

ADVANCING BAW BAW



Community **Advocacy Toolkit**



Advancing Baw Baw Community Advocacy Toolkit

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1. Introduction



Advocacy is the ability to obtain public and/or government support for a project, policy or program.

What is Advocacy?



Advocacy usually takes the form of a campaign that is made up of organised activities with the specific purpose of obtaining support for the project, policy or program.

Over the years we have seen many successful grassroots advocacy initiatives that have made communities voices heard on new polices, infrastructure and services. With more campaigns, however, it becomes harder for these voices to break through the noise.

2. About this toolkit

We've put this toolkit together to support individuals and community groups to advocate on issues that are important to them and to help these campaigns stand out.

It is a resource that can help with developing and implementing advocacy campaigns of any size and includes checklists, templates and tip sheets to make advocacy easier for you.

Successful advocacy campaigns are:



Evidence based – the 'ask' at the centre of any advocacy campaign needs to have a sound evidence base. This may take the form of public policy, research, statistics, data or case studies. Whatever form it takes, the evidence must be able to withstand scrutiny.



Realistic and relevant – the 'ask' needs to be realistic. It can be ambitious, but it needs to be within the realms of what is achievable from a political, financial, environmental or economic perspective. Advocacy must be directed at the relevant target that has responsibility for making decisions that can help secure the 'ask'.



Create a community of concern – the needs and interests of the community must be at the centre of each advocacy campaign. A mobilised, activated community is vital to help further any advocacy campaign.



Clear, consistent and coordinated – clear messages that explain and support the 'ask' are needed. Messages should use facts and statistics to help generate support for the 'ask' and be used consistently in all campaign materials from social media posts to brochures and websites. An advocacy plan that details what needs to be done, when, by whom and what resources or materials may be required will help coordinate all campaign elements.

Advocacy has a language of its own:



Advocacy

An activity or series of activities designed to get public and/or government support for a project policy or program.



Ask

The objective that the advocacy campaign is trying to achieve. E.g. obtaining funding, securing regulatory change or a new service.



Influencers

Those who have the potential to encourage the target to make a decision that supports and ask.



Tactics

Activities used to communicate campaign messages, seek support for the campaign and place pressure on the target to support the ask.



Stakeholder

An Individual or organisation with an interest in the ask, e.g. they may benefit from it.



Target

The individual or organisation responsible for funding, supporting or implementing an ask.

Key Terms

3. To Advocate or Not?

The Baw Baw community has an impressive advocacy history, successfully advocating for much needed infrastructure projects.

As many in the community know, effective advocacy can take significant effort and energy. So, before you start planning an advocacy campaign, ask yourself the following questions to make sure you are on the right track.

Can you confirm the ask?

What do you the advocacy campaign to achieve? Can you explain it in one sentence?

Do others want the same thing?

Can you identify partners/allies/supporters who will also benefit from the ask?

Is there research or data that supports your ask?

Is there an evidence base to support your ask? If so, make sure you include details of it in your campaign materials. If there isn't, can you get some perhaps from council or relevant government websites or even by conducting an online survey or asking people to complete a questionnaire at the local shops?

What are the reasons against support your ask? Put yourself in the shoes of your advocacy target, what arguments might they use to oppose your ask? Can you counter them? Ultimately, who has the power to provide what you are advocating for?

Can you identify who your advocacy campaign should target?

It may be an individual (such as a Minister) or an organisation (such as government department or agency or council).

Next steps

Before you start planning an advocacy campaign you should be able to answer all of these questions.

Ask (your desired outcome)

Supporters

Evidence base

Counter arguments

Target (has the power to provide what you want to secure)

Who is responsible for what?



Depending on what your ask is, your advocacy campaign may target local, state or federal government, a government agency, authority or other public or community organisation.

It can be confusing, for example Federal and State government fund schools, but local councils fund school crossing supervisors.

Each level of government also has statutory authorities and agencies such as VicRoads and Public Transport Victoria.

