



Library Strategy Plan

2006 – 2011

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1. Executive Summary

The public library is an important cultural, economic and social institution for the community. Libraries collect and disseminate information; they provide comfortable and convenient places for people to read and learn; their physical spaces form meeting places for community groups. They are highly valued by the communities they serve, and are uniquely placed to draw a diverse range of people and groups together.

In this vital community building role, public libraries need to be supported, both politically and financially. This is the principal message of the Libraries Building Communities project – the first comprehensive Australian study of the value that public libraries add to their communities. The study included all 44 Victorian public library services and draws on the views and ideas of nearly 10,000 Victorians. A copy of the study is available by request.

Public libraries make a fundamental contribution to our communities in four key areas:

- they provide free public access to computer and information technology resources;
- by helping people locate information they create better informed communities;
- they run programs that promote lifelong learning and literacy in the community;
- they build connections between individuals, groups and government.

The importance of public libraries to community life is emphasised by the fact that in 2004/2005, there were 232,077 visits to Latrobe City Libraries. Using information from the Victorian Public Library Statistical Survey, this was benchmarked against other regional areas such as Mildura (286,517), East Gippsland (186,192) and Wellington (130,123).

Latrobe 2021, the vision for Latrobe Valley identifies the following:-

- A vibrant region
- A caring and enterprising community
- A harmonious community
- A substantial, safe secure region

The role of libraries in Latrobe City can support the Council and community in delivering this vision. The libraries can provide greater advocacy, together with increased levels of inclusion and support for older people, young people, the Koorie community, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

Our public library, one of our greatest community strengths, is well known, easily accessed and widely used. The ability and agility required to meet future demands and needs is dependent on increased investment in infrastructure, resources and staff development.

Further improvements to facilities and the ongoing upgrade of technology infrastructure will be required. Libraries will need to forge stronger partnerships with community groups, government and business. The public library needs to be promoted to non-users, so that they become aware of the many roles that libraries fill and the services they provide beyond book lending.

International trends demonstrate libraries are playing an increasingly dynamic role in the community's social and economic development. While usage of traditional lending services is generally continuing to increase at all libraries in Australia, there is a substantial increase in demand for programs and resources aligned to learning and record development of new skills. This requires library staff to demonstrate how to access and use information technology.

The importance of collaboration and partnerships in the delivery of library and other council services is a key theme in this Strategy. Many of the objectives and strategies recommended focus on collaboration with other players in the learning arena in order to maximise access to library services.



2. Introduction

Vision

To inspire creativity and foster vibrant well-connected communities.

