



SPORTS FOCUS
SPORT & RECREATION FOR ALL

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022

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POSITION STATEMENT



A key aspect of Sports Focus's work is to ensure that sport and recreation clubs/organisations are supported to deliver equitable and inclusive participation opportunities for under-represented groups, e.g.

- people with disabilities
- Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders
- people from low socio-economic backgrounds
- people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities
- women
- seniors

It does this by:

- Identifying, developing and maintaining partnerships with key stakeholders which support the effective participation of under-represented groups.
- Providing information about sport and active recreation participation opportunities to people from under-represented groups.
- Providing information, training and tools to clubs to build their capacity to meet the needs of under-represented groups.

1.0 Executive Summary

Sports Focus is a not-for-profit organisation that supports the development of a sustainable and inclusive sport and active recreation sector sport across Central Victoria. It aspires to be recognised as the leading peak body that guides sport and active recreation in the region.

Sports Focus recognises some of the key challenges currently facing rural and regional sports clubs and organisations. These challenges include:

- Supporting under-represented groups to be more physically active
- Procurement of a suitable facility to house regional sports associations in Bendigo
- Population decline in the smaller towns, which then impacts on the number of people available to make up teams or to participate in activities
- Difficulties in recruiting and retaining volunteers and a change in the way people choose to volunteer
- Difficulties in attracting and retaining junior players
- Competition from an increasing number of sports or other activities
- Decline in some sports, particularly summer sports
- Lack of experienced or qualified coaches or instructors available locally in some towns
- Ageing communities, which impacts on the availability of both players and volunteers
- Low levels of physical activity participation in general and increasing levels of overweight people, obesity and health related issues
- Changes to physical activity participation – a shift away from organised sport to individual activities such as; walking, cycling, swimming, running and gym workouts
- Cost and compliance issues for clubs
- Cost of participation by members of the community in relation to registration fees, travel and time
- Maintaining and upgrading ageing infrastructure
- Accessing sufficient water
- Limited local funds, grants and sponsorship opportunities to offset rising costs.

With its charter to support the development of a sustainable sport and recreation sector, it is imperative that Sports Focus addresses these challenges wherever possible through training, information, programs, support and advocacy. In order to address these challenges, it also needs to have efficient and effective governance and management processes in place.

The two priority areas and goals of Sports Focus over the next four years therefore, as identified in the Strategic Plan are:

Organisational development

There are two parts to organisational development:

- Governance – which refers to the setting of goals, directions, policies, limitations and accountability frameworks. The Sports Focus Board of Management is responsible for governance activities.
- Management – which refers to the implementation of policies, allocation of resources, and overseeing the day to day operations of Sports Focus. Sports Focus staff are responsible for management.

Goal: To ensure that Sports Focus Board of Management and staff have the skills, knowledge and support to effectively plan, implement and monitor the strategic directions of the organisation

1. Undertake an annual skills audit and identify gaps in the composition of the Board (including mandatory gender board quotas).
2. Provide Board members with training opportunities to ensure that they have sufficient skills to govern Sports Focus effectively.
3. Utilise appropriate self-reflection Board evaluation tools to evaluate the performance of the Board.
4. Review and strengthen governance systems and policies with consideration of other similar organisations.
5. Review board member induction manual.
6. Develop annual work plans which reflect the strategic direction of Sports Focus and preferred outcomes of funding bodies.
7. Review staff appraisals systems to identify potential improvements.
8. Conduct annual staff appraisals.
9. Identify developmental opportunities required by staff.
10. Develop and implement an Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) plan.

Sector Development

Sector development refers to all of the policies and actions that have been developed by Sports Focus to build the capacity and sustainability of sport and active recreation clubs / organisations in the region and to encourage greater levels of participation in sport and active recreation.

Goal: To influence the development of a strong and responsive sport and active recreation sector

11. Investigate the level of interest and willingness of relevant organisations including, but not limited to, Local Government Authorities and State Sporting Associations to become future tenants in a sports hub.
12. Identify potential partners to establish a sports hub within the Loddon Campaspe region.
13. Engage a consultant to undertake a study to determine the feasibility of establishing a sports hub.
14. Provide timely advice and support on issues affecting the business of Sports Focus and its partners.
15. Ensure that Sports Focus is positioned to respond to issues and opportunities that impact the sport and active recreation sector.
16. Develop an equity framework that supports greater access to sport in the region.
17. Conduct four public speaking engagements to promote Sports Focus or to highlight specific issues of relevance to the sector.
18. Conduct two surveys three years apart to measure awareness of Sports Focus and its role within the region.

