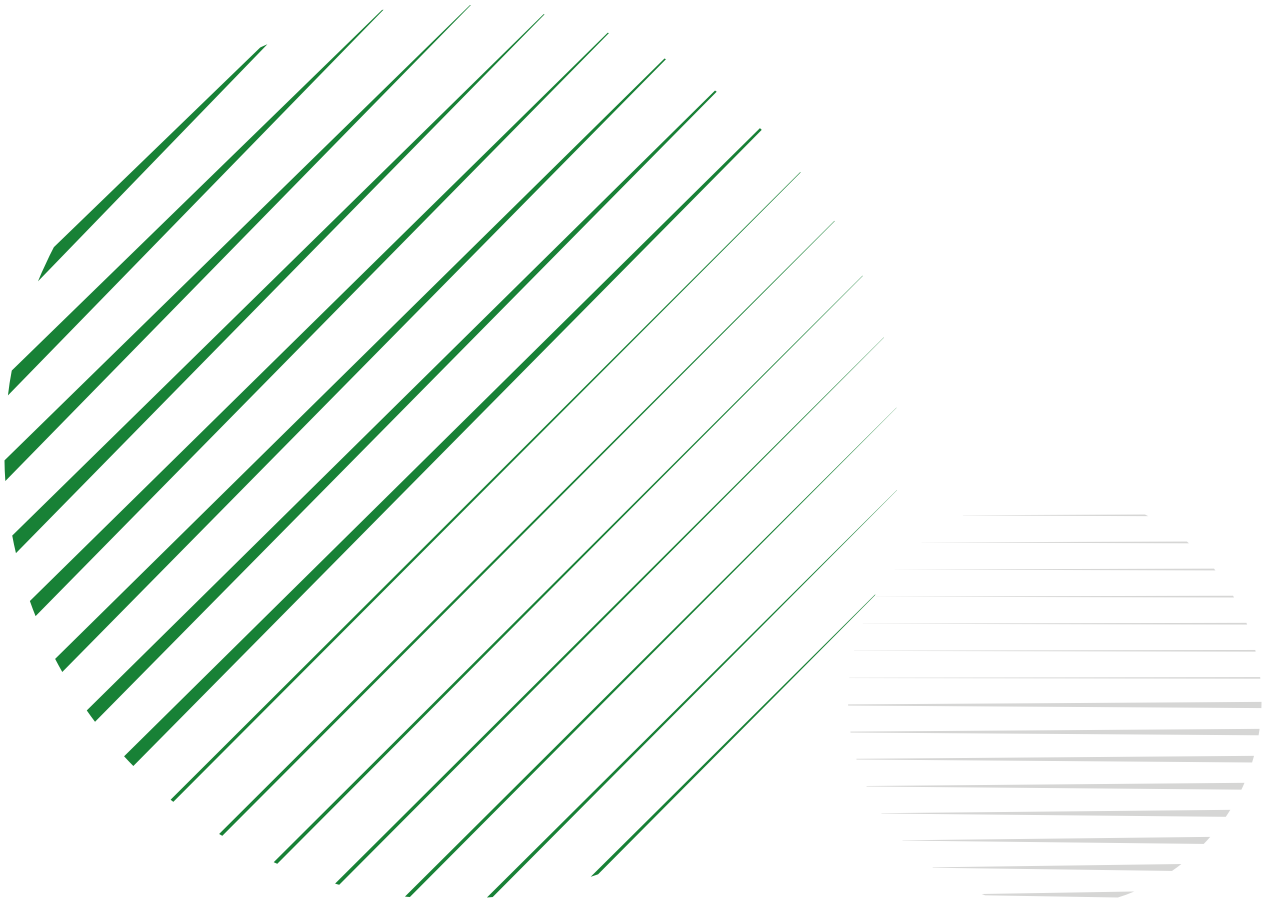




NATIONAL
BOWLS CENTRE
STRATEGY



A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL BOWLS CENTRE

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FOREWORD BY WORLD BOWLS

I want to congratulate Bowls Australia (BA) on this initiative. BA continues to set the benchmark for the development of our sport and the establishment of a National Bowls Centre will be of benefit not just in Australia but globally. Access to this facility for bowlers and coaches from around the world will help to improve the standards across the whole spectrum of our sport. WB looks forward to watching this exciting project come to fruition. It also comes at the best possible moment when our sport needs imaginative initiatives such as this to assist in its recovery from the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

John Bell
President
World Bowls



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SECTION 01 BACKGROUND

Historically, the international competitiveness of Australia's bowlers has primarily been due to having a well-developed High Performance program, a large base of participants and members in the sport, which is supported by a strong club system and infrastructure. In numerical terms this equates to over 160,000 active members and more than 1,830 bowls clubs nationally.

