Library Board
of Victoria

Library Board of Victoria and Public Libraries Victoria Network

Framework for Collaborative Action

Revised 2014

Preface

This document is the third revision of the *Framework for Collaborative Action*, which was first published in June 2004, revised in April 2006 and again in April 2011. It is for all Victorian public library services and the State Library of Victoria, the operating agency of the Library Board of Victoria.

The Board, the State Library and public libraries have many things in common, particularly a shared commitment to delivering excellent information services to all Victorians. We have done much to advance our common aims by working together rather than separately (see Appendix 1). This revision of the *Framework for Collaborative Action* confirms our commitment to working together and outlines how we will proceed over the next three years. It was revised between January 2013 and April 2014 by representatives of Public Libraries Victoria Network, the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Library Board of Victoria and the State Library of Victoria. All constituents will receive a copy, and it is available on the websites of the State Library of Victoria and Public Libraries Victoria Network, and on the website of Victoria's Virtual Library. The Framework will be reviewed again in early 2016.

John Wylie
President, Library Board of Victoria

John Murrell
President, Public Libraries Victoria Network

April 2014

1. Introduction

The *Framework for Collaborative Action* defines the way in which the Library Board of Victoria, through the State Library of Victoria, works with the Victorian public library network to deliver improved library services to our communities.

The Board's Advisory Committee on Public Libraries comprises representatives of the Board, the State Library, public libraries and the Municipal Association of Victoria. The Advisory Committee has created the Framework to support the Collaboration by:

- developing a shared vision for improving access to public library services
- specifying values and protocols to guide collaborative action and support cohesive, consistent and confident decision-making
- identifying how the Collaboration will achieve its goals
- providing a clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of the Collaboration's constituents

The Framework is reviewed every three years to ensure that it continues to meet the Collaboration's requirements.

2. Purpose and scope

2.1 Vision

The Collaboration delivers enhanced library services to Victorians, through partnership between the State Library of Victoria and Public Libraries Victoria Network.

2.2 Goals of the Collaboration

In determining its goals and priorities the Collaboration considers the priorities of the state government, the Library Board of Victoria, local governments and Public Libraries Victoria Network.

The Collaboration provides opportunities to advance the goals of:

- enhanced library collections
- improved access options
- 'seamless' service/access for users
- enhanced staff skills
- increased community and government understanding of and engagement with libraries
- greater efficiency and effectiveness of library services through collaboration and sharing.

Building on the achievements of previous years, the Collaboration will focus on:

- initiatives in support of the State Library of Victoria *Corporate Plan 2013–16*
- initiatives in support of Public Libraries Victoria Network's *Strategic Plan 2013–17*
- initiatives informed by the *Victorian Public Libraries 2030 strategic framework*
- working with the state government and local government on advancing the vision of the *Victorian Library* for Victorian public libraries
- exemplary management of the growing range of joint initiatives.

2.3 Challenges and opportunities

The external environment in which the Collaboration operates provides many challenges and opportunities. Chief among these are:

- opportunities presented by the democratisation of education and information
- challenges in technology and the digital environment, particularly e-lending and the impact of the National Broadband Network
- the interests of stakeholders such as the state government and the Municipal Association of Victoria
- national agendas, including initiatives of the commonwealth government and bodies such as National and State Libraries Australasia and the Australian Library and Information Association
- resourcing and sustainability of services, including financial constraints.

3. Values

A common set of values and principles guides the activities and behaviour of the constituents of the Collaboration.

3.1 Values

The Collaboration is based on a shared belief in the importance of:

- communities that are informed, engaged, empowered and participative
- libraries, for the role that they play in providing their communities with information, opportunities for lifelong learning, and a sense of 'connection' and enjoyment.

The Collaboration's constituents believe that the greatest community benefit is obtained by:

- sharing resources, skills, knowledge and ideas through partnerships
- innovative approaches to challenges, problems and issues.

