



REMEMBRANCE PARKS
CENTRAL VICTORIA

Strategic Plan 2016 - 2019



Our Vision

Nurturing enduring remembrance

Mission Statement

Working with our community we will:

- Deliver quality and caring service with compassion; and
- Create and maintain enduring and accessible remembrance into perpetuity



Our Values

Board members, staff and volunteers of Remembrance Parks – Central Victoria carry the responsibility of upholding our values of:

Compassion Community Integrity

These values are augmented by a commitment to uphold the Victorian Government Public Sector Values that include:



Building off our critical success factors, our long-term objective is to ensure we contribute to a one vision delivered by a cohesive, focused and effective team across an integrated sector, as demonstrated below:



PREFACE

This Strategic Plan has been developed in accordance with sections 18O and 18P of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003* (the Act). It establishes the strategic direction for Bendigo Cemeteries Trust, trading as Remembrance Parks - Central Victoria (RPCV).

Remembrance Parks - Central Victoria is an established Class A Cemetery Trust in accordance with s.5 of the Act and performs the functions of a Class A Trust outlined within s.12A of the Act. The organisation is governed by a Board appointed by the Governor-in-Council in accordance with the provisions of s.6A of the Act.

In developing the Strategic Plan 2016-19 the Board has adopted a proactive future-focused approach that extends current thinking and boundaries across the organisation and the sector. This is necessary to ensure challenges and risks are considered and strategies developed to mitigate these issues and make sure the organisation is sustainable in the long term. Managing these changes is particularly relevant when nationally there has been a move to deregulate the sector and this will open up competition and make it more important than ever to meet changing community attitudes towards funeral and memorialisation services.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	4
BUSINESS PROFILE	5
AFTER LIFE CARE AND REMEMBRANCE.....	9
OUR OPERATING ENVIRONMENT.....	10
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	18
RPCV Balanced Scorecard.....	25

FOREWORD

This comprehensive three year strategic plan details the management and operational strategic directions for Remembrance Parks Central Victoria (RPCV) to ensure its future growth and sustainability. It reflects the Board's commitment to sound governance and provides an agreement between the Board and management.

RPCV has not only provided a plan for the future but also taken the opportunity to review and reflect on the significant achievements over the past three years. They include installation of a new oversize cremator, a significant improvement in all stakeholder relationships (including funeral directors), implementation of a new trading name to reflect the change in strategic direction, leadership and support to the Class B Trusts across northern Victoria, organisation restructure and outsourcing to improve performance, assigning clear accountabilities within the business and improved service to the community. These achievements provide a sound foundation for the next three years in the development of this plan and are considered along with the changes currently occurring and emerging in our operating environment.

Over the life of this Strategic Plan we will continue to operate in a collaborative manner with all stakeholders in the delivery of vertically integrated funeral and memorialisation services. As a new opportunity, we will invest in research and engagement with our communities to create ongoing conversations to assist individuals and families make better end of life decisions, earlier in their lives. A Grattan Institute Study in 2014 found that at present, 70% of the Australian population would like to die at home, only 14% do and with 50% of deaths occurring after age 75, there is a trend towards opposing medical interventions that don't improve the quality of life.¹

A key priority during the life of this Strategic Plan is to look at developing a Natural Burial Ground as an environmental friendly alternative to traditional burials.

During the implementation of this Plan, we will continue our ongoing monitoring of the external environment and tracking relevant changes to ensure we are well positioned for more competition and for the potential deregulation of the sector. This is because other Australian states have moved or are moving towards deregulation. There are also other competitors entering the market such as Costco selling caskets. We will continue to be proactive in reviewing new opportunities and ensuring they align with customer needs.



Pam Macdonald
Chair



Graham Fountain
Chief Executive Officer

¹ Grattan Institute (26/6/16) <http://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/815-dying-well.pdf>

BUSINESS PROFILE

Overview

Bendigo Cemeteries Trust, trading as Remembrance Parks – Central Victoria (RPCV), is a government owned enterprise established as one of five Class A Cemetery Trusts under the provisions of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003* (the Act). It is accountable to the Minister for Health through the Department of Health and Human Services and is responsible for the direct management of six sites. RPCV also has a broader responsibility to provide leadership, support and assistance to 205 Class B Cemetery Trusts within the Loddon Mallee Region.

Business Overview

The Strategic Plan is underpinned by a detailed forecast of the demand for our products and services and the key resources required to deliver the Plan. The following table provides a summary of those inputs:

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Interments (bodily remains)	392	384	390	396
Interments (cremated remains)	103	114	116	118
Cremations	1174	1200	1218	1236
Memorialisations	340	335	340	345
Operating Revenue	\$ 2,451,211	\$ 2,481,154	\$ 2,518,371	\$ 2,556,147
Asset Value	\$ 5,131,680	\$ 5,182,996	\$ 5,234,826	\$ 5,287,175
Employees	9.2	9.2	9.2	9.2

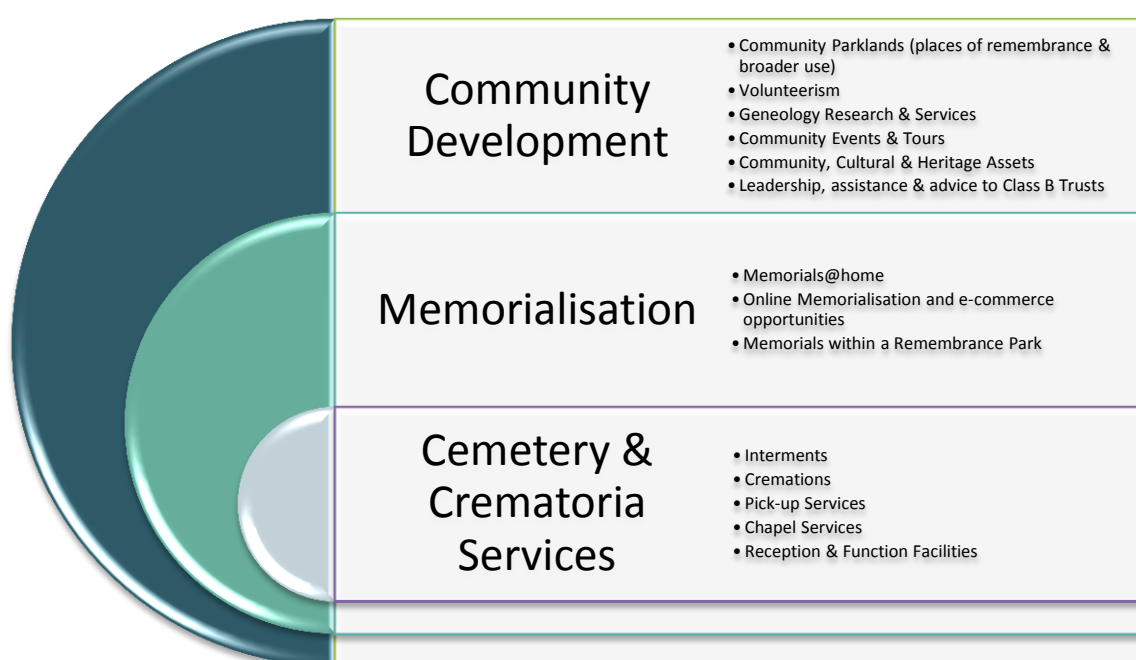
To assist management in determining prices for products and services and therefore operating revenue, the Board has adopted the following guiding principles for pricing:

Fairness	Ensuring customer equity, by providing community members with an accessible selection of products and services.
Financial Sustainability	Allowing a revenue stream for RPCV that allows it to better meet its future expenditure obligations.
Cost reflectivity	Setting prices to ensure that services costly to provide are also more expensive for customers to purchase.
Innovation	Thinking outside the square, considering innovative approaches from other industries.
Flexibility	Allowing RPCV the freedom to respond to changing circumstances and community trends.
Simplicity	Approving a fee structure that is easily understood by potential customers, funeral directors and all interested parties.