For more information visit

www.gov.au

4. Advocacy Essentials

This section provides practical steps on developing the essential elements of an advocacy campaign.

1. Research the issue.

If you're not already, become an expert on the issue. Start by finding out:

- Are there any existing plans to deliver the policy, project or program you want? Has it been delayed, if so why?
- How much will it cost?
- Has anybody else asked for it in the past and why hasn't it been funded?
- How many people would it benefit?
- An online search using words that describe your ask, your location and other relevant search terms is a good first step. Go through back editions of the local paper to see if they have reported on the issue, these are usually available online at your local library.

2. Confirm your ask.

Your 'ask' needs to be simple. You should be able to explain it in one sentence for example:

"This campaign is seeking to secure (insert dollar value) to fund/develop (insert brief description of the policy, project or program) that will benefit (number of people or specific demographic for example older residents) in (insert location)."

3. Develop an evidence base.

Good campaigns are based on solid research. Gather all available research and statistics that support your ask.

You may find these on council or government websites or through relevant community organisations, peak bodies or industry associations. You could also do your own research by:

- Posting an online questionnaire to a relevant Facebook page. Be sure to explain why you are doing the research and how you will use the results.

- Arming volunteers with clipboards and questionnaires on the ask outside the local shopping centre, school or local train station.
- Creating an online survey (Google Forms or Mailchimp) and asking your local school to promote the link in its newsletter, and by encouraging parents to complete it.

Using these tactics will also help link you with others who support your ask and find anecdotal evidence that could also be used to support the advocacy campaign.

The data you obtain should be used in campaign messages and materials to help generate support for your ask, for example:

"More than (insert percentage) of (insert location) residents surveyed said they strongly supported the need for the (insert brief description of the policy, project or program)."

4. Confirm the advocacy target.

As part of considering whether to advocate or not, you may have already identified the target of your advocacy effort. If you haven't already, learn more about their views and policies and determine how best to approach them.

5. Raise the profile of the issue.

An important precursor to any advocacy campaign is raising awareness of the issue the advocacy campaign intends to resolve.

You need to state the problem and the propose a solution (for example what the campaign seeks to achieve) as highlighting the issue and raising the profile of it among the community creates a ready environment for a campaign.

For example, if the campaign is to secure funds to install a traffic light outside a school to make crossing the road safer, the activity at this step would be about highlighting the dangers the school community currently face.

This can be done through:

- Digital and social media: posting news, personal stories and photos
- Media relations: issuing media releases, plan photo opportunities and general media interest and coverage
- Community outreach: hanging out leaflets outside the school.

Once more people are aware of the issue and concerned about the risks, they are more likely to support your advocacy campaign.

6. Identify the influencers.

It can also be useful to list all the people who may be able to influence the ultimate decision maker, these may include community leaders, business owners or other high profile community leaders, business owners or other high profile individuals. Think about how you may be able to get them to support your campaign.

7. Craft clear messages.

Short, sharp, easy-to-understand messages are vital. Use them consistently in all campaign materials such as media releases, social media posts and correspondence.

These messages should be based on the data you collected and cover the following:

- The ask – what it is, why it is needed, how much it costs, who would benefit from it and what the risk of not securing it is?
- The target – who has the power to deliver the outcome you want to secure, the risk they face if they do not deliver.
- The evidence base – results from your research that provide a compelling argument in favour of your ask.
- The support – who supports the campaign and why.

8. Develop an advocacy campaign plan

Using your messages and tips and templates provided in this toolkit, develop an advocacy campaign plan. Understanding the electoral cycles of the three tiers of government – that is, when budgets are handed down and elections are to be held – is useful to help you plan your activities.

Each tier of government has elections every three to four years and each one has its own annual budget process. Community groups have an opportunity to make submissions during the budget process for each tier of government.

