



## Part B      Where to from here? Strategic directions 2005-2008

What are our guiding principles?

How do we enhance library services to the Port Phillip community?

What are our key themes?

Key objectives

Objective 1

To be well known as a sustainable, dynamic and responsive service

Objective 2

A policy framework that ensures that the needs of the individual library user are balanced with the community of users in accessing library resources.

Objective 3

To promote library space as a valuable, flexible/multi-purpose and inviting public and community space

Objective 4

To develop and maintain a vital, current, responsive and accessible Port Phillip collection in a variety of formats supporting the lifelong learning and leisure interests of the community

Objective 5

To build on, and enrich access to the global library network via our online services and resources

Port Phillip Library Service Charter



## What are our guiding principles?

... 'You see, I don't believe that libraries should be drab places where people sit in silence, and that's been the main reason for our policy of employing wild animals as librarians.' — Monty Python

The City of Port Phillip aims to provide a cutting edge library service that is innovative, well resourced, effectively managed and which aims to support lifelong learning in the community.

Council has endorsed the guiding principles developed in 2001 as part of our first Strategic Plan, agreeing they remain valid in 2005 to inform our direction over the next three years.

These principles are:

- *Equity in access to services*
- *Responsiveness to changing community need*
- *Provision of cost-efficient, quality library services*
- *Commitment to the continued support and development of library staff*

In working with these principles, we take *Equity in access to services* to encompass a range of factors that reflect a capacity to deliver citywide services in an inclusive and efficient way.

These could include:

- Quality of collection
- Spread of opening hours
- Geographic location
- Information services and technology, and
- Range of programs and activities



Port Phillip Library Service (PPLS) currently comprises five sites – St Kilda, Port Melbourne, Albert Park, Middle Park and Emerald Hill – a structure inherited from council amalgamations in 1994.

The development of this new plan has been carried out with the knowledge that PPLS is a highly utilized and valued community resource that continues to play a critical role in lifelong education and learning.

PPLS continues to attract positive feedback, from across the municipality and beyond, for our flexible and inclusive circulation policies, quality collections and fantastic staff, who bring to the service a range of skills and interests that enrich the experience of our library users.

## **How do we enhance library services in 2005 and into the future?**

The new strategic plan is an opportunity to develop and profile PPLS as a citywide library - acknowledging local neighbourhood needs while also building a strong and cohesive single library service with the potential to fulfill its role as a gateway to the global library network.

The new plan assumes a structure of five sites, with a shift in emphasis for the three main sites – St Kilda, Port Melbourne and Albert Park – complemented by a new changed focus for the smaller sites - Emerald Hill and Middle Park. A range of library-related activities provided at appropriate community centres and facilities will supplement this structure.

In terms of the three larger sites, this shift aims to more realistically reflect patterns of use and emerging community need in terms of physical facilities and resources, and provide PPLS with the flexibility to meet these needs. It also provides an opportunity to develop the smaller sites' local individual strengths and community profile, while fostering opportunities for a broader range of community uses within those spaces.

The plan proposes to trial Sunday opening hours at Albert Park commencing from mid-2005. The results of these new pilot hours will be assessed in early 2006, with a view towards evaluating the viability of establishing Sunday opening at our other two main sites – Albert Park and Port Melbourne - within the period of this plan, to complement the services already available at our main St Kilda site.

The new plan does not propose any additional sites or service points.



## What are our key themes?

Following a process of community consultation over September and October 2004, and discussion with our Library Advisory Committee, some key themes were identified. These themes build on the key principles, and provide the framework and strategic thread for our future direction. They are:

- Spreading the joy about PPLS by promoting what it is that we do
- Engagement with the community of library users in accessing library resources.
- Accessible and inviting spaces (as part of a community hub/precinct)
- Vital, responsive and fresh collections
- Effective use of technology to deliver a range of dynamic online services

These themes describe the areas libraries will be actively working to develop over the next 3-5 years. In particular libraries will also be looking to build our relevance to groups who are currently under-represented, (such as young people, the Indigenous community, people with a disability or who may be socially disadvantaged).

Under this broad thematic umbrella, some key objectives have been identified:

### Key objectives

- To be well known as a sustainable, dynamic and responsive service
- To build on a policy framework that ensures the needs of the individual library user are balanced with the community of users in accessing library resources.
- To promote libraries as valuable, flexible/multi-purpose and inviting public and community space/s
- To maintain and develop a vital, current, responsive and accessible Port Phillip collection in a variety of formats supporting the lifelong learning and leisure interests of the community
- To build on, and enrich, access to the global library network via our online resources and services

Under these objectives we have identified **new directions and service priorities** to provide an indication of how we intend to address existing issues, respond to community feedback and open up space for innovation.

At the same time we have included **what will remain the same**, to reaffirm for everyone those services and activities that are so highly valued from Port Phillip Library Service.

