



**Launceston
Volunteers For
Community**

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POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

SECTION 1 – ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE, THE BOARD & MANAGEMENT

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ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Launceston Volunteers for Community Services Inc

Launceston VFC Services Inc. is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation that promotes well-being and independence for those who are older and frail, and for younger people living with a disability who want to remain living in their homes and communities. Services that assist people with tasks of daily living are carried out by volunteers and managed by staff, and a Board of Management. Services are provided for a small co-contribution for community transport, home maintenance (lawn mowing and minor tasks), social support and domestic assistance for those who are unable to leave the house. These are tasks which help people to remain living as independently as possible, in their own homes, without becoming isolated. Launceston VFC Services Inc. operates in the Greater Launceston area.

Vision

To establish an enduring organization across Tasmania, providing services through volunteers, for the frail, the elderly, people living with a disability, the disadvantaged and the vulnerable.

Mission

Our Mission is to provide a community led range of services, provided by volunteers, which respond to the needs of the frail, the elderly, people living with a disability, the disadvantaged and the vulnerable and empower them to lead more independent lives.

Values

Core values are:

1. **COMPASSION:** Establishment and maintenance of relationships with our clients and other stakeholders which are based upon promoting independence and wellness. Openness, trust, fairness, honesty, integrity, caring and confidence.
2. **INTEGRITY:** Adherence to the highest ethical standards.
3. **EMPATHY:** Concern and fair treatment for our employees, volunteers and clients.
4. **COLLABORATION:** Employees, volunteers and stakeholders demonstrate pride and enthusiasm.
5. **INCLUSIVENESS:** Ensure a supportive environment through open communication with employees, volunteers and clients.
6. **RESPECT:** Respect for individuals and appreciation for the contributions that each can make.
7. **EXCELLENCE:** Commitment to excellence and continual improvement in our organization.
8. **WELLNESS & RESILIENCE:** Create a culture that supports and embraces the principles of good health and well-being.

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History

The Kings Meadows Community Health Centre opened in 1976. The main objective was to establish a centre to provide community support. A Ladies Auxiliary was established, and it identified the need for respite care, childcare, transporting disabled children and companionship for the elderly and support with shopping, homecare and garden maintenance.

The foundation of the Voluntary Support Service was made possible in 1979 with the Ladies Auxiliary receiving a grant for funding by the Family Support Scheme, Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services continued to fund a new service called Family Support Service.

With this funding came the need for governance and a Board was established.

In 1991, the service changed its name to Launceston V.F.C. Services Inc. with the V.F.C. standing for Voluntary, Family, and Childcare. As time went on, the childcare arm of the service closed due to the lack of funding.

