes.



Governance and shared-facility partnerships

It is critical to have people around the table during the planning stage with the strategic capacity to contribute and present recommendations for approval to their organisation. It is also preferable for all partners to have a person allocated to the project who is dedicated to it and available consistently.

Lisa Letic, Manager, Family and Children's Services, City of Hume

What is governance?

Broadly speaking, governance is about the decision-making and accountability within an organisation. This relies upon structures and processes to enable the organisation to function effectively. It also means an organisation conforms with its legal and regulatory requirements and meets community and stakeholder expectations of probity and openness.

In the context of shared-facility partnerships, governance ensures the involvement and participation of all partners; maintaining open lines of communication and fostering coordination; cooperation and mutual accountability. An effective governance arrangement allows partnership goals to be realised, stakeholders to be engaged and risks to be managed. In addition, good governance allows a partnership to function effectively without detracting from the school's core responsibilities of teaching and learning.

A partnership also needs to consider the existing governance arrangements of each of the organisations involved. This includes consideration of the operating environment of each partner as well as their approval processes and decision-making authorities.

What are the principles of good governance?

Good governance principles should be embedded in a partnership's governance processes and structure. These principles are outlined below:

- **Transparency** – all decisions concerning the partnership should be based on clearly established criteria and be open to scrutiny.
- **Accountability** – each partner should know what they and the other partners are responsible for, be aware of the consequence of not delivering on their accountabilities, and act accordingly.
- **Participation** – the school, council, local community and other stakeholders should each have an opportunity to determine how the partnership and the facility itself are run, to provide feedback and to be heard.
- **Consensus Oriented** – partners should have a shared understanding of the design and purpose of the facility, and of the management of the partnership, including procedures, processes and measures of effectiveness.
- **Responsiveness** – how the partnership is managed and directed should be flexible enough to respond to new ideas and changing circumstances.



- **Effectiveness and efficiency** – the scope of the project must correspond with the resources available (e.g. funding, time, personnel), with the best result possible planned for in terms of maximum outcomes in teaching and learning.
- **Integrity and stewardship** – while it is important that developing a new facility is done effectively and efficiently, it must also be carried out legally and ethically.
- **Leadership** – clear leadership is required from all partners, including accountability for progress of the project and associated risks.
- changes in the governance structure to suit the three distinct phases of a partnership project: planning, development and management.

Good governance also relies on having appropriate processes in place, such as:

- agreed operating protocols and terms of reference (see examples in *Section C*)
- regular meetings of the governance bodies
- comprehensive documentation of discussions and decisions of the governing bodies, including agreed processes for managing legislative requirements and record-keeping
- a project management plan, comprised of the project outline, governance structure and control mechanisms such as risk management and dispute resolution (see example in *Section C*)
- where possible, continuity of membership throughout the phases of the project to maintain commitment to the original vision for the facility. In addition, succession planning, or an exit strategy is needed to cover the departure of key individuals from the project and the arrival of new members
- provision of appropriate training for governing members, depending on the skills required
- clear communication between governance bodies at all times
- clearly established performance measures to assist in the evaluation of the partnership.

What governance structures and processes do effective partnerships have?

There is no ‘one size fits all’ governance structure for every project. The structure chosen will reflect the scope of the project and the number and nature of partners involved. Some groups within the structure will be advisory; some will exist to reflect the needs of stakeholders; and others will have responsibility for key decision-making.

Effective governance structures are characterised by:

- the selection of governing body members who represent key project stakeholders and have the authority to act on behalf of the organisation they represent.
- a consideration of the skills and expertise that will be required by individuals within the governing bodies at different phases of the project.

Different types of bodies that can form a governance structure during the planning, development and management stages are outlined below:

GOVERNANCE BODIES	KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	SUGGESTED MEMBERSHIP	PHASES
Steering Committee / Project Board / Project Control Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility for key project decisions • Oversees project feasibility and the development of a business plan • Approves project budget and strategic and operational plans, including asset management • Provides guidance to project team • Ensures milestones are achieved and reports progress to key stakeholders • Seeks advice from any advisory committees or reference groups that are formed • Ensures initial project vision is maintained 	<p>At least one representative from each partner</p> <p>Community representatives</p>	Plan Develop
Project Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for delivering the facility • Accountable to the project board 	One representative from each partner plus others (e.g. architect)	Plan Develop
Advisory Committee / Reference Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represents key stakeholders, providing a mechanism to air their views and ensuring the project meets their needs • Contributes expertise to key project phases, providing advice to the project board • Acts as link between key decision makers and those directly involved with facility development (architects, builders, etc.) • Provides advice to other groups within the governance structure, such as the project team during the facility development and the committee of management once the facility is complete 	One representative from each key stakeholder group, including one or more community representatives project manager and any experts	Plan Develop Manage
Working Group / Subcommittee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides input to a particular facet of the project development such as facility design, facility use, program development and marketing • Provides advice to the advisory committee and/or project team 	A mix of key stakeholders, community representatives and/or users of the facility	Plan Develop Manage
Committee of Management or Responsible Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operates the facility • Oversees hiring of the facility, setting of fees for use, and collection of fees • Ensures appropriate facility insurance is obtained and maintained • Employs facility staff as appropriate (e.g. a committee of management may appoint a facility manager) • Maintains, cleans, repairs and secures the facility in an appropriate manner 	<p>Committee of management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • representatives from the school and key partners; • representatives from the main user groups (optional) <p>Responsible partner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one of the partners as agreed 	Manage

Governance structures

The governance structure for a relatively simple partnership, such as between a school, a local council and a sporting association to develop and share a sports stadium on a school site, will evolve over time. At different phases it may incorporate a project board, an advisory committee and a committee of management. This is illustrated in Figure 1, with the project board and advisory committee in place during the planning and development phases and the committee of management taking over for the ongoing management of the facility.