## Objective 1

To be well known as a sustainable, dynamic and responsive service

*Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read.*  
— Groucho Marx

### New directions and service priorities

- Raise the profile of libraries as a key information portal for both Council and the community, particularly targeting groups who may be socially disadvantaged, (e.g. people with literacy issues, poor IT access, etc)
- Development of partnerships with community groups so as to acknowledge, learn and respond to the wide variety of ways in which the library is and can be used
- A highly visible promotion of library resources and services, both onsite and online, and using other communication channels such as Divercity and local media
- Leverage off Statewide public library sector initiatives as appropriate to help raise user awareness of information options available, e.g. promotion of databases available through membership of the Gulliver consortium (health, business, news, science etc)
- Further develop push-promotion opportunities, such as targeted web-based information bulletins, email alert systems, etc,
- Foster partnerships with local businesses and community service providers to identify options for program or activity sponsorships, etc
- More active education for users about what it is that we do and offer, including raising awareness of library spaces and the potential for new uses



## What will remain the same?

- Our profile as a valuable community resource
- Staff at our frontline service desks who are well trained to promote and deliver quality services to the community
- Maintenance of annual PPLS Marketing Plan, including a review process
- Our ongoing relationship with CoPP Communications to ensure that all avenues are maintained for promotion of PPLS activities across the community
- Continued participation in key library sector initiatives to promote services and resource sharing initiatives, (e.g. Viclink, Inter-Library Loan Group; Kinetica Working Group; Collection Cooperative, etc)



## Objective 2

A policy framework that ensures that the needs of the individual library user are balanced with the community of users in accessing library resources.

*Censorship, like charity, should begin at home: but unlike charity, it should end there.*

- Claire Booth Luce

### New directions and service priorities

- Through implementing the library's new Service Charter developing an enhanced awareness of the library as a community of users
- Review mechanisms to track the progress on current processes and policy to ensure their on-going relevance to service direction
- New ways to engage with the community to get a better understanding of how to plan our services for the future
- Incorporating the principles of Council's Same Day Service policy as a key driver in library service delivery and policy formulation

### What will remain the same?

- Policies and processes that are responsive, relevant and geared towards enhancing the experience of all library users
- Policies that are reflective of Council's commitment to Economic, Environmental, Social and Cultural Sustainability
- Clear avenues for community participation and input
- A policy framework that is evidence-based and reflects the needs of our users
- Staff with the capacity to exercise good judgement within the current policy framework in facilitating access to library services
- Shared commitment to the maintenance of a strong policy framework
- Clear and transparent access to library policy and the decision making process

## Objective 3

To promote library space as a valuable, flexible/multi-purpose and inviting public and community space

*"Perhaps no place in any community is so totally democratic as the town library. The only entrance requirement is interest". - Lady Bird Johnson*

### New directions and service priorities

- Upgrade and restore St. Kilda's capacity to play a pivotal role within PPLS
- Enhance the potential and capacity of our two larger branches - Albert Park and Port Melbourne - in line with patterns of use and emerging community need
- A new focus for our smaller sites – Emerald Hill and Middle Park - to encompass a range of library and educational activities to build on individual and local strengths. (These could include community-based programming or activities to build information literacy developed and/or delivered in partnership with other service providers as appropriate, or work with Curatorial Services on activities to support the educational role of the Urban History Centre).
- Strengthen and consolidate existing collections across the service (in line with the Collection benchmark of 47% of items aged 5 years or less)
- New Sunday opening hours at Albert Park with a view towards establishing Sunday opening at our other main site – Port Melbourne - to complement the services already available at our main St Kilda site.
- Linkages with other council service areas to foster the diversity of activity occurring within library spaces
- Increased out-of-hours use of library spaces
- Exploring opportunities to utilise our outdoor spaces more productively
- Spaces that are physically accessible for the aged and disabled in line with CoPP's Disability Action Plan
- More targeted education for users about our space and its uses.



### What will remain the same?

- Spaces that are free and open to all, safe and inviting
- Spaces that are flexible to accommodate a range of activities at different times in the day
- Seeking opportunities to raise libraries profile by offering our spaces as a venue for Council and community events
- Monitor and adjust opening hours based on emerging community need and use

## Objective 4

To develop and maintain a vital, current, responsive and accessible Port Phillip collection in a variety of formats supporting the lifelong learning and leisure interests of the community

*It does not matter how many books you may have, but whether they are good or not.*