Despite Australia's strong international performances over many years results at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow did not meet our expectations. Determined to restore Australia's pre-eminent position on the world stage, Bowls Australia (BA) initiated an independent review of its High Performance and Talent Development system and very quickly implemented a suite of recommendations, resulting in an improvement in the culture and operations of the sport's High Performance system. This culminated in a very successful 2018 Commonwealth Games campaign where the Australian Jackaroos won seven out of ten medals, including five gold.

Bowls is a core sport within the Commonwealth Games program and is a significant participation sport. Australia has excelled in both men's and women's bowls, has set considerably High Performance benchmarks and experiences substantial levels of expectations within the sport, from its key funding partners and the general public.

BA has adopted a very deliberate and robust position to the strategic direction of the Bowls High Performance program. Several new initiatives have been undertaken since 2016, aimed at maintaining Australia's leadership position within the sport and building on individual and team results for the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham and beyond.

The creation of a National Bowls Centre (NBC) is an extremely exciting venture which will not only cater for our elite bowlers but also provide numerous other benefits including improved player pathways, talent identification, coach and official development, team building (Bowls and non-bowls), competitions and will act as a hub for other local, state, national and international Bowls and sporting organisations to enhance their performance.

BA acknowledges that as a nation, Australia no longer has the advantage we once held and to maintain our place at the leading edge of the sport worldwide, we believe the establishment of a National Bowls Centre (NBC) will help drive continuous improvement in the sport for years to come.

Neil Dalrymple
Chief Executive Officer
Bowls Australia

KEY FEATURES

Key features of this new direction include:

- Independent High Performance system review;
- Establishment of a long-term High Performance Plan 2016 - 2022 – a blue print for success;
- Aggressive performance benchmarks set for 2022 Commonwealth Games and 2020 World Championships; and
- Improved state and territory bowls talent delivery systems.

THE NATIONAL BOWLS CENTRE CONCEPT

The concept of establishing a National Bowls Centre (NBC) has been a BA strategic objective for some time.

It was a recommendation to come from the 2016 BA HP Review and it is identified as a priority within the 2018-2022 Bowls in Australia Strategic Plan, the BA High Performance Plan and the BA World Bowls 2021 Gold Coast Legacy Plan.

As such, in March 2020, BA engaged McLaughlin Sports Consultancy (MSC) to work with key stakeholders to investigate the feasibility of establishing a NBC; and depending on the outcome of this exercise, to develop a user-friendly strategy / plan associated with the establishment and operations of a National Bowls Centre.

The scope of the project is summarised below.

PROJECT SCOPE

The primary objective of the project was to investigate the feasibility of establishing a NBC and make recommendations associated with its potential establishment and operating model. If it is determined that such an exciting development is feasible, then a NBC Strategy should provide a clear direction in regard to the centre's establishment and operating phases.

Work needed to include (but was not limited to):

Review of the current Bowls High Performance (HP) service provision and infrastructure;

Review the current (and likely future) needs of Bowls HP stakeholders, in line with world's best practice; and identify opportunities to address these needs via a NBC;

Consider the feasibility of multiple NBC business models, enabling BA's selection of the best model to support an intensive NBC; and

Prepare an NBC operating strategy to support the establishment and sustainable operations of a NBC.

PROJECT METHODOLOGY OUTLINE

STAGE 1 - NBC PROJECT REFERENCE GROUP WEBINAR

This webinar allowed Mike McLaughlin and the PRG to confirm a shared understanding of the project purpose and methodology, the role of the PRG and to allow MSC to collect background information relevant to the project.