Through the adoption and implementation of this strategic plan, Sports Focus will be in a position to take advantage of new opportunities as they arise and to more effectively meet the needs of the sporting community.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Purpose of the Plan

This Strategic Plan, developed in partnership with Sports Focus Board of Management and staff, will play a critical role in managing and guiding the direction of Sports Focus over the next four years: 2018-2022. Specifically this plan:

- Identifies the vision, mission and values of Sports Focus
- Identifies directions and priorities
- Identifies the actions needed to achieve priorities
- Guides internal management and operational processes including:
 - Setting priorities
 - Allocating resources
 - Monitoring
 - Reporting
 - Accountability.

2.2 Our History and Our Region

Sport and Recreation Victoria created nine not for profit regional sports assemblies (RSAs) in 1983 in order to provide better support to sports clubs in regional Victoria. Sports Focus, which is one of the nine RSAs, services the following six Local Government areas that operate within the Loddon Campaspe region:

- Campaspe Shire Council
- Central Goldfields Shire Council
- Greater Bendigo City Council
- Loddon Shire Council
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council
- Mount Alexander Shire Council



2.3 Our Members

The area serviced by Sports Focus supports approximately 811 community based sporting organisations (clubs, leagues and associations). 239 of these clubs are members of Sports Focus. In return for their membership fees, these clubs receive communication from Sports Focus about grants, training opportunities, research and other matters. They also receive three hours of one on one support from Sports Focus.

2.4 Our Funding Partners

Other than some revenue from membership fees, Sports Focus receives the bulk of its funds from Sport and Recreation Victoria to deliver the Supporting Victorian Sport and Recreation program, which incorporates the Access for All Abilities program, as well as funds from VicHealth to deliver the Regional Sport Program. Additional funding is received from the Alcohol and Drug Foundation to deliver the Good Sports program. Sports Focus has also partnered with other organisations periodically to deliver relevant projects as identified.

2.5 Our Past Achievements

Sports Focus is proud of its many achievements over recent years. Some of these achievements include:

- Strong relationships with a variety of different organisations, e.g. Local Government Authorities, Primary Care Partnerships, etc.
- Advocacy on behalf of sporting clubs and a range of population groups
- Strategic approach to industry development
- Involvement in Local Government Authority planning
- Development of the Centre State Games
- Implementation of 'Administrator of the Year' award, now into its 30th year
- Solid fiscal management
- Solid and focused operational leadership group
- High retention rate of qualified staff has provided good continuity and retention of corporate knowledge
- Provided good support to sporting communities following floods and bushfires
- Demonstrated sustainability from a financial, program identification and delivery perspective
- Effective coverage of the Loddon Campaspe region through outreach work
- Strong partnerships have enabled Sports Focus to have a greater reach and more influence.