Products and Services

RPCV offers a broad range of services to the community in accordance with the respective provisions of the Act. These services are tailored to the unique nature of the funeral services industry, the operating environment and to meet the needs of the community it serves. The following provides a snapshot of the current and potentially future RPCV products and services:

Figure 1 – Overview of Products & Services

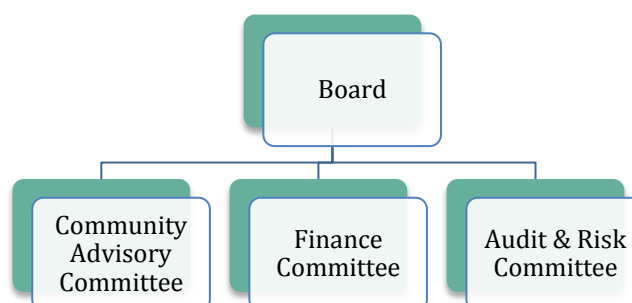


In recognition of changes in community attitudes to the breadth of the above products and services, this plan continues the enhancement of the suite of products and services offered by RPCV. This includes engaging with like organisations (within and outside of the sector) to deliver co-produced products and services to the community in a collaborative and seamless manner.

Governance

Remembrance Parks – Central Victoria is governed by a Board appointed by the Governor-in-Council upon the recommendation of the Minister of Health (s.6A of the Act). The Board has nine representatives

who are appointed by the Governor-in-Council for a maximum of three years. To assist the Board in governing the organisation, the following board committee structure operates across RPCV, consisting of Board representatives and in the case of the Audit and Risk Committee an independent member.



Management

A Chief Executive Officer, appointed by and responsible to the Board (s.18L of the Act) manages the organisation and its resources (s.18M of the Act) on a day-to-day basis. In addition to the responsibilities outlined for the CEO in the Act, the Board has delegated its powers according to s.15 of the Act to the CEO. The CEO manages the organisation through the following organisational structure:

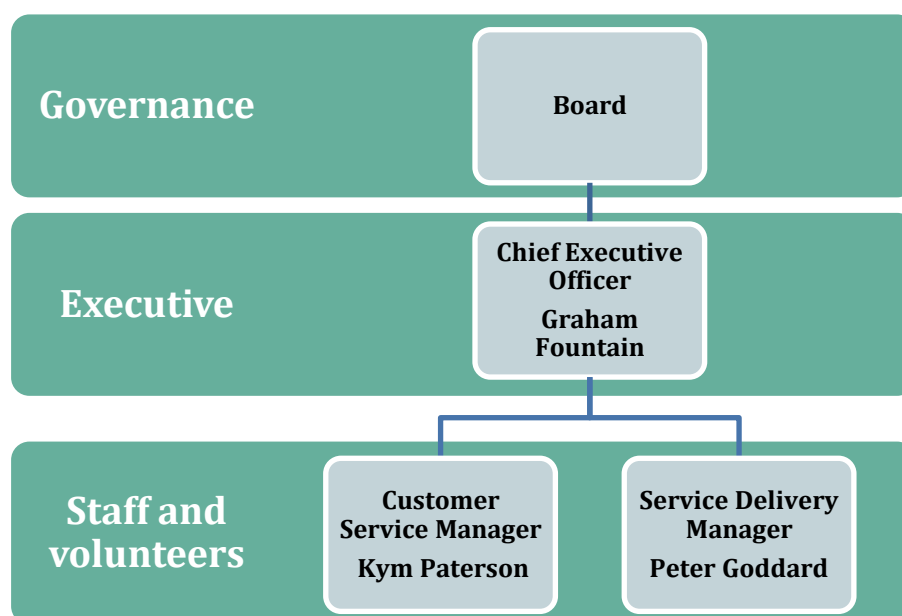


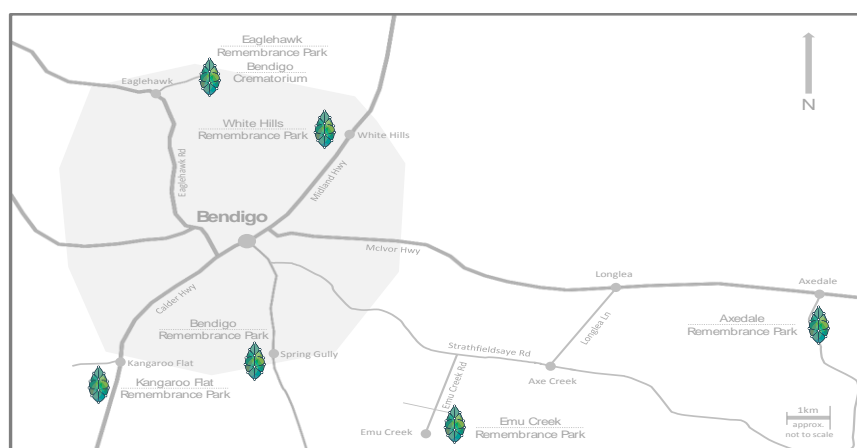
Figure 3 – Current organisational Structure

Locations

The following provides an overview profile of the six locations managed by Remembrance Parks - Central Victoria:

	RPCV Total	Bendigo	Eaglehawk	White Hills	Kangaroo Flat	Axedale	Emu Creek
Established	1987	1858	1864	1853	1855	1868	1869
Area	73ha	21ha	22ha	20ha	4ha	2ha	4ha

In addition RPCV, on behalf of the Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst, manage under contract the Axedale Catholic Cemetery, which is located adjacent to the Axedale Public Cemetery.



THE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

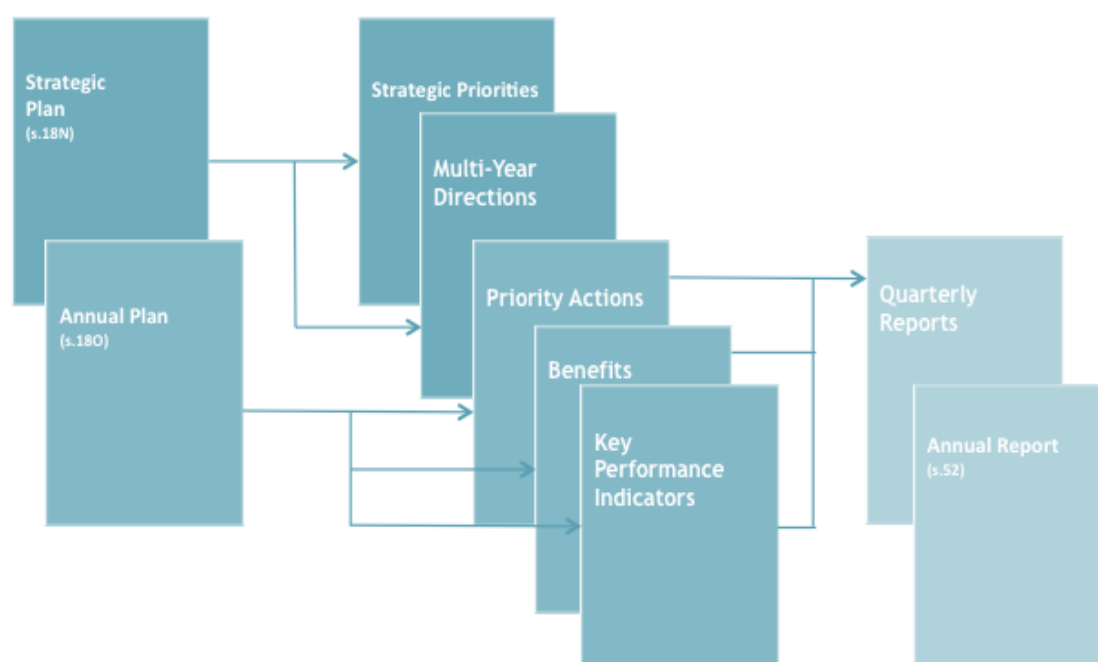
The Strategic Plan 2016-19 has been developed through an appraisal of the current and emerging:

- operating environment in which RPCV operates;
- market environment and past, present and future market share (including consideration of the impacts and strategies to counter competition);
- current performance level of the organisation commensurate with community and key stakeholder needs; and
- resource efficiency and financial sustainability.

