

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

November 2009

INTRODUCTION

This plan is the result of discussions held between members of a subcommittee of Liberty Victoria and three volunteers with experience in business management, government policy development and business consulting. The participants are listed on page 11.

The discussions took place over three one-and-a-half hour sessions, plus a half day workshop run by an external facilitator. These sessions specifically considered:

- Who Liberty Victoria is
- What it does
- Why it exists
- How it seeks to achieve its objectives, and
- Where Liberty Victoria should be in 5 years time.

SUMMARY

The broad themes that arose from our meetings were that Liberty Victoria:

- will need to grow its resources if it wishes to do more of what it currently does well;
- wants to be more proactive, to lead debate rather than merely responding to events;
- should re-examine how it deals with its members to prevent churn and therefore to have more resources; and
- should not attempt endeavours that other groups can do more effectively. (Such endeavours include litigation, the provision of legal representation or advice to individuals, large scale campaigns to mobilise the public and major education projects.)

The plan is built around 5 major objectives. Liberty Victoria is to,

1. Influence public policy and government decision making to promote and protect civil liberties and human rights
2. Influence and lead public opinion on matters affecting civil liberties and human rights
3. Establish an organisational structure and governance framework to support its growth
4. Build organisation capability and resources needed to achieve its goals
5. Promote the human rights agenda through collaboration with complementary human rights organisations

Objectives 1 and 2 cover the “who, what and why” of Liberty Victoria, listed in the introduction. These objectives are met reasonably well already but the plan proposes ways of doing better.

Objectives 3 and 4 are new. They deal with “how”. In our opinion these are the most important because, without an appropriate structure, allocation of responsibilities and better use of resources, Liberty Victoria will not be able to extend beyond its’ current level of activity.

While there is a history of collaboration with other human rights groups, Objective 5 represents a more deliberate and organised approach. This promises a greater reach and influence for Liberty Victoria.

In the following pages each of these objectives leads to a set of strategies. Each strategy leads to a set of specific actions.

The plan has a very large number of action items and it does not yet specify any timing. The size of the list need not be daunting. The plan can be rendered manageable if the current committee takes ownership of the plan by

- allocating priorities to these actions
- assigning a person to each, who will be responsible for their completion and
- staging the actions over the next few years.

Liberty would like to raise more revenue. In our opinion this may not be necessary. It may be enough to use the members and volunteers it has more effectively. In any case to raise more revenue, Liberty will need to raise its’ profile by doing more.

THE PLAN

WHAT WE HOPE FOR	A society in which civil liberties and human rights are central to public debate, and foremost in the minds of legislators
WHAT WE DO	We advocate for civil liberties and human rights in Australian society. We maintain our independence so that we can speak freely according to the principles of human rights.

	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRI-ORITY	PERSON RESPONS-IBLE
1	Influence public policy and government decision making to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promote and protect - remedy deficiencies in, and - protect against the erosion of civil liberties and human rights	Policy foundation Provide an authoritative policy foundation on civil liberties and human rights as basis for Liberty Victoria public statements and activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to develop and publish well articulated policies on all major civil liberties and human rights issues 2. Review and document current and emerging civil liberties concerns 3. So as to be proactive, develop a checklist of possible responses to emerging and possible future civil liberties concerns. 		
		Legislation review Establish a system for the early identification of new legislation/legislative amendments that impact civil liberties and human rights	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Audit identified legislation, regulation and policies for consistency with human rights and publicise audit results 5. Establish a <u>Policy Team</u> of suitably skilled members/volunteers capable of reviewing, interpreting and commenting on legislation 		
		Submissions and hearings Increase the number and impact of submissions to parliamentary and government inquiries on issues that may affect civil liberties and human rights	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Build capacity to make submissions by attracting law and human rights students and practitioners to Liberty Victoria 7. Review ways to increase the monitoring of parliamentary and government inquiries 8. Leverage investment made in developing submissions by preparing media releases and/or opinion pieces on each submission topic. 		
		Expert advice Apply Liberty Victoria's expertise strategically to maximise impact on civil liberties and human rights	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Seek appointment to parliamentary and government committees of inquiry 10. Plan an approach to engaging and establishing relationships with policy makers and legislators so as to exert more influence 		

