

Mansfield Shire Council

SIAG Member Handbook

2026



Mansfield Shire Council **SIAG Member Handbook**

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Membership of the Social Inclusion Action Group

The Mansfield Social Inclusion Action Group (SIAG) is a dedicated group made up of community members and leaders working together to deliver initiatives that boost social inclusion and connection. By promoting diversity, equity, and accessibility, the Mansfield SIAG aims to create spaces and experiences where everyone feels valued, respected, and included.

Membership of the Mansfield SIAG as per the guidelines should reflect the demographics of the local community. Membership should include a variety of lived and living experiences including members with experience of mental illness, psychological distress, addiction and/or social exclusion, isolation, and discrimination. Membership should reflect diverse communities (defined as people with a disability, LGBTIQ+ people and people from Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds, as well as include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, young people and older adults and a balance of sexes.

Mansfield SIAG Aim and Core Values

The goal of the Mansfield SIAG is to foster a culture of social inclusion that enhances the experiences of community members from diverse backgrounds. SIAG seeks to promote social inclusivity across various groups, including young people, single parents, individuals not engaged in education, training, or employment, people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities, refugees, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, individuals with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ communities, and older people.

The members of the Mansfield Social Inclusion Action Group collaboratively developed core values that guides decision making and interactions with the community. These values are:

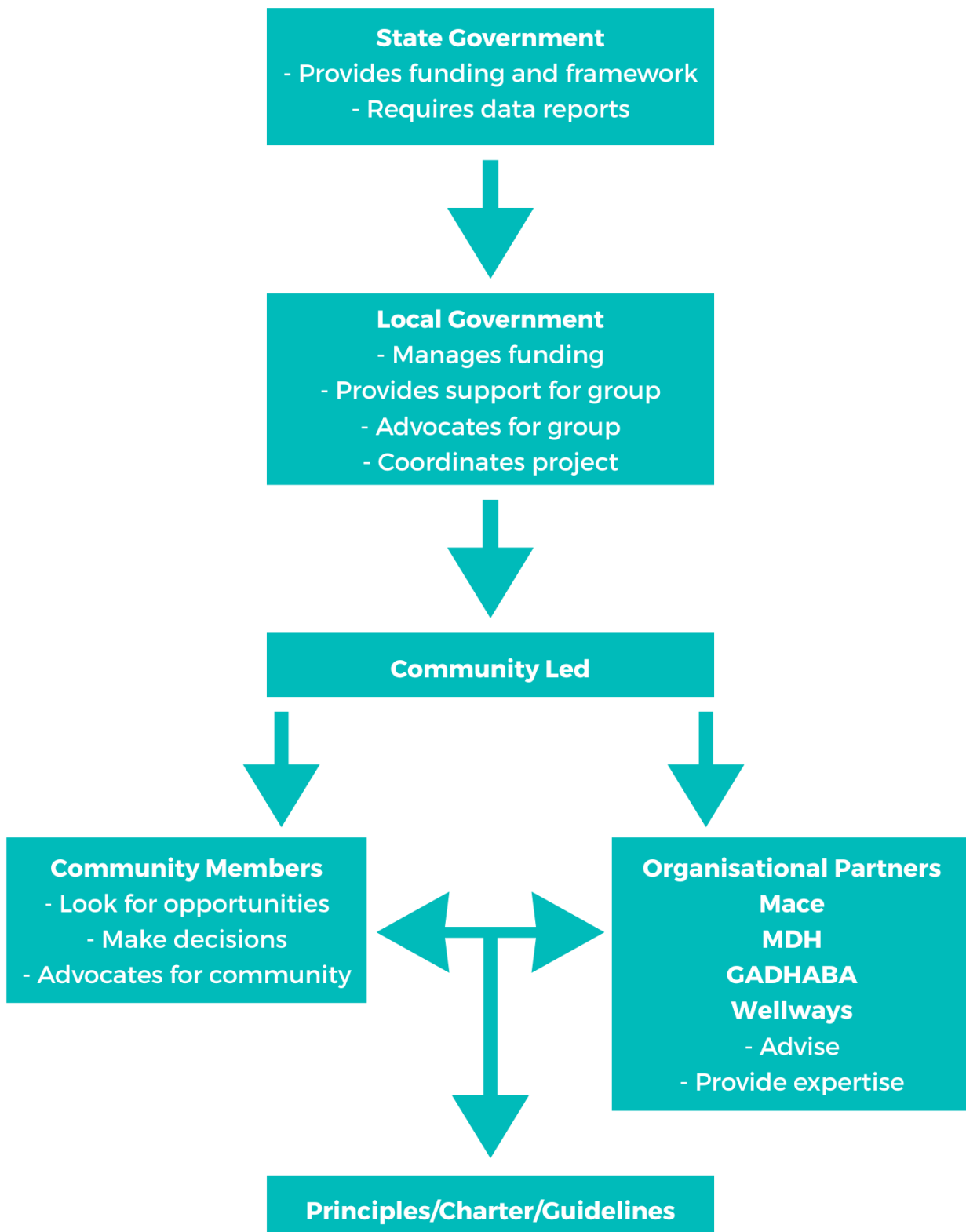
- ▶ Inclusivity
- ▶ Connection
- ▶ Collaboration
- ▶ Empowerment
- ▶ Wellbeing