STAGE 2 - DOCUMENT REVIEW

Reviewed of all relevant information (e.g. all BA HP plans and operational information, all BA 2020 World Bowls Champs legacy information, information relating to world leading sport specific and multi-sport Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Australia and internationally, Sport Australia BA Annual Performance Review assessments re HP, Gold Coast City Council, QLD state government and federal government sport infrastructure plans and funding schemes, GC2018 Benefits document, information relating to the operating model of the Broadbeach Bowls Club, and other information sources as guided by the PRG).

STAGE 3 - BA HP STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Facilitation of up to 10 x BA HP stakeholder telephone interviews.

STAGE 4 - SPORT NBC CASE STUDY DISCUSSIONS

Conduct webinars with management of identified CoEs in other sports to discuss matters relating to business models, funding sources, facility design and usage, etc.

STAGE 5 - FINDINGS AND OPPORTUNITIES PAPER

Developed a comprehensive findings and opportunities paper from project stages 4-1 (above). The Paper included information relating to: Market analysis; business case: justification of need; potential operating model; location rationale; facility design / technical considerations; capital costs and funding models; and staging alternatives.

STAGE 6 - PRG WEBINAR

PRG webinar unpacked the findings and opportunities prior to the completion of stage 7.

STAGE 7 - NBC OPERATING MODEL STRATEGY

Developed a strategy / plan designed to guide the successful establishment and sustainable operations of the BA NBC.

THE PROCESS

SECTION 02

WHAT IS AGREED

Following the NBC Project Reference Group's consumption of the NBC Feasibility Study Findings and Opportunities Paper, a number of key concepts were agreed to, all of which contributed to the PRG requesting MSC to develop a Strategy designed to guide the establishment and operations of the facility. These key concepts are summarised below.

NEED/BENEFIT

The weight of evidence collected via the feasibility assessment process strongly supports the need for and benefits associated with the establishment of the NBC. Evidence themes to support is position include:

- Alignment to the achievement of key elements of the BA planning framework (i.e. BA 2020-2022 Strategic Plan; 2016 Independent Review of the BA High Performance and Talent Development System; 2016-2022 BA High Performance Plan; 2016-2022 BA Participation Plan; BA National Facilities and Retirement / Lifestyle Villages Strategy; and BA World Bowls 2020 Legacy Plan). The NBC will provide Bowls / BA with a highly visible presence at the epicenter of world bowls;
- The significant size and nature of the Australian Bowls High Performance and Talent Development athlete cohort (refer below) and the current lack of a world-leading facility to optimally support their development;
- There are currently 35 athletes categorised by BA and the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) as HP athletes / para athletes.
- There are currently over 300 male and female development level athletes / para athletes being supported in various ways by each State and Territory Bowls Association.
- There are currently over 160,000 competition playing members nationally.
- The size of the world's High Performance bowling fraternity, which views Australia as the leader – i.e. The top 31 ranked Bowls nations compete in the Bowls World Championships every four years, with bowlers from approximately 50 countries;
- The extensive number of international and national Bowls events committed to being held between 2021 and 2025;
- The need for the BA coach development system to be highly prioritised and the role the NBC will play in this space;