Figure 1.1: Example governance structure for a simple partnership

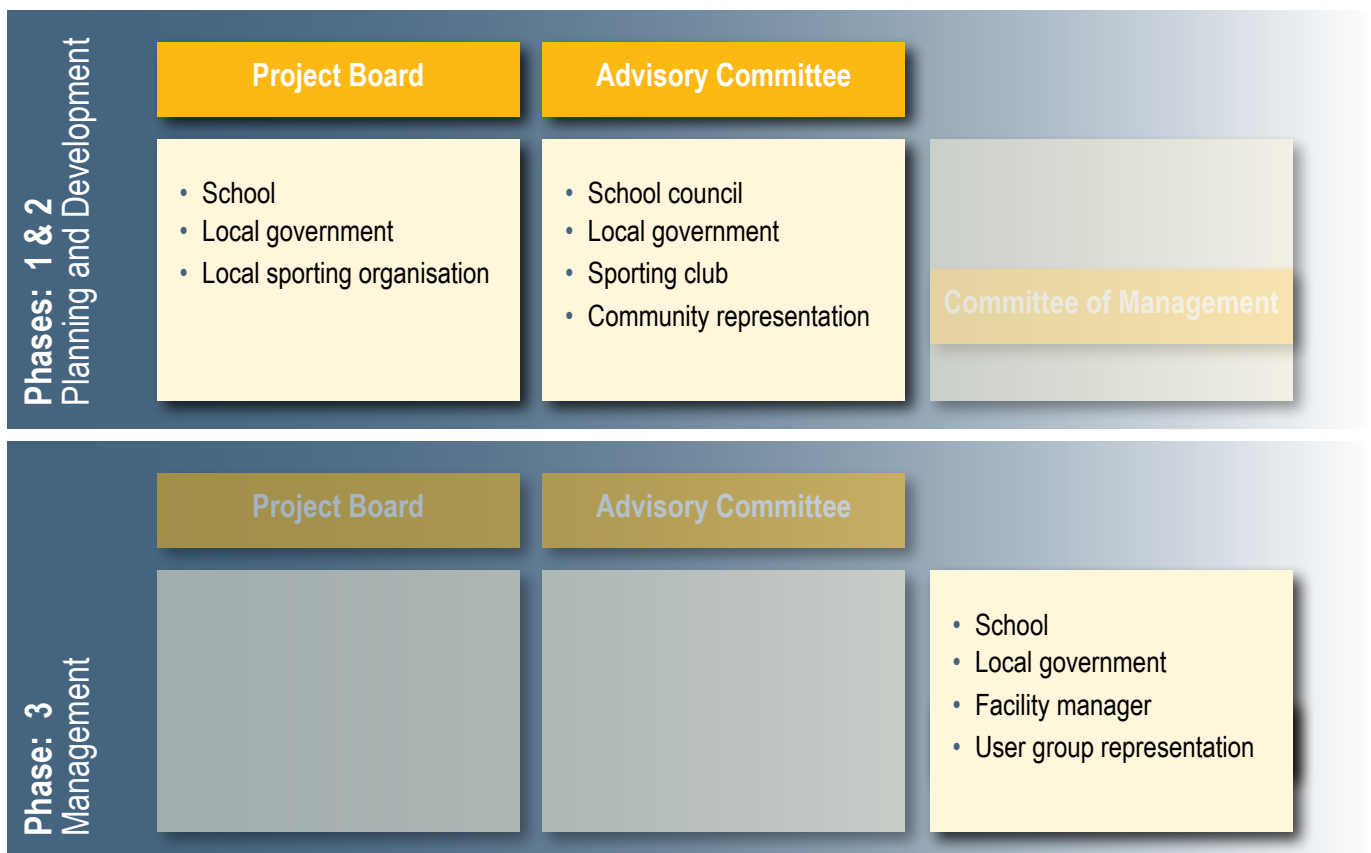
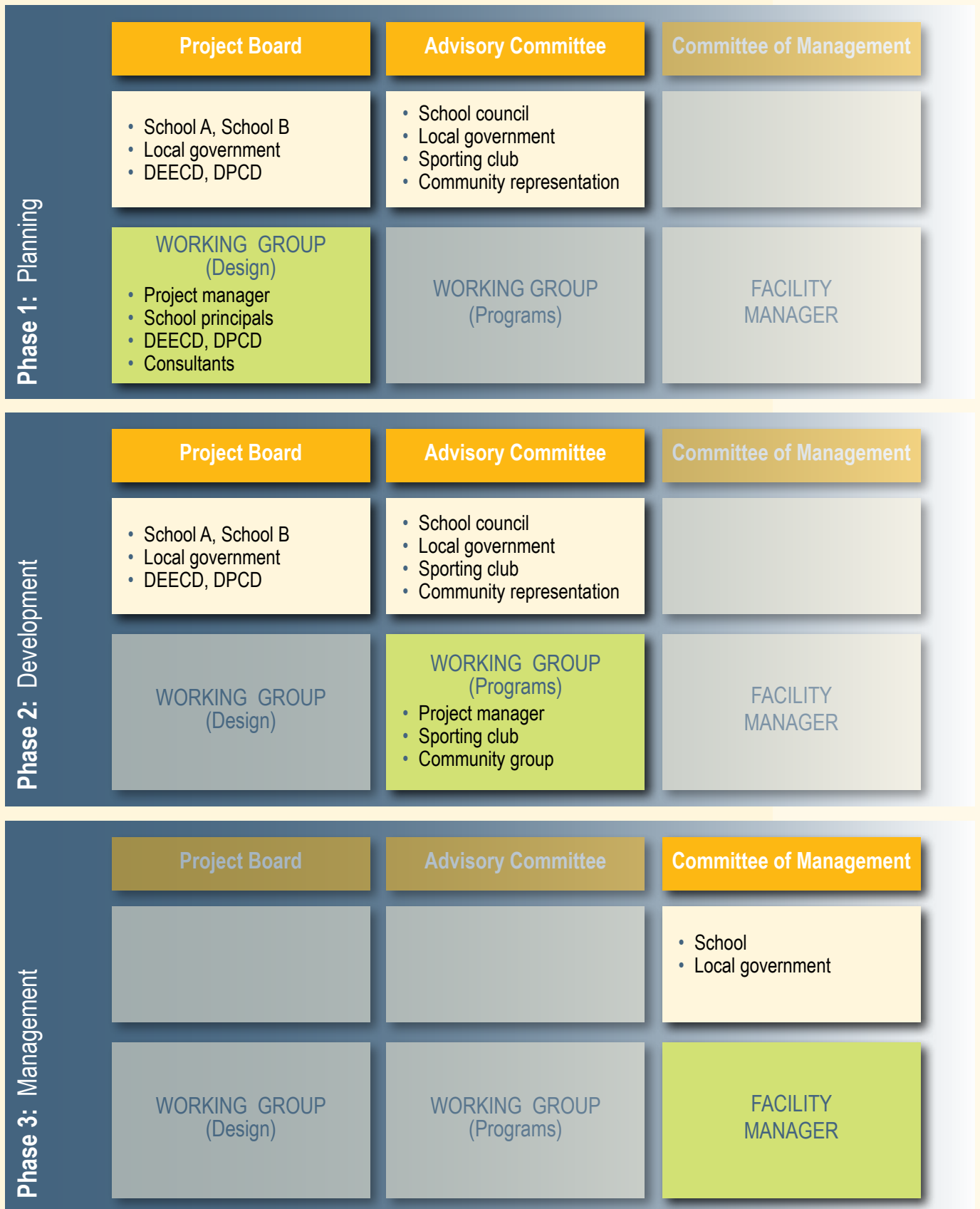


Figure 2 illustrates a governance structure for a more complex project where two schools, local government, local community organisations and two Victorian Government departments are in partnership to develop a new educational, recreational and community precinct. The governance structure incorporates a project board, an advisory committee, two working groups, a committee of management and a facility manager.

Figure 2: Example governance structure for a more complex partnership



“ We engaged a consultant to bring together the ideas of the various partners. She spent time understanding the culture of the local community, challenged assumptions, was skilled in dealing with government, knew when and how to be assertive, and wouldn't readily accept no for an answer. She really helped us move forward. ”

Gerardine Christou, Neighbourhood Renewal Place Manager, Wendouree West and Delacombe



How can workloads be managed?

Principals, and in some cases school and local councils and other community leaders, are usually required to take an active role in establishing and maintaining shared-facility partnerships. This responsibility can lead to a significant increase in workload, and the nature of the work required at times calls for skills that are outside their usual professional expertise.

Partnership projects can benefit from engaging expertise in different phases of the project, such as an external facilitator, partnership broker, financial adviser/business planner, project manager or a facility manager. For larger projects that involve a larger number of stakeholders and operate under a more complex governance structure, these

individuals can devote time to the role that others within the partner organisations may not have.

It is important for the governing body to make available sufficient resources to support these roles, and the costs should generally be shared by funding partners. The governing body will need to determine the capacity of the partnership to engage such individuals according to the particular needs of the project, and approach potential funding bodies for support if necessary.

The table opposite describes the key responsibilities of a number of specialised roles.

ROLE	KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	PHASES
Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists in bringing project partners together • Facilitates the needs of stakeholder groups to be communicated to the governing bodies • Liaises with government departments and agencies, especially regarding funding • Maintains independence from all project partners 	Plan
Financial adviser/ business planner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists in financial modelling and the development of a business plan • Provides guidance on evaluating assets for insurance cover • Provides advice on meeting maintenance costs and setting up a capital fund 	Plan Manage
Partnership broker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes expertise in and knowledge of partnership projects • Assists in establishing and supporting an appropriate governance structure for the project • Takes a lead role in business planning for the project • Negotiate issues such as project timing and resourcing with partners • Prepares communication materials to promote the benefits of the partnership, and the link between the governance process and intended outcomes for the communities • Develops a system for evaluating the governance process and outcomes in accordance with the partnership objectives • Maintains independence from all project partners 	Plan Develop
Project manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages the overall implementation of the project from business plan to completion of construction within agreed parameters for time, budget and quality • Coordinates the work of consultants and contractors, including designers, architects, quantity surveyors and builders • Liaises between the project's main governing bodies and the developers, user groups, and other community and reference groups • Oversees the management of the risks to the project • Monitors budget • Maintains documentation of procedures and approval processes 	Plan Develop
Facility manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures the facility is appropriately maintained • Acts as the main point of contact for users of the facility • Collects fees as required from users of the facility • Monitors facility usage and liaises with governing body about capacity constraints • Ensures ongoing security arrangements for the facility • Attends meetings of the governing body as required 	Manage

Phases of shared-facility partnerships

Shared-facility partnerships, particularly those that demand the time and resources of many partners and stakeholders, require a sound project management approach to ensure their success. Partnership projects go through three key phases: planning, development and management. Key tasks are usually associated with each phase, as shown in the table below. Effective good governance structures and processes will ensure that these phases are managed effectively. The tasks in each of the phases are outlined in more detail in *Section B*.

