

INTRODUCTION

The nominees who were elected at the SHYAC AGM in March 2009 supported the following broad policy principles to seek a mandate for change from the membership.

- *SHYAC deserves improved governance, management, insurance policies and procedures to ensure it operates in the best interests of all members.*
- *SHYAC should undertake immediate reform of its out-dated constitution and hold a Special General Meeting before the next AGM to do so. One reform would be to institute term limits on specific office bearers to encourage greater vitality in the Committee and ensure the replenishing of ideas and energy on a regular basis.*
- *SHYAC remains committed to an annual major musical theatre production*
- *SHYAC should seek to create alliances and affiliations with other appropriate community-based organisations and arts-based bodies in order to improve the opportunities available to its members and grow the membership of the Association accordingly.*
- *SHYAC should pursue funding for the Production & Outreach Development (POD) project to expand the range of arts activities offered to its members and the youth of the region.*
- *SHYAC should seek to offer more performance, workshops and participation opportunities for its youth members: These could include projects in short film, comedy, drama, webcasting and other arts mediums. As well, an additional musical theatre production with an upper age limit of perhaps 14 years so that principal roles can go to younger cast members is to be explored.*

These principles and policies have largely served as an interim strategic plan and have mostly been fulfilled over the past 12 months. The Committee's priority until June/July was to ensure a successful season of *The Wizard of Oz*. The scale of that production and the level of success it achieved has provided SHYAC with a considerable enhancement to its reputation within the community and to its financial position. Achieving a \$25,000 grant from the IMB Community Foundation in 2009 and \$12,000 in 2010 along with many other forms of sponsorship, support and alliances has also increased SHYAC's potential capabilities to expand and grow its programmes.

The reform of the SHYAC Constitution took longer than first envisaged because it has involved a complete revision using the current Model rules with the benefit of *pro bono* legal advice. It has also been rewritten to allow SHYAC the option of applying for tax-deductible status as a Registered Cultural Organisation.

This document addresses SHYAC's need for a strategic plan for the period 2010-12.

WHY A STRATEGIC PLAN?

SHYAC is intended to be the peak body or umbrella association for youth arts in the Southern Highlands. If that objective is to be realised then a strategic plan is needed to communicate with SHYAC's many stakeholders so they can understand its goals, assist in realising them, and provide the Association with management achievement benchmarks.

A Strategic Plan will affirm a mission statement, identify broad objectives that align with that mission statement, develop goals, projects and budgets as part of an operating plan to fulfill those objectives.

It will be far easier to focus the contributions of SHYAC members, volunteers and tutors as well as attract supporters and sponsors if a clear statement of SHYAC's medium term objectives is agreed and made available to its stakeholders and the wider community.

The other benefit of a strategic plan is that it provides a measure of protection from maverick individuals or factions to skew the activities of the Association towards their own ends. Candidates for election to the Management Committee can be assessed by the membership on their willingness to support the current strategic plan or to otherwise articulate how they would alter it.

The statement of principles and policies in the introduction above, together with SHYAC's Production & Outreach Development Project, currently act as an interim substitute for a strategic plan. SHYAC already has certain obligations resulting from its successful POD Project grant application to the IMB Community Foundation.

It is proposed that the essential elements from these two sources be used to document an interim operating plan for 2010 (see following). The SHYAC committee elected at the next AGM and presumably operating under a new constitution would then be in a position to develop a more formal strategic plan with a 2-3 year horizon that can in turn be reviewed and amended annually by future committees.

SHYAC STRATEGIC PLAN - Interim

Mission Statement: Southern Highlands Youth Arts Council Inc (SHYAC)

To encourage, support and promote Youth Arts and Youth Cultural Development in the Southern Highlands of NSW and surrounding regional areas.

SHYAC Slogan: *Art by Youth for Youth*

Objectives

- To have SHYAC recognised as the peak body or umbrella association for encouraging, supporting and promoting youth arts in the Southern Highlands of NSW and surrounding regional areas;
- To develop projects across a broad spectrum of youth arts and cultural activities based on identified needs and the emerging priorities of our stakeholders;
- To ensure SHYAC maintains its strong tradition of activity in youth musical theatre and youth dramatic performance;
- To create partnerships and alliances with other organisations and bodies to enrich the quality and quantity of opportunities for participation in youth arts activities;
- To provide opportunities for members of the regional community to volunteer their time and expertise in support of SHYAC's mission and encourage a high standard of involvement that is mutually beneficial for both volunteers and SHYAC;
- To ensure high standards of duty-of-care are embodied in SHYAC's activities, particularly in relation to its youth membership;
- To maintain high standards of governance and volunteer management within SHYAC and to meet its legal, financial and fiduciary responsibilities accordingly.
- To have fun! As a volunteer non-profit organisation working in youth arts, if people aren't happy or enjoying themselves in the work then SHYAC itself will not be served well.

Goals & Projects for 2010 (as at 8th June 2010)

1. Development and adoption of a new SHYAC Constitution during 2010
2. Further development of the SHYAC Strategic Plan for 2011-13
3. Further develop the strategic relationship with Kazcare Education and in particular the future of the Creativity Campus project on that site
4. Successful production of *big The Musical* in May 2010
5. Develop a SHYAC Choral Group as a regional youth choir
6. Manage SHYAC's involvement with *Brigadoon* and *Tulip Time*, possibly with the Choral Group & street performance troupe eg busking and clowning/circus skills
7. Successful production of "Olivia – The Female Oliver" in October 2010
8. Completion of the POD Project for 2009-2010 including the website development
9. Successful fundraising activities for the 2010 production programme and the SHYAC PODcasting channel
10. Develop a new SHYAC programme in filmmaking & screen acting, allied with a comedy component (perhaps linking with the national Class Clowns Competition)
11. Establish an Expert Advisory Panel to SHYAC to meet at least twice a year that draws on individuals with expertise from other arts organisations, education and government in both the arts and youth portfolios. The purpose of that panel would be to assist SHYAC refine its strategic plan and advise on ways it can achieve its goals.
12. Host further NIDA workshops, specifically in Producing for both theatre and film as a way of training and attracting adult volunteers to assist in SHYAC productions.
13. Stage the SHYAC Drama Showcase in July 2010 bringing together the best of the HSC drama performances from the region (hosting the NIDA HSC Drama workshop in April might be linked to that project as an incentive)
14. Stage a workshop for youth with disabilities in theatre and/or dance movement using the \$500 Wingecarribee Council grant and other sponsorship funds (possibly NIDA could provide the relevant expertise)
15. Consider SHYAC involvement in the planned Mary Poppins centenary celebrations
16. Further recruitment into SHYAC's volunteer base especially in publicity, web design, production & technical expertise, budgeting & general administration.
17. Further development of SHYAC's administrative & financial procedures to meet the needs of the 2010 production programme