More information about each tier of government including elections and budget process can be found at these websites:

- www.australia.gov.au
- www.vic.gov.au
- www.bawbawshirecouncil.vic.gov.au

Effective public campaigns can influence government decision making. Public opinion matters to the popularly elected, and a public on our side will make governments listen.

While some issues may only require a small number of actions to get your ask heard by the appropriate decision-maker, other issues will require a more organised and long-term approach.

For issues that require a longer-term approach it is effective to use the advocacy plan below, which has four streams – media relations, government (and/or other decision maker) relations, community outreach and digital/advertising.

Advocacy Plan

Activities listed below provide some ideas of what you could plan as part of your advocacy campaign.

Activity stream	What	How	When	Who
Media relations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media releases Photo opportunities Letters to the editor Form media partnerships 		
Government (and/or other decision maker) relations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings and briefings Letter writing Petitions Postcards Social media 		
Community outreach		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter box drop Liaison through local clubs, organisations and businesses Strategic partnerships Social media Campaign collateral (brochures, fact sheets, poster etc) Forums and activities 		
Digital advertising		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Social media (focus on Facebook) 		

9. Implement the advocacy plan

Stick to your plan and use (reuse) your key messages. By the time you get tired of saying the same thing, your target audience is only starting to hear you, so stick with it.

But at the same time be agile and make the most of any opportunities that may arise, such as budget submissions, participating in consultations or public inquiries etc.

To effect change and secure outcomes, advocacy needs to be relentless. Keep your community of concern updated and engaged and be sure to respond to all requests – from the community, the media or other interested stakeholders.

10. Evaluation

Securing what you advocated for is the best measure of success. However, in some cases, you may not have secured your ask but you may have been successful in:

- Forging community networks
- Building advocacy tools such as Facebook page or website
- Creating an enduring community group or cause
- Developing new skills

Other measures of evaluation can include:

- Media coverage and reach
- Engagement and support from third party endorsers
- Level of community participation

A note on social media



Social media is revolutionising campaigning – at the national and community level.

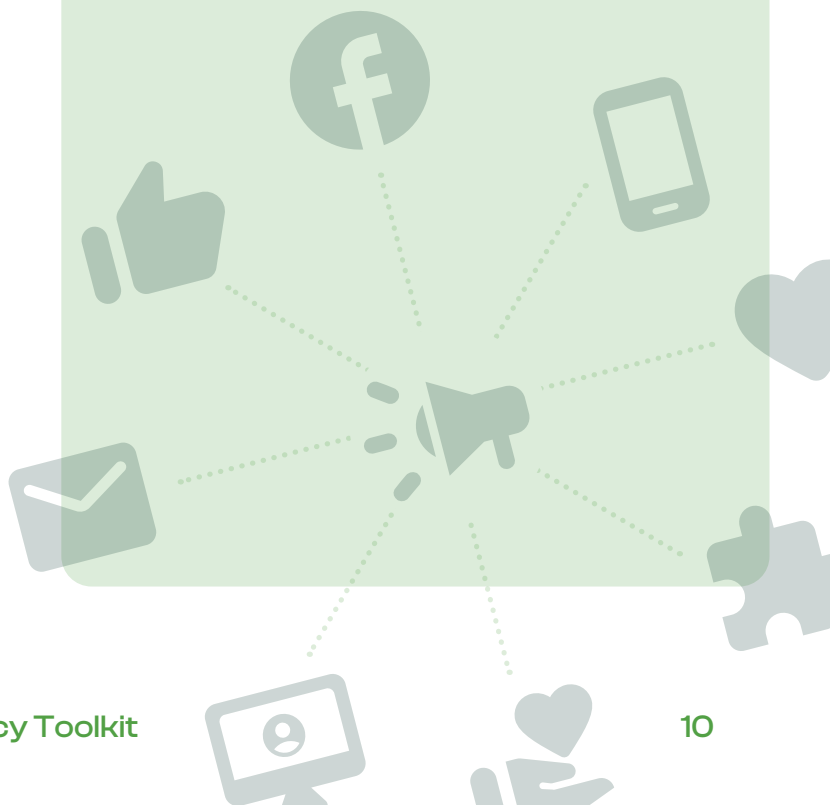
Facebook is the perfect grassroots communication tool. It is inexpensive, easy to set up, manage and update and has a wide reach. It allows you to connect directly with the community.