The constituents are committed to creating an effective partnership through:

- trust
- clear and open communication
- respect
- flexibility and responsiveness.

4. Action plans

4.1 Statewide Public Library Development Projects

The Statewide Public Library Development Projects, which are funded annually by the Library Board of Victoria, are the main focus of the Collaboration's actions. These projects complement strategic planning for libraries and support efficient management of shared resources. The projects are agreed on a triennial basis.

The following guidelines are used to determine the Statewide Public Library Development Projects.

The projects must support one or more of the goals of the *Framework for Collaborative Action* (see Section 2.2) and they must:

- deliver statewide benefit to the Victorian community
- increase the capability of public libraries to deliver excellent services
- increase interaction/partnering/ collaboration between public libraries, and between the State Library of Victoria and the public library network
- avoid duplicating the work of other organisations or project funding
- stimulate innovative responses to the challenges and opportunities presented by the changing environment in which libraries operate.

Projects must:

- be delivered in a cooperative and collegial manner by the State Library of Victoria and Public Libraries Victoria Network
- achieve their agreed outcomes within the time frame of the funding.

The Library Board of Victoria's Advisory Committee on Public Libraries is responsible for monitoring the Statewide Public Library Development Projects. The Advisory Committee is also responsible for reporting to the Library Board of Victoria on the projects as its Board representatives deem appropriate.

4.1.1 Process for determining Statewide Public Library Development Projects

The Advisory Committee on Public Libraries oversees the process to gain approval of a three-year cycle of Statewide Public Library Development Projects. The Advisory Committee:

- agrees to the overall model and criteria for the projects and seeks approval of the Library Board of Victoria to proceed
- defines and implements the process for developing project proposals, which includes gathering of project ideas from Public Libraries Victoria Network and from the State Library of Victoria; review of all Project ideas and selection of ideas for development into full project proposals
- recommends Statewide Public Library Development project proposals for the triennium to the Library Board of Victoria for approval.

4.1.2 2014–17 Statewide Public Library Development Projects

The following initiatives have been proposed for the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2017:

Read: a suite of initiatives supporting literacy and reading for pleasure across all life stages, incorporating strategy development and delivery of community programs.

Memory: an initiative to commemorate the Anzac Centenary with a touring exhibition and related programing drawing on library collections, and an initiative to increase online access to Victorian local-history collections and content.

Lead and Learn: an initiative to ensure that the sector has the knowledge, skills and leadership capability required of 21st-century libraries, incorporating training, seminars, conferences, scholarships and awards, with an emphasis on online learning.

See Appendix 1 for information about the 2006–08, 2008–11, and 2011–14 programs of Statewide Public Library Development Projects.

5. Roles, responsibilities and contributions

This section establishes what the various constituents bring to the Collaboration and what each is expected to contribute to achieving the shared goals.

5.1 Governance and coordination

The Advisory Committee on Public Libraries and the constituents its members represent are the 'owners' of the Framework.

The Advisory Committee members are the custodians of the *Framework for Collaborative Action*, and are responsible for promoting the Framework and its outcomes to the Library Board of Victoria.

The State Library's Manager, Public Libraries is responsible for enacting the Framework's goals on a day-to-day basis.

In the event of a dispute arising among any parties in the Collaboration, it will be dealt with following the guidelines in Appendix 3.

5.2 The Advisory Committee on Public Libraries

The Advisory Committee on Public Libraries – the body responsible for directly linking the Library Board of Victoria with the Victorian public library network – was established in July 2003. The Advisory Committee consists of the following members:

- up to two members of the Board, in addition to the Chairperson of the Committee who shall also be a member of the Board
- the Chief Executive Officer of the State Library of Victoria
- four representatives of Public Libraries Victoria Network, the peak body for Victorian public libraries, including the President and at least one other executive member, and one other representative from country Victoria
- Public Libraries Victoria Network may nominate two substitute representatives. In the event of inability to attend by a Public Library Victoria Network representative on the Committee, a substitute may attend, speak and vote at the meeting in the person's place
- one representative from the Municipal Association of Victoria.