PHASE ONE: PLANNING	PHASE TWO: DEVELOPMENT	PHASE THREE: MANAGEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess project feasibility, including potential funding sources • Establish a shared vision for the facility • Engage with stakeholders and the community • Develop a communication plan • Develop a business plan • Design the facility • Develop and endorse a legal agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage builders and other contractors • Oversee the budget • Prepare the facility for use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the facility • Oversee facility maintenance • Monitor outcomes of the legal agreement and review as appropriate

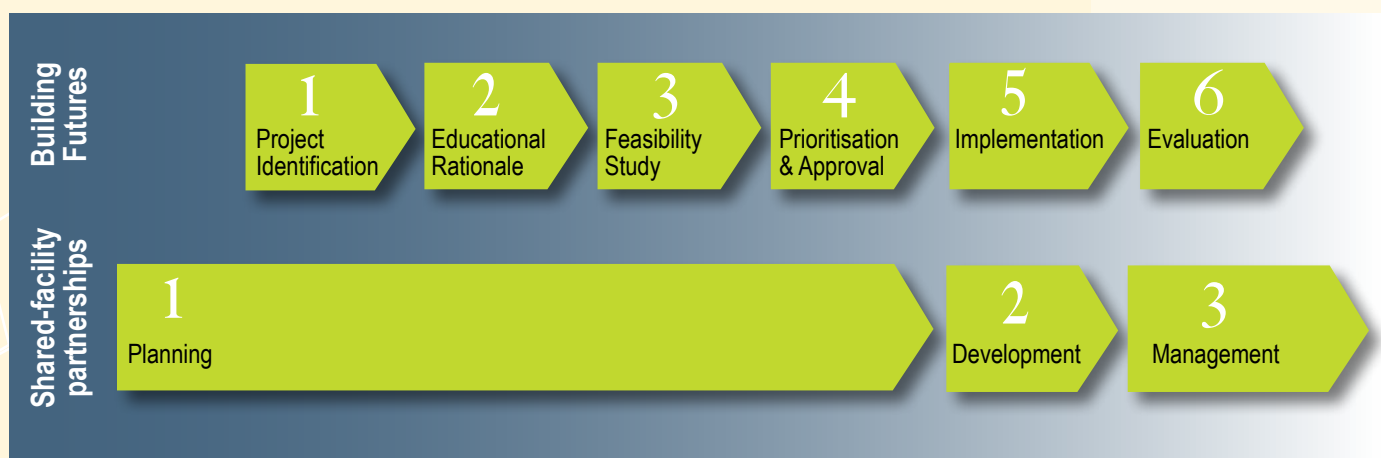
Shared-facility partnerships and the DEECD *Building Futures* process

Building Futures is the policy and process for all capital investment in school facilities and infrastructure. It is designed to ensure that expenditure on education assets generates gains in educational achievement. Shared-facility developments are also capital investment ventures and therefore schools involved in these projects must proceed through the *Building Futures* process in order to secure the Victorian Government's contribution to the project funds.

Building Futures involves a series of reviews at six key stages of a project's lifecycle. The first four stages provide for the development of strategies to improve student outcomes and the identification of any requirements for investment in school infrastructure. Proposals are then considered against a core set of criteria, which ensures that capital investment is driven by educational needs and improvements.

Figure 3 shows how the three phases of partnership projects, relate to the six stages of *Building Futures*, as outlined in this guide:

Figure 3: Phases of partnership projects



More information on the *Building Futures* process is available at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/buildingfutures/default.htm>





Section B: Planning, Developing and Managing a Partnership.

Phase One: Planning

Managing community and stakeholder expectations about realistic project outputs and outcomes in the planning and building stages of shared facilities is critical. A clash of stakeholder expectations provides a barrier to successful partnerships and getting the job done.

David Brooks, Director, Broadmeadows Schools Regeneration Project

PHASE ONE: PLANNING

- Feasibility, including funding
- Vision
- Stakeholder and community engagement
- Communication plan
- Business plan
- Design
- Legal agreement

The planning phase of a shared-facility partnership is critical. Establishing an effective governance structure for this phase will help to ensure that a shared vision for the project is established, that stakeholders are sufficiently engaged and a business plan is prepared. Where relevant, a comprehensive planning phase enables parties to formalise their partnership through a legal agreement.

Pre-planning: ensuring the project is viable

Shared-facility partnerships include substantial financial investments that require lengthy budget planning and approval times. Early, detailed and coordinated planning involving all partners is essential. Pre-planning can prevent disappointment at a later stage if funding support

is unsuccessful after other stakeholders and the community have become engaged in and attached to the project. Early consultation should occur with the local council to settle any issues over land ownership, building regulations and permits, as well as to coordinate with the service and facility planning processes undertaken by the council.

Potential sources of funding should be approached at this point, although it is likely that financial commitments will be tentative until the project is confirmed and formally commenced. Full or partial funding may come through the *Building Futures* process as mentioned earlier in these guidelines. Additional or alternative funding sources may include local government, other state government departments, Commonwealth government grant programs, private or philanthropic organisations, or locally raised funds. Project partners should explore these opportunities fully to maximise the funding available to support the project.

Information on potential funding options can be found in the *Schools as Community Facilities: Policy Framework and Guidelines*. Information on the Department of Planning and Community

Development (DPCD) grants and advice on accessing these opportunities can be provided through the DPCD local area teams. Schools and community organisations interested in developing shared-facility partnerships should contact their DEECD regional office (see page 47 for contact details) and local council for advice and support. DPCD local area teams can also provide assistance in this process.

Creating a shared vision

Great ideas for shared facilities can come from anywhere. Frequently they emerge when an individual or group (e.g. a principal, local council planner or sporting organisation), identifies a problem or opportunity.

While some preliminary feasibility investigations can be useful, it is premature to commence detailed business planning or enlist architects at this point. The priority at this stage is to engage with stakeholders so that a common vision for the facility is established. This vision is the foundation upon which a successful shared-facility partnership can develop, focusing on the benefits that are available to the broader community.

The vision for the project must be consistent with practical considerations such as the time frame for completion, the amount of funding likely to be available, and the resources available to support the partnership. Many successful partnership projects require lengthy periods of planning, in some cases as long as 10 years, as capital budget allocations are usually determined some years in advance.

For schools, an initial conversation with the regional or central DEECD office at this point can determine the broad feasibility of the project and keep expectations realistic. The final vision often involves compromise of the initial expectations of the parties. Partners will invariably bring to a project particular conformance requirements within which they operate, which will shape opportunities for shared-facility development. Schools operate under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* and within a policy context determined by the Government. Local councils operate under the *Local Government Act 1989* and associated legislation and local by-laws. While Community organisations are accountable to their own agreed documents, guiding principles and relevant legislation.

Once the vision is agreed, it is worthwhile documenting this in some way, such as in a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) (see example in *Section C*). An MOU can be valuable during the early phases of a partnership because it serves to document the initial intent and goodwill between the parties. It also establishes a formality to the relationship while leaving time for more detailed discussions about the content of any legal agreement that may be required.

The governing body must remember that an MOU has no formal legal standing. It is often useful to consult with the regional and/or central DEECD office again at this point to test the contents of any MOU or similar agreement developed at this stage.

Thorough discussions among all stakeholders help lay the groundwork for well-constructed legal agreements and ensure that the initial shared understandings are not lost when key individuals involved in the project's planning phase move on.

Michael Tudball, Director, Caroline Springs Partnership

Engaging stakeholders

A stakeholder is any individual or organisation that has influence over, or is impacted by, the partnership's activities. This includes those internal to the school and its partner organisations, such as students, parents, school staff, local councillors and other council staff, as well as the wider community.

The main governing body can lay the groundwork for success of the partnership project by undertaking widespread stakeholder engagement from the outset. Engaging with stakeholders helps ensure that those who have an interest in the project are given a 'voice'. This clarifies expectations and shapes the objectives of the project.

Within the partnership, it is critical to get 'buy-in' for the project at all levels of the partner organisations. To assist this process, partners should seek strategic support for the project from the highest levels of their stakeholder organisations, which can promote commitment to the project throughout each organisation.

The DPCD local area teams are available on request to facilitate and broker strong governance arrangements and engagement approaches for projects deemed high priority shared-facility partnerships.

To what extent should stakeholders be involved in the project?

A shared-facility partnership project can interest or have an impact on a number of individuals or organisations. While it is important to involve stakeholders, it may not be feasible for all stakeholders to engage in the project in a similar way. The more people involved in making decisions, the more difficult they can be to make. It is therefore important to identify the key stakeholders as early as possible.

A helpful way of identifying and prioritising the engagement of key stakeholders is by determining the extent of power they exert, and their interest in the project. These criteria will help to establish the best means of engaging each stakeholder group:

- **High power, high interest stakeholders:** these are key players in the project. They should participate in governance bodies such as the project board, receive reports on the progress of the project and lead or be included in other engagement activities
- **Low power, high interest stakeholders:** these should be involved in the project, e.g. participating in a reference committee or through focus groups or public meetings.
- **High power, low interest stakeholders:** these should be kept informed through fact sheets and websites.
- **Low power, low interest stakeholders:** these will have little interest in or impact on project processes and outcomes. Use generic engagement strategies, such as newspaper articles and fliers, to reach this group.



Shared ventures work best when a sense of ownership of the facility is fostered throughout the community.

Rob Spence, Chief Executive Officer, Municipal Association of Victoria

Why is community engagement so critical?

In many shared-facility partnerships, community organisations will partner with the school, or play an integral role in the shared partnership's governance structure. In all shared-facility partnerships, the wider community is one of the partnership's most important stakeholders. Knowing how to engage the community is therefore critical to good governance.

Broadly defined, community engagement is the process by which the community is involved in problem-solving or decision-making, and community input is employed to make better decisions.