It also helps generated local media coverage with reporters liking, following and reporting on campaign activity they see occurring online.

Guidelines for use and moderator guidelines must be publicly available to appropriately manage online interactions.

A digital campaign can comprise a website, online forms, email address, Facebook page, twitter feed, online petitions and surveys.

Importantly, most of these activities can be undertaken at no – or low – cost.



5. Advocacy Tools

This section includes templates, tools and checklists that will help you implement your advocacy plan.

5A: Checklist

This table will help you get organised and prioritise tasks to develop your advocacy campaign

5B: Dealing with the media

Local journalists are always on the lookout for stories. Providing them with new, interesting and local content will help you get a story in the local media.

In some instances, it may be worth trying to get metropolitan print, radio or TV interest. A handy list of local and metropolitan media contacts is included below (page 15).

5C: Reaching the community

Tips to identify and select activities that will be most effective to your campaign.

5D: Effective Communications/PR

A straightforward guide to developing activities and events to get your target's attention.

5E: Social Media Tips

Determine the best social media platform to suit your needs and develop the right tools to manage it appropriately.

5F: Advocacy Letters Tip Sheet

Writing formal letters takes practice. Find out how to write an effective letter to a politician. Most of the time it will be a Minister who will have the final say on your issue.

5G: Meeting with politicians

During your campaign you may get the chance to meet with a Minister face-to-face. This tip sheet will help you prepare.

5H: Stakeholder map

This table will help you map out the people who will impact your campaign.

5I: Campaign Calendar

Get organised with a well-planned calendar to ensure you are focused and on-time.

Advocacy Checklist

5A. Checklist

This table will help you to get organised and prioritise the tasks to develop your advocacy campaign. As you advance, shade each activity to indicate completion.

Step	Activity	Check
1	Confirm that advocacy is the best path for you to take – follow the 10 step guide included in this document.	
2	Develop a stakeholder map – find out who the political, bureaucratic business and community players are.	
3	Confirm what your budget is – if you don't have any money, explore ways to get financial support from allies.	
4	Write key messages based on facts.	
5	Develop the campaign branding – look and feel.	
6	Develop campaign infrastructure if required – incorporation, official roles, bank account, social media channels, web address, PO box.	
7	Recruit volunteers that will help you with different tasks.	
8	Develop tools and tactics – list all communications and engagement activities that you are planning to use.	
9	Create a campaign plan using all of the communications and engagement activities that you plan to use. Include budget and resource implications.	
10	Implement campaign.	

Media

5B. Dealing with the media

Understanding the media

A strong relationship with local media is an important part of any local advocacy campaign.

How to work with journalists:

- Respect their deadlines: real and non-negotiable
- Always be polite, enthusiastic and cooperative
- It's the audience that matters: talk to them

How to handle interview requests:

- Take time to prepare: don't respond immediately, take details and return the call if you need to
- You can say no, but advise early rather than cancel late
- Prepare three key messages and practice saying them aloud several times
- Know your material and think about what you may be asked.

Conducting interviews

- Use your key messages
- Remember who your audience is
- Say what you want to say
- Enjoy yourself

Key messages

- They work
- Write them down, know them and use them
- Speak to your audience, use appropriate language, examples and images
- Say the same thing, just in a different way. Plan and practice, practice and plan

Media support tools:

- Designated media contact to manage enquiries
- Protocols, ensure only designated people speak to media
- Issues register: holding statements help ensure consistency
- Media log: tracking interactions and outcomes.