	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRI-ORITY	PERSON RESPONS-IBLE
2	Influence and lead public opinion on matters affecting civil liberties and human rights	<p>Increase media engagement Devise a media strategy that enables proactive promotion of the human rights agenda</p> <p>Build public profile Promote the Liberty Victoria brand to raise high public profile</p>	<p>11. Continue to: respond to media requests for comment on issues of public interest; prepare media releases; write opinion pieces for media publication and make media appearances</p> <p>12. Build on existing profile/contacts with journalists to increase media exposure across all mediums</p> <p>13. Investigate the feasibility of using a media company and or publicist to improve Liberty Victoria's media presence and to be more proactive in the media</p> <p>14. Leverage the effort put into submissions by generating additional media releases, commentary and articles</p> <p>15. Publish the media articles, in which LV is quoted, on the website (in addition to media releases and opinion pieces)</p> <p>16. Profile and promote achievements and activities of past and present high profile members and representatives</p> <p>17. Articulate and promote Liberty Victoria's strengths, <i>i.e.</i>: a non-partisan and independent organisation with well-informed spokespeople that provides credible, authoritative and unfettered views</p> <p>18. Seek a participating member with strong media background to lead a volunteer-based <u>Communications Team</u></p>		
		<p>Online strategy Maximise the benefits of the Liberty Victoria website</p>	<p>19. Continue to enhance the Liberty Victoria as an authoritative site for information and knowledge about civil liberties</p> <p>20. Enhance the website through inclusion of relevant video content</p> <p>21. Install Google Analytics to monitor usage and assist in planning additional content</p> <p>22. Consider an electronic mailing list for wide distribution of the newsletter</p> <p>23. Include, on the website and in the newsletter, a short electronic survey about membership expectations and experience</p> <p>24. Highlight the benefits of membership on the website</p> <p>25. Establish <u>Web Team</u> with call for skilled volunteers, headed up by Liberty Victoria member</p>		

	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRI-ORITY	PERSON RESPONS-IBLE
		<p>Events strategy</p> <p>Use special projects and events as high-profile opportunities to promote the human rights agenda</p>	<p>26. Continue to hold the annual oration, Voltaire Awards, etc</p> <p>27. Plan an annual event for students interested in human rights issues</p> <p>28. Continue to supply qualified members as public speakers for appropriate external events</p> <p>29. Review speaking engagement policy to focus on more influential audiences (e.g. guest lectures for relevant tertiary courses in preference to primary/secondary schools)</p> <p>30. Identify and develop worthwhile special projects</p> <p>31. Build <u>Events Management Team</u> with call for skilled volunteers. The team should be led by a Liberty Victoria member</p>		
3	Establish organisational structure and governance framework to support growth of Liberty Victoria	<p>Organisational structure</p> <p>Review the decision-making structure and processes within the organisation</p>	<p>32. Document options for organisational structure. See ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE, page 8</p> <p>33. Select an organisational structure that will allow Liberty Victoria to grow and is acceptable to a majority of active members</p> <p>34. Revise the Constitution to reflect the selected model and to ensure it remains compliant with the Associations Incorporation Act</p>		
		<p>Rationalise use of resources by focusing on specific activities and strategically targeting use of executive and board resources</p>	<p>35. Clearly identify what Liberty Victoria does and does not engage in: For example (for review):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liberty Victoria <u>does</u> engage in public policy and debate through parliament submissions, media and online activities; opinion pieces and events. - Liberty Victoria <u>does not</u> undertake wide-scale education activities or offer legal representation or advice. <p>36. Review roles of board and executive members to ensure that high-level expertise is used strategically. Consider in light of collaboration, volunteer and resource-building proposals, below.</p>		