In properly engaging with the community, the local governance arrangement becomes participatory. In other words, it ensures that those affected by the planning, development and management of the shared facility have a genuine say in decisions made about the facility. These 'bottom-up' collaborative processes are more likely to ensure the sustainability of the partnership than 'top-down' decision-making processes.

What is effective community engagement?

Community engagement takes a number of forms including information, consultation, involvement, collaboration and empowerment. If the goal is to provide the public with balanced information to assist them to understand problems and seek solutions, the engagement strategies will be different from those employed to engage stakeholders who are going to contribute to decisions or implement outcomes.

The key objective of community engagement is to ensure a shared understanding about the vision of the project. Developing a shared vision requires engagement with the community as early as possible about the problem or opportunity, and thinking creatively about connections with less empowered groups. Establishing a process for ongoing community consultation will also ensure the new facility meets the needs of its users and is well utilised.

The DPCD local area teams are able to provide advice for key projects on best-practice community engagement tools and methodologies that are relevant to local communities.

More information on community engagement, including the *Strengthening Local Communities* publication series is available on the DPCD website at

<http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/web14/dvc/dvcmain.nsf/allDocs/RWP0C47790245D57B16CA257045007FFBE3?OpenDocument>.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment provides a series of practical tools on community engagement at [http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/CA256F310024B628/0/5BEE8070970CF42ACA257085001FEF94/\\$File/Book+3+-+The+Engagement+Toolkit.pdf](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/CA256F310024B628/0/5BEE8070970CF42ACA257085001FEF94/$File/Book+3+-+The+Engagement+Toolkit.pdf).

The VicHealth website includes information on partnership development at <http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/partnerships>.



Developing a communication plan

A strategic and practical communication plan can support the lifecycle of a shared-facility project, and is often developed in the planning phase when creating a shared vision through effective stakeholder and community engagement. The main governing body may consider establishing a working group or subcommittee to develop a communication plan, linking it to any existing communication plans employed by the project partners.

Practical communication plan tools are available through the Schools Communication Toolkit at <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/commstoolkit.htm>>.

An outline of a communication plan is included in *Section C*.

Developing the business plan

A critical step for the main governing body during the planning stage is to ensure that a shared facility partnership is the right response to the problem or opportunity that exists. The long-term viability of a shared facility is essential and can be established through the careful development of a business plan, including a feasibility study (see sample feasibility plan in *Section C*). A comprehensive business plan includes the following elements:

- the business objectives of the proposed facility (e.g. the educational and community need for the facility)

- the nature of the existing facility (if applicable), and similar facilities already available to the school and community
- the attitudes of key stakeholders and decision-makers
- an analysis of the impact of current and forecast demographic trends on facility demand
- the proposed site or sites of the new facilities, based on professional planning advice
- an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) relating to various aspects of the facility (e.g. suitability of the site, financial viability, etc.)
- budgets for the development and the ongoing management of the facility, including projected costs of hiring external support, where required, and projected income and expenditure
- an examination of capital funding opportunities and consideration of how funding will be set aside for medium-to-long-term facility maintenance and upgrades
- an assessment of risk, including a risk management plan (method, criteria, responsibilities and reporting schedule)
- any actions required to implement the business plan.

Partners involved in large-scale partnership projects should consider options for investing resources in business planning. Utilising

business planning expertise can guide sound decision-making by the governing body and minimise risk to the project. The business plan must be endorsed by the main governing body.

What support is available for the business planning process?

Regional DEECD offices have well-developed knowledge of local provision planning and can be a valuable source of assistance in business planning. Local councils also have access to demographic and other information essential to business planning. Local business people can also bring expertise and capacity to the building and planning process (e.g. financial planning, budgeting).

Most local governments also have significant experience building and managing multi-use facilities. Schools seeking to evaluate their options should contact their local council.

Advice on asset management can be found on the DEECD website at <<http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/facility/schools/index.htm>>.

Information on risk management is available for schools from the DEECD intranet at <<https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/intranet/policies/risk.htm>>.

Designing a facility

The design of the facility is more likely to fit its function and meet the differing needs of all users if all partners share a clear understanding of the purpose of the facility. Some of the design issues that a main governing body should consider include:

- the relationship of the proposed facility to existing and future buildings on the site
- the provision of adequate open space and additional amenities (e.g. lighting, irrigation, change rooms)
- the size of the land for the development of recreation and sporting facilities required to comply with the guidelines of recognised sporting bodies and to allow for optimum use
- multi-functionality and flexibility in response to possible changes in the needs of the school or the community, or in the local demographic profile



- principles of environmentally sound design
- the layout of the facility, to ensure it is conducive to shared use, and based on consultation with the community and potential users
- community access needs, including adequate on-site parking, drop-off zones, pedestrian crossings and traffic management that meet safety requirements and minimise traffic disruption
- if on DEECD land, the consideration of student safety and security issues due to increased community access.

Information on innovative school designs, related research and design resources are available on the *Building Futures* website at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/buildingfutures/default.htm>. For design guidelines on developing facilities on DEECD land, principals and school councils should consult their regional office. Advice about the processes for engaging consultants, including architects is available from <http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/facility/consult/select.htm>.

Formalising the partnership

A formal development and joint-use agreement, executed by the Minister for Education, is required for all projects that involve a partner contributing financially to the development of a shared facility on DEECD land. The agreement is critical to defining the nature of the relationship between the partners, and establishes their respective roles and responsibilities.

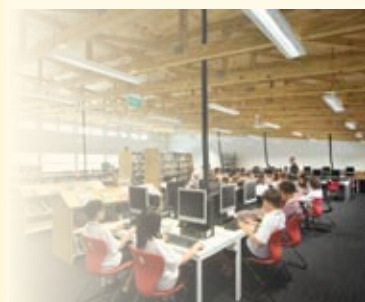
Two distinct management models for the ongoing management of the facility must be

considered - a committee of management or a responsible partner. A committee of management will usually comprise one representative from each of the partners, as well as a representative of the users of the facility if appropriate. In the responsible partner model, one of the partners assumes sole responsibility for the day-to-day management of the facility. The model chosen will depend on what kind of arrangements best suit the partners, bearing in mind the degrees of control and involvement that will be needed for the ongoing management of the facility, as well as the willingness and capacity of partners to assume responsibility for this role. The decision about the model may also depend on the availability of resources and expertise among the partners. An outline of the standard provisions of development and joint-use agreements for committee of management and responsible partner governance models can be found in *Section C*. Further detail on legal agreements can be found in the *Schools as Community Facilities Policy Framework and Guidelines*.

The legal agreement should be in place toward the end of the planning phase of the project, prior to the commencement of building works. This timing is important because the agreement will prescribe governance-related structures and processes that apply both before and after the facility is constructed.

The main governing body should:

- allow plenty of time to get the legal agreement right. Legal deliberations are important and require all partners to engage seriously in the process. It is recommended that all partners seek independent legal advice.



- determine responsibility for recurrent costs, particularly in regard to shared areas and the distribution of service costs where there is no separate metering. Where amenable, shared costs can be dispersed in line with usage patterns or hours of operation.
- Agree on the hours of use by each party; and the processes for setting fees, booking arrangements, and changeover times. This ensures that inconvenience to other partners is avoided
- include all necessary works in contractual agreements, e.g. footpaths, car parking, minor roadwork, landscaping, furnishing, fittings, interior and exterior lighting, security, signage and access
- focus on maintaining the enthusiasm and goodwill of the partners involved.



Phase Two: Development



PHASE TWO: DEVELOPMENT

- Contractors
- Budget management
- Preparation for use

During the development phase, project partners focus on the construction of the facility. The governance structure in place during the planning phase will change to correspond with the new demands associated with construction. For example, a project manager might be appointed to oversee the building of the facility and a working group may be established to represent future facility users.

Engaging contractors

The main governing body's terms of reference should identify the person or group responsible for hiring and coordinating contractors. Depending on the governance structure and size of the project, the architect is usually responsible for the preparation of specifications and plans, tendering the project and overseeing the on-site coordination of the appointed contractors.

The governing body enters into the contract with the successful tenderer(s). In some instances, this maybe the school council if the building is on DEECD property and they are the major stakeholder. In others, it may be an alternative stakeholder or a combination of both. This should be specified in the legal agreement established during the planning phase. With a proposed building that is valued in excess of \$50,000 and where the school council is to be the principle stakeholder, all plans and associated specifications must be approved by the DEECD Facilities and Infrastructure Branch (FIB) prior to the project proceeding to tender. Should these plans and specifications be deemed appropriate, approval to proceed to tender and enter into a contract/s will be provided by FIB. This requirement is based on the existing delegation authorities of schools. In all other cases, copies of plans should be provided to FIB for comment.