Ways of Working

Each meeting will start with a reminder that members are operating within the agreed Ways of Working. At the end of the meeting there will be a check in to see how members felt the meeting went and if the items in the Ways of Working were adhered to. The Ways of Working will be periodically reviewed and amended as required to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference were developed to define the purpose, objectives, and understanding of the group's operations.



What you will do as a SIAG member and what is expected

Members will:

- ▶ Collaborate effectively to achieve shared objectives
- ▶ Actively participate in steering the program's operations
- ▶ Learn from peers and exchange valuable information
- ▶ Ensure activities are grounded in evidence and reflect community interests and best practices
- ▶ Assist in the implementation and execution of initiatives
- ▶ Identify and track potential risks
- ▶ Advocate for activities and celebrate achievements
- ▶ Take part in training opportunities
- ▶ Approve funding allocations

What is expected of SIAG members:

- ▶ Commitment to attend meetings on the first Tuesday of each month from 5.30pm - 7pm and other meetings as required
- ▶ Commitment to attend 70% yearly meetings in person
- ▶ Willingness to Learn
- ▶ Commitment to Inclusivity
- ▶ Reliability
- ▶ Attend SIAG events

SIAG Pre-Engagement Screening Checks

Mansfield Shire Council has a responsibility to ensure all personnel, including SIAG members, undergo police and relevant checks prior to commencing, to ensure that they are suitable for the roles they are performing and have no prior criminal convictions which would put community safety at risk.

Working with Children Check (WWCC)

The Working with Children Act 2005 (Victoria) requires that any person doing child-related work, and who is not exempt, must have a valid WWCC.

SIAG members over the age of 18 who are likely to come into regular contact with children through their time with the group are required to hold a WWCC that lists Mansfield Shire Council as an associated organisation.

WWCC are valid for 5 years, during which time the holder is periodically screened for reported

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criminal activity or professional misconduct.

As required by law, all holders of a WWCC must notify the Department of Justice and Regulation with 21 days of any changes to their personal, contact and organisation's details.

SIAG members are required to apply for their own WWCC through the website www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au. There is no cost involved to obtain a WWCC as a volunteer.

National Police Record Check

A Police Check is a list, at any given point in time, of offences a person has committed. Unlike the WWCC, a Policy Check is only current up to the date on which it was issued and therefore does not have an expiry date. A current police check, paid for by Council, is required for all active Mansfield SIAG members over the age of 18.

Due to the diversity of lived experience sought from group members some disclosed Police History Information such as alcohol or drug disclosable court outcomes will not automatically eliminate applicants from becoming group members. A discretionary risk aware approach should be taken to ensure community members can still join the group and provide valuable insight and feedback.

Police checks are to be renewed every 3 years or more frequently if required by the relevant funding authority. Police checks are conducted by the Council Officer responsible for Volunteers at the request of the Program Coordinator or when due for renewal.

Police Supplementary Safety Screening

When a SIAG member has been a citizen or permanent resident of a country other than Australia after the age of 16, the SIAG coordinator must ensure the volunteer candidate completes any supplementary safety screening required as directed by the Volunteer Policy. A statutory declaration is required for any staff or volunteers who have been a citizen or permanent resident of a country other than Australia after turning 16.