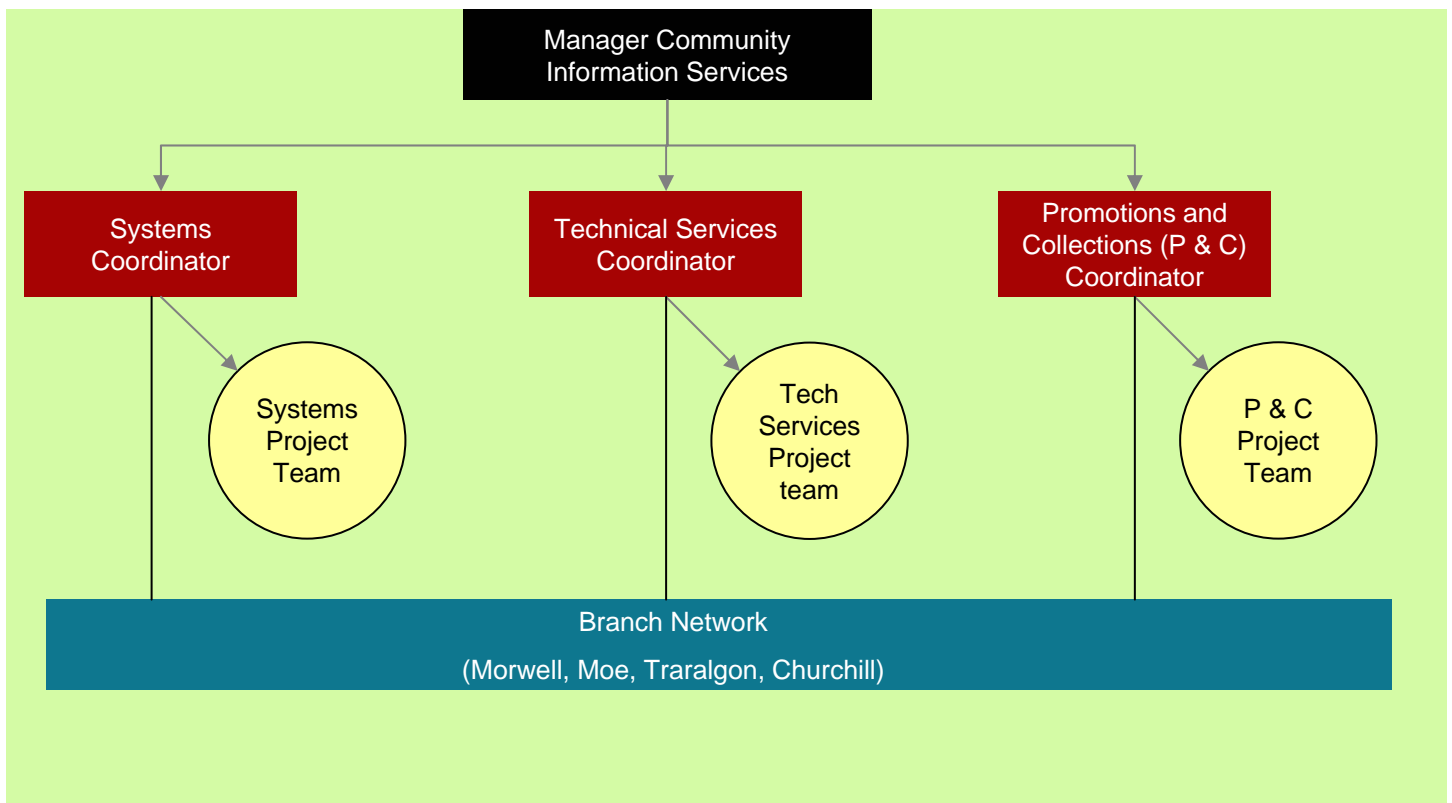
Our aim is to provide a Library Service that:-

- Provides resources to empower the community with knowledge
- Ensures equity of access
- Aims to provide excellence in customer service with a community focus encouraging social integration and fostering intergenerational relationships.
- Promotes and nurtures lifelong learning and recreational pursuits.
- Acts as a conduit for local Council, State and Federal Government resources.
- Provides facilities that are responsive to community needs.
- Fosters co-operation, partnerships and alliances.

This document provides an overview of the following:-

- International and National trends in Library Services.
- Current Service Profile of the Latrobe City Library Service.
- Strategic Actions for developing the Latrobe City Library Service over the next five years.
- How the Library Strategy Plan aligns with Latrobe 2021: The Vision for Latrobe Valley.

The current structure of Latrobe City Library Service



There are six key areas that the Latrobe City Library Service will focus on over the next five years:-

Service Delivery

- To deliver a range of high quality library services to support the cultural, educational and recreational needs of the community.

Partnerships

- To work with a broad range of people to develop and support learning, liveability and community capacity building initiatives in Latrobe.

Facilities

- To provide accessible, attractive, inviting and efficient library facilities to all aspects of the community.

Marketing & Communication

- To connect with the community by increasing awareness of and support for the use of the libraries' resources and services.

Resources

- To ensure that the Library's collections are diverse, current, of high interest, in a variety of formats and languages that respond to the community expectations, and support life long learning and development.

Information Technology

- To plan for and provide electronic access to timely and relevant information resources for education, work and pleasure.



4. Situation Analysis

This Library Strategy Plan has been developed to adhere to State Government legislation in providing a five year Library Strategy Plan. It is also an opportunity to promote the Latrobe City Library Service and ensure our community is connected to knowledge, experience and ideas enhancing liveability and community engagement.