If the proposed site for development is on DEECD land, schools and community partners should be aware of legislative and other DEECD requirements relating to the



management of a capital works project as outlined in the Procedures for New Construction and Major Upgrades, available at <http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/facility/pdfs/ProceduresforNewConstructionUpgrade2005.pdf>.

The Department of Infrastructure has produced a useful publication for principals and school councils that are new to the tendering process. Tendering for Public Construction and Related Consultancy Services provides a step-by-step breakdown of the tendering process, and can be accessed from http://www.buildingcommission.com.au/resources/documents/Guide-Tendering_for_Public_Construction.pdf.

Project partners should also consider if and how joint contracting arrangements might lead to greater efficiencies, for example jointly engaging an architect to prepare plans for different parts of a co-located building project.

Budget management

Effective management of the budget will ensure that the project is delivered and that partners are able to identify and treat any risks to the project. The financial responsibilities and availability of funds of all parties must be specified in the legal agreement established during the planning phase prior to a project proceeding to tender. During construction, responsibility for budget management rests with the project architect in conjunction with the main governing body. The contributors should formalise their understanding of cost sharing responsibilities. They should also agree

on contingency plans should cost overruns be experienced during or at completion of the project.

Preparing the facility for use

Between building completion and opening the facility, a number of tasks require the attention of the governing bodies. These tasks will depend on the nature of the facility and the services it will provide to the school and its community. Some tasks that may need to be carried out include:

- hiring staff for the facility
- developing a strategy and tools for promoting the facility or its services to future users and stakeholders
- preparing transition arrangements for services moving from existing locations into the new facility
- determining what security arrangements the facility will require
- preparing any programs that will be run in the facility
- winding up the governance structures used during the development phase in preparation for the governance model for the ongoing management of the facility.

Attention to these tasks can help to smooth the transition to effective ongoing management of the facility when it is opened, as well as to retain goodwill between project partners. It will be necessary for the main governing body to wind up the governance structures used during the development phase and establish a governance model for the ongoing management of the facility.

Phase Three: Management

PHASE THREE: MANAGEMENT

- Facility management
- Maintenance
- Maintenance and review of legal agreement

Once a facility is completed, the governance arrangements for the ongoing management will usually be streamlined, but remain critical to the success of the partnership.

As determined through the legal agreement that is finalised during the planning phase, a committee of management or a responsible partner will usually be the main governing structure in place, sometimes complemented by a reference group or user group.

The key governance tasks during this phase relate to use of the facility, its capital maintenance, and upholding the terms of the partnership's agreement.

Managing the facility

Irrespective of the governance structure adopted, all partners need to be clear from the beginning of the project about their ongoing management responsibilities for the shared facility, including arrangements regarding maintenance works and costs. These understandings should be reflected in the legal agreement and supported by ongoing communication between partners about management issues.

Facility management includes responsibility for employing staff to provide services for the facility, hiring the facility to user groups, collecting fees, maintaining the overall cleanliness and amenity of the facility, and

ensuring there are appropriate access and security arrangements in place. There also needs to be clarity about the allocation of any income streams generated by the facility and agreements as to whether any profits will be spent solely on the facility, or made available to other school or community needs. The governing body will also need to consider and outline as early as possible any charges owed by partners to hire the facility for use.

The committee of management or responsible partner should also ensure that insurance of the facility is up-to-date and reflects any changes over time in how and by whom the facility is used.

Good management will also ensure that facility users have an ongoing role in the way decisions are made regarding the operation of the facility. This could occur, for example, through user forums; annual general meetings; and surveys.

Maintenance

One of the most critical aspects of a shared-facility partnership is having a sustainable maintenance plan for the facility that provides a realistic assessment of the timing and likely costs of foreseeable maintenance, as well as outlining contingencies for meeting unplanned maintenance expenditure. While it is sometimes assumed that facility hire fees will cover all expenses associated with ongoing maintenance, this is not always the case. Facilities that fall within a school's entitlement will have some maintenance funding allocated to them through the *Student Resource Package*.



However this allocation may not cover all maintenance costs associated with the facility. In many cases, the school and its partners will be solely responsible for funding ongoing maintenance. Project partners should consider the merits of establishing a capital fund for meeting maintenance costs.

Maintaining and reviewing the legal agreement

The legal agreement underpinning the partnership should clearly describe the process by which it will be reviewed over time. The

agreement will contain standard clauses to deal with resolving disputes between the partners, as well as termination of the agreement.

Typically, agreements should also outline what will happen to the facility in situations when land is required for the construction of school buildings or other purposes, including compensation of partners who are affected by such processes. Further information on reviewing legal agreements is available from *Schools as Community Facilities: Policy Framework and Guidelines*.

Shared-facility partnership checklist

KEY STEPS TOWARDS SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS	PAGE
Phase One: Planning	
<input type="checkbox"/> Is there a suitable governance structure in place for the planning phase?	8–11
<input type="checkbox"/> Has initial scoping been undertaken with the local council about the potential for a partnership project to emerge?	17
<input type="checkbox"/> Has a shared vision for the facility been established?	18
<input type="checkbox"/> Has consultation with the DEECD regional facilities manager on the overall feasibility of the project taken place?	17
<input type="checkbox"/> Has consultation with local council taken place?	17–19
<input type="checkbox"/> Have stakeholder and community engagement processes been undertaken?	19–21
<input type="checkbox"/> Have terms of reference and operating protocols been created for the governing bodies?	8, 31–33
<input type="checkbox"/> Has a business plan been developed, and does it include appropriate forecast analysis, development and ongoing management budgets?	21–22
<input type="checkbox"/> Is there a fit-for-use design for the facility?	22–23
<input type="checkbox"/> Has a legal agreement been developed?	23–24
<input type="checkbox"/> Has the legal agreement been submitted to the Minister for Education for execution?	23, 38
Phase Two: Development	
<input type="checkbox"/> Is the governing body functioning as originally intended and fulfilling its obligations?	26
<input type="checkbox"/> Has the regional facilities manager been consulted for advice and support during the construction phase?	25
<input type="checkbox"/> Is the project complying with the government's tendering requirements for engaging contractors?	25–26
<input type="checkbox"/> Is the facility ready for use , including staff, promotions and amenities?	26
<input type="checkbox"/> Are arrangements in place for transition to an appropriate governance structure for the management phase ?	26
Phase Three: Management	
<input type="checkbox"/> Is an appropriate governance structure in place for the ongoing management of the facility?	9
<input type="checkbox"/> Has a maintenance plan been prepared?	27–28
<input type="checkbox"/> Is there a plan for reviewing the legal agreement over time?	28

Section C: Tools and Resources.

Sample terms of reference	31
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Sample memorandum of understanding	35
Sample communications plan	36
Sample feasibility plan	37
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Sample terms of reference.

The sample terms of reference below were developed during the early planning stage of the Colac Education, Recreation and Community Precinct project, and is not the final document used by the partnership.

Project Control Group (PCG)

Function

The PCG will oversee the guiding principles of the development and provide high-level policy advice where necessary.

Given the number of government and funding agencies, the PCG will oversee the planning, funding and delivery of the joint facilities project, and will monitor the project's completion in accordance with agreed time frame, budget and quality parameters.

The PCG will be chaired by DEECD, which has ultimate responsibility as the proponent, project administrator and assumed financial risk of the project.

Responsibilities

- Agree and approve the budget and scope for joint-use facilities project and each project component including the establishment of adequate funds for the project contingency.
- Provide strategic direction and decision-making to facilitate the project within the approved brief, budget, program and quality parameters.
- Advise on and assist if required, in expediting approvals throughout planning and regulatory bodies.
- Review any proposed significant changes to the scope, and where endorsed, ensure that all necessary approvals are in place prior to any direction to proceed with implementation.
- Advise the stakeholders on the adequacy of the proposed brief, program and budget.
- Receive reports from the Project Working Group (PWG); and monitor the achievement of the project outcomes and deliverables within the approved brief, budget and program, quality parameters; and, if necessary, identify any specific actions to be taken by the PWG.
- Oversee the management of the risks raised by the project.
- Review proposed remedial actions required to maintain overall project objectives and endorse and assist where possible.
- Ensure probity is maintained during the life of the project.
- Approval for DEECD to enter into contracts and approve expenditure.

All members of the project team will be available for consultation with the PCG on an 'as required' basis.

Meetings will generally be held on a monthly basis on a schedule of dates to be agreed.

Project Working Group (PWG)

Function

The PWG is responsible for the coordination of the activities of the overall project team including the reference groups, and the interface with stakeholders and other authorities (if required).

The Project Manager will assume the role of chair of this Group and report on an agreed basis to the PCG on progress of the project. Should no Project Manager be appointed, DEECD has ultimate responsibility as the proponent, project administrator and assumed financial risk for the project, shall take on this role.

