



MOUNT WAVERLEY BOWLING CLUB



STRATEGIC PLAN 2021 – 2025 FINAL DRAFT

March 2021

BACKGROUND

This Strategic Plan updates its predecessor, written in 2020, to take account of changing circumstances.

The major change in circumstance in 2020 was COVID-19, which had a significant impact on the Club's operations and finances. Use of the greens by players and visiting non-profit and business groups was severely restricted and this had a flow-on effect to income. Sponsorship income was also down due to the impact COVID-19 had on many businesses and because the Club chose not to run Tournaments due to health concerns.

Whilst the Club took measures to reduce costs, these were not sufficient to prevent a significant operating loss in 2020/21 and a consequent run down in cash reserves. Whilst the Club is now operating on a more normal basis, under the guidance of a COVID-Safe Plan, the virus continues as an ever-present threat and makes forecasting future financial outcomes difficult.

On the good news side, there was agreement for the Club to receive \$216,000 from the sale of the Southern Indoors Bowling Centre in Caulfield because of its past association with the Centre. The payment was received in mid-February 2021 and will help to offset the operating loss in 2020/21 and bolster the Club's cash reserves.

In the year since the 2020 Plan was written, progress has been made in implementing Key Actions identified in that Plan:

- Continued discussions with the City of Monash regarding renewal of the Club's current lease over the land, which expires in October 2021.
- Made the Club's facilities available to other Clubs, non-profit groups, and local businesses for recreational and social purposes.
- Explored opportunities to share resources with local bowls clubs and other sporting and recreational groups.
- Ran a Barefoot and Twilight Bowls competition.
- Conducted a Member Survey to identify areas for further improvement.
- Funded high priority projects through a range of funding sources e.g., Clubhouse awnings.
- Continued implementation of the Club's new identity, including the introduction of new polo shirts bearing the Club's new logo.
- Prepared a 5-Year Capital Plan
- Maintained and updated the Club's website.

This Plan builds on the above achievements, identifies Key Issues and Actions for the year ahead and sets out challenging targets for the 5-year planning period.

The Plan is a dynamic document and will be reviewed annually to take account of changing circumstances. Club members and key stakeholders will be advised annually of progress against outcomes and targets set out in the Plan.

The Plan is structured as follows:

- Preparation of the Plan
- Environmental Analysis
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Future Vision

- Measures of Success and Performance Targets
- Key Actions

PREPARATION OF THE PLAN

The preparation of this Strategic Plan has involved a review of the Strategic Plan 2020 to 2024 to account for:

- Any material changes in the external environment and stakeholder expectations and the implications of these changes for Club's Vision, Key Actions and Key Performance Indicators and Targets
- Progress made over the past year in implementing Key Actions.
- The on-going relevance of identified Key Performance Indicators and the achievability of identified Targets.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

An internal analysis of the Club's strengths and weaknesses and external analysis of opportunities and threats were undertaken and identified the following:

Strengths

- Well-managed Club
- Convenient location
- Ownership of our own building
- Picturesque setting with lovely gardens
- Particularly good bowling facilities
- Attractive venue for social functions
- A welcoming and social club
- Well-established tournaments which attract participation by members of other clubs
- Solid support from the City of Monash
- Good relationships and support from the State Member of Parliament.

Weaknesses

- Declining and ageing membership
- Difficulty in getting volunteers for committees/working groups.
- Difficulties in attracting/retaining new and younger members.
- Difficulty in getting our top side into Division 1, which can attract new members/better performers.
- Ageing club house and furnishings
- Ownership of our own building which requires on-going maintenance.
- Stable financial position, but susceptible to potentially large and necessary capital improvements.
- Trend for sponsors and advertisers to look for a better return on their investment.

Opportunities

- Potential to leverage membership of people about to retire or recently retired.

- Potential to leverage membership off existing local clubs e.g., Probus, Waverley Life Activities Club, U3A
- Potential to have more Clubs/Groups use our facilities on a regular basis.
- Potential to encourage local non-bowlers to become members.
- Potential to create modified opportunities for time poor bowlers and families.
- Potential to recruit new members freed up by not having to travel to work as frequently.
- Potential to maximise the use of existing facilities.
- Potential to encourage the growing Asian population to take on bowling.
- Potential to encourage Juniors to take on bowling.
- Potential to share resources with other local bowling, sporting and community clubs.
- Potential to grow income from corporate functions.
- Potential to encourage more social bowlers through social bowls e.g. Barefoot and Twilight Bowls.
- Potential to access funding for projects through the Australian Sports Foundation.
- Potential to access grant money from all levels of government.
- Potential to use Zoom for management meetings.

Threats

- Ageing members moving out of active bowling
- Ageing members moving into retirement villages
- Risk that COVID may impact future operations and playing numbers.
- City of Monash Sports Activity Plan which will set lease payments based on performance goals.
- Risk in raising fees that members will choose to leave.
- Changing demographics with bowls not a 'natural' sport for Asians to play
- Gen Xs and Ys not solely 'club motivated' – want to participate in several sports or pay-for-use.
- Replacement of capital assets is increasingly dependent on Council and other Government grants.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The Club has a diversity of stakeholders. The principal stakeholders and their expectations are set out in the table below. The expectations of the following stakeholders were confirmed during the year through the following means:

- Playing and Social members - Members' Survey conducted in March 2020.
- Corporate Visitors - direct feedback from social functions held over summer of 2019/20.
- Expectations of Sponsors - direct feedback from sponsorship drive from July to September 2020.