International & National Trends in Library Services

- Libraries are a growth industry.
- Libraries are playing a much more dynamic role in community development.
- Community demand for direct delivery of programs aligned to community learning and development of new skills is increasing rapidly.
- There is an increasing library staff role as teacher, particularly in relation to IT.
- Libraries are an integral partner in the lifelong learning process; not a competitor with other learning providers.
- There is an unprecedented demand for libraries to develop and facilitate access to online services and information.
- Purpose built technology/learning centres are being incorporated into library design.
- Governments are identifying libraries as key access points to ensure equitable access to information.
- Libraries are taking a much more professional approach to marketing.
- Opening hours increases are focusing on weekends rather than earlier opening and later closing.
- Increasing costs of operating libraries may be partially offset by sponsorships and partnerships.
- Increasing assistance from Friends of Library groups.

The popularity of public libraries has been acknowledged by the continuing and expanding level of financial and policy support provided by governments for libraries as places.

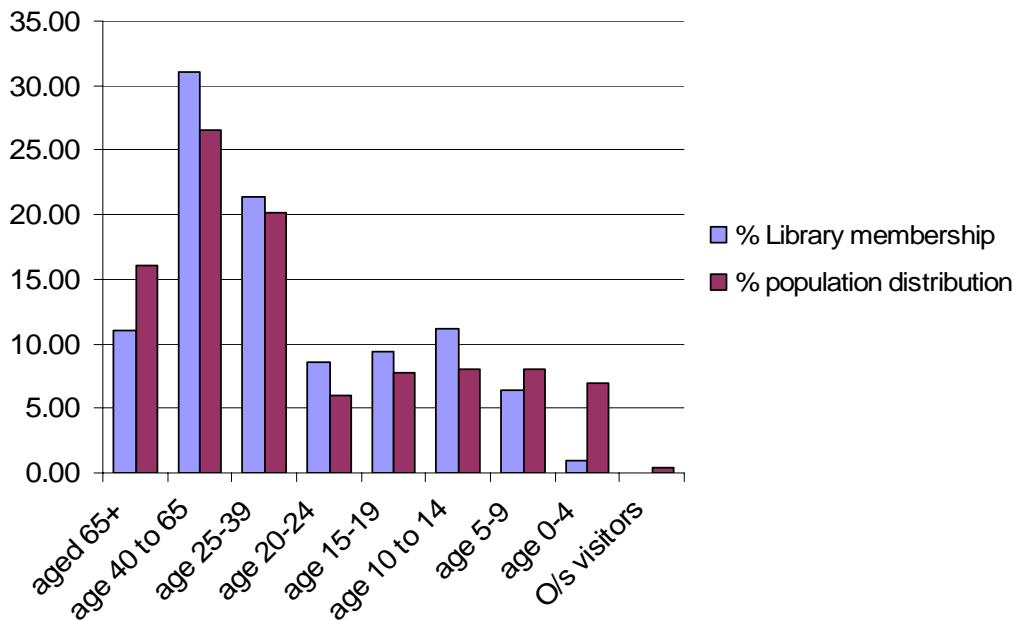
The increased use of information technology within public libraries has enabled remote access to information within a particular community, nationally and internationally. Libraries are seen to be vital elements in extending information literacy and increasing the skills of individuals.

While public libraries offer a wide variety of services, many members of the community, particularly those who haven't been involved in any learning education programs since they left school, are unaware that libraries do anything beyond lending books for recreational reading.