	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRI-ORITY	PERSON RESPONS-IBLE
4	Build the organisation capability and resources needed to achieve Liberty Victoria's goals	<p>Build financial resources through a range of sources including membership fees, donations, bequests, fund-raising and grants.</p> <p>Grow income to support more projects and stronger administration</p>	<p>Membership fees</p> <p>37. Review membership fees in terms of affordability, fairness and income growth</p> <p>38. Develop a new fee structure that better reflects capacity to pay with a view to significantly increasing membership income</p> <p>39. Implement an on-line membership payment system that requires people to opt out rather than opt in to renew membership</p> <p>Donations</p> <p>40. Seek advice about attracting donations and bequests</p> <p>Grants</p> <p>41. Develop strategy to increase capacity to apply for government and not-for-profit grants to resource specific projects</p> <p>42. Defer projects and programs (e.g. education projects, volunteer programs) until sufficient resources are available</p>		
		<p>Develop membership strategies to retain and engage existing members; draw back former members; and attract new members, especially younger members</p>	<p>43. Obtain understanding of what members want from Liberty Victoria.</p> <p>a. review membership profiles, numbers and churn</p> <p>b. develop a short electronic survey to send to past and present members about membership expectations and experience.</p> <p>c. Include the same questions in the application form.</p> <p>d. undertake telephone campaign to talk to current and former members</p> <p>44. Develop member engagement strategies:</p> <p>a. regularly acknowledge importance of members and thank them for involvement</p> <p>b. review member events and benefits</p> <p>c. consider online social networking tools – blogs, newsletters, alerts, RSS feeds, etc</p> <p>d. identify how willing members can get involved in specific events and projects</p> <p>e. publicise benefits of membership on the website</p> <p>45. Develop member recruitment strategies such as:</p> <p>a. target events to build membership</p> <p>b. have membership drive on campus directed at specific disciplines (e.g. law, social work)</p> <p>c. membership activities such as meet and greet/bring a friend</p> <p>d. seek co-sponsors to boost benefits (e.g. appropriate books, gifts, etc with new memberships)</p>		

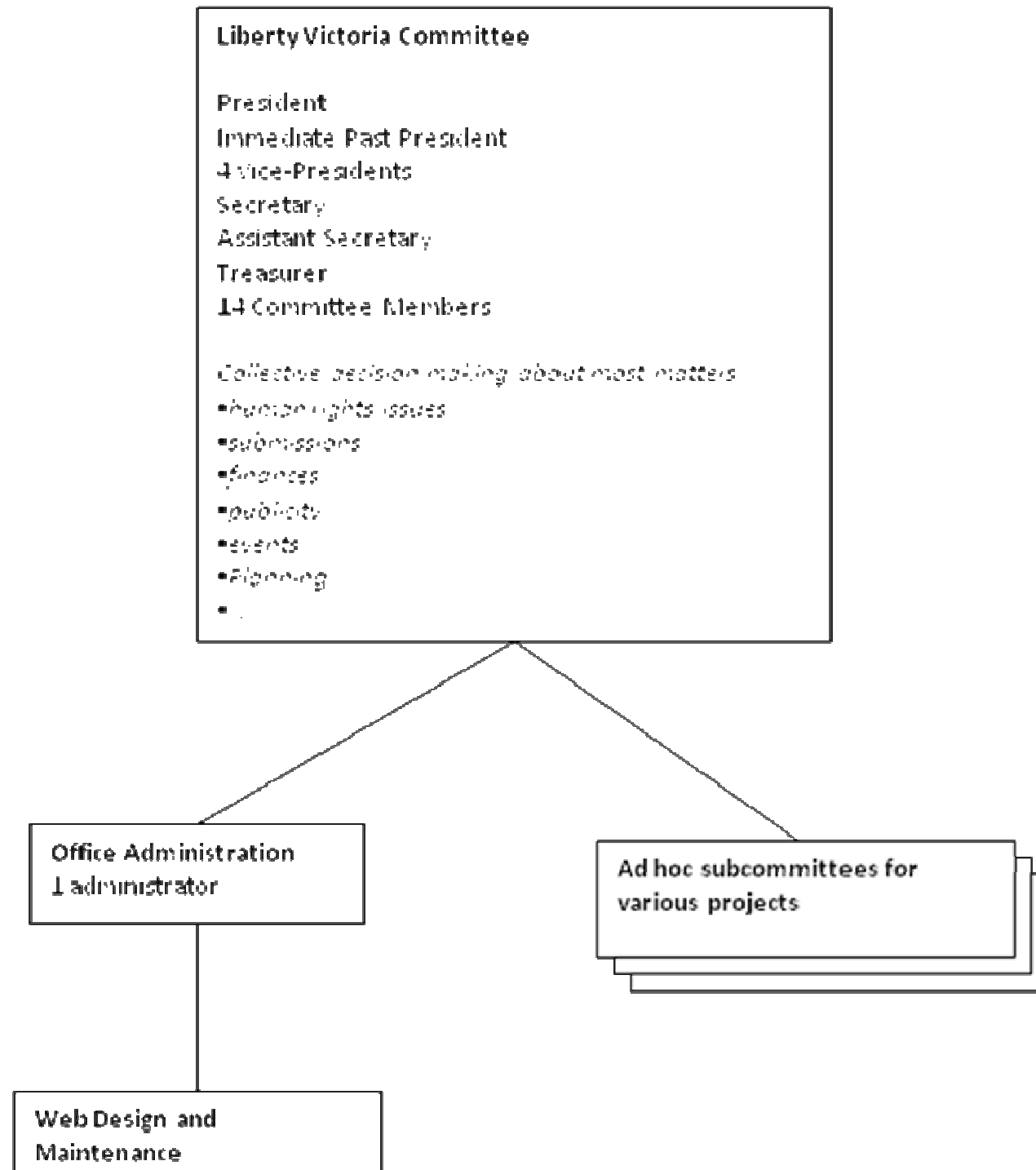
	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRI-ORITY	PERSON RESPONS-IBLE
	<p>Build organisation capability and resources needed to achieve Liberty Victoria's goals</p> <p>Continued ...</p>	<p>Volunteers Grow and manage volunteer base to extend Liberty Victoria capacity to undertake projects and activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 46. Identify projects and activities for which volunteers are routinely needed 47. Identify skills and expertise needed to perform these projects and activities 48. Develop volunteer team structures – e.g: Marketing/Communications Team; Web/IT Team; Events Management Team; Policy Team (law students) with a Liberty Victoria member as coordinator of each 49. Advertise on website and membership application forms for volunteers with specific skills [note: see how Get Up! does it] 50. Develop volunteering (and membership) programs aimed specifically at tertiary students of law and human rights 51. Continue to offer internships for students interested in human rights issues 52. Research volunteering Best Practice to ensure Liberty Victoria meets sector standards and operates in a manner consistent with its ideology 53. Research volunteering resources e.g. Volunteering Australia 54. Training key Liberty Victoria members in managing volunteers 		