The Advisory Committee works on a representative model. Public Libraries Victoria Network, the Municipal Association of Victoria and the Library Board of Victoria are responsible for communicating and consulting with their constituents about the Framework and for providing feedback to the Advisory Committee.

The State Library of Victoria assists the Advisory Committee's representatives to consult with their constituents by providing a facilitator if required.

Terms of reference define the Advisory Committee's objectives, functions and powers, structure, terms and conditions (see Appendix 2).

5.3 The Library Board of Victoria/State Library of Victoria

The Library Board of Victoria exercises its responsibilities in relation to public libraries through the State Library of Victoria. These responsibilities are defined in the *Libraries Act 1988*:

- to oversee cooperation in programs with libraries and information organisations to promote access to library and information resources
- to exercise leadership and promote high standards in the provision of library and information services
- to provide advice and information to the minister on any matter concerning libraries and information organisations.

The Public Libraries team is the primary interface between the State Library and Public Libraries Victoria Network. It:

- communicates across the public library sector and to its stakeholders
- coordinates industry knowledge, research and innovation
- develops and delivers projects that meet statewide public library sector needs
- supports strategy development.

slv.vic.gov.au

5.4 Public Libraries Victoria Network

Public Libraries Victoria Network is a collaborative and advocacy organisation, and the peak body for Victorian public library managers, comprising representatives of every public library service in the state. Initiatives range from information sharing and training to setting up of consortia to conduct projects and purchase materials in a collaborative manner. It is incorporated under the Associations Act and its duties and obligations are set out in its constitution. Membership is institutional.

The vision of Public Libraries Victoria Network is that Victoria is a dynamic and effective network of public library services. Its mission is to facilitate collaboration and cooperation between Victorian public libraries and other stakeholders to deliver best practice library services, and to advocate on behalf of Victorian public libraries to increase their profile, funding and capability.

Public Libraries Victoria Network partners the Library Board of Victoria in meeting its responsibilities by:

- promoting access to library and information resources
- informing it about issues as appropriate
- providing advice to ensure there is network-wide support for issues within its sphere of influence and that there is agreement on standards for provision of library and information services.

Public Libraries Victoria Network brings extensive knowledge, expertise and skills to the collaborative process. Further, because it is the representative body through which the outcomes of the collaborative action are implemented, it contributes the experience of the libraries that deliver services at a local level to Victoria's communities.

www.publiclibrariesvictoria.net.au

5.5 Municipal Association of Victoria

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is the legislated peak body representing the 79 Victorian councils, which are the owners, operators and majority funders of public library services in Victoria. Two key roles of the MAV are as the lead negotiator between local government and other spheres of government, and acting as the advocate for councils on policy, funding and program priorities. The MAV is the communication and information hub for and about Victorian local government, and facilitates councils' capacity development. On behalf of Victorian local government, the MAV negotiates broad state and commonwealth policy and funding arrangements.

www.mav.asn.au

6. Evaluating the success of the Collaboration

The Advisory Committee on Public Libraries, on behalf of the Board, reviews the performance of the Collaboration annually in line with the budget process and as part of its review of itself. The success of the Collaboration in meeting its goals is gauged by the following indicators:

- the extent to which the Collaboration can demonstrate that its activities reflect the Collaboration's values and lead to better library services
- the extent to which the Library Board of Victoria and Public Libraries Victoria Network is informed about, engaged in and actively working on issues related to public libraries
- continuing integration of the framework into future planning and operations.

These indicators will continue to be refined by the Collaboration.

Any party to the Collaboration may choose to develop its own indicators for evaluating whether its continuing membership of the Collaboration meets its objectives.