Top 10 Media Tips



1. Identify the local newspapers and websites likely to be interested in your campaign as well as those decision maker and influencers are likely to read, watch or listen to.
2. For local papers, find out when deadlines are and always contact the reporter with a story idea or send them a media release a few days before deadline for the best chances of generating coverage.
3. Find out who the journalists and editors are. Read previous stories they have written, identify if they have particular interests that may inform how you should approach them.
4. Contact the journalists. Their contact details are often listed inside the publication or online.
5. Talk about the campaign and why the paper should cover it. Be straight to the point and focus on what's in it for them (e.g. reporting on an issue that impacts on the lives of its readers).
6. Form a relationship with the journalist, provide them with your contact details and indicate that you are available to provide regular updates and information as required.
7. Should a journalist contact you, respond promptly, try to assist even if the journalist's request is unrelated to your issue.
8. Follow-through with your promises. If a situation changes, promptly contact the journalist and let them know.
9. Be friendly and engaging.
10. Develop a media contact list for your major announcements. Include talk back radio and TV news programs.

Media Contacts

Local media

Warragul and Drouin Gazette
Editor: (03) 5623 5666
Email editorial@warragulgazette.com.au

ABC Radio Gippsland
(03) 5143 5511
Email: gippsland@abc.net.au
Talkback: 1300 295 222
SMS: 0467 842 722

Gippslandia
info@gippslandia.com.au

Triple M Gippsland
Email: warragul.reception@sca.com.au
(03) 5622 2535

Metropolitan media

ABC Radio Melbourne
Email: abcradiomelbourne@abc.net.au
Talkback: 1300 222 774
SMS: 0437 774 774

The Age
newsdesk@theage.com.au

Herald Sun
news@heraldsun.com.au

Nine News
gtvnews@nine.com.au

Seven News
melbnews@seven.com.au

The Weekly Times
news@news.com.au

3AW Talk Back
news@3AW.com.au



Media Releases

Media releases

Local journalists often get story ideas from media releases that have been sent to them or contact that has been made with them by phone or email. You may want to issue a media release to:

- Help raise the profile of the issue prior to the campaign
- Launch the campaign
- Promote or report on a campaign event or activity
- Release research findings

Below are tips on the type of information to include in your media release:

- The name of your group, campaign and the ask
- Comments from relevant spokespeople
- Different ways people can support the campaign
- Offer interviews with organisers
- Promote an event: include time, place, date, spokespeople and special guests
- Release of a new report that supports your campaign

Other media tactics

Case studies using real people telling real stories, letters to the editor and opinion pieces are also often useful ways of having your campaign covered in the media.

Personal stories:

Real people telling real stories of how they are directly affected by the issue and will benefit from the campaign ask can be very powerful/

- Search for local people who have a story to tell and support the campaign
- Summarise the story in no more than one page, providing the journalist with an overview of who the person is and how they are impacted
- Propose ideas for photo opportunities to accompany the story
- Present the story to the journalist. Follow up to gauge interest.

Letter to the editor/Op ed:

Writing letters to the editor of a newspaper or arranging an Opinion Editorial (Op-ed) are also good ways to express your views. Tips on writing opinion content:

- Use current news and events to get readers interested
- Be brief – get straight to the point
- Stick to one issue



Media Releases

How to write a media release

Media releases follow a structure that makes it easy to communicate information to journalists. Below is a template that explains every section of a media release.

1. Date

2. Headline – the headline of should be an attention-grabbing summation of the media release

3. Lead paragraph – the first paragraph must be straight to the point. It should answer as many of the following questions as possible:

- Who it is from
- What is being announced
- Why the news is important
- When things will occur
- How can people get involved

4. Body – the next paragraph/s should provide more details that tell the story. Use short sentences with active language. Check that you:

- Always write in the third person
- Use quotes to make your writing more interesting
- Remember all opinions must be attributed to a person or the organisation.

5. End – use the last paragraph to summarise information and include a call to action

6. Contact information – provide contact details for further information – a contact name, email and phone number

7. Background information – here you can include relevant information about the group and/or issue. Things such as the history of the group and its purpose will provide more context. This information will give the journalist an overview that isn't featured in the body of the release.