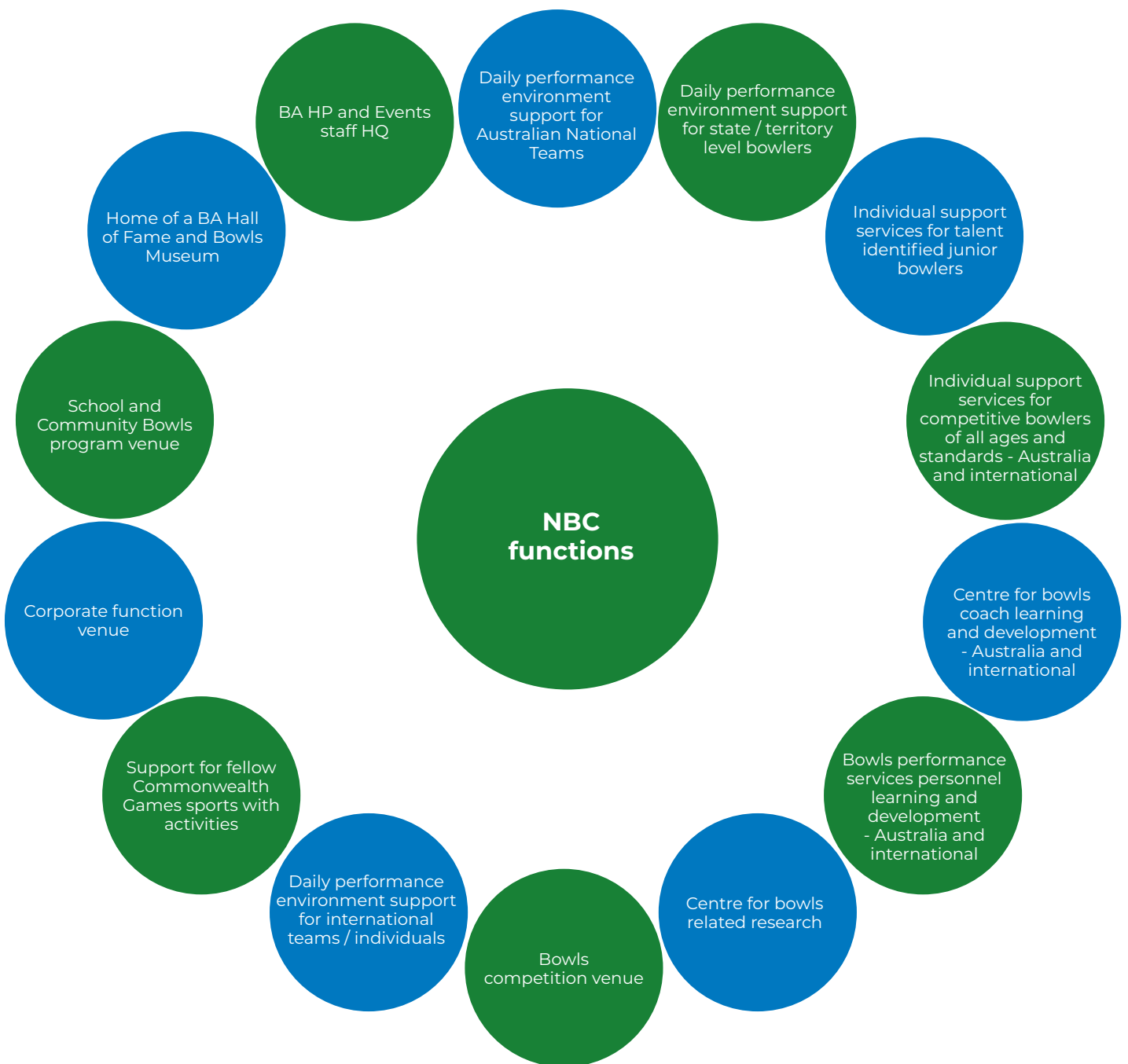
- The need for the BA High Performance system to take the next step in its journey to implementing best practice High Performance sport training systems and facilities;
- The benefits associated with BA forming mutually beneficial partnerships with key agencies such as the State Institutes or Academies of Sport QAS and universities; and with maintaining high quality relationships with current partners such as the State Government, Commonwealth Games Australia and others;
- A NBC with a broader operating scope would allow community bowlers access to world's best coaching and development opportunities;
- A NBC will provide exposure for BA commercial partners;
- A NBC will provide a legacy for the sport following pinnacle events being held on the Gold Coast (i.e. 2018 Commonwealth Games and 2021 World Bowls Championships); and
- BA's drive to maintain its world #1 position. The AIS has identified a suite of performance driver pre-requisites for a world leading HP system, for any sport. Note: All elements of the HP system infographic below could directly benefit from the establishment of a NBC.



PURPOSE

It is agreed that the purpose of a NBC be broader than “traditional” CoE operating models, which focus solely on HP athlete support. A broader purpose will provide a more sustainable financial model associated with the year round, high usage operations of a NBC, as well as greatly increasing the visibility of the NBC and its commercial partners – refer Figure 1, below.

Figure 1 – Functions of the NBC



PROGRAMS

In-line with the broad purpose statement outlined above, the types of programs and services the NBC will consider delivering include (but may not be limited to):

- All BA HP program activities. Note: For various reasons (e.g. the age of the BA national team athletes, the employment status of current national team athletes, and others), it is not recommended that the BA HP program move from a decentralised program to a centralised program, based at the NBC, however, the HP program's use of the facility for a greater number of camps is recommended);
- Individual and group camps for pathway athletes;
- Individual and group camps for community level competitive bowlers;
- HP camps for international teams and individuals;
- Participation related activities and programs;
- Bowls coach development programs and services (domestic and international);
- BA promotional and commercial leveraging activities;
- Bowls events (international, national, local);
- Bowls leadership development programs (e.g. BA, STA, club staff and volunteer development, etc.);
- Bowls research programs;
- Corporate functions;
- Museum/Hall of Fame.