The Strategic Plan establishes the focus and framework for the organisation into the future. It recognises the future will hold some challenges and tough issues for the organisation and broader sector and is designed to proactively address these. Obviously there will be some unforeseen issues that will inevitably arise over the next three years that will need to be addressed. Therefore it is important for the Strategic Plan to remain an agile and dynamic document that the RPCV Board continually reviews.

The following diagrammatically demonstrates the relationship between the Strategic Plan, the Annual Plan and reporting mechanisms, in accordance with the RPCV multi-year planning framework. In this manner the planning process will remain relevant, focused, continually reviewed and assessed against the current and future operating environment. This is a key fiduciary duty of the RPCV Board on behalf of the community.

Figure 6 - Multi-year Planning Framework

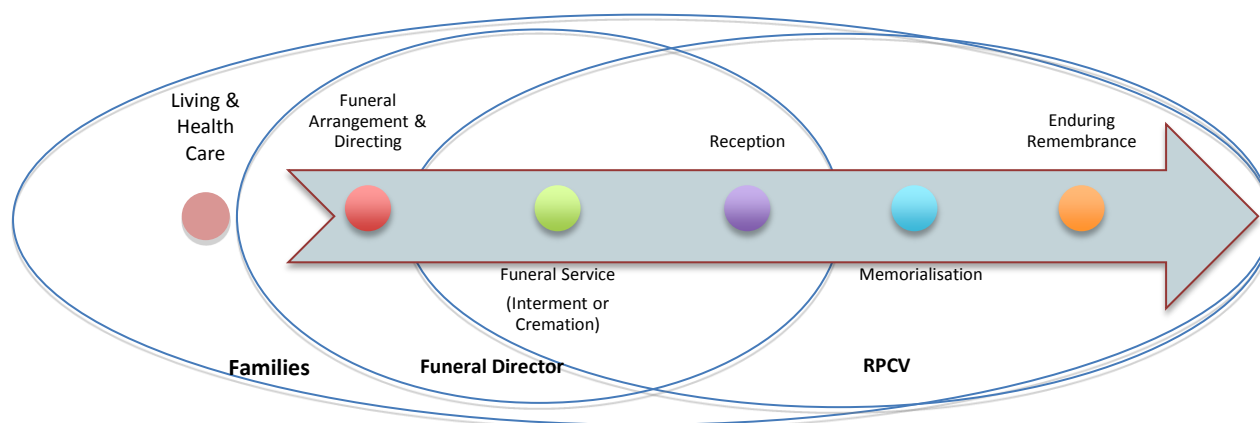


AFTER LIFE CARE AND REMEMBRANCE

After life care is often a reactive consideration for individuals and families with a range of ambiguous understandings of what is involved and who assists in these difficult and emotional times. RPCV takes its responsibilities in the continuum of after life care and remembrance with the utmost attention to ensure its products and services meet the needs and expectations of the community into the future. More importantly RPCV aims to ensure that the memories and contributions of loved ones within its care are captured, accessible and not forgotten. RPCV recognise they are one partner in the delivery of vertically integrated funeral services to the community and are committed to work in close partnership with funeral directors and other providers to deliver service excellence in this regard. This plan is premised on this partnership and the continuum of after life care and remembrance.

A key objective over the life of this Strategic Plan is to advocate for and establish more active relationships within the community to facilitate more open discussion on after life care and remembrance. This will require RPCV to operate beyond the established continuum and ensure the organisation has the capacity and capability to undertake the necessary consultation and research. This change is critical if RPCV is to remain relevant to the community it serves and to ensure it is well placed in a competitive market, particularly given the momentum in movements such as *Death over Dinner*.²

Figure 8 – After Life Care & Remembrance Continuum



Death Over Dinner is dedicated to helping people talk about their end of life care wishes and sparking cultural change at the kitchen table – not in the intensive care unit, when it's simply too late.³

² Death Over Dinner (20/06/16) <http://deathoverdinner.org.au/>

³ Death Over Dinner (20/06/16) <http://deathoverdinner.org.au/#about>

OUR OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

Over the next three years, RPCV will face a number of challenges and will need to manage developing and new risks. To address these, the Board have been proactive in establishing processes to identify and track changes and build agility into the organisation to adapt and remain a thought leader within the sector. These issues underpin the development of this plan.

The following political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental (PESTLE) factors within RPCV's operating environment were considered in developing this plan.

Political

RPCV is subject to a range of political interfaces whether they be legislative, regulatory or reporting relationships to the Minister and Department of Health and Human Services. These relationships establish the boundaries in which RPCV is required to operate. However, in establishing the boundaries, it also creates restrictions that limit RPCV's ability to openly compete in the changing environment. In addition the method of indexation, pricing regime and the payment of the cemetery levy all have a direct impact on the manner in which RPCV can determine its financial sustainability into the future, whereby other competing businesses are not subject to these same controls and restraints.

The Board supports the need for ongoing change across the sector. RPCV recognise the focus and prioritisation on our services amongst other pressing health obligations and demands for government is not high, but strongly believes a greater focus of defining the direction of the sector is required, particularly to provide certainty to the sector.

A key area of discussion and potential change over the life of this Strategic Plan is potential regulatory change. However we are confident this level of reform is not on government's policy agenda. A political focus at all levels of government on the removal of red tape will increase pressure to change. This includes a number of reports produced by the Productivity Commission on red tape reduction. Any discussion would need to consider standards for the conduct of funerals, especially in relation to the transport, preparation and storage of human remains. Other considerations would be to ensure the industry is covered by competition and consumer legislation to cover issues such as misleading advertising and pricing practices within the sector.

These changes are be driven by the high cost of funeral services and changing community expectations, in particular towards limiting the impact of after life decisions on the environment.

An ongoing area for review is the process of allocating grants across the sector to ensure the finite funding is allocated for the best possible outcome from a whole-of-sector perspective. Changes to the application and method of tax rules and other regulatory aspects such as occupational health and safety legislation and environmental expectations have a potential impact on RPCV.

Economic

The fiscal situation impacting on the State is resulting in reviews and tighter budgets. Whilst not having a direct impact on RPCV as it is not a funded agency of the State it indicates an economic environment of some concern. This may also lead to a tightening of available grant funding with any discretionary funding being directed to higher profile and priority issues.

The forecast Commonwealth budgetary situation, changes to interest rates and the value of the Australian dollar and the consequential flow-on impacts on employment and costs of living contribute to changes in consumer confidence with flow-on impacts on RPCV and across the industry. These potentially impact on decisions taken by families between interment and cremation, which are non-discretionary items at the time of death, and more so on discretionary decisions surrounding the purchase of memorialisation and premium products, all of which directly impact on the service demand and sales potential for RPCV. In addition, in an endeavour to reduce costs, the impact of cheaper products and services continue to have a potential impact on RPCV.

“In May 2016, Costco announced that they would be selling in Melbourne a range of 14 coffins and caskets that will cost between \$360 and \$3800. The items will not be available in store but will be sent directly to homes or nominated funeral homes of members within 48 hours after they are ordered.”⁴

These competitive changes combined with the economic outlook and in particular interest rates also has a direct impact on RPCV’s investment earning capacity. These have a direct impact on RPCV’s perpetual maintenance reserve, cremator reserve and the new defined benefits superannuation reserve.