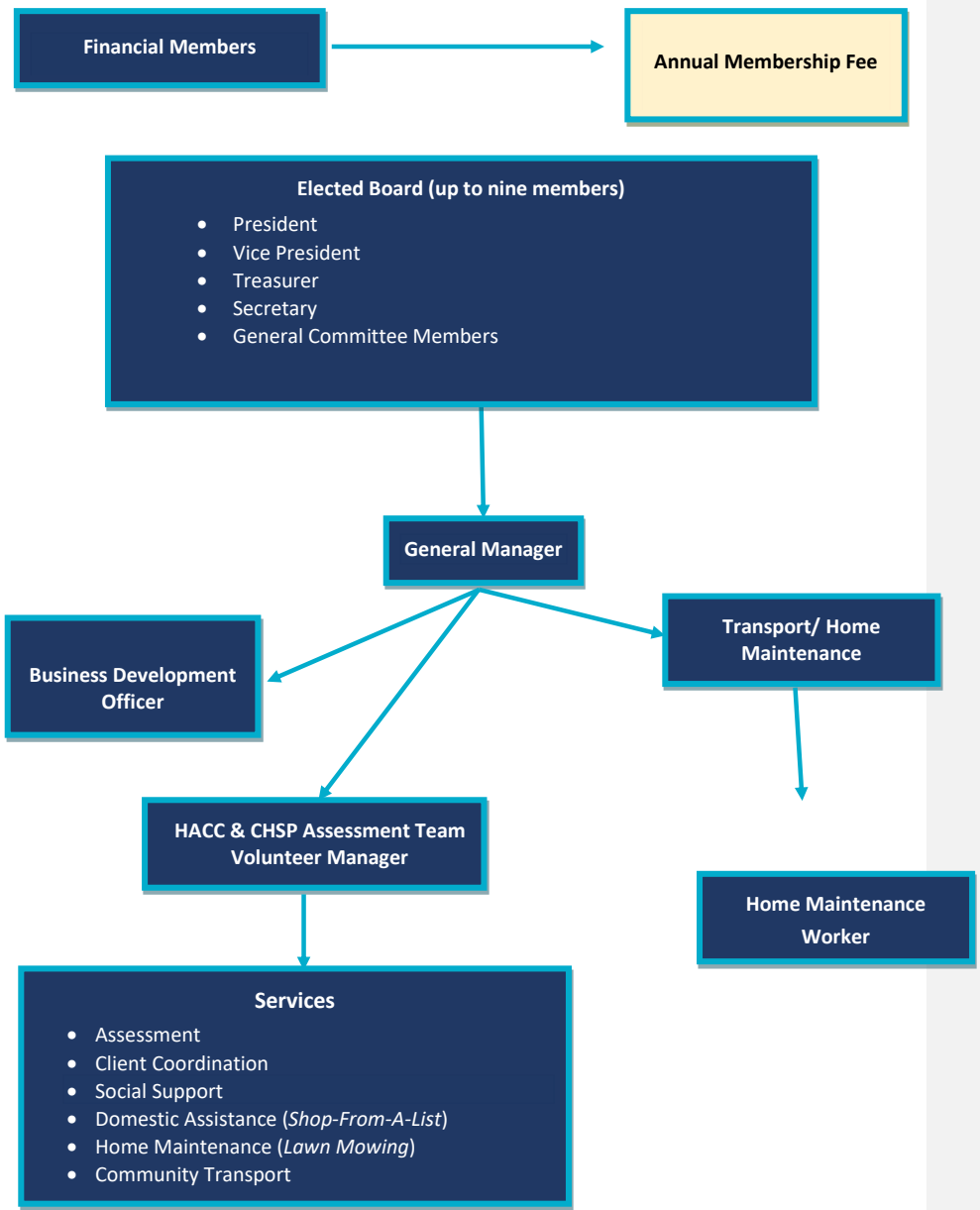
In 2005, the Board became aware that the majority of new referrals being received by *Family Support Service* were of an extremely complex nature. The skills required for these clients fell way outside the "Duty of Care" plan for the volunteers of Launceston V.F.C. Services Inc. After lengthy negotiations with all parties involved, it became clear that *Family Support Services* was not able to provide the service being required of it, and as a consequence, the *Family Support Service* closed in November 2005.

The year 2005 brought another challenge for Launceston V.F.C. Services Inc., namely the need for more volunteers. It was decided to purchase a vehicle and use it to provide a *Community Car Service* for medical appointments, and some social activities, to the frail-aged and younger people with a disability. This proved extremely successful and popular with clients.

In 2023, LVFC has 4 community cars, 70 volunteers, 5 paid staff, and provides a range of services to approximately 400 clients in the greater Launceston area. The Service name now stands for – **Launceston Volunteers For Community Services Inc.**

Organisational Chart

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Incorporation Compliance Requirements

Launceston VFC Services is registered as an Incorporation. As such, it is subject to the Corporations Act 2001, administered by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC).

It has an Australian Business Number (ABN): 325 936 125 73

The General Manager is responsible for coordinating compliance with ASIC or other regulatory body requirements and may delegate tasks to other staff members as necessary

- The General Manager must ensure the following:
 - Advising ASIC within 28 days or other requirement of any change to:
 - Launceston VFC Services Inc Directors or Office Bearers (appointments and resignations or retirements)
 - the address of a Director or Office Bearer
 - the Association's Rules of Association
 - the Association's registered office or principal place of business
 - proper conduct of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and any General Meetings
 - lodging annual returns by the due date
 - maintaining the register of members
- The Company Secretary is responsible for signing formal correspondence with ASIC or other regulatory body, and may delegate signing duties to the public officer
- Copies of the Rules of Association are to be held in the office and made available to all members and staff of LVFC Services Inc

Use of the Company Seal/Corporate Key

The General Manager must ensure that the Company Seals are kept in secure locations and protected from unauthorised use.