Induction, Learning, and Development

All SIAG members must attend an induction and orientation briefing with the SIAG Coordinator before commencing. Formal and informal learning and development opportunities are available to the group and will be guided by the group and their needs and may take the form of mentoring, skills training, and network building. The group will collaborate with other SIAGs within the area to swap ideas, experiences, build networks, and strengthen the program collectively.

Confidentiality

As a member of the Social Inclusion Action Group, you might come across some personal information about community groups and other SIAG members. It's important to keep this information private. Sharing information without permission could result in being removed from the group.

Grievances

Due to the nature of the program and the initiatives, we understand at times there will be a need to provide feedback to each other, to be able to have robust and healthy debate.

We encourage members to lean into challenging conversations when providing feedback.

If the Ways of Working in the Charter of Commitment are met, then people should feel comfortable in being able to bring things up directly with the person involved.

If someone is feeling there is a breach, they should have the courage to speak up at the time and have a conversation with the person concerned to try and resolve the issue.

Where that option is not available or there is a situation where the member feels uncomfortable, they are encouraged to seek out the chairperson to discuss further.

If the issue remains unresolved, escalate it to the coordinator outside of the room.

The coordinator will speak to both parties to try and resolve the issues as an independent third party.

If no resolution can be made, a decision may be made to remove group members.

Organisational Partners

- ▶ If an organisational partner has an issue with program operations, then it is expected they will contact the coordinator outside of the group to discuss and resolve the issue.

Conflict of Interest Provisions

In performing their roles as Group members, members:

- ▶ Act with integrity
- ▶ Impartially exercise their responsibilities in the interests of the local community or the community group they represent
- ▶ Do not improperly seek to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person
- ▶ Treat all persons with respect and have due regard to the opinions, beliefs, rights, and responsibilities of other persons
- ▶ Commit to regular attendance at meetings
- ▶ Do not make improper use of information acquired because of their position, or release information that the member knows or should reasonably know is confidential.

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Where a conflict of interest is identified by a member, that member informs the Group of the conflict and excludes himself or herself from associated discussions and decisions.

Workplace Health and Safety

Under Section 23 of the Victorian *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, Council has an obligation to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that persons other than employees are not exposed to risk to their health for safety from the conduct of the employer.

Before volunteers undertake an activity on behalf of Council a risk assessment of the activity will be undertaken to ensure the following:

- ▶ The activity is suitable for volunteers.
- ▶ The activity does not place the health or safety of volunteers at risk.
- ▶ The volunteer has the physical capacity to undertake the activity.
- ▶ The volunteer has the knowledge, training and skills required to undertake the activity in a safe manner.

Council must, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide and maintain for volunteers a working environment that is safe and without risks to health. Volunteers shall not undertake, or be expected to undertake, an activity that they believe may present a hazard to a client, volunteer, member of the public or private property.

While volunteering for Council volunteers must not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided at the workplace in the interests of health, safety or welfare.

Depending on the nature of the volunteer role, the responsibilities for volunteers may include the following:

- ▶ Be aware of the approved risk procedures for the task.
- ▶ Follow directions of the volunteer supervisor
- ▶ Inform the volunteer supervisor of any safety concerns.
- ▶ Report any incidents or near misses.

Hazardous Manual Handling

Hazardous manual handling means work requiring the use of force to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain a thing if the work involves one or more of the following:

- ▶ Repetitive or sustained application of force
- ▶ Sustained awkward posture
- ▶ Repetitive movement.
- ▶ Application of high force involving a single or repetitive use of force that it would be reasonable

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to expect that a person in the workforce may have difficulty undertaking.’

- ▶ Exposure to sustained vibration.
- ▶ Handling live persons or animals; and/or
- ▶ Handling unstable or unbalanced loads or loads that are difficult to grasp or hold.

Always ensure you assess the task for hazardous manual handling and implement controls where necessary. If you are unsure, contact your Council Representative.

Personnel Protective Equipment

Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE) refers to anything used or worn to minimise risk to personal health and safety.

All volunteers must comply with Council’s PPE requirements. Prior to commencing work, your supervisor will advise you of any PPE requirements and provide you with appropriate instruction on its correct use, maintenance, and storage.

Sun Protection

To reduce the risk of cumulative UV exposure, sun protection is recommended all year round for volunteers whose role requires them to work outdoors.

Sun protection measures include:

- ▶ Re-organising work
- ▶ Using shade
- ▶ Using protective clothing and equipment
- ▶ Using sunscreen