Pressing and volatile economic forecasts and operating environment necessitates the need for RPCV and the sector to continue to explore opportunities to reduce cost through economies of scale such as sharing services, contracting services and amalgamating trusts.

Social

The combination of an ageing population, increasing obesity and increased life expectancy have a direct relationship to projected death rates and consequently an impact on RPCV planning and service demand.

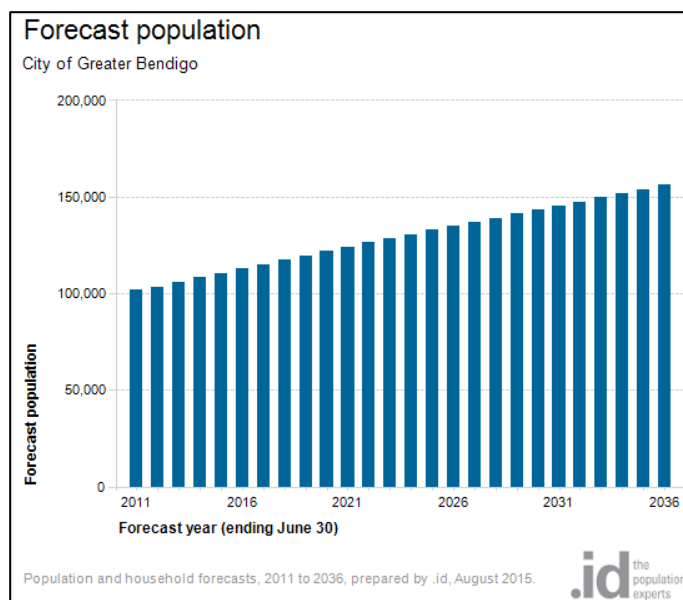
The number of obese people in the world now outnumbers the underweight people, according to analysis of the trends of adult body-mass index in 200 countries over the last 40 years. In Australia, about 27% of the population are obese.⁵

⁴ <http://www.smh.com.au/business/retail/costco-starts-selling-cutprice-coffins-in-australian-stores-20160505-goncuo.html>

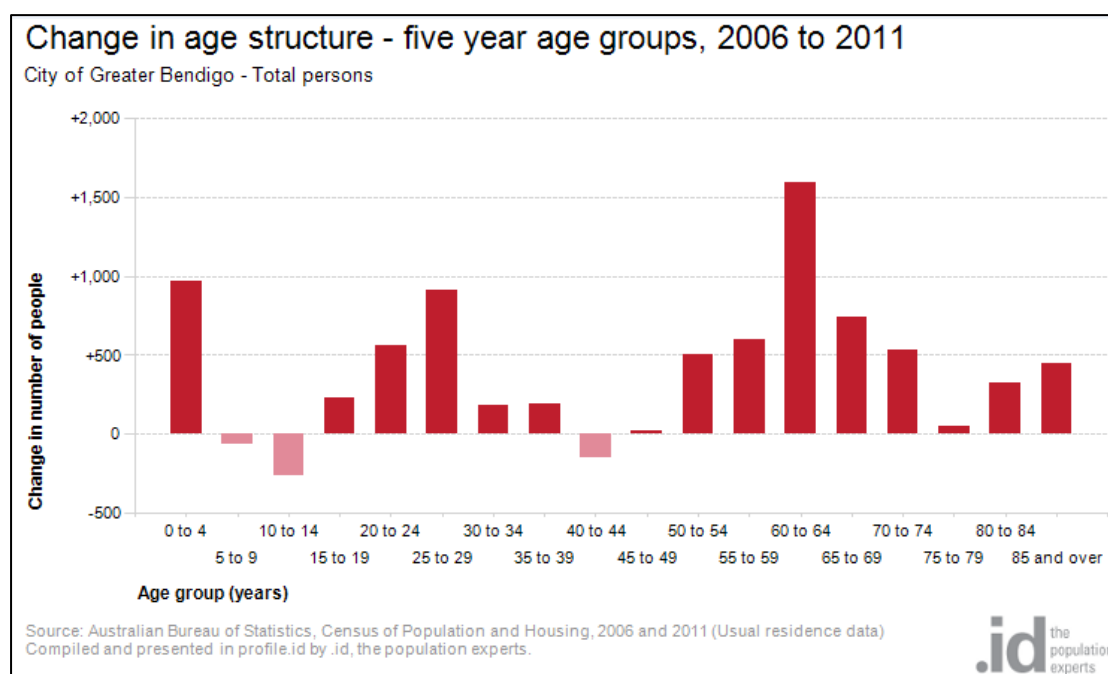
⁵ <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/obese-people-outnumber-underweight-people-time-human-history/story?id=38082611>

Likewise, consumer confidence and an increased consciousness of costs and a focus on an individual's environmental footprint will continue to impact end of life decisions. During the planning period RPCV will continue to grow the accessibility of family lead funeral options, including home funerals to ensure the product range meets the changing expectations of our customers.

An increase in the population will impact RPCV service delivery outcomes. As an example of the population growth in central Victoria, the City of Greater Bendigo has grown substantially over the last twenty years, with growth most heavily concentrated in areas such as Kangaroo Flat, Strathfieldsaye, Strathdale, Flora Hill and Golden Square. This growth, approximately 1.7% annually, has been driven by significant local economic and employment growth.⁶ The population growth rate for Loddon Mallee as a whole is anticipated at 0.71%⁷



The population is not only growing but due to the ageing baby boomer generation and decision to marry and have children later in life, there is a major shift in age groups⁸:



⁶ CoGB Population Forecasts (20/06/16) <http://forecast.id.com.au/bendigo>

⁷ Regional Development Victoria <http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/information-portal/regional-snapshot>

⁸ CoGB Population Forecasts (20/06/16) <http://profile.id.com.au/bendigo/five-year-age-groups>

The number of deaths will be impacted by other changes in the external environment such as improvements in overall road safety.

Currently, Australia is ranked the thirteenth safest country internationally for the number of road deaths per 10,000 vehicles and tenth per billion vehicle kilometers. However, this still means over a 1,000 deaths annually and many serious injuries.⁹

With a significant focus in the automobile industry on safety advances such as autonomous emergency braking, lane departure warnings and the development of autonomous or driverless vehicles, there will be a reduction in the number of deaths from vehicle crashes.

Changes in religious and cultural beliefs particularly the decline in formalised religion, community views on assisted suicide and increased immigration, will also continue to influence community attitudes and expectations into the future.

This is particularly relevant in Bendigo where the citizens come from 30 different countries and this number is higher when taken into consideration across Central Victoria¹⁰.

All cemeteries are significant to the community as they are not merely a functional place for disposal of the dead. They also serve the community's emotional, religious and cultural needs. They are a resource that allow the community to delve back into their past. The monuments and graves represent the last public memorials of many people, both famous and unknown, who were intimately involved with the growth of the local area in which they are buried. The monuments also demonstrate the art of the stonemason whose skill and craftsmanship is not likely to be repeated.

But it is not just the headstones that are important in cemetery landscapes. Many rural cemeteries contain important botanical species that are endangered and also provide a haven for wildlife generally. Therefore, it is vital that conservation management plans for all cemeteries managed RPCV are developed and implemented to protect the historic and cultural value of these assets.

A key issue in maintaining sites is the inability to locate living relatives. As the individual purchases each site in perpetuity, the obligation to maintain the site for eternity belongs to the deceased and their family. As many people in the community are not aware of this obligation to fund or undertake the maintenance on each site, many are in a state of decay. RPCV do not have the legislative power to intervene to maintain sites.