For the purpose of making online lodgements of organisational details, the following people are authorised to have access to the Corporate Key:

- General Manager
- President/Public Officer

The Company Seal may only be used with the approval of the Board or of a Board sub-committee authorised by the Board to use the Seal. Any document to which the Seal is affixed must be signed by a Board member and countersigned by the Secretary, a second Board member, or by a person appointed by the Board for the purpose.

Rules of the Association

The Rules of the Association (sometimes referred to as the constitution) are a legal document which must be lodged with ASIC. The Rules set out:

- the objects of the Association

- its legal powers
- the composition of the Board and Office Bearer positions
- conduct of elections and general meetings
- membership
- winding up requirements

Insurance

LVFC has a significant number of insurance policies to protect the organisation, its staff, volunteers and assets. These policies are reviewed annually by the Audit & Risk Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Board, working closely with the General Manager to ensure cover is sufficient for the organisation's needs. Insurers/brokers are also reviewed regularly (2-3 years) to ensure the best value and level of cover is achieved.

THE BOARD

Role of the Board

The Board is responsible for:

- governance & strategic oversight of the organisation, including risk, legal and financial compliance.
- Long-term vision and development of the organisation.
- recruitment and performance management of the General Manager.

The Board is NOT responsible for day to day management of the organisation which is the responsibility of the General Manager.

One of the most important roles of the Board is ensuring that the operations of Launceston VFC Services Inc. comply with the relevant Acts and legal requirements at a federal, state and local government level. It is to assist in compliance with all its legal obligations that Launceston VFC Services Inc. has in place formal policies and procedures with which everyone involved in the organisation should be aware.

The relationship between Board members (Directors) and the organisation is a fiduciary one, built on trust and honesty. Board members must act in good faith and to the best of their ability in the interest of the organisation. Directors must avoid conflicts of interest and be aware that their duties are to the organisation, not the members.

Sub Committees

The Board may appoint sub committees, such as the Audit and Risk Committee, having determined and approved the terms of reference of any committee that is established.

Election of the Board

The Board comprises up to nine members who offer their services in a voluntary capacity and are recruited with the aim of ensuring a wide range of relevant skills. Board members are elected at the AGM.

Board Meetings

The Board meets six times a year and for an AGM in September. A Board calendar is set for the year with the Audit & Risk Committee meeting in advance of each Board meeting.

Board members who fail, without leave granted by the Board, to attend three or more meetings of the Board in one financial year, may have their position considered vacant.

Board Performance Appraisal

Annual board evaluations are usually internally managed by the President and may incorporate the use of surveys and one-to-one meetings.

The organisation may seek the services of an outside consultant as a means of benchmarking against the governance practices of other boards.

Confidentiality Agreement

All Directors are required to sign a confidentiality agreement. All information acquired during tenure of membership of the Board is to be treated as confidential and should not be disclosed to third parties without prior written approval from the Launceston VFC General Manager and/or the Board, unless required by law or by the rules of any regulatory body.

Management of conflicts of interest

Directors are required to declare any conflict of interest with an agenda item at the start of each Board meeting. The Chair and Board will assess whether a conflict exists and decide whether the Director should:

- to the discussion but abstain from voting or taking part in a decision on the matter
- observe but not take part in the discussion or decision making
- leave the meeting during discussion and decision on the matter

Board members with a significant and ongoing conflict of interest may be asked to:

- take leave of absence from the Board for the period over which the matter will be discussed and decided
- resign from the Board

Any declaration of conflict of interest is recorded in the minutes of the meeting along with the action taken

Agenda Planning

To accomplish its governance responsibilities, the Board follows a structured annual agenda plan which includes standing items covered at each meeting:

- Strategic review
 - Chair's report
 - General Manager's report
 - Progress against strategic plan
- Board Reports
 - Audit & Risk Committee
 - Financial report
 - Compliance report
 - Risk report

In addition, specific items are scheduled for discussion through the year, including:

- Adoption of the following year's budget
- Review of the Rules of the Association
- AGM planning
- Preparation for annual audit
- Directors' and General Manager reviews
- Strategic planning session

Board-Management Relationship

The General Manager is the Board's only link to operational management. As such:

- Instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the General Manager will be conducted through the General Manager
- The evaluation or appraisal of staff, either formally or informally, other than the General Manager, will only be carried out by the General Manager
- The General Manager's performance, in general terms, will be appraised against the achievement of organisational objectives subject to the limitations placed on the General Manager by the Board through its policies.
- The Board will develop operational and strategic objectives that make clear the results the Board expects the General Manager to achieve
- The Board delegates to the General Manager responsibility for the implementation of these objectives whilst complying with its financial limitations policy

- The Board will develop, monitor and modify any other General Manager Limitations policies that may be deemed appropriate
- The level of detail prescribed in any Board policy will be determined by the degree of information required to ensure the interpretation of policies by the General Manager is consistent with the interpretation intended by the Board
- The General Manager is encouraged to utilise the knowledge and experience of individual directors on the Board.

Strategic Planning

The Board sets the strategic direction for the work of the organisation through a three yearly strategic planning process involving consultation between the Board, General Manager, staff, volunteers, members, client and community representatives and other stakeholders.

The Strategic Plan outlines the key goals and objectives of Launceston VFC Services as well as broad strategies to meet these objectives.

The Strategic Plan will be the main reference point for any work undertaken by the organisation. It is a living document which is to be reviewed regularly and serves as the key road map for the organisation.

The planning process for a new strategic plan will usually commence six months before the end of the period covered by the current Strategic Plan. The process will be led by the President in consultation with General Manager, and may be conducted as an internal process, or with the assistance of external facilitators.

A draft Strategic Plan is submitted to the Board and the final document then formally adopted by the Board.

Once adopted, the Strategic Plan will be made available:

- to all Launceston VFC Services members
- to the public via the Launceston VFC Services website
- in hard copy available from the Launceston VFC Services office.

Documentation of the plan

The Strategic Plan will include:

- Purpose or mission statement
- Goals that Launceston VFC Services will meet
- Strategies to achieve the goals
- Specific activities to implement each strategy

Monitoring of the plan

The General Manager is responsible for reporting to the Board on the extent to which goals are being met.

MANAGEMENT

The Board delegates day-to-day management of the organisation to the General Manager.

The General Manager is responsible for ensuring:

- **Financial management:** That Launceston VFC Services Inc
 - has sufficient funds to carry out its core work and contracted obligations;
 - operates within its allocated resources;
 - maintains reserves to adequately cover its liabilities;
- **Activities and services:** That Launceston VFC Services Inc:
 - contracts only for activities and projects that are within its identified core aims and strategic directions;
 - implements work programs that provide effective contribution to the achievement of Launceston VFC Services Inc's core aims and objectives.
- **Human resource management:** That Launceston VFC Services Inc:
 - is able to attract the skilled staff required;
 - operates within current industrial relations legislation and within the terms of any contracts or agreements with staff;
 - provides a safe and supportive working environment.
- **Asset protection:** That the assets of Launceston VFC Services are well managed and maintained.
- **Communication and advice to the Board:** That the Launceston VFC Services Inc Board is provided with:
 - accurate information and well-considered advice from staff;
 - reports on current status of the organisation and its activities;
 - information on any risk or threat to the organisation and its interests.
- **Legal obligations:** That Launceston VFC Services Inc
 - operates in compliance with the policies and procedures established by the Board;
 - acts in compliance with its legal obligations and within the law generally;
 - does not become liable to legal action as a result of negligence by the General Manager or other staff.
- **Public profile:** That Launceston VFC Services
 - maintains a positive profile and reputation with stakeholders and in the media;
 - is respected for its competence and capacity to carry out its role.