	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRI-ORITY	PERSON RESPONS-IBLE
5	Expand influence through collaborations with other civil liberties and human rights organisations	<p>Develop and document potential collaborators</p> <p>Plan sustained and mutually productive relationship with key organisations</p> <p>Initiate and implement collaboration and partnerships</p> <p>.</p> <p>Expand collaborative approach to generate a sustainable human rights community</p>	<p>55. Undertake a thorough 'scan' of Australian and Victoria organisations and individuals who are influential in the civil liberties and human rights sphere</p> <p>56. Map and/or document external parties</p> <p>57. Identify which external organisations it would be advantageous for Liberty Victoria to collaborate with – and identify how such organisations would benefit from partnering with Liberty Victoria</p> <p>58. Develop an External Relations Plan that identifies key contacts, preferred modes of collaboration, and how to develop and sustain relationships. Elements may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. meeting with key potential collaborators on a regular basis b. share information to support specific campaigns c. identifying when to take lead, subordinate or partnership roles on high profile issues and/or events <p>59. Initiate contact and build relationships wit potential collaborators, : the Human Rights Law Resource Centre in particular.</p> <p>60. Come to agreement about respective roles in promoting the human rights agenda</p> <p>61. Develop joint projects and policy interventons</p> <p>62. Initiate opportunities for like-minded people to meet and discuss human rights issues.</p>		

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Current Structure

The purpose of an organisational structure is to get things done as efficiently as possible. Therefore an enterprise should be organised around roles and responsibilities, that is, who does what and who reports to (is led by) whom. The current organisational structure looks like this:

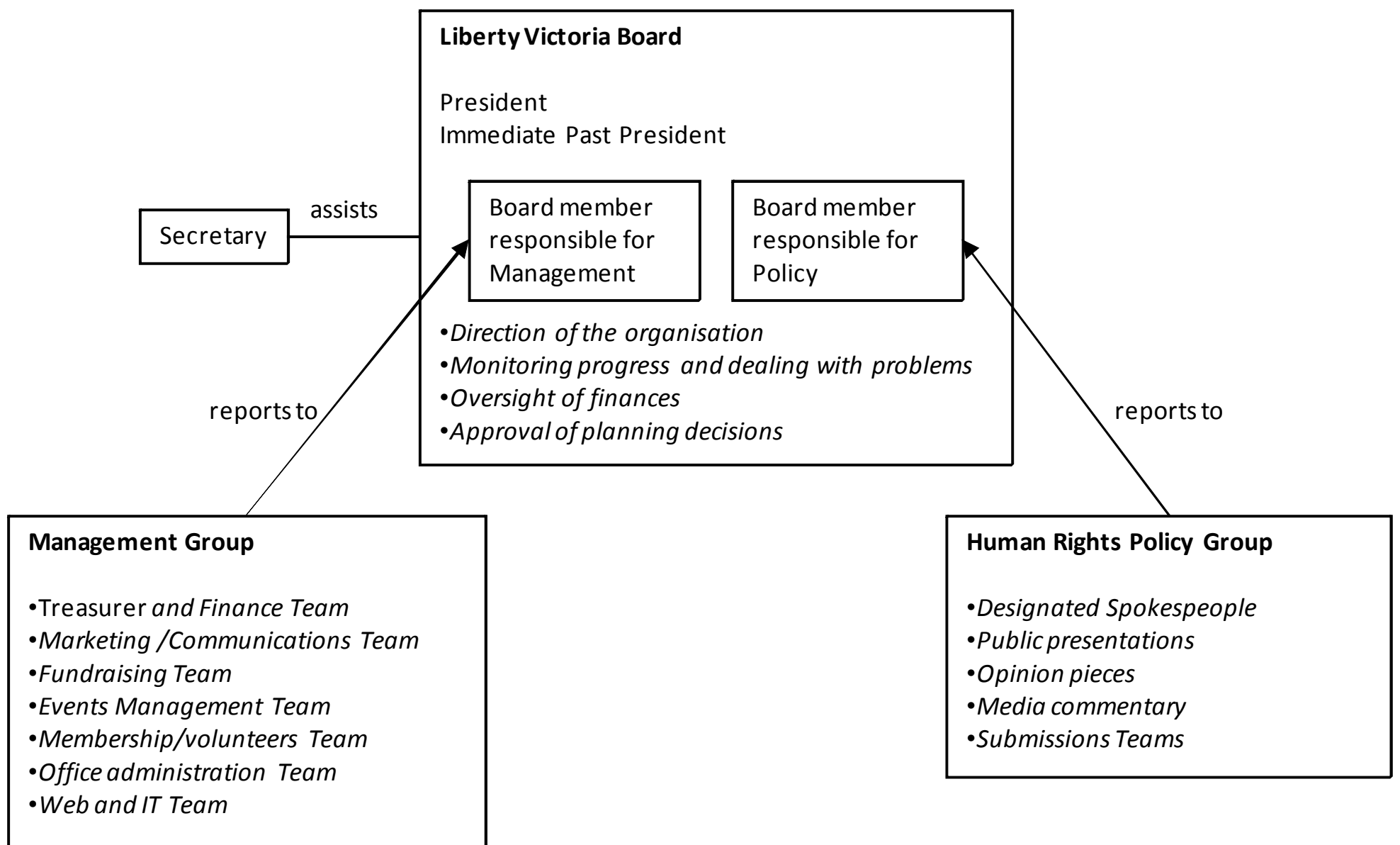


The lines of reporting are unclear. It's hard for 22 people, meeting monthly, to be fully informed and to come to an agreement or even for them all to turn up.

The next two pages propose two alternative structures. The first is typical of most enterprises that comprise more than 30 people and have a serious purpose. The second is a proposed interim step between the current situation and the first alternative.

A More Conventional Structure

An alternative to the current, arranged around roles and responsibilities, looks like this:



This structure separates the three distinct areas of the organisation that are currently admixed. The key to making it work is:

- delegation
- taking responsibility
- the serious inclusion and involvement of members and volunteers