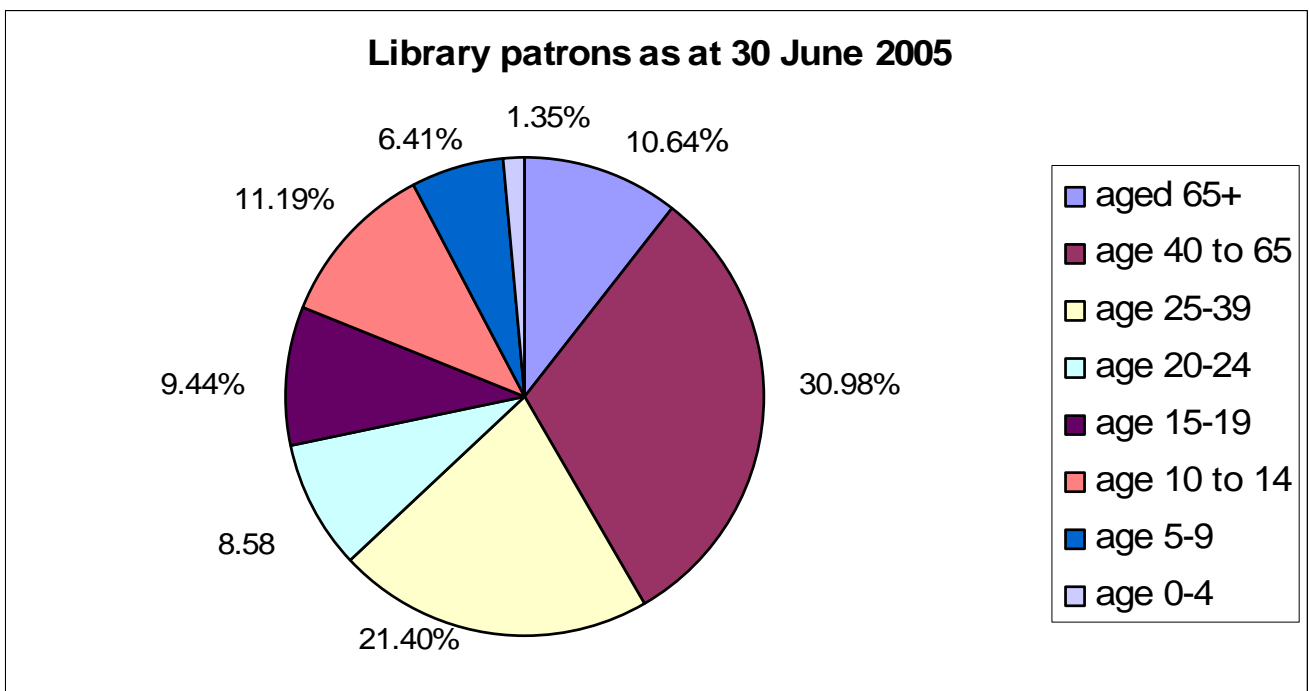
Public Libraries tend to be underutilised in the contribution they can have to the promotion, information giving and delivery of other Council services.



4. Situation Analysis



The age distribution of residents and proportional representation in the library service indicates a need to cater for housebound services and collection choices. One exception being the children aged 0-4 who are not represented in library membership but attend storytime programs and borrow resources often using parent memberships.



5. Customer Service Profile

Latrobe City's Library Service currently comprises four branches; one in each of the major towns within the municipality:-

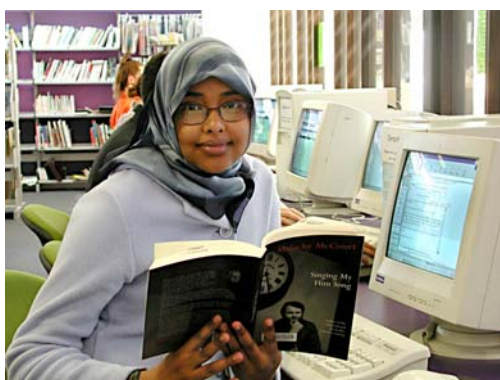
Town	Approx Size sqm	Hrs open p/w	Days per week
Moe	650	43	6
Mwill	1087	43	6
Tgn	1100	37	7
Ch'll	Joint use	30	5

Latrobe City Library Service offers all traditional public library services including:-

- Lending services
- Information/Reference services
- Collections in standard and large print and videos
- Computer, Internet and Email facilities
- Children's services including storytime and school holiday programs
- Local and family history research facilities
- Access to a range of online resources
- Virtual library service

Latrobe City Library Service collection also includes popular DVDs and music CDs. The Library Service is committed to extending its service and organises programs and events for adults and teenagers including recognition of cultural celebrations etc.