Stakeholder	Expectations
Playing Members	Strong leadership, organisation and sense of direction, effective communication, responsiveness to issues, value-for-money fees, high standard greens, help with skills development, pennant success, attractive facilities, stimulating social interaction
Social Members	Strong leadership and organisation, effective communication, responsiveness to issues, value-for-money fees, attractive facilities, welcoming, active social program
Visiting Players	High standard greens, attractive facilities, welcoming, friendly and inclusive Club

Corporate Visitors	Attractive facilities, fun, welcoming, friendly and helpful Club, competitive function costs
Private Visitors	Attractive, functional, convenient, welcoming and friendly Club
City of Monash	High community utilisation of Club's facilities
Sponsors	Active promotion of products and services, commercial return

FUTURE VISION

The Future Vision for Mount Waverley Bowls Club is **a sustainable, bowls-focused, sporting, and recreational club servicing its members and the wider community.**

MEASURES OF SUCCESS AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

The following areas have been identified for measuring the Club's performance over the 5-year period of the Strategic Plan in achieving its future vision:

- Governance
- Membership
- Bowls
- Greens
- Facilities – condition and utilization
- Reputation/image
- Community involvement
- Finance

Key Performance Indicators for each success area are detailed in the Appendix.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIONS

Based on a situational analysis, the following key issues have been identified:

- Declining and aging membership, amongst playing and social members.
- Need to turn around a significant operating loss and decline in cash reserves in 2020/21.
- Need to arrest a decline in sponsorship income in 2020/21.
- Need to improve communications, both internally and externally.

The following actions have been identified to address the key issues above:

1. Increase membership, both playing and social members.

- Look to recruit new members based on local opportunities such as friends and partners of members, Community Hub participants (e.g., U3A), Sponsors and Parents and Citizens Associations of local schools.
- Establish and promote a Friday 4.00 to 6.00 pm open invitation to bowl and have a social drink.
- Promote a New Member Welcome Pack which includes a low joining fee, free coaching, loan of Club bowls, and provision of a Club polo shirt if playing pennant bowls.
- Portray a more diverse image of the Club through its Website and Facebook page to reflect different ages, gender, ethnicity, and ability.
- Simplify the process for member applications.

- Engage a Club Patron to provide better links into the community.
- Develop a marketing database for recruitment and retention of members.

2. Restore Sustainable Financial Position

- Increase revenue from sponsorship, member fees, corporate events, bar operations and club mergers.
- Continue to contain costs.
- Review options for use of the East Green.
- Increase the number of people attending the Club.
- Develop a fully costed and prioritized 5-year Capital Plan for grounds and buildings, which identifies possible funding sources.

3. Increase Sponsorship Revenue and Develop Stronger Sponsor Relations

- Focus on local traders where there is mutual benefit.
- Restore past sponsors and expand and diversify new sponsors.
- Benchmark other Clubs for potential new sponsors.
- Invite sponsors to Social Dinners and Information Nights
- Hold a Sponsor's Day where sponsors can bowl socially with members and display their wares.
- Install a 'Sponsor Board' in the Clubhouse.
- Better articulate links between costs and benefits to sponsors in the Sponsor Opportunities pamphlet.
- Continue to encourage members to make known to sponsors their membership of Mt Waverley Bowling Club.
- Prepare a 'Trades List' for members.

4. Improve Communications, both Internally and Externally

- Use the full range of communication channels (i.e. emails, Website, Facebook, after play sessions, Information Nights, foyer notice boards and Zoom meetings to communicate information about the Club's activities and management decisions.
- Purchase a portable video TV screen for publicizing Club Events and Sponsors.
- Leverage off Facebook pages of major sponsors to disseminate information about the Club.
- Keep the Website continually updated, particularly for external audiences.
- Communicate the Strategic Plan through several channels.
- Prepare pie charts showing the contribution of member fees to total income and where member fee income is applied.
- Approach Parents Associations in local schools to encourage children to bowl after school hours
- Include the weeks' Pennant results in the Vice President's Monday email.
- Promote Facebook link in the Newsletter.
- Use the newsletter to focus on different Pennant aspects e.g. Night Bowls
- Nominate one member of the Committee of management to ask the question 'how are we going to communicate this decision'.

Accountability for implementing the above actions will be assigned to individual members of the Committee of Management. In some instances, members may set up Working Groups or Project Teams

to assist in completing the task. The Committee of Management will exercise an oversight and coordination role in support of the identified actions.

APPENDIX – LIST OF KPIs

Governance

- Maintenance and review of relevant policies and compliance with their implementation.
- Formal approval from Monash Council by September 2021 to extend the Club's current lease.

Membership

- Number of members.
- Number of new members.

Bowls

- Number of pennant sides.
- Success of pennant sides – one pennant side to be promoted each year.
- Success of pennant sides – no more than one pennant side to be relegated each year.
- Establish a pro-active program to encourage the participation of women in bowls.

Greens

- Greens running time at 14+/-3 seconds during the bowling season.
- 2 greens available for pennant play and major tournaments.

Facilities

- 5-Year Capital Plan for grounds and buildings, fully costed and prioritized, and identifying possible future funding sources, prepared by September 2021.

Reputation/Image

- Overall satisfaction of key stakeholders > 65%.

Community Involvement

- Number of casual visitors using the Club's facilities each year.

Finance

- Operating cash surplus.
- Sponsorship revenue.
- Liquid reserves.