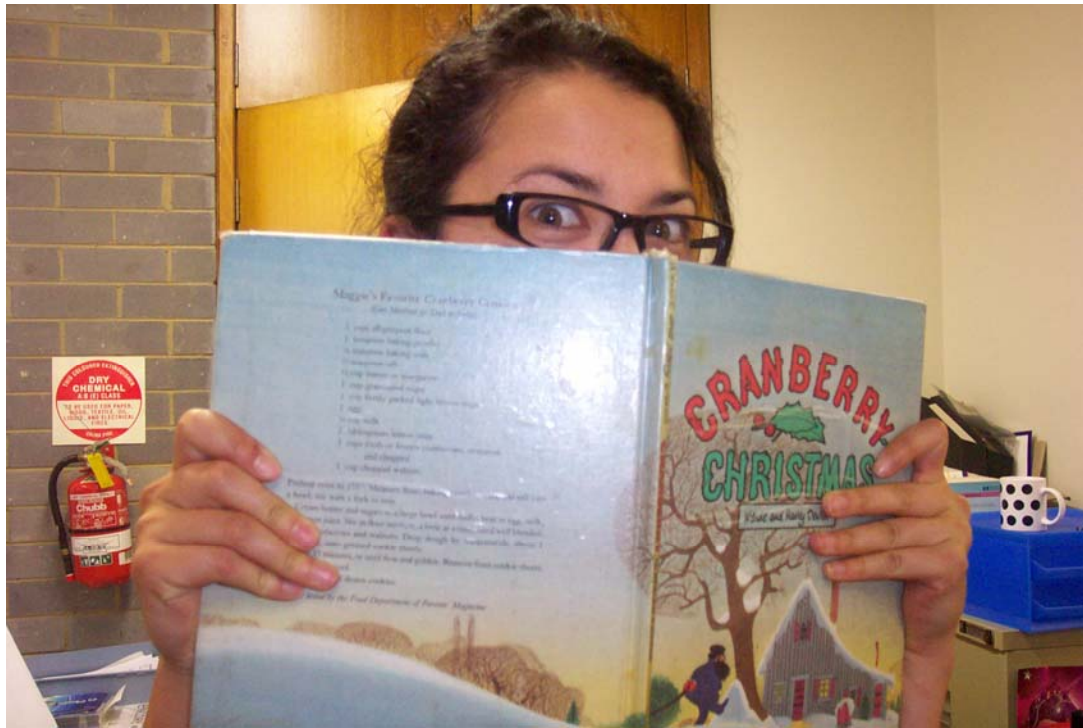
— Lucius Annaeus Seneca (3 B.C.-65 A.D.)

### New directions and service priorities

- A collection (in line with industry standards) that has a high percentage of its stock less than 5 years old, and where a range of appropriate indicators are used to measure our progress in achieving / maintaining this standard.
- Higher levels of targeted engagement with the collection by the community, such as input from the Young Persons' Reference Group in both selecting and promoting materials for the library collection
- Enhanced means by which people will be able to find what is relevant to their needs through an enriched catalogue and online presence
- Partnerships with bookshops and alternative methods for fulfilling requests in order to reduce turn-around-time.
- Targeted collections that respond to patterns of use, i.e. the right material in the right location at the right time
- Exploration of new formats and emerging alternate collections or resources that meet the changing needs and expectations of our users, (such as the new Zine collection)

### What will remain the same?

- We will still have books
- We will continue to maintain and develop our collection strengths
- Access to all collections will be maintained regardless of location, i.e. an item's physical home location
- We will continue to have an evolving collection that is response driven, i.e. we will welcome your suggestions for inclusion.
- We will maintain our resources while sharing capacity with other libraries in order to broaden access to other library collections
- We will continue to access data from Spydus (our library management system) to gather information about the usage patterns of our collections to assist with service planning



## Objective 5

To build on, and enrich access to the global library network via our online services and resources

*The web has enabled many new voices in our democracy – and globally – to be heard: advocacy groups, artists, individuals, non-profit organizations. Just about anyone can speak online, and often with an impact greater than in the days when orators had to climb on a soap box in a park...Bill Moyers*

### New directions and service priorities

- Develop more effective working relationships with both Information Systems and Port Phillip Online. The aim is to establish a shared strategic vision with the goal of enhancing virtual access to library collections and services for our users.
- Develop PPLS as an information portal increasing people's ability to access council and other information in a range of ways, particularly online and out of hours
- More secure and reliable remote access to quality interactive information and leisure based services via the library's website, with a uniform level of access across the service
- Provision of a range of material for users to enrich their interaction with the library website / catalogue, such as book reviews, subject guides, and dynamic reference services
- Ensure a level of online service delivery that is in line with emerging industry standards and evaluated against our benchmarking partners, (e.g. neighbouring library services such as Stonnington, Bayside and Glen Eira)
- Improve access to Spydus for our external partners (our library suppliers) to enhance service delivery to our users by reducing turnaround time and increasing the availability of stock for loan

### What will remain the same?

- Free internet and PC access at all our branches
- Flexible security measures that protect use but don't restrict potential
- Awareness and promotion of online databases by staff as valuable resources for our users
- Information services enabling library staff to help you find the answer to your questions

# Port Phillip Library Service Charter

## Our aspirations

Free to all

Entering a library space will feel easy, comfortable, and safe

You will be treated with courtesy and respect by staff who are equipped to listen and respond

You will have access to other library, information and Council networks

Our policies promote diversity, flexibility, and are adaptive to change

Our staff are trained to provide quality information from a range of resources

Our collections are relevant and responsive to trends and suggestions

We provide technology that supports our service provision and your research and leisure needs

We will make all attempts to fix a problem on the spot, or give you a clear indication of when you will hear from us

## You can help us by –

**Respecting** this space

**Respecting** the staff

**Respecting** other users