

Male Candidate #1**Robert Sharpe**

Dandenong Club

Proposed by**Ross Dunlop**

Dandenong Club

Seconded by**Alan Jolly**

Chadstone Bowls Club

Introduction

I am a former Chief Executive of a Melbourne based Sporting Association (Eastern Football League) where I previously held a position as a board member for 4 years.

Having retired from the CEO role in 2014 I began a small sports consultancy firm in 2015. Today I am semi-retired doing the best I can to be in the northern states for the winter.

Having been a bowler for six years I have observed what appears to be a willingness for those who run the sport to broaden its appeal across a wider demographic. I appreciate the value of what scale can bring to a sporting association and am particularly interested when combined with a stronger commercial focus how this can be of benefit

Should I be elected to the Bowls Victoria Board I would offer a broad range of experience and connections in sport.

I am a strong advocate for establishing a plan with purpose, to know what creates success, to avoid distractions and to focus on delivering outcomes where it matters most.

I am of the view that the role of the Bowls Victoria Board should be to maintain a strong focus on strategy and compliance. It should be the defender of its clubs and the game of lawn bowls.

Career

I held a position as Board member at the Eastern Football League for four years. I was then appointed CEO, a position I held for 7 years.

On retiring from the CEO role in 2014 I commenced a small sports consultancy firm in 2015, working in sports such as Australian football, cricket and for the past three years, lawn bowls at Dandenong Club.

The Dandenong Club role has involved working with the Club General Manager to support the Club's objective of growing their position in the lawn bowls industry. This has included a governance review and subsequent restructure of the bowls club, development of the undercover facilities, growing participation, winning and managing events, strengthening relationships with Bowls Victoria and Bowls Australia, the establishment of a profitable retail operation, building the Club's social media platform and establishing the club's UBC and BPL teams.

Before working in the sports industry, I held various senior marketing and communication roles in the energy industry. During the latter part of my 30 years in the energy industry, I was heavily involved in structural reform projects emanating from government privatisation and deregulation.

I have established strong connections to government at State and local level that have resulted in the successful acquisition of significant funds for sporting infrastructure.

I remain an active bowler, having commenced playing bowls at Vermont South in 2014, in 2018 I transferred to play pennant bowls at Dandenong Club.

Curriculum Vitae**EDUCATION / QUALIFICATIONS:**

- 1998-2000 Graduate Diploma Marketing
Monash University
- 2000 Advanced Web Development
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
- 1998/9 Executive Certificate in Marketing
Monash University
- 1995 Graduate Certificate of Management
Monash Mt Eliza Business School
- 1995 Marketing The Strategic Edge (Residential)
Monash Mt Eliza Business School
- 1991 Management Development Program
Monash Mt Eliza Business School
- 1988 Advanced Certificate of Management
Box Hill T.A.F.E.
- EDUCATION / QUALIFICATIONS:**
- 2012 VicSport -Best Sports Development Initiative by
Industry Associate- EFL umpire Development
Program
- 2010 Australian Drug Foundation - Excellence in
Creating Healthy Sporting Communities
- 2009 AFL Victoria. Best Community Development
program –Young Leaders Program
- 2008 AFL Victoria Best Community Sports
Development Program Women of the EFL
- 1999 Australian Gas Association Meritorious Award
for the development of the Natural Gas market
in Victoria
- 1998 Public Relations Institute of Australia Internal
Communications Award For Excellence

- 1996 UMS Best Practice Conference, for Gas & Fuel
Corporation Effective Advertising, San Francisco
- 1996 Australian Institute of Marketing, Victorian and
National Awards for Advertising Excellence for
the Gas & Fuel Corporation central heating
campaign
- 1995 Australian Gas Association Residential Marketing
Award For Excellence