The *Framework for Collaborative Action* is reviewed triennially in line with the life cycle of the Statewide Public Library Development Projects. Comments on the Framework are welcome and may be submitted via a representative on the Library Board of Victoria's Advisory Committee on Public Libraries, or sent to Debra Rosenfeldt (drosenfeldt@slv.vic.gov.au) at the State Library of Victoria.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Achievements of the Collaboration

A great deal has been achieved by the Collaboration through the 2005–08, 2008–11 and 2011–14 suites of Statewide Public Library Development Projects.

Achievements of the 2011–14 Statewide Public Library Development Projects include:

- a wide range of community programs aimed primarily at the reading development of adults, including the High Road to Reading program of author events in public libraries across the state, events for the 2012 National Year of Reading, a summer reading program and a creative writing competition
- the *Internet and PC usage in Victorian public libraries* report and a cultural benefits study to help public libraries better articulate their value to communities and their operational needs
- the *Victorian Public Libraries 2030 strategic framework*, created to assist public library managers in service planning. This initiative received an Arts Portfolio Leadership Award
- upskilling of the public library workforce through a diverse program of seminars and participation by over 1000 staff in the Frontline online reader-development training, and planning for the next vital steps in professional development for the sector through statewide implementation of a skills audit framework
- continued development of the leadership of the future through two six-month Shared Leadership programs and the Margery C Ramsay and Barrett Reid Scholarships
- the digitisation of more than 50 of Victoria's newspapers from World War I, which have been made freely available and easily searchable to anyone, anywhere, anytime in the world through the National Library's Australian Newspapers Online portal, thus enhancing library collections and dramatically improving community access options.

Achievements of Statewide Public Library Development Projects for 2005–08 and 2011–14 include:

- undertaking the first statewide audits of Victoria's public library collections and public library buildings, providing managers with invaluable data for use in planning and advocating for services
- the development and implementation of Memory Victoria, a comprehensive strategy in support of the care, management and promotion of the local history collections held by 34 of Victoria's public library services. This strategy received an Arts Portfolio Leadership Award
- continuation of the groundbreaking Libraries Building Communities research and development initiative, with publication of a second volume of inspirational best practice case studies from Victorian public libraries; publication of the *Connecting with the community* guidelines for improving library engagement with hard-to-reach groups; and funding of ten projects of individual library services to help them serve their communities in new ways
- significant work being undertaken on future workforce requirements through the Workforce Sustainability and Leadership research and planning project
- enhancement and improved community access options to library collections through the digitisation of over 50 of Victoria's earliest newspapers, which have been made freely available and easily searchable to anyone, anywhere, anytime in

the world through the National Library's Australian Newspapers Online portal
- development of *The independent type* panel exhibition about books and writing in Victoria, and an associated program of talks and workshops, drawing on the State Library's collections and touring to 18 Victorian public library services
- completion of the landmark *Dollars, sense and public libraries* report on the socio-economic value of Victorian public libraries, released to great acclaim and the recipient of the National Planning Institute of Australia Award for Social and Community Planning
- development, piloting and publishing of the *Being the best we can* framework and toolkit, for use by public library managers in assessing the performance of library services and identifying improvement programs
- development of leadership capability in the public library network through two six-month Shared Leadership programs, sponsoring of places in leadership institutes, professional development seminars, subsidisation of an international study tour of leading public libraries, *The Big Issues* symposium and the *New Horizons* planning retreat for public library managers.

Appendix 2

Advisory Committee on Public Libraries

Terms of reference

The terms of reference for the Advisory Committee on Public Libraries is contained in two documents. Policy document A2.04 relates to all standing committees of the Library Board of Victoria. Policy document A2.10 is specific to the Advisory Committee on Public Libraries. Policy document A2.10 only is reproduced below.

A2.10 Advisory Committee on Public Libraries terms of reference

1.0 Purpose

To define the functions and powers of the Advisory Committee on Public Libraries in accordance with the Library Board of Victoria's policy on its standing committees.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all the activities of the Advisory Committee on Public Libraries as approved by the Library Board of Victoria.