On the other hand, the lack of historical reference, interest, acknowledgement and potential decrease in appreciation of cultural and heritage significance in younger generations is an ongoing concern to RPCV. Despite this changing attitude by the younger generation, an opportunity exists to capitalise on increased digital literacy (especially through websites such

⁹ https://bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/international_road_safety_comparisons.aspx

¹⁰ https://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/files/f799b87e-3653-4b8a-8d7e-a53900987a3b/212124_Cultural_Diversity_and_Inclusion_Plan_-_Fact_Sheet_A3-folded_FINA_2.pdf

as ancestry.com, myheritage and familysearch) and a community expectation for online access to information to memorial services online, either through the web or specifically at the internment site.

Technological

Advances in technology and the use of technology in all aspects of RPCV's business and the community in general will continue to drive the need for increased investment by RPCV during the planning period. The demand for immediate information and/or ability to transact with RPCV, including the use of social media, will continue to drive RPCV business arrangements and processes. This will also include understanding and linking in with Services Victoria, the portal being developed for all Victorians to interface with government services.

The ongoing challenge of translating historical manual records into this online environment is a significant issue for RPCV, which necessitates the digitisation of a large volume of manual records.

The consequential education of staff and community users poses a further challenge for RPCV in translating its business into the online and e-commerce operating environment. Connectivity across all sites and the potential shared services operating environment continue to be a key focus for RPCV.

To understand the size of the change occurring in the digital age, the following is the world's most populous 'countries' in descending order:

*China (1.3 billion); India (1.2 billion); Facebook (800 million); Skype (521 million); Twitter (380 million); United States (312 million)...*¹¹

This change is occurring not just in Australia but the global economy is undergoing a fundamental transformation in the nature of work brought on by the new technologies of the Information Age revolution. This is also linked to the concept of a digital industry - a knowledge-based society surrounded by a high-tech global economy that operates in an efficient and convenient way.

The information industry is able to allow individuals to explore their personalised needs, therefore simplifying the procedure of making decisions for transactions and significantly lowering costs for both the producers and buyers. Internet-based media expands the marketing ability to move consumers from awareness to engagement, consideration, loyalty, and advocacy.

It is axiomatic that the exponential use of technology is apparent in all aspects of society and is now relied upon as a primary source of day to day living. Statistics demonstrate that 86% of all households had access to the internet and 86% of those households accessed the

¹¹ Hajkowicz SA, Cook H, Littleboy A. 2012. *Our Future World: Global megatrends that will change the way we live, 2012 Revision*. CSIRO, Australia

internet by a mobile or smart phone and 62% via tablets. In 2014-15, 85% of people used the internet for personal use for a mean number of 10 hours per week.

A telling statistic is 61% of users used the internet for purchasing goods or services equating to 9.7 million people in Australia. The mean number of transactions for internet users who purchased goods and service online was 11 transactions in 3 months¹².

Shifts to cloud computing and the need for data security, disaster recovery, business continuity and real-time records management and spatial mapping are all key considerations to ensure future investments in new technology keep pace with available technologies with the ability to evolve and move in an agile way into the future.

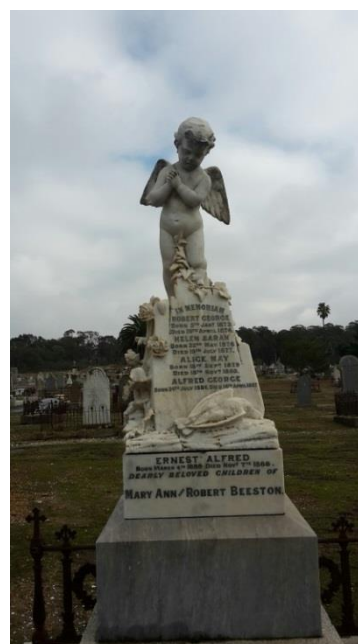
Legal

Primarily the legal environment in which RPCV operates is governed by sector legislation and public sector compliance and reporting obligations. Any changes to legislation that may arise during this planning period will have a direct impact on RPCV.

Changes to taxation law or rulings during the planning period may have an impact on RPCV and our customers. The potential for change will be increased in the current economic environment.

General changes to workplace relations law, occupational health and safety, planning laws (including native vegetation, heritage and conservation management), local municipal laws and government policy may arise during the planning period will potentially impact on RPCV and the realisation of this plan.

Any changes to perpetuity or limited tenure arrangements for interments during the planning period will necessitate a change to RPCV arrangements, product offerings and forecast capacity across all sites.



¹² Australian Bureau of Statistics, 8146.0 – Household Use of Information Technology, Australia, 2014-15 (18 February 2016) <<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/8146.0>>.

Environment

An ongoing focus on environmental sustainability and responsibility underpins the activities of RPCV. RPCV must be future focused to ensure services are aligned with customer expectations. This includes consideration of the following potential changes in the industry:

- green funerals that use biodegradable shrouds or caskets¹³
- purpose built buildings and/or warehouses to inter bodies and cremations rather than parkland
- virtual graveyards rather than physical ones¹⁴
- using sites for interment and revegetation with the families using GPS to identify the location of their loved ones^{15 16}
- biodegradable capsules with tree seeds – such as the *Capsula Mundi* burial pods¹⁷
- artificial memorial reefs – one exists in Miami that has been designed for 100,000 cremated remains¹⁸
- aquamation that uses water instead of fire to return a body to nature. This is done with a combination of flowing water, temperature and alkalinity to accelerate the natural course of tissue hydrolysis. At the end of process, the body is returned to its constituent elements - amino acids, peptides, sugars and salts - dissolved in the water. Aquamation is a more natural, ethical and environmentally friendly alternative to cremations.¹⁹

Global warming and the ongoing climatic changes continue to necessitate an increased focus on the landscape and operation of all RPCV sites. The ongoing variation in weather patterns impact on the planning associated with the maintenance of lawn and garden areas to meet the needs and expectations of the community into the future.

RPCV will continue to look at all options to enhance the standards and appearance of all sites as part of this plan. While a lot has been done to improve our public spaces, more can be done over the life of this plan to meet the expectations of the community.

¹³ <http://www.naturalgrace.com.au/>

¹⁴ <http://motherboard.vice.com/read/death-is-a-high-tech-trip-in-japans-futuristic-cemeteries>

¹⁵ http://apo.org.au/files/Resource/conversations_-_creating_choice_in_end_of_life_care_achr.pdf

¹⁶ <http://inhabitat.com/heres-what-the-environmentally-friendly-cemetery-of-the-future-could-look-like/>

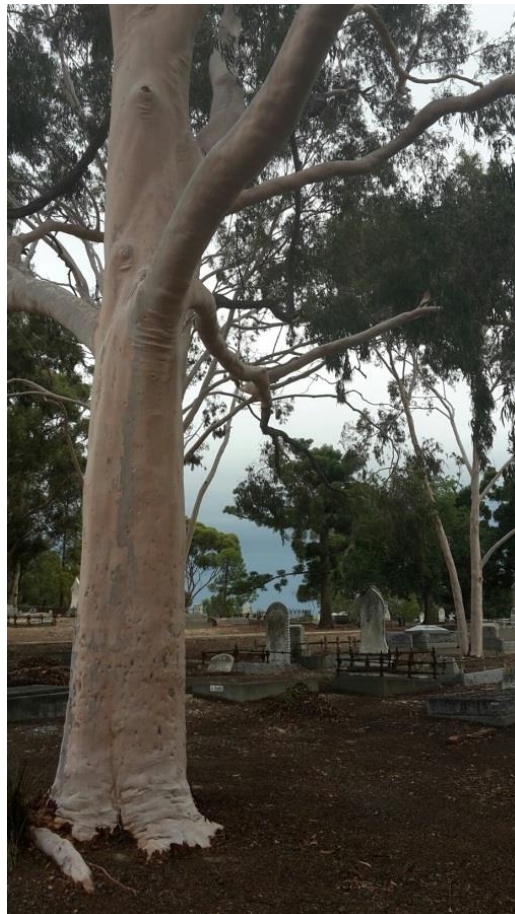
¹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHkZZNlxLzo>

¹⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FS-2LVXDLoQ>

¹⁹ <http://www.aquamationindustries.com/Aquamation-An-Introduction.pdf>

The ageing and increased impact of climatic changes on older memorials and the recognition that the responsibility for memorial maintenance is that of the right of interment holder continues to be a challenge for RPCV. Given the historical nature and significance of a number of memorials and areas within RPCV sites, and the reality that identification of a living descendant of the holder of the right of interment is not feasible, RPCV has adopted a more lateral solution to identifying the appropriate *custodian* of the memorials and/or specific areas within a Remembrance Park and liaises with them as to the restoration and maintenance of ageing memorials. We will continue this approach.