2.6 Preparation of the Strategic Plan

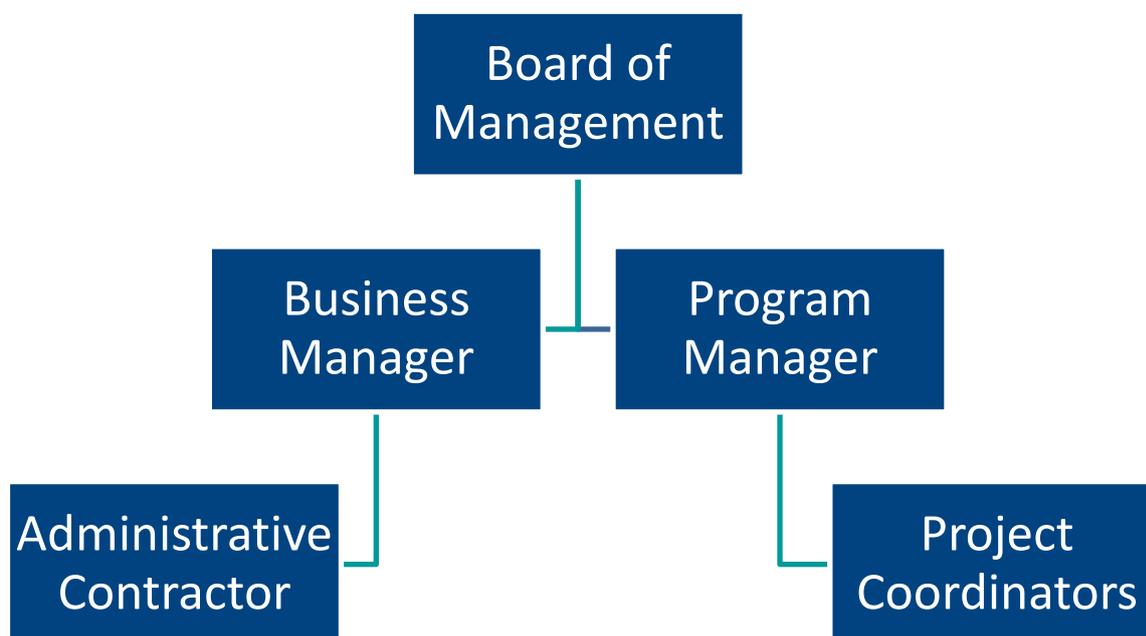
The Strategic Plan was prepared by communityvibe in partnership with the Board and staff of Sports Focus. It builds upon previous plans. Goals and actions were identified through a workshop with the Sports Focus Board of Management and staff.

2.7 Our Organisational Structure

Unlike most organisations, Sports Focus does not have a single executive officer to manage the organisation. Instead, in 2003, Sports Focus decided to appoint a business manager and a program manager. This arrangement works very well. In addition, there are two full-time project coordinators, three part-time project workers and a part-time administration contractor.

A board of management governs Sports Focus. This board is made up of representatives from the local sport sector, Local Government Authorities and interested parties qualified to deliver a specific outcome.

The organisational structure of Sports Focus is as follows:



3.0 Our Vision, Mission, Core Values and Operating Principles

3.1 Vision

Our vision is:

“To be recognised as the leading peak body that guides sport and active recreation in the region.”

3.2 Mission

Our mission is:

“Supporting the development of a sustainable and inclusive sport and active recreation sector.”

We will do this by assisting clubs and organisations to provide a safe, healthy and inclusive environment.

3.3 Core values

Our five core values are:



INNOVATION

In a dynamic, changing world, Sports Focus recognises the need to build upon tradition, while also 'daring to be different' to ensure clubs are healthy and dynamic into the future.



COMMUNICATION

Sports Focus will continue to build upon its clear systems for dissemination of information; for recognition of excellence and achievement; and for listening to its clubs and stakeholders.



COLLABORATION

Sports Focus will continue to build partnerships with like-minded agencies to best meet the needs of our clubs and community.



LEADERSHIP

Sports Focus will continue to provide leadership in all areas of club development and advocate the benefits of healthy, dynamic community sporting clubs.



EMPOWERMENT

Sports Focus will continue to work in partnership with clubs to empower them to be dynamic and sustainable and to be in control of their future.

3.4 Our 7 Operating Principles

In order to achieve our vision and mission, Sports Focus will implement the following operating principles:

- 1 • Implement a system of governance appropriate to a modern, not-for-profit community organisation.
- 2 • Continue to refine two-way communications systems.
- 3 • Hold as a priority at all times the objective of achieving healthy, safe, inclusive and active communities.
- 4 • Recognise that outcomes will be stronger when developed in partnership with key stakeholders.
- 5 • Ensure that services offered are directed at the long-term sustainability of clubs.
- 6 • Promote diversity and act against discrimination.
- 7 • Ensure that Sports Focus staff are well resourced and supported in their roles.

4.0 Situational Analysis

An environmental and SWOT analysis were undertaken to help understand the context in which Sports Focus is operating and is likely to operate in over the next three years.