Community Outreach

5C. Reaching the community

Community Outreach Tips



The needs of the community must be at the centre of any advocacy effort. A strong community voice will make governments take notice. Below are some tips for effective community outreach:

- **Communicate** – regular and clear communication is needed to build and maintain community support. Provide updates to your supporters using newsletters, social media and community meetings.
- **Listen** – you must be prepared to spend time with people and understand their issues and points of views. Attend or arrange events where there will be large numbers of people such as community festivals or carnivals.
- **Speak their language** – speak to people in a way they can understand. Take time to understand people's background, views and interests. This will help you adjust you're your communications approach.
- **Keep in touch** – to the extent that is possible – keep in touch with people that you speak to and record any issues or topics that are discussed. Keeping a well-organised database will make this task easier.
- **Respect people's time** – be on time and respectful of people's commitment. Your campaign will depend on volunteers so it is important that you demonstrate respect and appreciation of people's efforts and commitments.



Communications & PR

5D. Effective communications/public relations

Communications public relations tip sheet

To communicate effectively you need to say the right thing, the right way, through the right channels and at the right time.

Events, town hall meetings and media stories will all help you reach your target in different ways.

Below are some activities and tactics you can use in your campaign:

- **Engaging partners/supporters** – meet with local community groups that have similar goals and obtain their support. Describe the shared benefits of your ask and why they should help/
- **Community events** – set up stalls at community festivals where you can promote the campaign and recruit supporters. You may also consider organising your own community day at a park together with any partners that you secure.
- **Fundraising** – organise activities such as chocolate drives and car washes to raise funds. This will allow you to raise funds and promote your campaign at the same time. The money raised could be used for other promotional activities.
- **Marketing collateral** – there are ways to create marketing collateral without spending too much money. Designing and printing flyers and A4 posters and giving them out at places such as train stations and shopping centres will help you spread the word. You may want to consider asking for support from businesses which may help pay for the design and printing of any material.
- **Newsletters** – printed newsletters are a good way to keep supporters and potential supporters informed about upcoming events. These can be delivered into people's letter boxes or emailed if you have their contact details.

- **Speaking engagements** – speaking at events which residents are likely to attend will give you the opportunity to reach more people and potentially build greater support. Events could include sport club functions and local trader association meetings.
- **Media relations** – get stories that support your campaign featured in local media. Use personal stories and events to generate interest. See media relations tip sheet for more information.
- **Petitions** – petitions can be a great way to show your target that your ask has support. Petitions can be physical (in paper form) or they can be electronic. Your petition must always have a clear ask.

Below are some tips to developing your own petition:

- Traditional paper petitions: this requires you and your supporters to convince people to join your petition. You need to record their names and signature on a paper list. Once your petition is complete you can present it to your target.
- Electronic petitions: use a free electronic petition site such as [change.org](https://www.change.org) to start, build and share your petition. The link to your survey can then be shared using email or on social media.



Social Media

5E. Social media tips

Facebook is the perfect grassroots communication tool. It is easy to set-up, manage and update. It has a wide reach and will allow you to connect directly with your supporters. It also helps to attract local media stories with journalists liking, following and reporting on campaign activity they see occurring online.

If possible you may also consider Facebook advertising. This can be inexpensive and help you increase your supporters.

Below are some tips to help you promote your campaign using Facebook.