Responsibilities

- Provide direct interface to stakeholders, the funding providers and statutory authorities where necessary.
- Coordinate between operator; client; users groups; reference groups; the cost consultant; other client consultants and the design team.
- Oversee the management of the risks to the project.
- Undertake investigations and research on relevant project issues.
- Manage the total implementation of the project from business plan to project design and documentation through to completion of construction against the agreed time, cost and quality parameters.
- Overview and recommend to the Project Manager and PCG any internal budget and design changes identified by the PWG as considered appropriate and/or necessary.
- Assist in the development, implementation and operation of procedures and approval processes.
- Ensure that Stakeholders' objectives of time, cost and quality are achieved.

A standing invitation is also available for members of the PCG to attend this meeting.

When requested, other consultants will attend. The PWG will meet generally fortnightly or as required.

Reference groups

Reference groups will be established to facilitate input into the planning and design of the new facilities through the PWG where necessary. These groups include:

- School community, e.g. teachers, parents, DEECD
- Central Reserve Advisory Committee
- Community facility providers, e.g. libraries
- Bluewater Fitness
- Youth Council
- Broader community
- Post-compulsory education providers

PWG members will be designated responsibility for facilitating and maintaining communication with reference groups. PWG will allow standing agenda items for each of these groups once established with the designated PWG member responsible for reporting. Terms of reference will be established by the respective groups and approved by the PCG. Once approved they will form part of this document.

Sample operating protocols.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) provides these operating protocols as a guideline for schools employing a project management framework.

Meeting quorum

Agree on the quorum: Which and how many members need to be present before a meeting can go ahead? If quorum not met, meetings are rescheduled. It is important that board meetings are scheduled in advance and all members commit to attending meetings. No proxies will stand in for members, because continuity is critical.

Decision-making

Decisions made by consensus (i.e. all members can live with the decision even though it may not be their first choice).

Confidentiality and communication

Chatham House Rules apply and the board consciously decides what should be communicated to stakeholders, at end of meeting.

Meetings minutes and minute-taker

Agree on the minute-taker: Who will document and disseminate meeting outcomes?

Minutes to be captured and agreed progressively throughout the meeting (using common visual record such as projected screen, whiteboard or Smart-Board). Minutes sent to board members within one working day of the meeting.

Standing agenda for project board meetings

Review meeting outcomes/agreed action items from last meeting.

- Review project progress (using the Status Report and Quick Reference Guide), assess project health and discuss any assistance required from the board.
- Decide whether to continue, change or stop project.
- Confirm next meeting date, agenda (including any papers/preparation required) and meeting roles.
- Confirm what needs to be communicated to stakeholders from the meeting, by whom and when.

Any papers will be provided to the board at least three business days in advance of the meeting so members have sufficient time to read and prepare.



Sample project management framework.

The sample Project Management Plan below was developed during the early planning stage of the Colac Education, Recreation and Community Precinct project, and is not the final document used by the partnership.

SECTION	DESCRIPTION
1. Introduction	1.1 Project summary 1.2 Purpose of the Project Management Plan
2. Project Overview	2.1 Context 2.2 Background 2.3 Stakeholder Outcomes 2.4 Project Objectives
3. Project Outline	3.1 Project Description 3.2 Time 3.3 Cost 3.4 Risk
4. Management Structure	4.1 Project Parties 4.2 Project Governance 4.3 Project Structure 4.4 Terms of Reference 4.5 Project Resources
5. Project Control Mechanisms	5.1 Scope 5.2 Time 5.3 Cost 5.4 Risk 5.5 Delegations
6. Communication	
7. Appendixes	Appendix A Gantt Chart Appendix B Budget/Cost Report Template Appendix C Time Report Template Appendix D Risk Matrix Report Template
8. References	

Sample memorandum of understanding.

The sample Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) below was developed during the early planning stage of the Colac Education, Recreation and Community Precinct project, and is not the final document used by the partnership.

Memorandum of Understanding between DEECD Barwon South Western Region and Colac Otway Shire for the development of a joint Education, Recreation and Community Precinct.

Colac Otway Shire (Shire) and DEECD Barwon South Western Region (BSW) are to enter into an agreement to plan and develop a precinct that will include joint education, recreation and community facilities.

The properties involved in this precinct include the site bordered by Hearn Sreet, Queen Sreet and Pound Road currently occupied by Colac College and the site bordered by Gravesend Sreet, the 'Beechy Trail' containing Central Reserve and controlled by Colac Otway Shire.

In respect of the Colac College Site:

- DEECD is to construct a secondary school as part of an Education, Community and Recreation Precinct unless a more desirable location is proposed as part of the planning process;
- DEECD and the Shire must agree to the design of the components of the precinct at the Colac College Site intended for community use. Cost estimates and scope of facilities are required by December. DEECD and the Shire are to approve and sign-off the design prior to construction commencing;
- a design and construction agreement is to be agreed between the parties to include the scope of master planning, cost sharing processes, timelines, and roles and responsibilities of the parties;
- school facilities intended for joint school/community use are to be built at the expense of DEECD;
- community facilities intended for joint school/community use are to be built at the expense of the Shire;
- operational agreements for the use of the shared facilities are to be agreed upon between the parties and subject to a joint-use agreement.

All external costs incurred as part of the process are to be met by each party.

In respect of the Central Reserve Site:

- Colac Otway Shire is to develop a plan for the long-term development of the Colac Central Reserve as part of the Education, Community and Recreation Precinct; and
- operational agreements for the use of the shared facilities are to be agreed upon between the parties and subject to a joint-use agreement.

Timeline for design and construction:

DEECD to have architect contact Shire by mid-October

DEECD to provide brief for architect for Education Precinct

Shire to provide brief for architect for Recreation and Community Precinct

Community meeting to formulate plan by 24 October 2006

Plans to be signed off by 30 November 2006

DEECD to submit budget proposal by 30 November 2006

Design and development meetings (ongoing – weekly/fortnightly/monthly)

Construction to begin on July 2007 subject to funding and final approvals

Construction meetings (ongoing – weekly)

Sample communications plan.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD)'s Sample Communications Plan includes the following sections:

Name of project:

Project team:

Date:

Background and scope:

Provide a brief situation analysis explaining the context in which the communications will take place.

Project goals:

What are the business goals of the project? Communications goals should link to the project goals.

Communications objectives:

Objectives should be clear, concise and achievable outcomes that are capable of being measured, tracked or evaluated.

Target audience:

The communications activity should be able to identify a clearly defined audience or set of audiences. List all of the audiences that you want to reach.

Key messages:

These are the messages you want your audiences to remember.

Issues:

What issues will need to be managed as part of the project? What is their likely impact? How will they be managed?

Tactics:

What tactics will be used to support the communications objective, including timing and designated responsibilities?

Evaluation:

What evaluation mechanisms have been put in place to measure the success of the communications and review its impact?

Communication protocols:

To include agreement to the use of branding and signage. This would also include agreed processes in relation to media relations, recognising partners in communications and sign-off processes.

Sample feasibility plan.

The sample feasibility plan below was developed by Langwarrin Park Primary School to guide the extension of an existing hall, the development of a performing arts centre and the creation of an outdoor sporting field.

Section 1 The business objectives of the development

Section 2 The business-strategic position

The nature of the existing business (and the proposed additions to the business)

The competitive position

The attitudes of the decision-makers

The image of the business

Section 3 Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) analysis

Suitability of the site

Staff and management skills

Market share

Research and development

Profitability

Level of borrowed funds

Summary of opportunities and threats

Section 4 Actions required

1999–2003

Resources required

Section 5 Appendixes

Cash income flow potential

Copy of site master plan

Evidence of questions to parent body and responses

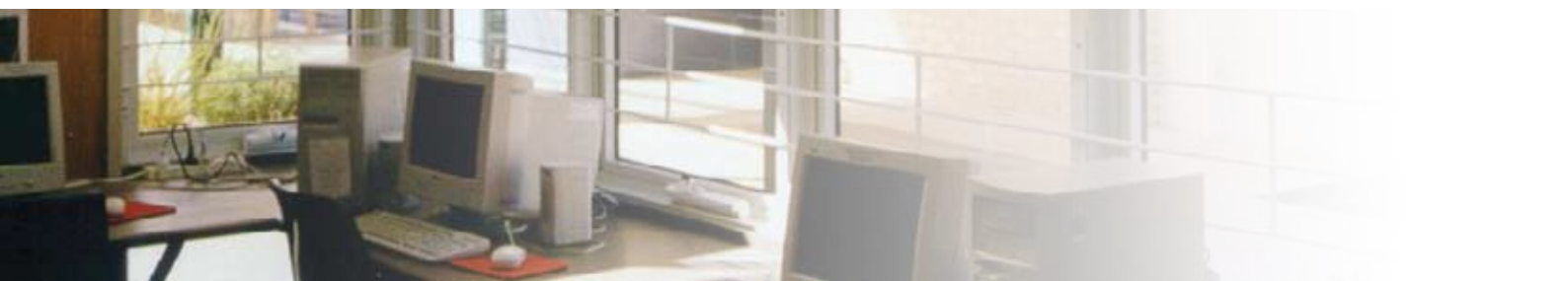
Copy of proposed additions to existing hall/gymnasium/music room

Outline of a development and joint-use agreement.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD)'s Sample Development and Joint-Use Agreement includes the following elements:

- Ministerial approval for entering the agreement, and for building on DEECD land
- nature of the rights granted by the Minister and the School Council relating to the agreement
- financial contributions of each partner towards the construction of the facility
- obligations of the party responsible for construction (including insurance, facility specifications, safety, audit of payments, inspection of works, and subcontractors and suppliers' warranty)
- construction obligations of the Minister and the School Council (general obligations and payment of construction contributions)
- other obligations during the construction of the facility (early termination, destruction of the facility and contractor's warranty)
- the party to whom a licence has been granted, including the term and fee of the licence and the hours of use of the facility
- delegation of powers and obligations of the Committee of Management or Responsible Partner, including operational and financial powers
- obligations of the licensee (maintenance, finance, hiring, insurance)
- obligations of the School Council, including establishing a capital reserve account
- dispute resolution process
- disposal of DEECD land
- termination of the agreement, including the Minister's options
- variations to the agreement
- other special conditions.