4.1 Environmental Analysis

An environmental analysis or audit reveals the influences and factors affecting an organisation and will guide future planning and strategic decision making. An environmental analysis can also be called a STEEPLE analysis, whereby sociological, technological, economic, environmental, political, legal and ethical factors, policies and trends are considered in respect to what influence they may have on a particular issue such as sport. Some of the environmental factors that may impact on the operation of Sports Focus include:

Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ageing community• Centralisation of population/ urbanisation; young people moving away from rural areas into regional centres• Weekend employment/ shift work impacts on numbers for team sports on weekends• Rise in one parent households – some children are only available for sport every second weekend due to custody agreements• Changing sport participation trends• Pay as you play sport is becoming increasingly popular• New and emerging sport and recreation products are available delivering more choice in the marketplace e.g. modified sports such as 20-20 cricket, Strava (competing against other cyclists or runners online), use of personal trainers, etc.• Sport continues to play an important social role within communities• Issues of integrity of sport increasingly on the agenda.
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sports clubs increasingly using social media such as Facebook to communicate with members• Some sports clubs not keeping up with technology, e.g. websites, social media, etc., for a variety of reasons e.g. access, capacity, policy, cost etc.• Club administrators often use their own personal computers• Technology has impacted on club administrators in a variety of ways• Assumption that everyone has email, etc.• Expectation that people use smart phones etc.• Advancements in the sports sector in terms of playing surfaces, equipment, etc. These are often quite costly for clubs to purchase.

Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding bodies expect significant outcomes from their investment • Increased cost of staff • Cost of sport, e.g. insurance, water, utility bills, etc. • Disposable income of families is often limited, therefore some parents forgo their own sport so their children can play • Clubs don't always understand operating costs (per participant) • Cost of training for staff can be high • Static government funding has no indexation for inflation • Player payments impact on other funds available within a club • Fixed cost of running a sports club is fairly static, but as population declines it can become cost prohibitive • Increased commercialisation of sport resulting in greater competition for the corporate sponsorship dollar • User pays has become increasingly prevalent • Local Government rate caps will impact on funding available to sport.
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport and facilities can be severely impacted by floods, drought and fire • More dry spells will impact on the condition of grassed playing fields • Increased awareness of environmental issues by clubs.
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The political landscape determines the agenda • Small 'p' politics – politics of club sport is prominent • Better representation of women on boards • There is opportunity for greater coordination within all three levels of government and across sectors • Sports Focus is non-political.
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance and legal issues can have a huge strain on clubs • Compliance and regulation are important issues to address • The growth and volume of compliance and regulations can inhibit peoples involvement in clubs • Lots of ignorance / fear around legal issues.
Ethical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased social awareness of integrity issues e.g. gambling, illicit drugs etc. • A lens is being put on gender equity within sport • Inclusive sport is a key area of focus • Ethical sponsors (i.e. no funds from cigarettes, gambling, alcohol, etc.) • Sport recognised as having a role in addressing racism and family violence and promoting reconciliation.

4.2 SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis was undertaken to help understand the current environment in which Sports Focus operates. A SWOT analysis is a list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relating to the organisation. The strengths and weaknesses are internal factors of an organisation while the opportunities and threats are external to the organisation. The SWOT analysis was carried out in a workshop format with input from the participants.

STRENGTHS

- Good management
- Good staff – cohesive, knowledgeable, excellent skill set, well qualified, complementary, have specifically targeted quality staff
- Execution of programs has been successful
- Good reputation and strong brand
- Good communication with members
- Responsive – think outside the square
- Have developed strategic and productive partnerships
- Financially successful
- Good rapport with LGAs – especially where there has been a continuity of LGA staff over a period of time
- Has 260 members / 824 clubs on the books
- Has great influence – government agencies and funding bodies often seek advice
- Strong board – diverse range of participants with relevant experience and an effective governance structure
- Apolitical
- Easy for clubs to get information
- Regularly get referrals from LGAs
- Identified by LGAs as a key partner in the delivery of sport and recreation.