Changes in community attitude with respect to eco-friendly funerals, including the use of cardboard coffins, alternative materials and natural burials are all key considerations which will be a key driver of change to RPCV product and service offerings during this planning period.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The following outlines the strategic objectives established as the basis of this plan:

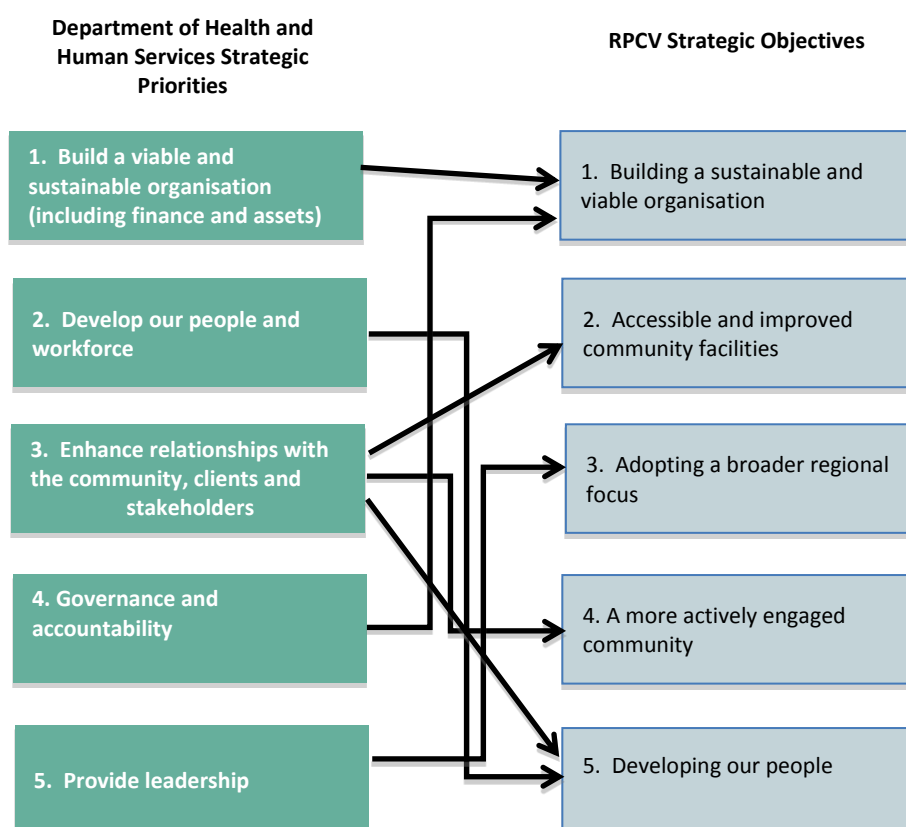
Figure 9 - Strategic Objectives



Strategies

Each strategic objective contains one or more strategic priorities from which planning outcomes have been established within the Annual Plan. For this Strategic Objective there are strategies with aligned strategic priorities and these are outlined in the following section.

Relationship between Department of Health and Human Services Strategic Priorities and RPCV Strategic Objectives are as follows.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ONE

Building a sustainable and viable organisation

Pursuit of financial growth and sustainability through good governance, planning and resource efficiency



1.1 Manage our financial resources and assets to deliver the best possible outcomes to the community		
Strategic Priority		Objective
1.1.1	Cash backing of reserves	Ensure all investment and resource allocation decisions are evidence based
1.1.2	Revenue Sustainability	Establish effective planning partnerships/networks, information systems and strategic frameworks that support appropriate and targeted allocation of resources and access to alternative funding streams
1.1.3	Investments	Use evidence to underpin investment decisions to target above market returns
1.2 Ensuring fair and equitable decision making processes are in place and well communicated		
Strategic Priority		Objective
1.2.1	Multi-year Planning	Establish effective planning partnerships/networks, information systems and strategic frameworks that support appropriate and targeted allocation of resources and access to alternative funding streams
1.2.2	Stakeholder and community education	Develop and implement a research and engagement strategy to advocate for early discussion and decisions for after life care
1.3 A well-governed, efficient and responsive organisation		
Strategic Priority		Objective
1.3.1	Governance structures and processes	Establish good governance principles and processes including continual improvement of internal policy and practice
1.3.2	Risk Management	Embed sound risk management frameworks to mitigate strategic and operational risks to RPCV
1.3.3	Organisational Capability	Ensure RPCV has the right skills to deliver services to our communities
1.4 Be actively involved and provide leadership to sector-wide reform across regional areas		
Strategic Priority		Objective
1.4.1	Shared Services	Promote and lead the implementation of shared services with like organisations to increase efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery
1.4.2	Advocacy and thought generation	Advocate effectively on significant issues affecting RPCV and its communities

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE TWO

Accessible and improved community facilities

Providing accessible community parklands as a place of remembrance and broader use by the community



2.1 Deliver efficient and effective services where customers are the focus		
Strategic Priority		Objective
2.1.1	Customer Service	Provide responsive and outstanding customer service across all aspects of the business
2.1.2	Products and Services	Provide products and services which are aligned to the needs and expectations of the community
2.1.3	Asset Management	Assets are managed and used to meet the need and provide for future generations
2.1.4	Natural Burial Ground(s)	Research and implement a cemetery based on a green funeral philosophy. This will include consideration of biodegradable shrouds or coffins and revegetation
2.1.5	Demystify Death	Engage the right capability and processes to advocate for early decisions on customers expectation following their death. This will include capturing their needs and advocating to legally enshrining their wishes
2.1.6	Home Service	Investigate the opportunity to provide an in home service option so the customer does not have to come to RPCV, particularly where the customer wants to spread the ashes
2.2 Improve the accessibility and beautification standards of our assets and establish them as community parklands		
Strategic Priority		Objective
2.2.1	Lawn Areas Improvement	Ensure all lawn areas contain robust lawn that is presentable, trafficable and drought resilient so it is reflective of the expectations of the community
2.2.2	Community Facilities	Provide and facilitate the development of community facilities and open spaces
2.2.3	Paths and Tracks	Facilitate the establishment of paths and tracks that are identifiable and usable for community use for either cemetery or recreational purposes
2.2.4	Lawn alternatives	Explore, evaluate and market test substitutes to lawn.