While all the DEECD development and joint-use legal agreements will encompass these conditions, some clauses will vary to reflect the needs of the management governance model adopted by the partnership.



Section D: Case Studies.



Yuille Park Community College: Building a community hub in Wendouree West

The story of the development of a community hub at Wendouree West shows the benefits that emerge when schools and the community work in partnership. In 2007 two primary schools merged to form Yuille Park Community College, the heart of a \$12 million state-of-the-art community facility (the Hub), which is expected to be ready for occupation in mid-2008. The Hub will house an integrated educational precinct encompassing a Prep to Year 8 school, a kindergarten, occasional child care, an information technology centre, adult education, a neighbourhood house, and other community and education spaces and services.

'The Hub' was formally established in 2005. UnitingCare Ballarat, in partnership with community and government agencies and local business, had purchased four shops in a local shopping strip in 2001. In partnership with Wendouree West Neighbourhood Renewal, UnitingCare Ballarat applied to the Community Support Fund for a grant to refurbish the shops to house new community facilities such as a Community House and a Family Services Centre. DEECD then came on board to develop a joint project in 2003, combining resources and shared facilities to create the Lifelong Learning Precinct. Architects employed to develop plans for the shops and community facilities were commissioned to develop plans for a facility to support a whole new model of education delivery for Wendouree West.

The DEECD Regional Office facilitated consultation with parents, students and teachers. A number of representatives from the DEECD regional office, as well as principals from the local primary and secondary schools, were involved in the neighbourhood renewal action committees, including the Learning Employment and Economic Development (LEED) Action Committee, one of the major drivers behind the Hub.

The Hub is a major achievement for the community of Wendouree West, the result of combined effort on the part of residents, government and non-government agencies and business. It demonstrates a shared vision and commitment to education and lifelong learning by people with the understanding, cooperative relationships and desire to work together.

The processes of involvement and community engagement in education are complex and require the commitment of time and resources.

The community has been represented by the residents' committee and the two school councils, which have played a fundamental role in the realisation of the vision. Meetings are now underway in relation to a board of management to administer the Hub, consisting of community members and representatives from the various agencies and governance bodies involved.

“ We want kids that are engaged in learning... It has taken lots of meetings, dedication and hard work. However if we weren't involved it wouldn't be as satisfying... If we weren't here we couldn't be involved in decision-making. In 50 years time the next generation will say 'my grandmother was involved with this!' It's about having ownership

School council parent representative

Northland Secondary College:

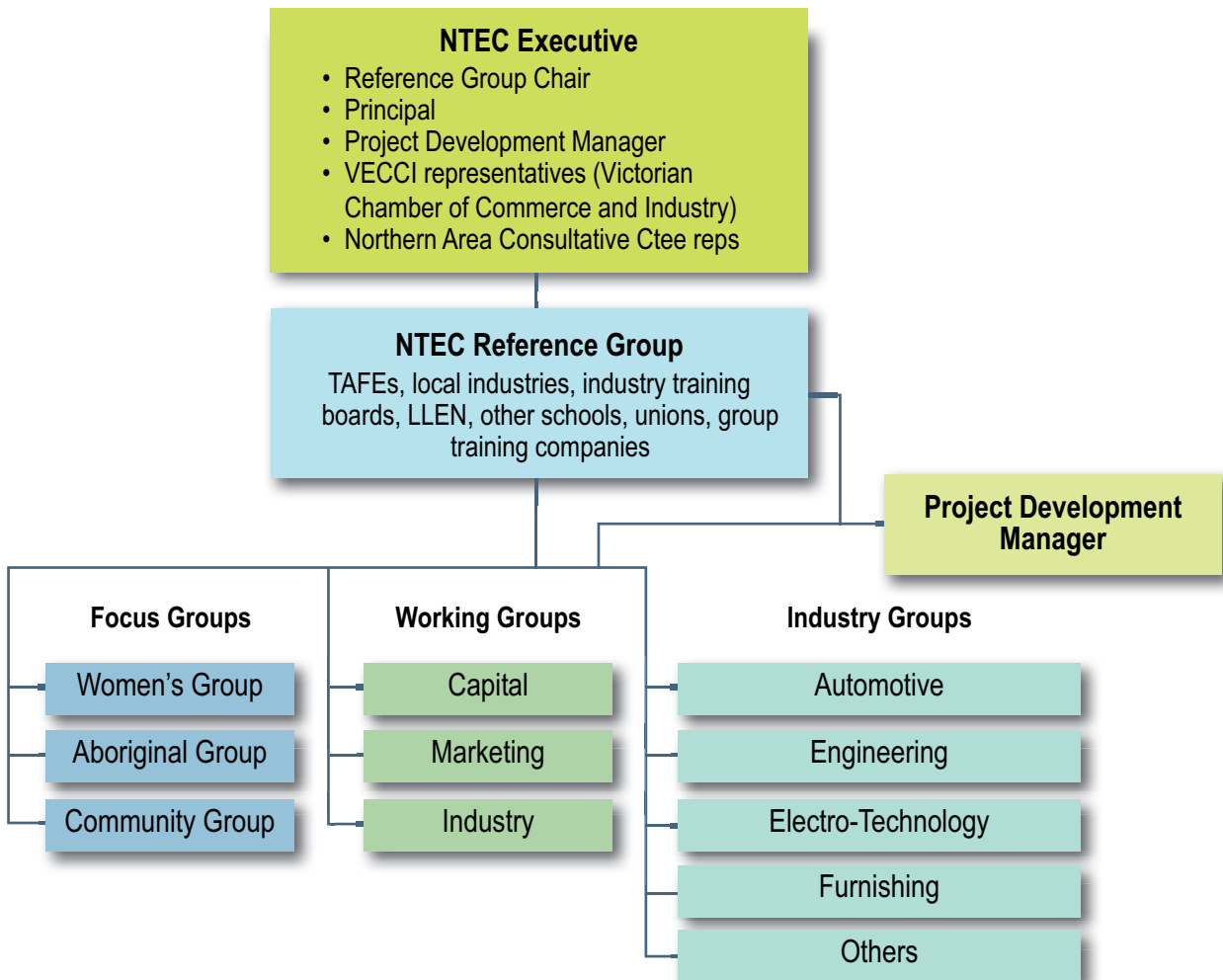
Ntec@nsc: a new concept manufacturing and technology facility

Ntec@nsc, a new \$3.7 million manufacturing and technology facility at Northland Secondary College, provides high-quality training in industry-standard facilities, facilitating student entry into apprenticeships, traineeships and further education. It provides training in areas in which there are skills shortages in Melbourne's north. Cooperation across schools means there is a broader range of programs, little duplication and lower costs. In 2007, 284 students in Years 10–12 from 27 government and non-government schools in the region

were enrolled. The facility is also used by the local community.

Ntec@nsc was jointly funded by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Department for Planning and Community Development; the Australian National Training Authority; the Commonwealth Government and through existing school funds and donations.

The governance structure for the Ntec facility and programs is represented below.



The initial reference group has since expanded and continues to meet on a regular basis to provide direction, determine strategy and oversee the continued development of Ntec. The Ntec Executive meets between reference group meetings to ensure targets are achieved and strategies implemented.

A Community Industry Partnerships Coordinator, initially funded by the Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN), is now a full-time Project Development Manager position funded by the College. This role focuses on the continued growth of the facilities and programs, and the development of community, school and industry partnerships,

through the facilitation of the reference group, working parties and focus groups that coordinate industry awareness activities and develop strategy for the facility.

Industry groups related to Ntec subject areas are currently forming and will eventually number between 20–40 companies per industry.