WEAKNESSES

- Vulnerable to funding and income streams
- Vulnerable to staff turn over
- Vulnerable at board level
- Not political
- Don't maximise our self-promotion
- Could be better at advocacy
- Limited by what can be achieved – can't be all things to all people
- Get funding to deliver a service, although may want to do other things
- Not all clubs know about Sports Focus
- Capacity to service clubs may be an issue (due to limited/ tied funding)
- Don't allocate enough time to research – use research from others though.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Greater self-sufficiency – **Action: 15**
- Develop new or improved partnerships – Sport and Recreation Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services, Australian Football League, Local Government Authorities, COTA, mental health suicide prevention, family violence etc. – **Action: 15**
- Identify the key community issues and who the main players are – then develop a plan to deliver programs / services for or in partnership with these agencies. – **Action: 15**
- Be contemporary – be the voice. – **Action: 14; 17**
- Greater connections with more people more often – stronger relationships – horizontal – influence others, e.g. health sector. – **Action: 15**
- Community health sector – big opportunity. – **Action: 15; 16**
- Be involved in relevant networks/ discussions. – **Action: 15; 16**
- Undertake more guest speaker roles at networks e.g. Bendigo Business Network. – **Action: 17**
- Make more conference presentations, e.g. World Health Organisation. – **Action: 14; 17**
- Identify area of specialisation, e.g. governance, inclusiveness. – **Action: 17**
- Examine trends and partner with others to provide relevant services and to access more funding. – **Action: 15; 16**

THREATS

- Funding reductions will result in limited services
- Relevance to the sport and recreation sector, i.e. clubs
- Other competition, e.g. private training companies
- Changing nature of sport and a decline in organised sport
- Mobility of interests in sport.

4.3 Summary

Based on the information obtained from the STEEPLE and SWOT analysis, it appears that the key issues for Sports Focus in the next four years are likely to be:

- Maintenance of existing partnerships and the development of new strategic alliances – **Action: 15**
- Continued support for clubs, particularly in areas such as social media, websites, sustainability, governance, inclusiveness, equity, developing more flexible sports structures, volunteer recruitment – **Action: 16**
- Improved promotion of the services Sports Focus is able to offer – **Action: 18**
- Greater presence at networking opportunities, conferences and meetings – **Action: 17**
- Continued focus on quality management and governance practices – **Actions: 1-4**
- Greater focus on advocacy and research and dissemination of this information – **Actions: 15-17**
- Greater awareness of what is happening in the sector and identifying funds to support initiatives – **Action: 14**

5.0 Our Action Plan

Goals and actions help to guide the direction of Sports Focus and directly influence the development of work plans.

For the purpose of this report, the following definitions will be used:

- Goals – goals are what Sports Focus hopes to achieve; its overall aspiration.
- Actions – actions are activities which are implemented to help achieve a goal.

Sports Focus has developed a series of goals and actions as part of a workshop with the Board of Management and follow up meetings with a sub-committee.

The two key performance areas which Sports Focus intends to focus on over the next four years are:

- Organisational development
- Sector development

Under each of these key performance areas, a goal has been identified. Each goal contains at least one action. To assist with the implementation and monitoring of each action, responsibilities, measurements, indicators and success outcomes are identified.

5.1 Key Performance Area: Organisational development

Goal: To ensure that Sports Focus Board of Management and staff have the skills, knowledge and support to effectively plan, implement and monitor the strategic directions of the organisation

ACTION	MEASUREMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	INDICATORS	SUCCESS OUTCOMES	CURRENT UPDATE
1. Undertake an annual skills audit and identify gaps in the composition of the Board (including mandatory gender board quotas).	A report on the skill gaps is provided annually to the Nominations Committee.	Sports Focus management Sports Focus Board of Management	June 2018 June 2019 June 2020 June 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
2. Provide Board members with training opportunities to ensure that they have sufficient skills to govern Sports Focus effectively.	Training opportunities are provided annually.	Sports Focus management	June 2018 June 2019 June 2020 June 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
3. Utilise appropriate self-reflection Board evaluation tools to evaluate the performance of the Board.	Develop and review the self-reflection tool.	Sports Focus Management	August 2018 August 2019 August 2020 August 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	

ACTION	MEASUREMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	INDICATORS	SUCCESS OUTCOMES	CURRENT UPDATE
	Self evaluation of Board members is undertaken on an annual basis.	Sports Focus Board of Management	September 2018 September 2019 September 2020 September 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
4. Review and strengthen governance systems and policies with consideration of other similar organisations.	Develop a Board calendar to review policies on a four year cycle.	Sports Focus Management	June 2018	Not yet applicable	
	Present relevant policy updates to the Board. A motion is presented by the Board to approve policy updates.	Sports Focus Management	December 2018 December 2019 December 2020 December 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
5. Review board member induction manual.	Induction manual is reviewed every 2 years.	Sports Focus management	September 2019 September 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
6. Develop annual work plans which reflect the strategic direction of Sports Focus and preferred outcomes of funding bodies.	A report is provided to the Board on how the work plans integrate with the strategic plan.	Sports Focus management	October 2018 October 2019 October 2020 October 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	