In order to maximise access to the library for all groups within the community, the Latrobe Library Service provides services and programs aimed to attract use by the aged, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD), disabled, the indigenous population, and children and young people.



Children and Youth

The Latrobe City Library Service provides collections for children and teenagers and offers popular storytime services in all libraries. The DVDs, CDs and video collections and computer/internet access are popular with young people. The Library Service is also encouraging study groups to visit the library by providing quiet spaces.

Culturally & Linguistically Diverse (CALD)

Library services and programs have been developed to attract CALD communities. These programs include access to email facilities and the Internet; and community groups performing in the library as part of cultural festivities. Library brochures in other languages and cross cultural awareness training for library staff also support services to CALD communities.

Disability

The library is committed to improving access services for people with disabilities, particularly through the upgrading of physical library facilities. Communication aids and screen reading software on computers are available for the Deaf/hard of hearing and vision impaired. We also have an expanding Talking Book collection, and the library will be trialling new technology to enhance this collection in the near future.

A broad spectrum of library resources, together with regular assessment of access options and staff training in disability awareness, contribute positively to our capacity to service the needs of community members with a variety of access requirements.

Indigenous

Indigenous communities have been involved in the development of targeted programs, such as the Koorie Oral History Project. These programs have focused on encouraging the Koorie community involvement in the Libraries as well as introducing Library patrons to the wealth within the culture and heritage of the Koorie community. Indigenous staff have been employed in front of house library jobs as part of Council's traineeship program and this is encouraging indigenous people to visit the library.

Senior Citizens

The Library provides an extensive large print, talking books collection and a housebound service on a small scale for the elderly. The Library Service is in contact with other agencies that assist the elderly to ensure they are aware of the service we provide.

6. Objectives / Strategic Actions / Measures

Objective

Service Delivery

Promote a customer focussed approach to the provision of library services that will support the needs of a learning community.

Strategic Actions	Indicators	Measures	Latrobe 2021 Strategic Action
Involve the community in defining their service needs	Community Engagement plan established	Implementation of Action Plan	LIVEABILITY To promote and support social, recreational, cultural and community life by providing both essential and innovative amenities, services and facilities within the municipality.
Provide relevant services to meet the needs of the community	Service Development Plan established	Implementation of Service Plan	
Conduct regular customer consultation	Customer Service Survey (internal annually)	Overall customer satisfaction rating of 80%	
	Customer Service Survey (external tri-annual)	Response to customer feedback forms provided within 10 working days	
	Mystery Shopper Surveys	Results of surveys communicated to those surveyed	
Promote participation in learning opportunities for staff to improve service delivery	Recorded on Individual Work Plans	Work Plan goals achieved	
Work together with other areas of Council to develop an annual Calendar of Events observing important national and local events etc	Annual Calendar of Events to be completed by August of each year to coincide with Corporate Calendar of Events	Participation in three corporate events annually	
Enhance the library's support for groups within the community with special needs including senior citizens, CALD, disability, indigenous communities and youth	Audit of accessibility to and within libraries to special interest groups to be completed by Oct 06	Utilisation of library resources and facilities Actively seek engagement with at least one of each of the marginalised groups	

6. Objectives / Strategic Actions / Measures

Objective

Partnerships

Improve the sustainability of the Library through the development of partnerships with relevant stakeholders.

Strategic Actions	Indicators	Measures	Latrobe 2021 Strategic Action
Develop partnerships within the community	Engagement with internal and external community stakeholders	Minimum of two partnership projects annually	COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING To promote Latrobe Valley as a strong diverse community that is positive about its future through advocacy, leadership, partnerships, inclusiveness and participation
Maintain participation in external service network planning and activities (VICLINK, CPLG, CALD Network, GULLIVER consortia)	Representation provides positive benefit for planning and service development	Attendance by Latrobe City Library Management staff of at least 80% of annual meetings	
Identify joint initiatives and promote collective effort with other organisations and groups to address low levels of literacy	Organisation and participation in planning to address literacy issues	Initiation of forum to engage holistic approach to provision of literacy programs and activities	
Extend the Library's Services capacity to develop additional collaborative partnerships and plan broader community involvement in cultural programs provided by the libraries Identify and seek funding for joint initiatives	Meeting to be held with different sectors to discuss possible joint ventures etc	Strategies implemented 06/07 Business Plan	
Investigate and scope the feasibility to further develop housebound services	Planning possible outcomes	Investigation and recommendations completed by Jun 07	