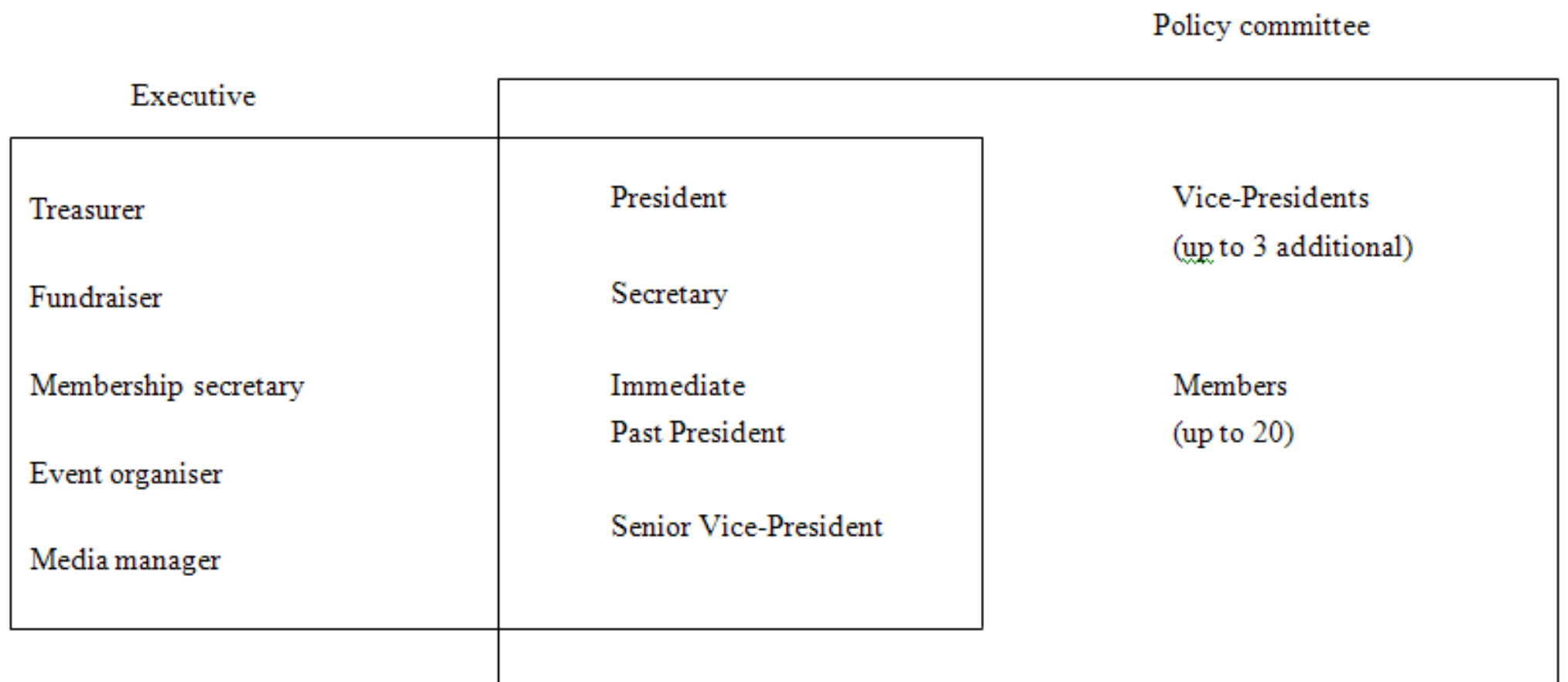
The focus here is on getting things done with minimal discussion. Having agreed on their tasks for the year, the various groups and teams would meet asynchronously, according to their needs. Additional ad hoc teams may be formed for special purposes.

There may be more teams than are shown here. Initially a team may consist of a single individual. The groups and teams would be staffed, and led, by a mixture of volunteers and members, including former committee members.

The Asylum Seekers Resource Centre is a highly successful example of this sort of organisation model. The ASRC started in 2001 with just a few people, gathering and dispensing aid. It has grown in 8 years to an organisation with 500 active volunteers and about 10 paid staff. It mounts over 30 programs including counselling, food aid, employment, training, a medical service and a full legal service. It has an annual turnover of close to 2 million dollars 85% of which comes from fundraising.

An Interim Structure

In this structure the policy function is partially separated from the rest.



1. Policy committee to report to Executive via the President.
2. Policy committee agenda to deal solely with policy matters and with a focus on submissions.
3. Executive agenda to deal solely with management matters.

PARTICIPANTS

The committee members were Michael Pearce, Yanlo Yue, Evelyn Tadros, Anne O'Rourke, Dennis Goldner and Marian Steele. The workshop was attended by Michael Pearce, Evelyn Tadros, Anne O'Rourke and Alex Krummel.

The volunteers are Angela Tidmarsh, Michael Cohn and Bill Haebich. The workshop facilitator was Vicki Davidson of Quest Consulting.