Getting started:

- **Build your Facebook following:** encourage community members to find you on Facebook by including links to your Page on any campaign collateral that you create
- **Assign an administrator for creating and managing content.** This is an important role that should be assigned to a trusted and committed person
- **Create rules about:**
 - Responding to comments
 - Use of photos and getting permission

Create and share content

- **Create Facebook events:** this is a great way to provide information about events such as fundraising activities, speaking engagements or community festivals that you will be taking part in
- **Share stories:** these could be personal stories of your supporters. The stories should demonstrate why your ask is important
- **Share information:** post about new information and share news articles that are relevant to your campaign
- **Ask questions:** bring up problems, issues or new ideas and invite the public to make suggestions and comments
- **Share photos and videos from events**
- **Share online petitions**

Things to remember:

- **Be helpful:** if someone asks a question on your page, respond. If someone shares feedback, thank them and make a comment back. When people take the time to reach out and share, return the favour with a considered response
- **Provide value:** from the links and content you share to the questions you ask of supporters, always ask for feedback
- **Tap into your influencers:** establish strong relationships with influential supporters who have many connections. Target people



Advocacy Letters

5F. Advocacy letters tip sheet

Writing letters to politicians can be very effective but correspondence must be structured correctly.

Structuring your letter

Include a return address in the letter

The first paragraph

- Include the topic of your letter. For example, "I am writing to express my concern about..."
- If you are writing to your own MP, tell them that you live in their electorate
- Focus on three points
- Pick the most important points about your ask
- Address a new point in each paragraph
- Acknowledge opposing arguments and evidence

Personalise the issue

- Explain how the issue affects you, your family or your community. A personalised letter may have more impact

Personalise your relationship

- Indicate if you have ever voted for them, met them, supported their election campaign etc.

Be cautious in relation to their views

- Find out about their view on different topics. This can usually be found on their website
- Avoid making assumptions about their views and comments, which could be considered as critical towards them or their party

Call for action

- Ask them to act on the issue (e.g. "increase funding in the budget" or, "publicly commit to...").

Ask for a reply

- End the letter with a statement encouraging a reply (e.g. "I look forward to your response on this matter")
- Write back if you do not receive a suitable response within a reasonable time frame.



Meeting with Politicians

5G. Meeting with politicians

Prior to the meeting

- You will need to be flexible and make it easy for them to meet with you
- Get organised. Prepare a one page summary on your ask and ensure you are very comfortable with the information
- Find out about the politician. Look up their website to find information about their views and interests
- Broaden the issue and explain how it not only affects your area but also the wider state

On the day

- Be on time. Allow time to find parking, navigate the grounds and sign-in if necessary
- Be patient if they are late
- Be precise. If they have said you have 10 minutes that is all you may get.

At the meeting

- Introduce yourself and explain why you have met with them. Leave the summary document with them
- If you do not have the answer to a question, offer to find out after the meeting. This gives an opportunity to follow up the meeting with a letter
- Be prepared to explain details clearly and concisely
- Be prepared with suggestions on how you can assist to progress the issue
- When finishing, ask how you can be of assistance to them
- Thank them for their time

After the meeting

- Send a thank you note and follow-up with any information promised during the meeting
- Keep in touch on relevant issues



Stakeholder Map

5H. Stakeholder map

The following table will help you identify stakeholders relevant to your campaign. Assigning a priority to each stakeholder is important as it will help you know where to dedicate efforts and resources.

Note:

The stakeholders listed below are only examples. Each campaign will have its own list of stakeholders that must be prioritised according to the ask.

Category	Stakeholders	Priority
State Government - Ministers		
State Government - Shadow Ministers		
State Government - Local MPs		
State Government - Department of xxxx		
Council - Councillors		
Council - Officers		
Federal Government - Local MPs		
Community groups		
Sports clubs		

Campaign Calendar

5I. Campaign Calendar

Below is a template that you can use to plan your campaign. You may want to add other columns and more lines as necessary.

Advocacy Campaign Calender			
Date	Activity	Resource Required	Responsibility

Appendix

Appendix 1 - Case Studies

Below are examples of advocacy that show the scale and scope advocacy campaigns and activities can take.

Neighbourhood Watch Signs - short-term campaign

Background: Concerned residents from Lakeside, Pakenham joined Neighbourhood Watch to increase the community's awareness about safety. As part of joining the program they purchased signs that needed to be installed at the entrance of the estate. Cardinia Shire Council was asked to install the signs but refused due to a lack of budget.