3.0 Definitions

None.

4.0 Roles and responsibilities

As defined in policy 2.04 Standing Committees of the Library Board of Victoria.

5.0 Policy contents

5.1 Establishment

The Advisory Committee on Public Libraries is a standing committee of the Library Board of Victoria (the 'Board') and established by the Board in accordance with the provisions of Section 27 of the *Libraries Act 1988* (the 'Act').

The establishment of the Advisory Committee on Public Libraries at the level of a Board advisory committee recognises:

1. the long-established and historical relationship between Victorian public libraries and the State Library of Victoria
2. a collaborative approach to assisting the Board to fulfill its role in relation to sections of the Act pertaining to 'oversee cooperation' (S18 ea) and to 'exercise leadership and promote high standards' (S18 eb)
3. the importance to the Board of sustaining and enhancing the ongoing relationship.

5.2 Objectives

The objective of the Advisory Committee on Public Libraries is to act as an advisory group and communication link between the Board and public librarians through their peak body, Public Libraries Victoria Network.

5.3 Functions

The functions of the Advisory Committee on Public Libraries are to:

- assist the Board to fulfill its role and responsibilities as outlined in the Act, with special reference to Section 18(ea and eb) responsibilities
- assist the Board in the development of strategies that ensure all Victorians have access to the resources and services of the State Library of Victoria

- provide advice to the Board about issues, policies and strategies that have a bearing on the provision of information services for all Victorians
- develop and recommend to the Board strategies aimed at improving coordination and collaboration between the State Library of Victoria and public librarians
- recommend to the Board a program of collaborative activities/projects that will enhance access to information resources and services for all Victorians
- assist the Board with the program's development, implementation and evaluation, including advice on the allocation of program funding, ongoing monitoring of particular activities/projects, and marketing and promotion of State Library of Victoria and public library collaborative action.

5.4 Powers

The Committee can make recommendations to the Board. It has no decision-making power independent of the Board. The committee shall only make decisions within the authority conferred on it by the Board from time to time.

5.5 Membership

The Committee shall consist of the following members:

- up to two members of the Board, in addition to the chairperson of the committee who shall also be a member of the Board
- the Chief Executive Officer of the State Library of Victoria
- four representatives of Public Libraries Victoria Network (the peak body for Victorian public libraries), including the President and at least one other executive member, and one other representative from country Victoria
- Public Libraries Victoria Network may nominate two substitute representatives. In the event of inability to attend by a Public Library Victoria Network representative on the committee, a substitute may attend, speak and vote at the meeting in the person's place
- one representative from the Municipal Association of Victoria.

5.6 Term of appointment

The term of appointment will be the same as set out in policy A2.04, with the exceptions that the appointment shall usually be for a period of three years and that no member shall serve more than three consecutive terms in the same capacity.

5.7 Meeting frequency

The committee will meet at least three times per year.

6.0 Related documents

Libraries Act 1988
A2.04 Policy on Standing Committees of the Library Board of Victoria

Appendix 3

Dispute resolution

In the event of any dispute arising among parties in the Collaboration, it will be resolved:

- in accordance with the Framework's values of trust; open communication; and respect for the knowledge, expertise and points of view of all parties
- by focusing on the issues and on the best outcomes for the Collaboration rather than on individual interests
- by seeking a consensus solution.

Specific steps for dealing with disputation are:

- the matter should be raised first with the Chief Executive Officer of the State Library of Victoria and the President of Public Libraries Victoria Network, who will together endeavour to find a resolution
- the issue or difficulty should be made explicit at a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Public Libraries
- the matter may be referred to the President of the Library Board of Victoria through the Advisory Committee's Chair
- the Advisory Committee on Public Libraries may decide to avail itself of an external facilitator.