PLACE

The PCG was open to exploring potential sites across Australia and would welcome the opportunity to pursue any interest in hosting this centre. Criteria for evaluating potential locations include, but are not limited to:

- Frequency of major bowls events being hosted in the region (recent and future);
- Alignment with Council's strategic priorities;
- Alignment with State government's strategic priorities;
- Alignment with BA strategic priorities;
- Climate;
- Level of bowls club membership / participation and clubs;
- Population;
- Accommodation;
- Proximity to an airport;
- Public transport network; and
- Proximity to Universities, specifically those with sporting departments.

FACILITY COMPONENTS

Based on the proposed purpose and functions of the NBC, and its potential HR model, key facility requirements will include (but may not be limited to):

- Access to outdoor greens - Tif Dwarf Australian surface;
- Outdoor green (3 or 4 rink) - which can be resewn depending on the grass type of next benchmark event international venue;
- Undercover / indoor carpet green (can also be utilised for functions with appropriate covering and adjustments);
- High quality lighting of each green for championship, tournament and potentially international play;
- Ample water storage;
- All associated equipment for play – boundary pegs, mats, jacks (outdoor and indoor), electronic scoreboards, umpiring kits, barefoot / second hand bowls, etc;
- Equipment storage space;
- Bowls specific strength and conditioning facility and equipment;
- Video analysis room and equipment;
- Training / education room and AV / IT equipment;
- Meeting room/s;
- Lounge / recreational area;
- Function area (Note: this could be incorporated into the undercover / indoor carpet green area);
- Commercial kitchen / catering facilities;
- On site office and ancillary facilities for NBC staff and contractors;
- Sufficient car parking (also suitable for buses and trucks);
- Physiotherapy / massage / medical rooms;
- Hydrotherapy pool / spa;
- NBC shop (e.g. merchandise, equipment, etc.);
- Appropriate viewing / spectator areas;
- Bowls Australia Hall of Fame and museum space; and
- Appropriate disability access throughout.

SECTION 03

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

FOCUS AREAS

1. PLANNING

- Facility Mapping
- Concept Design and Cost
 - Estimates
 - Site Selection



2. FUNDING

- Source Capital Funding

4. OPERATIONS

- Operating Model
 - People
 - Programs
 - Partnerships



3. ACQUISITION & DEVELOPMENT

- Site Acquisition
- Facility Development

STRATEGY HORIZONS

The NBC Strategy incorporates three horizons – **1. Establish; 2. Operate; 3. Review.**

This three-stage process is designed to ensure the Strategy is realistically achievable and allows all key stakeholders to maintain a targeted focus throughout the lifecycle of the Strategy. This staged and targeted focus is seen as imperative to the successful and sustainable establishment and implementation of the NBC.

1

ESTABLISH

The Establish phase will primarily focus on finalising the facility design and site selection process; identifying the capital and associated costs for establishing the NBC; accessing the necessary funding; acquiring / developing the site and facility; and establishing the NBC's operating model and human resource structure.

2

OPERATE

The Operate phase will focus on the delivery of targeted, well managed, relevant and contemporary programs and services to key stakeholder groups, in line with the agreed purpose of the NBC. The people, systems and processes developed in the Establish phase will continue to be refined, as required, throughout this period.

3

REVIEW

The Review phase, will do just that. It will review the structure, operations and performance of the NBC, and based on the outcome of this process, the NBC will look to optimise productivity in line with its purpose and to capitalise on new opportunities, e.g. facilitating an expanded list of world leading programs and services to an expanded list of stakeholders.

KEY ACTIONS

HORIZON 1: ESTABLISH (JULY 2020 - JUNE 2023)

1. PLANNING

1.1: Facility Mapping

Initiate a facility mapping exercise, designed to map the agreed NBC facility component requirements, with the facilities of potentially suitable NBC venues.