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**Sharper Sports**

Managing Consultant 2015 - 2016

Eastern Football League

Chief Executive Officer 2006 - 2013

Energy Resources Group

General Manager 2004 - 2006

Initiative Marketing

General Manager 2003 -2004

Txu

Communications and Corporate Brand Manager 1999-03

Kinetik Energy

Corporate Communications Manager 1997 – 1999

Marketing Manager Energy Retail 1997 - 1998

Gas & Fuel Corporation

Manager - Residential Markets 1987 – 1997

Marketing Manager - Yarra Valley Region 1996 – 1997

Manager -Retail Sales 1994 – 1996

Manager - New Home Sales 1992 – 1994

Sales Manager - New Homes Sales 1991 – 1992

Marketing Assistant 1989 - 1991

1987 - 1989

Hawthorn Football Club

1981 - 1983

PROFESSIONAL ACHEIVEMENTS**Business Development and Commercialisation**

- Established Melbourne Pulse bowls team to compete in 2019 to 2022 BPL Bowls Australia elite national bowls competition. Finished third and sixth in the first two events the Pulse competed in.
- 2019 established two professional bowls teams to compete in notational competitions. In augural winner of the \$500,000 Ultimate Bowls Competition earning \$155,000 in prize money in year on
- In 2016 engaged in a consulting role at Dandenong Club to develop non member bowls opportunities and grow participation rates. This project has extended to development of a hub for Lawn Bowls that in 2019 resulted in a \$1.4 infrastructure project that requires full time operational staff providing coaching, bowls program management, retail operations and food and beverage services.
- In September 2015 contracted to commercialise the assets of AFL South East that realised significant new revenue and enabled the funding of the appointment of a full time Business Manager
- Increased number of participating EFL teams from 380(2006) to 461 (2013)
- Secured government funding for the following EFL projects:
 - o Upgrade to Bayswater Oval facilities to improve finals capacity. (\$560,000)
 - o Conversion of 20 grounds to summer grass (\$180,000)
 - o Youth and leadership training (\$1,192,000)
- Initiated the concept of hub for football in the Eastern Suburbs. Established a joint venture with AFL Victoria and Hawthorn Football Club to fund the initial viability study. Identified site options and secured government interest in the program.
- Established umpires program that produced record numbers of available umpires and provided development opportunities that eventuated in the delivery of 17% of the VFL umpires panel
- Grew EFL sponsorship revenue over a 5 year period by 122% to \$570,000 and total revenue
- Secured significant EFL media partners in Nine News, SEN, Leader News
- Increased total EFL revenue by an average of 14% per annum over 7 years to \$2,966,125.
- Established partnership with medical services supplier for EFL clubs that provided high levels of emergency services
- Converted on line operations from cost centre to profit centre.
- Secured EFL major sponsors
 - o Connect East,
 - o Fern Tree Gully Holden
 - o Yarra Valley Water
 - o Bendigo Bank
 - o in October 2014 established Sharper Sports to deliver project work, business development, commercialism, organisational reform, sports marketing, event management.
 - o Commenced a 10 month contract with Cricket Victoria establishing a detailed plan for the restructure of turf cricket in metropolitan Melbourne.

Crisis Management

- Established and led media management at Eastern Football league. Dealt with all forms of media on matters relating to sporting and social behaviour and conduct of matches.
- Developed and led Kinetik Energy Corporate Communications Program during the 1998 Longford Gas Crisis. This crisis management program included communications and customer management strategies to inform the public, the media and customers of the State Emergency.
- Communications strategy for Vencorp during October 1998 gas restrictions that eliminated backlash on Energy retailers and achieved satisfaction ratings from public of management of the crisis of 85%
- Communications management of the Horsham gas outage (7 days with no gas) in November of 1998. Achieved 90% positive media coverage during this crisis
- Customer management strategy for Kinetik shutdown and relight of gas system to Horsham customers in December 1998 to eliminate media and public negativity.
- Instigated the recruitment of board members with specialised skills that complemented the EFL strategic plan and operational needs.
- Initiated collaborative approach to Government at Federal State and Local levels
- Developed operational plans for all EFL staff to better focus and prioritise tactical effort to ensure delivery to EFL key objectives
- First competition to introduce on line player registration fees to begin to shift the operational costs to player from club to participant
- Established disciplined approach to project management at Initiative Marketing. Introduced Stakeholder planning and management, KPI's for project controls to increase the capacity of project managers to oversee multiple projects simultaneously
- Led Corporate Communications merger team to review existing practices and to establish a new organisation structure for TXU Australian operations, reducing staff numbers by better than 60%.
- Consolidated communications functions with the merger of Eastern Energy and Kinetik Energy.

Change Management

- In 2019 wrote and introduced a new set of club rules, committee structure and developed sub committees to better utilise volunteer talent with the Dandenong Club for the club operational requirements
- 2015 prepared a detailed implementation plan for Cricket Victoria as a means of reform of Turf Cricket in Melbourne. The project aimed to consolidate the number of existing cricket associations, relieve the burden on volunteers and established funding programs for the game operating under an independent board structure and Executive Officer.
- Worked with the Victorian State Government on the breakup of Gas & Fuel Corporation. Developed brand plans for six new entities incorporating naming assignments.
- Project managed the restructure of Gas & Fuel Corporation's Sales and Marketing to strengthen positioning for a deregulated market. Identified and implemented opportunities to reduce staff from 115 to 57 and net cost reductions of \$4.0m.

