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|  | Fact Sheet | Regional Council planning | September 2015  Audience | Chairperson, all members |

This **Fact Sheet** outlines an approach to planning in Regional Councils (Councils).

### Why this is important

Council members develop and monitor the direction of the Council’s work through a Regional Council Plan. All decisions the Council makes should be consistent with the agreed plan.

The Council’s planning process will ensure that it is able to deliver on the ACFE mission and provide accurate input and advice to the ACFE Board (Board) consistent with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (the Act), the Victorian Government and the Board’s policy.

In addition, the Board must consult with Councils to develop mutual planning approaches for adult, community and further education in Victoria.

## Coordinating Board and Council planning

The Board operates within a three-year strategic planning cycle and an annual business planning cycle.

In March each year the Board and the chairperson of each Council attend a planning workshop to either refresh the current Board strategic plan or develop a new strategic plan. A new business plan is developed for each year. These plans are endorsed by the Board before the new financial year to which the plans relate.

The Regional Council Plan must be developed in October/November as the Regional Council Plan applies to the following calendar year. Councils should ensure that this plan clearly aligns with the Board’s mission and plans.

## The six-month gap between planning events ensures Councils can embed Board objectives or directions into the Regional Council Plan.

In addition, the Council is likely to need to provide specific advice to the Board at particular times of the year. Regional Department staff contacts will notify Councils when this information is likely to be required.

## The planning process

A Regional Council Plan is based on:

* a clear understanding of the ACFE mission and the functions of Regional Councils
* identifying and prioritising performance issues of the Council by conducting an annual review
* identification of and prioritising regional (learner and provider) needs/issues from implementing the Council’s Consultation Plan
* scope and analysis of planning data
* strategies for balancing regional needs and Board priorities
* development of a plan and processes for feedback from key stakeholders.

### *Sourcing and using planning data*

Information relevant to regional planning could include:

* demographic data on disadvantaged learners
* regional industry profiles
* ACFE provision and participation
* broader education provision and participation
* forecasts (economic, social and so on)
* knowledge of the region
* needs analysis and future predictions.

### *Assessing the environment*

The Council ensures its plan is based on reviews and evaluations of present and future opportunities, threats and risks in the region.

### *Determining strategy and implementation*

The Council develops the Regional Council Plan, ensuring that there are resources to meet its requirements.

Councils should be mindful of their need to be realistic about what is achievable in their region, as Councils will have limited access to resources to undertake projects.

The Council should ensure that it has actions in its plan that will advise the ACFE Board on matters that it has identified as important.

### *Performance measures for the region*

The Regional Council Plan should include appropriate performance indicators and targets.

### *Implementing the Council Plan*

The Regional Council Plan will be framed into a Statement of Expectations with the ACFE Board.

Regional Department staff support the implementation of its plan. The Council should develop an effective process to:

* monitor implementation of the plan at each meeting of the Council, using traffic light reports
* review and continuously improve the plan on a regular basis
* monitor the plan for performance in regard to targets and relevance of desired outputs and outcomes on a regular basis.

### *Templates*

The Regional Council planning template is similar in format to that used by the ACFE Board.

Further information

[Fact Sheet | Leading Regional Council](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/research/acfepublications/rchubfsleading.docx)

[ACFE Regional Council planning template](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/research/acfepublications/rchubplantemp.docx)

[ACFE Board, Learn Local: Focusing on the Future](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/research/acfepublications/LLfocusingonfuture.PDF)

[Fact Sheet | Consulting with stakeholders](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/research/acfepublications/rchubconsultstake.docx)

[Fact Sheet | Advising the ACFE Board](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/research/acfepublications/rchubfsadvisingboard.docx)

[Fact Sheet | Regional Council annual review](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/research/acfepublications/rchubannualreview.docx)