Issue: The Council was unable to pay for the installation of the Neighbourhood Watch signs in Lakeside Pakenham.

The Ask: Installation of the Neighbourhood Watch signs.

The Target: Cardinia Shire Council

Activity: To send a clear message to the Council, the local resident's group - Lakeside Residents Group did the following:

- Petitioned the Council
- Mobilised support using Facebook
- Raised the profile of the issue using local media

Outcome: The LRG's advocacy efforts were successful and the Council installed the Neighbourhood Watch signs following a short campaign.

Access Denied Campaign - medium-term campaign

Background: Facing massive population growth and limited ability to build the infrastructure and services its community needed and deserved, the City of Whittlesea turned its attention to advocacy. Council identified two transport infrastructure projects – the Hume Freeway interchange at O'Herns Road and the extension of the South Morang train line to Mernda – as most need to help their community thrive.

Issue: A need for better transport infrastructure in the City of Whittlesea.

The ask: State Government funding to connect O'Herns Road and build Mernda Rail.

The target: The State Government and Opposition candidates campaigning in the lead up to the 2014 election

Activity: The City of Whittlesea led a community-backed campaign called Access Denied. The campaign communicated residents' sentiment about a lack of transport infrastructure. The campaign included activities such as:

- Media and government relations
- Community engagement
- Marketing and advertising

Outcome: The campaign raised the profile of the issue among residents and captured the attention of both major political parties. The campaign resulted in both projects being funded and completed in 2019.

Appendix: Case Studies

Melton Hospital - long-term campaign

Background: Melton City Council, along with passionate residents, community groups and health professionals launched the Build Melton Hospital campaign in 2018.

The Campaign asked the State Government, Opposition and minor parties to commit to building a 24-hour, full-service hospital in the suburb of Cobblebank, 4km southeast of central Melton, south of the Western Freeway and close to Cobblebank train station on the Melton line.

Issue: The City of Melton is one of Victoria's fastest-growing communities. Every day, 21 people move into the City of Melton – that's 7654 new residents a year. The nearest major hospitals are in Footscray and Sunshine. For too many people, they are out of reach. And too often, they are out of space.

Building a public hospital in the City of Melton would support a growing community, provide lifelong health care and create jobs, investment and opportunity.

The target: The State Government and Opposition candidates campaigning in the lead up to the 2018 election

The ask: The 'ask' was for a commitment to build a 24-hour, full-service hospital in the suburb of Cobblebank,

Activity: Melton City Council, along with passionate residents, community groups and health professionals launched the Build Melton Hospital campaign.

The campaign included things such as:

- Post cards
- Letter box drops
- Posters and billboards
- Media relations
- Social media
- Email newsletters
- Face to Face Campaigning – Shopping centres and info sessions
- Online petition that collected 21,370 signatures

Outcome: In May 2019 the Victorian Government's 2019/2020 State Budget allocated \$2.4 million to plan a new Melton Hospital. This planning work will determine the location, size and range of services the hospital will offer.

In November 2020, the Victorian Government allocated \$75 million in the 2020/2021 Victorian State Budget to fund the first stage of a new Melton Hospital over three years which includes purchasing land and undertaking detailed planning and early works for a 24-hour hospital.

In July 2021, Minister for Health Martin Foley MP announced the new Melton hospital would be located at 245-267 Ferris Road, Cobblebank.

The Victorian Government's business case for the Melton Hospital is being finalised and will guide detailed planning of the facility. The next steps will include completing the land acquisition, determining the model of care and allocating significant funds to construct the facility.

Given the urgent need for hospital services in the outer west, Council continues to advocate to have the allocation of construction funds for the hospital included in the 2022/2023 Victorian State Budget will continue to seek a commitment for construction to commence in 2022 and for the hospital to be operational in 2026.



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The logo graphic consists of a white square containing a stylized white shape that resembles a map outline or a geometric design.