6. Objectives / Strategic Actions / Measures

Objective

Facilities

Provide facilities, locations and outreach services that meet community needs.

Strategic Actions	Indicators	Measures	Latrobe 2021 Strategic Action
Development of a Future Service Plan that delivers most effective service to the community	Future Services Plan developed	Action Plan and implementation	LIVEABILITY To promote and support social, recreational, cultural and community life by providing both essential and innovative amenities, services and facilities within the municipality.
Investigate options for future development of Moe Library and Service Centre	Investigation complete and report prepared by Jul 06	Project completion by Dec 09 in accordance with Library Industry Standards	
Investigate options for Library Service located within proposed Churchill Intergenerational Hub	Options for funding investigated during 05/06 financial year	Identify potential improvements for accessibility le hours modified resource collection etc	

6. Objectives / Strategic Actions / Measures

Objective

Marketing & Communication

Improve the sustainability of the Library through effective promotion and marketing.

Strategic Actions	Indicators	Measures	Latrobe 2021 Strategic Action
Develop a Library specific Marketing Plan in accordance with the Marketing and Communications Strategy Plan	Provide programs/activities complimenting Council marketing initiatives	Participate in a minimum of 2 corporate events annually	COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING To promote Latrobe Valley as a strong diverse community that is positive about its future through advocacy, leadership, partnerships, inclusiveness and participation
Proactively promote the Library as a facility for community recreation as well as being a gateway for lifelong learning	Number of programs delivered annually	Storytime sessions conducted weekly during school terms Four school holiday programs delivered Adult programs delivered (eg author visits)	
Staff development in marketing library services and resources	All staff attend marketing and service delivery training annually	7 hours annual average training hours per staff member	
Improve online access to homepage and content	Review homepage performance and report regularly	Online access survey Increasing number of external access visits annually	
Foster new ideas and interest in resources and services through innovative program of activities including computer and internet skills training for the community	Development of programs	Minimum of 6 Internet education programs delivered annually	
Invite Councillors and other community leaders to the library, hold periodic briefings and information sessions to enhance their understanding of the library service	Regular briefings and information sessions held annually	Feedback from sessions	

6. Objectives / Strategic Actions / Measures

Objective

Resources

Provide equitable access to relevant collections to support lifelong learning and development.

Strategic Actions	Indicators	Measures	Latrobe 2021 Strategic Action
Select and acquire a diverse range of books and other library materials for all ages that reflects the wide range of community interest	Annual audit of library materials acquired	Customer satisfaction rating 80%	COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING To promote Latrobe Valley as a strong diverse community that is positive about its future through advocacy, leadership, partnerships, inclusiveness and participation
Provide opening hours that meet customer expectations where possible with a consistency across the municipality	Morwell, Moe and Traralgon Branches open the same/equivalent hours within 5 years	Review of opening hours completed annually	
Ensure that library service procedures and services are standardised across the region	Audit procedures completed annually with regular review	Staff evaluation/ feedback for quality control Customer satisfaction rating 80%	
Provide an efficient loans service with user friendly policies	Circulation Policy reviewed annually	Customer satisfaction rating of 80% with loans service Review fees and charges annually	
Develop, organise, maintain and provide access to the collection of library materials	Facilities audit including signage and catalogue access	Customer satisfaction rating 80%	
Develop and maintain a collection profile (both hardcopy and electronic) that meets the evolving recreational and learning needs of the community	Number of materials purchased per resident Average age of collection	Purchasing Plan targets achieved Items purchased 15/100 people annually (ALIA standard) Latrobe = 10,500 pa Average age of collection to be < 8 years	
Conduct appropriate marketing of Library services to ensure level of current Capital Works Budget is sustained	Regular marketing to organisation and Councillors	Annual Budget provides for sustainable library service delivery	

6. Objectives / Strategic Actions / Measures

Objective

Information Technology

Provide access to a relevant range of databases and services and foster development of access to local and global information resources.