ACTION	MEASUREMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	INDICATORS	SUCCESS OUTCOMES	CURRENT UPDATE
	Program reports are submitted to funding bodies and acquitted. Present outcome summary to the Board.	Sports Focus management	August 2018 August 2019 August 2020 August 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
	Ongoing funding is provided by funding bodies. This is reflected in contract offer and renewal and the budgetary process.	Sports Focus management	May 2018 May 2019 May 2020 May 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
7. Review staff appraisals systems to identify potential improvements.	Present staff appraisal systems to Board every second year.	Sports Focus management Sports Focus Board (sub-committee)	March 2019 March 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
8. Conduct annual staff appraisals.	Present annual staff appraisal outcome summary to the Board.	Sports Focus management Sports Focus Board (sub-committee)	June 2018 June 2019 June 2020 June 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	

ACTION	MEASUREMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	INDICATORS	SUCCESS OUTCOMES	CURRENT UPDATE
9. Identify developmental opportunities required by staff.	At least one development opportunity is provided to each member of staff annually. Present outcome summary to the Board.	Sports Focus management	April 2018 April 2019 April 2020 April 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
10. Develop and implement an Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) plan.	Present an ICT plan to the Board.	Sports Focus management	May 2019	Not yet applicable	

5.2 Key Performance Area: Sector development

Goal: To influence the development of a strong and responsive sport and active recreation sector

ACTION	MEASUREMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	INDICATORS	SUCCESS OUTCOMES	CURRENT UPDATE
11. Investigate the level of interest and willingness of relevant organisations including, but not limited to, Local Government Authorities and State Sporting Associations to become future tenants in a sports hub.	Expressions of Interest (EOIs) are provided by relevant organisations. Progress report(s) are provided to the Board.	Sports Focus management	October 2018 December 2018 February 2019	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
12. Identify potential partners to establish a sports hub within the Loddon Campaspe region.	Progress report(s) are provided to the Board.	Sports Focus management Sports Focus Board	September 2018 January 2019	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
13. Engage a consultant to undertake a study to determine the feasibility of establishing a sports hub.	Feasibility study conducted.	Sports Focus management	October 2019	Not yet applicable	
14. Provide timely advice and support on issues affecting the business of Sports Focus and its partners.	A minimum of four issues are identified and communicated regionally to the sector.	Sports Focus management	June 2018 June 2019 June 2020 June 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	

ACTION	MEASUREMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	INDICATORS	SUCCESS OUTCOMES	CURRENT UPDATE
15. Ensure that Sports Focus is positioned to respond to issues and opportunities that impact the sport and active recreation sector.	A minimum of two regional issues are identified. Evaluation conducted by Sports Focus on its capacity to respond to identified issues.	Sports Focus management	June 2018 June 2019 June 2020 June 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
16. Develop an equity framework that supports greater access to sport in the region.	Equity framework is developed.	Sports Focus management	April 2019	Not yet applicable	
17. Conduct four public speaking engagements to promote Sports Focus or to highlight specific issues of relevance to the sector.	Four public speaking engagements are conducted.	Sports Focus management	December 2018 December 2019 December 2020 December 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	
18. Conduct two surveys three years apart to measure awareness of Sports Focus and its role within the region.	Sport and active recreation clubs are surveyed. Results of surveys are reported to the Board.	Sports Focus management	February 2019 February 2021	Not yet applicable Not yet applicable	

6.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

It is important that this Strategic Plan is reviewed on an ongoing basis to reflect the ever changing environment in which Sports Focus operates.

The purpose of this document is to act as an ongoing guide to direct Sports Focus continually over the next three year period – rather than a document that is examined only at the end of this period. It is recommended that a review of the entire strategy is undertaken annually. A new strategic plan needs to be prepared every three years. The following table outlines the proposed review and reporting requirements:

Every Meeting	Status report on current actions
Annually	Evaluation of outstanding actions
Annually	Review Strategic Plan
2021	Full analysis of actions throughout the plan