2.3 Increase the utilisation of RPCV assets and services		
Strategic Priority		Objective
2.3.1	Chapel Utilisation	Improve the chapel facilities and market its availability with consequential increased utilisation
2.3.2	Receptions	Enhance the service provision associated with the hire of the board and function room
		Market the board and function room availability with consequential increased utilisation
2.4 Facilitate the appreciation of our unique community, cultural and heritage assets		
Strategic Priority		Objective
2.4.1	Conservation Management	Protect and share RPCV’s unique cultural heritage and create a legacy for the future
2.4.2	Memorial Restoration	Increase community awareness on the ownership and responsibility for memorial maintenance
		Identify and establish the owners or appropriate custodians for memorials and work in partnership with these to restore and maintain memorials
2.4.3	Turn key option	Consider and develop a memorial restoration program. Fixed price service plan.
2.5 Increase the level of sustainable development and revenue generating use of our assets		
Strategic Priority		Objective
2.5.1	Site Development	Progressively implement development of premium areas and alternative products offerings in accordance with the documented masterplan, community needs and expectations and evidence based decision making
2.5.2	Revenue Generation	Maximise revenue generating possibilities of all current and future developed areas across all sites
2.5.3	Future Land Use	Identify and commence planning for future land procurement having regard for demand and capacity analysis of existing sites
2.6 Provide infrastructure and facilities that are well managed, environmentally sustainable and are suitable for the community’s needs into the future		
Strategic Priority		Objective
2.6.1	Environmental Sustainability	Adopt and implement environmentally sustainable practices across all aspects of the business
		Reduce energy and water consumption through the adoption of proactive practices, recycling and improved infrastructure and systems
2.6.2	Recycling	Continue to participate in the <i>Orthometals</i> or alternative recycling program for orthopedic remnants following the cremation process and invest any funding received into local charities
2.7 Enhance our community and customer focused online presence		
Strategic Priority		Objective
2.7.1	Cemetery Management Systems	Ensure ICT infrastructure meets the future needs of the business
2.7.2	Records Management	Ensure all records are securely managed in accordance with relevant legislation and are accessible as required
2.7.3	Develop Digital App	Design and develop a digital app that allows remote updating and as a GPS system to locate those interred, whether in a current or future site. Assess the marketability of the app for other Trusts

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE THREE

Adopting a broader regional focus

Extending service delivery, leadership, support and assistance across the Fairer Victorian Government Regions



3.1 Improve and strengthen our strategic regional partnerships to ensure our ongoing financial viability

Strategic Priority		Objective
3.1.1	New Service Delivery Model	Actively engage with regional funeral directors and increase a tailored / targeted service delivery offering
3.1.2	Establish Regional Partnerships	Establish regional partnerships and implement any opportunities for shared services and resource utilisation

3.2 Provide increased leadership, support and assistance to Class B Trusts

Strategic Priority		Objective
3.2.1	Class B Engagement	Maintain an active relationship and support network with Class B Trusts across the regions
3.2.2	Class B Support	Provide enhanced leadership, support and assistance to Class B Trusts across the regions
		Where requested provide contracted support to Class B and other organisations across the regions

3.3 Be recognised as a centre of excellence within the Loddon Mallee and Hume Regions

Strategic Priority		Objective
3.3.1	Information and Intelligence Portal	Establish a demographic analysis by local government area (LGA) within the regions to provide decision making support for RPCV and other strategic partners
3.3.2	Doctrine	Progressively develop doctrinal and procedural processes relevant to the business
3.3.3	Presentations and Seminars	Be a known and trusted point of contact for the provision of presentations, seminars and representation to interested parties across the regions

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FOUR

A more actively engaged community

Building trusted and enduring relationships with the community and key clients that deliver collaborative outcomes to the community



4.1 Provide opportunities for involvement in our activities for groups and individuals within the community		
Strategic Priority		Objective
4.1.1	Community Advisory Committee	Support the Community Advisory Committee as active participants within the business
4.1.2	Create a Healthy Volunteer Cohort	Work to advocate strong ties to the community which contributes to the growth and variety of our volunteers
4.1.3	Public Participation	Use International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Core as the tool for targeting engagement
4.2 Establish a collaborative, transparent and trusted relationship with Funeral Directors as key clients		
Strategic Priority		Objective
4.2.1	Funeral Director and Related Services	Maintain relationships with Funeral Directors as key clients and collaboration within the wider industry
4.3 Ensure the community has access to a range of educational opportunities to maximise their understanding and planning for after life care and remembrance		
Strategic Priority		Objective
4.3.1	Events & Open Days	Facilitate local events and open days to connect to and provide a platform for remembrance and education of the community
4.3.2	Community Remembrance	Advocate for earlier and well informed decisions about individual after life care
		Provide avenues to ensure that all members of our community are recognised and remembered, their stories recorded and told ensuring their survival into perpetuity for future generations
4.4 Work with all levels of government and agencies to strengthen the physical environment, standing and service provision of RPCV		
Strategic Priority		Objective
4.4.1	Department Liaison	Evolve the level of liaison with the Department of Health and Human Services to deliver a seamless, joined up cemetery and crematoria sector throughout Northern and Central Victoria
4.4.2	Emergency Management	Maintain our emergency management systems to ensure we plan for and are capable of dealing with emergencies

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FIVE

Developing our people

Developing, empowering and encouraging our people to deliver service excellence to the community



5.1 An organisation that demonstrates community inspired leadership		
Strategic Priority		Objective
5.1.1	Training and Development	Develop capable, competent and professional people, individually and collectively focused on proactive service delivery
5.1.2	Culture	Establish a customer oriented, <i>Safety 1st</i> and proactive organisational culture
		Ensure staff and volunteers are culturally aware of the individual cultures and sensitivities within the community we interact with
5.1.3	Empowerment	Establish a delegations manual that ensures all personnel are empowered to perform their role within the business
5.1.4	Innovation	Foster innovation and technology adoption
5.1.5	Performance and Accountability	Facilitate high performance via the introduction of a performance and accountability framework at all levels of the business
5.1.6	Succession Planning	Develop talent and succession plans that supports the nomination and development of potential successors for all identified pivotal roles

5.2 Encourage volunteerism to create active, confident, engaged, informed and resilient communities		
Strategic Priority		Objective
5.2.1	Broader Roles & Membership	Evolve the roles and opportunities for volunteerism within RPCV
5.2.2	Collaborative Opportunities	Establish a collaborative partnership with other volunteer based organisations that provides the opportunity for cross pollination of ideas, resourcing and volunteer pathways
5.2.3	Recognition	Ensure the contribution and commitment of all volunteers is appropriately publicised and recognised within and outside of the organisation

RPCV Balanced Scorecard

The following tables provide an indicative suite of performance measures aligned to this plan. Such metrics will integrate with the *RPCV Annual Plan* and be subject to measurement and monitoring by the Board.

Strategic Objective 1 – Building a Sustainable and Viable Organisation	
Strategic Priority	Key Performance Indicators
Cash Backing of Reserves To establish a suite of cash backed investment funds to cater for perpetual maintenance, major asset replacement and potential future defined benefits superannuation obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to perpetual maintenance reserve of 25% of each right of interment sold • Contribution to cremator reserve of 6% of each cremation fee • Ongoing contribution to defined benefits superannuation within reserve investment account to a value of \$150K
Pricing Structure Establish cost reflective, simplified, fair and equitable prices for all products and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-annual analysis of application and price shifts to be undertaken during the financial year
Investment Review Maximise growth and return on all investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual investment growth greater than 5%
Stakeholder and Community Education Enhanced understanding of the complexity of issues impacting RPCV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of executives on RPCV Stakeholder engagement Strategy
Annual Governance Assessment Establish good governance principles and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Board and Sub-Committee assessments conducted by end of Q3
Risk Management Embed sound risk management frameworks to mitigate strategic and operational risks to RPCV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All high risks have a treatment plan that results in an acceptable risk profile against board risk appetite • Scheduled internal audit completed by end of Q3 • A minimum of four Audit & Risk Committee meetings held • Audit recommendations implemented within specified timelines
Shared Services Promote and lead the implementation of shared services with like organisations to increase efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigations with other like-minded Cemetery Trusts conducted and implement opportunities where appropriate • Quarterly review conducted for adherence to maintenance standards
Advocacy and Thought Leadership Advocate effectively on significant issues affecting RPCV and its community's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate effectively on significant issues affecting RPCV and its community's