The General Manager manages key operational issues, according to the direction and policies laid down by the Board, including:

- Implementation of the strategic plan;

- Developing and implementing organisational strategies and making recommendations to the Board on significant strategic initiatives;
- Recruitment, management and supervision of staff, including performance appraisals and succession planning;
- Developing the annual budget and managing day-to-day operations within the budget;
- Overseeing financial management of the organisation, including managing expenditures within delegations and budget;
- Maintaining an effective risk management framework;
- Liaising with stakeholders;

Performance review

The General Manager's performance is continuously monitored by the Board against achievement of operational and strategic objectives. The Board will provide regular feedback to the General Manager.

A formal performance review is conducted annually by the President.

Quality Management

Launceston VFC Services Inc is committed to quality management and to building and maintaining a culture of continuous quality improvement.

This includes:

- involving staff, volunteers, the Board and other stakeholders in service review processes
- providing opportunities for clients, their families and carers to have input into the organisation's services
- gathering information on performance by tracking complaints, incidents and achievements and using this information to inform continuous improvement
- internal reporting on progress and performance
- developing a culture of continuous improvement
- adherence to Australian/New Zealand national quality management standard principles

Conflict of Interest

Launceston VFC Services Inc is committed to ensuring that actions and decisions taken at all levels in the organisation are informed, objective and fair. A conflict of interest may affect the way a person acts, decisions they make or the way they vote on group decisions.

Conflicts of interest must be identified and action taken to ensure that personal interests do not impact on the organisations services, activities or decisions.

All staff, volunteers and the Board and members must:

- act impartially and without prejudice
- declare any potential or actual conflict of interest
- not accept gifts or benefits that would influence a decision

This includes situations in which:

- close personal friends or family members are involved, such as decisions about employment, discipline or dismissal, service allocation or awarding of contracts
- an individual or their close friends or family members may make a financial gain or gain some other form of advantage
- an individual is involved with another organisation or offers services that are in a competitive relationship with LVFC and therefore may have access to commercially sensitive information, plans or financial information
- an individual is bound by prior agreements or allegiances to other individuals or agencies that require them to act in the interests of that person or agency or to take a particular position on an issue

Registration of known conflicts of interest

A register of conflicts of interest is kept and all Board members, staff and volunteers (if applicable) will be asked to declare:

- Potential or actual conflicts of interest that exist when a person joins the organisation
- Conflicts of interest that arise during their involvement with the organisation

The register will maintained by the General Manager. All potential and actual conflicts will be recorded in the register,

Identification and declaration of conflicts of interest

In addition to an initial declaration of any potential conflicts of interest at the beginning of their involvement with the organisation, all Board , staff and volunteers are required to declare any potential or actual conflicts of interest they are aware of by:

- At the beginning of any meeting or decision making process informing those present when a conflict becomes apparent
- Outside of a meeting informing the relevant person when a conflict becomes apparent

The potential conflict will be assessed by the staff member's immediate supervisor or, in the case of the Board, by the President. Where the conflict concerns a group process, the assessment may be conducted by the group convenor or the staff team concerned

If a conflict of interest exists or there is a perception that a conflict exists, the staff member may be asked to:

- contribute to the discussion but abstain from voting or taking part in a decision on the matter
- observe but not take part in the discussion or decision making

- leave the meeting during discussion and decision on the matter

Staff involvement in external activities

Launceston VFC Services Inc encourages and supports staff members becoming involved in community activities and volunteer work in their personal lives. However, it is possible that staff members may undertake volunteer or professional roles outside the organisation that give rise to a conflict of interest, or a perception of conflict (e.g. Staff undertaking consultancy work for member organisations or government agencies).

As a result Launceston VFC Services Inc expects that all staff members declare their involvement in external activities related to the work of Launceston VFC Services Inc when they are employed, and discuss and plan with their supervisor how any potential conflicts of interest can be managed. Staff members taking on other (new) work outside Launceston VFC Services Inc need to inform their supervisor.

Contractors

All contracts with external consultants being engaged by the organisation will include a declaration that no conflict of interest exists.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE MATERIAL

- Rules of the Association
- Strategic Plan