Strategic Actions	Indicators	Measures	Latrobe 2021 Strategic Action
Review Library Mgt System to ensure adequate functionality in the future	Review to be undertaken by Jul 06	Successful implementation of updated Library Mgt System in 06/07	COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING To promote Latrobe Valley as a strong diverse community that is positive about its future through advocacy, leadership, partnerships, inclusiveness and participation
Audit of all technology across all Libraries to ensure it can meet the needs of users and staff into the future	Overall audit and report completed by Dec 06.	Customer satisfaction rating 80%	
Continue involvement with peak library and other relevant bodies (State Library, Viclink, Vicnet) to ensure the Latrobe City Libraries are involved in the development and implementation of relevant co-operative schemes	Planning framework to be completed by Dec 06	Engagement with stakeholders and implementation as appropriate	

7. Implementation, Evaluation and Control

*Alignment to Latrobe 2021: - The Vision for Latrobe Valley

The Library Strategy Plan is aligned with the Latrobe 2021: The Vision for Latrobe Valley objectives and indicators, and integrates well with other related support strategies of Council.

Implementation

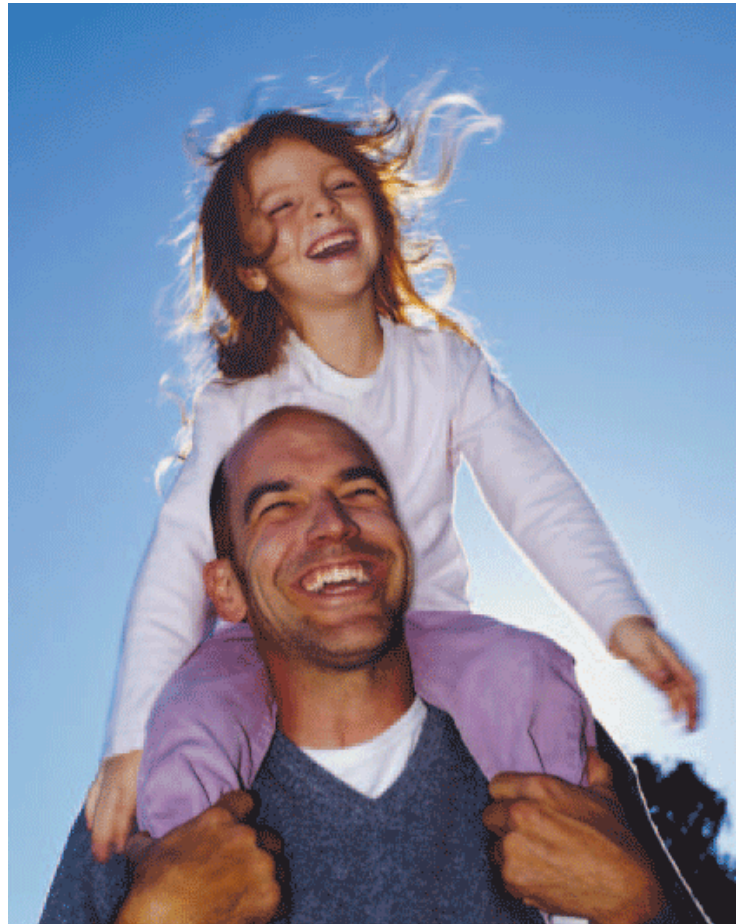
Implementation of actions identified in the Library Strategy will commence throughout the 2005/06 financial year.

Evaluation

Evaluation will take place through quality monitoring and reporting processes in conjunction with annual Business Plan reporting.

Monitoring

Council will be provided with a full status report of actions identified at the conclusion of each financial year.



* Appendix One