Strategic Objective 2 – Accessible and Improved Community Facilities	
Strategic Priority	Key Performance Indicators
Customer Service Provide responsive and outstanding customer service across all aspects of the business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased performance from annual customer satisfaction survey Zero errors in grave placement and preparation
Products & Services Provide products and services which are aligned to the needs and expectations of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete investigation into the viability of establishing Emu Creek as an environmental site Sell remaining 40% of the granite pods
Asset Management Assets are managed and used to meet the need and provide for future generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal annual audit of outdoor contract completed Regular informal audits of outdoor contract completed quarterly Decrease in the number of community complaints regarding the state of sites Two Conservation Management Plans developed and implemented
Lawn Area Ensure all lawn areas contain robust lawn that is presentable and trafficable reflective of the expectations of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly audits completed of all lawn areas to ensure minimum maintenance standards are being met Investigation into alternative surface to lawn completed
Chapel Utilisation Improve the chapel facilities and market its availability with consequential increased utilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10% increase in chapel services conducted during year Funding sourced and work carried out to restore the chapel at the Bendigo Cemetery site Increase in chapel utilisation ratio against the number of cremations
Receptions Enhance the service provision and facilities associated with the hire of the board and function room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10% increase in receptions conducted during year 10% increase annually for the Board and function room being utilised for non-funeral related activities
Memorial Restoration Increase community awareness on the ownership and responsibility for memorial maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate community restoration projects as identified
Revenue Generation Maximise revenue generating possibilities of all current and future developed areas across all sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase annually interments of bodily remains by five percent Increase annually interments for cremated remains by ten percent Ten percent increase in memorialisation conversion rates annually

Environmental Sustainability Adopt and implement environmentally sustainable practices across all aspects of the business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% reduction in paper consumption • RPCV's environmental footprint assessed as baseline • From 2017-18 onwards, a five percent reduction in RPCV's environmental footprint
ICT Establish contemporary ICT infrastructure to meet the future needs of the business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New computer systems implemented as identified • Continue to opportunistically digitise post-1990 records through grant programs that may be offered by government and other philanthropic organisations

Strategic Objective 3 – Adopting a Broader Regional Focus

Strategic Priority	Key Performance Indicators
Service Delivery Model Enhance the service delivery model across the regions including the pick-up and delivery service for cremations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase cremation levels and gross revenue each year by ten percent • Improve customer satisfaction levels
Class B Engagement Establish an active relationship with Class B Trusts within the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of peripheral Class B Trusts contacted a minimum of once during planning period • A minimum of two Trust Talk Newsletters circulated to Class B Trusts
Class B Support Provide enhanced leadership, support and assistance to Class B Trusts across the regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of requests for support completed and satisfied • 100% of contacts for contracted support and/or service provision provided with a proposal and proposed Service Level Agreement (SLA) • Annual review of demographic analysis by local government area within central Victoria completed by the end of Q3 and made available to Class B Trusts at the Annual General Meeting
Governance Progressively develop doctrinal and procedural processes relevant to the business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% current policies formally reviewed during planning period
Presentations and Seminars Be a known and trusted point of contact for the provision of presentations, seminars and representation to interested parties across the regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of all presentation/guest speaker opportunities accepted and conducted

Strategic Objective 4 – A More Actively Engaged Community	
Strategic Priority	Key Performance Indicators
Engagement Ensure the Community Advisory Committee is functional and operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of four meetings of Community Advisory Committee convened during the year
Funeral Director Partnerships Enhance the partnership with Funeral Directors as key clients and eliminate any retrospective views of the organisation and individuals involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Funeral Directors within central Victoria contacted directly a minimum of once during planning period A minimum of two Funeral Director roundtables convened during the planning period with a minimum of one roundtable to involve the RPCV Chair and Board representative/s Publish a minimum of two Funeral Director Updates and disseminate to all Funeral Directors within Central Victoria All Funeral Directors within Central Victoria invited to the Annual General Meeting Percentage increase in satisfaction with services provided to funeral directors (as measured through an online survey) Percentage decrease in number of complaints received from funeral directors
Funeral Service Alliance Evolve the Funeral Services Alliance concept to enhance service delivery and strategic partnerships across the industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of Funeral Services Alliance concept achieved across all Funeral Directors from Central Victoria
Events & Open Days Facilitate local events and open days to connect to and provide a platform for remembrance and education of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Halloween Tour conducted during Q2 One RPCV Christmas Memorial Service conducted during Q2 One RPCV Clean Up Our Cemeteries Day conducted during Q3 One Gallipoli Lone Pine Memorial Ceremony in Q3 One RPCV Mothers' Day Memorial Service conducted during Q4 Percentage increase in attendance at events listed above Increase in positive media exposure associated with RPCV and events/open days

Community Remembrance Continue the community remembrance project to ensure those who contributed or were members of our community are recognised and remembered, their stories recorded and told ensuring their survival into perpetuity for future generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and promote self-guided walking tours Develop new software to allow the community to input and update history and genealogy of their loved ones
Department Liaison Evolve the level of liaison with the Department of Health and secure additional support and resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department liaison and relationships evolved
Emergency Management Work with emergency services and other agencies to plan for, and recover from, emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a minimum of one internal emergency management exercise during the year Where applicable, ensure policies and procedures relating to Code Red bushfires are implemented

Strategic Objective 5 – Developing our People

Strategic Priority	Key Performance Indicators
Training and Development Develop capable, competent and professional people, individually and collectively focused on proactive service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board and staff members professional development completed annually in line with development principles Percentage achievement of Balanced Scorecard
Culture Establish a customer oriented, Safety 1st and proactive organisational culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero lost time injuries Percentage decrease in reported incidents and near misses All safety audit outcomes resolved to the satisfaction of the Audit and Risk Committee
Empowerment Empowered, engaged and satisfied workforce striving to achieve commercial and individual success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enterprise Bargaining Agreement implemented without Industrial disputation Decrease in the number of unplanned or certificated absences Annual delegations review conducted
Innovation Ensuring staff access and knowledge of mobile technology in relation to RPCV systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training to be conducted with appropriate staff for new Cemetery Management System
Performance & Accountability Facilitate high performance via the introduction of a performance and accountability framework at all levels of the business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All KPI's outlined in management performance plans successfully completed by end of Q4

Performance & Accountability Facilitate high performance via the introduction of a performance and accountability framework at all levels of the business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All KPI's outlined in management performance plans successfully completed by end of Q4
Succession Planning Develop a succession plan that supports the nomination and development of potential successors for all identified pivotal roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of succession plan and talent management plan by Board and Executive
Broader Role & Membership Evolve the roles, opportunities and recognition of RPCV volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer role promoted in the community • Percentage increase in volunteer membership and participation • Percentage increase in the roles undertaken by volunteers • Volunteer recognition program managed
Collaborative Opportunities Establish a collaborative partnership with other volunteer based organisations that provides the opportunity for cross pollination of ideas, resourcing and volunteer pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of two presentations conducted to local volunteer groups

Nurturing enduring remembrance



Photo Credits

Jessika Stringer – Photo on Mission, Vision and Values page

Joanne Trickey – Photos pages 15, 16 and 24





REMEMBRANCE PARKS

CENTRAL VICTORIA

REMEMBRANCE PARKS
Central Victoria

5 Victoria Street Eaglehawk 3556
PO Box 268 Eaglehawk 3556
Telephone 03 5446 1566
Facsimile 03 5446 9958
Email enquiries@rpcv.com.au

www.rpcv.com.au