NBC Facility Expression of Interest - Initiate a targeted expression of interest process to encourage potentially suitable venues / facilities to express their interest and capacity to be a facility partner in the NBC.

1.2: Concept Design

Based on the outcome of the expression of interest process, engage the necessary consultants to undertake more detailed site analysis and to develop concept designs and costings for the short listed sites. This work will provide a total capital cost for each site.

1.3: Acquisition and Development

Identify the total capital costs of a short list of potential facility options (i.e. build costs, fit out costs, preparation costs, fees paid to authorities, professional fees and costs associated with the purchase / lease of land, etc.)

1.4: Preferred Site Selection

Undertake a detailed assessment of facility acquisition / development options and select the preferred site and development option.

2. FUNDING

2.1: Funding Partners -

Identify and vigorously pursue all government, not-for-profit, commercial and philanthropic funding opportunities in order to secure funds required for the development of the NBC facility.

Note: It is envisaged that potential sources of financial support for the establishment (and/or operations) of the NBC could include BA, STAs, Federal Government, State Government, Local Government, Commonwealth Games Australia, identified Bowls club / facility partners, commercial sponsors, philanthropic donors, etc.

3. ACQUISITION & DEVELOPMENT

3.1: Site Acquisition

Undertake all necessary activities to acquire the preferred site / facility, or enter into a mutually beneficial partnership agreement with the owner / lessee.

3.2: Final Facility Design

Engage the Design Team and Cost Planner to develop the concept plans and estimates referencing Bowls Australia Guidelines and in accordance with the preferred Delivery System. Appoint a Project Manager to oversee the development of the documentation and to assist in the selection of the Procurement System.

3.3: Building Contract

Procure the builder in accordance with the preferred delivery system and undertake the works under the control of the Project Manager.

3.4: Facility Development

- Work with the contracted architect to oversee the implementation of the building contract and works.

4. OPERATIONS

4.1: Operating Model

Based on an assessment of risk and benefit, implement the optimal NBC operating model. Options may include:
- Direct Management
- Contract Management
- Lease Management
- Joint Management

4.2: People

Based on the agreed purpose, programs and operating model, design a human resource structure to enable the effective and efficient operations of the NBC.

4.3: Programs

Develop the operational policies, processes and support resources required for the effective delivery of agreed NBC programs.

4.4: Partnerships

Identify and enter into mutually beneficial partnerships.

Note: Partnership could include (but may not be limited to): service delivery, commercial, technology, equipment, education, accommodation, etc.

4.5: Financial Estimates of Operations

Estimate annual fixed and variable operating costs associated with identified NBC operating model, HR structure, programs and services, usage rates, and facility operating costs.

HORIZON 2: OPERATE

4. OPERATIONS

4.6: Annual Operating Budgets

Preparation and review of detailed NBC annual operating budgets.

4.7: Annual Operational Plans

Preparation, implementation and review of fully costed NBC annual operational plans.

4.8: People

Undertake all activities required to activate the agreed NBC human resource structure.

4.9: Programs

Delivery of all agreed NBC programs.

4.10: Performance Monitoring

Development and implementation of systems designed to effectively monitor the effective operations of the NBC in line with its purpose.

HORIZON 3: REVIEW

4. OPERATIONS

4.11: Ongoing Operations

Continue to implement all Operate Phase activities + (refer below).

4.12: NBC Review

Initiate a full review of all NBC structures and operations (facility, purpose, programs, people, financials, etc.) and develop a post review action plan to guide BA's effective implementation of endorsed recommendations.

SECTION **04**

OUR COMMITMENT TO THE NBC STRATEGY

The NBC's establishment and operations will now be guided by this document, which will be used by staff, monitored by the BA Board and formally reviewed annually.

Importantly, BA will develop project specific plans associated with each Key Action identified in Section 3 of this Strategy (pages 12-14), which incorporate financial and human resource allocations for each Key Action being implemented. This is to ensure our projects are successfully completed in a timely manner and to the highest possible standard; and that the financial management of BA and the NBC remains sound at all times.

Through cooperation and commitment, we can and will achieve the establishment and successful operations of the first ever NBC and create a lasting legacy for the sport of Bowls..



NATIONAL **BOWLS CENTRE** STRATEGY

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