Ntec@nsc is a model of how effective partnerships between schools, industry, philanthropy and government can benefit young people, industry and the community. It is already achieving a very positive response from the local community, schools, industry and students.

“ Ntec is a community response to critical needs in our local economy, as well as meeting a real need for our young people. It has sought and gained the support of local schools and others in the wider region. It builds social capital, helps overcome disadvantage for young people and strengthens our local economy through meeting the needs of local industry. ”

Jacinta Lucas, Executive Officer, INLLEN



Kangaroo Ground Primary School:

Providing a children's centre



At times, there was a lack of continuity as the people involved came and left the project. The project was made possible because a number of dynamic people within the partnership have acted as a constant thread.

Laurie Murray, Principal, Kangaroo Ground Primary School

In November 2007, the community of Kangaroo Ground realised a vision that had brought together the primary school, Nillumbik Shire Council and the council kindergarten since 2001. The new \$600,000 community centre is located on the grounds of the Kangaroo Ground Primary School, accommodating the council kindergarten; space for maternal and child health facilities; and a multipurpose room for school and community use. It was made possible through Council funds, the Victorian Government's Community Facilities Fund, and contributions from the school.

The kindergarten enjoys the benefits of a permanent facility, no longer needing to be packed away each evening as it did in its previous location. For the school, having the kindergarten on site helps to demystify the transition to school life for young children, and helps to promote enrolments from within the local area. The council also benefit from the shared-facility partnership, which provides a functional space for a diverse range of community groups, from chess clubs to local commercial operators.

The project was planned over many years. In the early days, a working party comprising representatives from the Nillumbik Council, the school and the kindergarten built support for the project and oversaw fundraising to supplement the Council's financial commitment. With support from the local church, museum and associated

bodies, community consultation, a business plan, a proposed site and a persuasive argument to support the need for a new facility, the Committee of Management's application to the Community Facilities Fund was successful. It proved to be an important driver for the shared-facility partnership.

While the design work for the facility was underway, the governing body commenced documenting the conditions of their partnership agreement. With the DEECD's input, the partnership discussed a range of management phase issues, including the hours and conditions of use by each partner, and the distribution of costs for security, cleaning and amenities. The extended time spent settling the partnership details during the planning process facilitated the effective distribution of management responsibilities. The school council intends to assume responsibility for hiring out the multipurpose room.

Since the launch of the facility, the partnership has considered the merits of creating a school council sub-committee to negotiate the ongoing management of the community centre. The participation of a representative from the kindergarten on school council has been critical to cross-partnership participation, supplying the primary school with a continuous link to its activities. If it comes to fruition, the sub-committee will draw on this model.

Langwarrin Park Primary School: A great community facility at Langwarrin Park Primary School



Every week, approximately 200 students from Langwarrin Park Primary School and other schools in Melbourne's south, as well as a number of adults from the local community, enjoy swimming lessons in the indoor heated pool on the school grounds.

The pool was jointly funded by the school, whose investment was achieved through the establishment of a cooperative and Kings – a commercial operator that runs a number of swim centres across Melbourne. Kings leases the pool and has responsibility for its day-to-day running; however, the school and Kings have joint responsibility for the ongoing management of the facility, and hold monthly meetings to oversee this (see *Committee of Management* chart below).

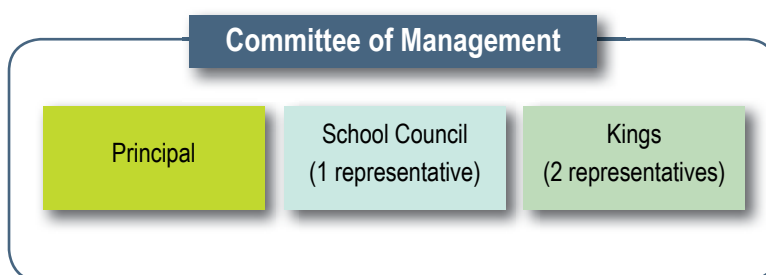
Swimming safety is a high priority for the school, as many of its students live near the beach and/or have a pool at home. However, due to rapid population growth, local pools were experiencing difficulty in servicing the demand for swimming lessons, so the school decided to build their own pool.

Planning for the facility, along with a new performing arts centre at the school, took seven years. A critical part of the planning stage was the development of a business plan,

which included a feasibility study based on community need for the pool, a comprehensive demographic analysis of the local population, and realistic analysis of projected income and expenditure.

The school considered partnering with two other commercial swim centre operators before deciding on Kings, which shared the school's philosophy about swimming education, demonstrated superior capacity and professionalism, and enjoyed a good reputation in the community.

Students at the school pay to use the pool just as students from neighbouring schools and members of the community do. The swim centre runs at a profit. Income from the facility is shared between the school and Kings, as is all expenditure. Maintenance and cleaning are a high priority for any swim centre, requiring significant funding. Consequently, the partnership has established a capital fund for this.



While the drive, vision and commitment of our principal was critical to the project coming to fruition, a team approach from the school staff and community, including a supportive school council and an amicable relationship between the school and Kings, have also been necessary for ongoing success. *Pauline Agius, Assistant Principal, Langwarrin Park Primary School*

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- DEECD website on risk management, <https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/intranet/policies/risk.htm>
- DPCD website on grants, <http://www.grants.dpcd.vic.gov.au> <<http://www.grants.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>> .
- DPCD website on publications and research on community engagement, <http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/web14/dvc/dvcmain.nsf/allDocs/RWP0C47790245D57B16CA257045007FFBE3?OpenDocument>
- DPCD website on local teams and additional contacts, <http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/web14/dvc/dvcmain.nsf/HeadingPagesDisplay/Contact+us#local>
- Procedures for New Construction and Major Upgrades, <http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/facility/pdfs/ProceduresforNewConstructionUpgrade2005.pdf>
- Schools Communications Toolkit, <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/commstoolkit.htm>

Glossary.

Building Futures is the conceptual framework that guides all capital investment in government school infrastructure in Victoria, ensuring that the educational needs of students inform the planning and development of school infrastructure. It enables new facility design and the organisation of education services to better meet contemporary education needs.

A **business plan** provides a description of the proposed business, the market in which it will operate, its objectives and the process by which they will be achieved. Shared-facility partnership projects will develop a business plan that incorporates the operational constraints of each partner, such as review or reporting requirements.

Co-location refers to the provision of a service on or adjacent to school land.

A **development and joint-use agreement** is the legal documentation of an arrangement whereby a school and one or more partner organisations come together to plan, build and in some cases jointly manage a facility that is to be used both by the school and by community groups or organisations.

Governance in this context refers to the structures, processes and associated arrangements established to plan, develop and manage shared-use facilities.

A **hire agreement** is the legal documentation of an arrangement whereby an organisation utilises a government school site for a one-off event.

Integration is the merging of more than one service, either on one or multiple sites, to create a new entity with shared resources and a common governance structure.

A **licence agreement** is the legal documentation of an arrangement whereby an organisation utilises a government school site on a regular basis.

A **Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU)** is a bilateral or multilateral agreement between parties expressing a convergence of will between parties. It does not imply a legal commitment, nor does it possess the binding capacity of a contract.

Operating protocols outline the procedures and code of behaviour informing a governing body and how it will reach decisions, communicate and determine an agenda.

Regeneration involves two or more school communities working together to maximise education provision in a local area.

A **shared-facility partnership** refers to all cases where a school and one or more partners share a facility.

Schools as Community Facilities: Policy Framework and Guidelines is a publication designed to help government schools and communities develop innovative partnerships through sharing school facilities.

Stakeholder engagement is the process of involving interested individuals in conversations and activities in the development of plans for existing or future services and facilities.

The **terms of reference** describe the purpose and structure of a project, and are created during the planning phase of a shared-use facility development. They set out a 'road map' for the project identifying the vision, stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities, financial plans for the project and its schedule.

The **Victorian Schools Plan** is the Victorian Government's commitment of \$1.9 billion over four years to rebuild, renovate or extend 500 Victorian government schools by 2010 .

Further information.

Schools and community organisations interested in developing shared-facility partnerships should contact their DEECD regional office and local council for advice and support. DPCD local area teams can also provide assistance in this process.

	DEECD regional offices	DPCD local teams
Barwon South Western	(03) 5225 1000	(03) 5215 6000
Eastern Metropolitan	(03) 9881 0200	(03) 9296 4670
Gippsland	(03) 5127 0400	(03) 5174 7308
Grampians	(03) 5337 8444	(03) 5327 2824
Hume	(03) 5761 2100	(03) 5722 7100
Loddon Mallee	(03) 5440 3111	(03) 5410 5200
Northern Metropolitan	(03) 9488 9488	(03) 9208 3124
Southern Metropolitan	(03) 9794 3555	(03) 9208 3231
Western Metropolitan	(03) 9291 6532	(03) 9208 3124

The DEECD Facilities and Infrastructure Branch can be contacted on (03) 9637 2000.

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