- Restructured Gas & Fuel Corporation's Residential Markets operations to reduce staff numbers and overall operating costs by 10%. Implemented clearer definition of job roles and significant productivity increases.
- * Centralised Gas & Fuel Corporation's Retail Sales regional management and relocated representative's activities to showrooms. This reduced staff levels from 215 to 170 without the need for the closure of any retail outlets or reduction in service levels. Flattened management structure: combined roles of new and existing home supervisors and eliminated the position of superintendent. Reduced line management by 30%. Developed with external consultants a blueprint for the establishment of a separate business unit for retailing of appliances.
- Seconded to the Gas & Fuel Corporation's Lift Off implementation team to assist business unit manager to implement the restructure of the Retail business unit. Worked with General Managers of Gasmart and NGV Australia in establishment of their businesses as autonomous business units. Established marketing structures for a regionalised Gas distribution and marketing business unit.
- Developed corporate brand strategy and framework for TXU Operations including:
 - o Australian representative for global effort to consolidate the TXU brand across regions. Worked with US consultancy to establish compelling position for the brand globally and to define a brand persona that would achieve across regions
 - o Development of brand architecture, brand positioning and implementation plan including TVC, print press and outdoor advertising
 - o Established set of guidelines for Australian business units to ensure consistency in the delivery of the Australian brand
 - o Launch of TXU brand in Australia achieving 55% brand recognition in Victorian market after nine months, and an increase of awareness (recall and recognition levels) from 22% to 85% in the Victorian market from December 2000 to May 2001.
 - o Led team that developed a retail on-line strategy for TXU centred on commerce and community concepts.
 - o Developed the corporate identity and brand plan and then led brand strategy team at merger of Eastern Energy and Kinetik Energy. This included:
 - o Development of TXU launch plan for 1999
 - o Implemented the Corporate brand campaign to position Kinetik Energy at the forefront of the gas industry in Victoria. The first and second phases of the campaign (awareness and attitude) resulted in 52% brand awareness after just four months of operations.

Corporate Brand Planning & Implementation

- Rebranded the Dandenong Club Bowls operations
- Introduced the concept of brand management to Eastern Football league that underpinned the commercialisation of the league's operations.
- Redeveloped corporate identity
- Established brand plan for Eastern Football league identifying key stakeholders as clubs, participants, commercial partners, officials, government and AFL.
- Established Government relations initiatives aimed at increasing standing of the league and improve the likelihood of support for infrastructure development

Product Campaign Development & Management

- Developed a new winter central heating campaign for Kinetik Energy aimed at building favourability and reducing purchase barriers. Research indicated that the TVC component of the campaign achieved total awareness of 75%. Key barrier for purchase (capital cost) reduced from 40% to 31%. Of the campaign audience 21% recognised the secondary objective of the campaign (central heating increases the value of your home) Total industry sales increased 19.5% over 1997.
- Developed the Gas & Fuel Corporation central heating campaign for the 1995 and 1996 and 1997 winters. Fully integrating advertising (TV Press, magazine and outdoor) with direct marketing activities. Introduced the utilisation of geo demographics resulting in 35% improvement in identification of direct marketing targets. Total market increased by 3.5% despite a 9% downturn in new home completions.
- Developed the Gas & Fuel Corporation 1994/95 Hot Water promotional campaign. Better than doubled awareness and recall of the previous campaign. Utilised press, magazine, outdoor, television and radio advertising. Direct marketing was utilised for trade purposes.
- Prepared and implemented the strategy that developed the new brand (Gaslink) and communications plan for outsourced appliance repair and maintenance services at \$13m and a cost saving to the Gas & Fuel Corporation.
- Launched a major environment campaign for the Gas & Fuel Corporation to develop the credentials of Natural Gas as an energy with considerable environmental benefits over viable economical alternatives. Program utilised press and outdoor advertising and incorporated, point of sale and brochure development.

Corporate Communications Strategies

- Established the Dandenong Club's on-line marketing platform that included redevelopment of the Club web site, establishing strategies to drive favourability through Facebook, Instagram and direct marketing
- Established Government Relations strategy for EFL focused on a collaborative approach to delivering positive sporting and social outcomes.
- Developed programs aimed at delivering positive social outcomes through sport. These included partnerships developed with Blue Ribbon Foundation, Zaidee's Rainbow Foundation, Cancer Council, Beyond Blue, Sports Chaplaincy Australia, and Australian Drug Foundation.
- Aligned the EFL with Good Sports Program through the establishment of an MOU that committed the EFL and its clubs to ongoing participation in the responsible serving of alcohol.
- Managed TXU's promotion of Natural Gas within Victoria achieving favourability ratings towards natural gas that remained undamaged despite the Longford crisis and continuing market share growth.
- Redeveloped the TXU web site to build interactivity, align to brand strategy and establish the platform for e-commerce operations
- Developed web site for Kinetik Energy to provide a low cost opportunity for information distribution and a platform for e-commerce opportunities for the business.
- Realigned Gas & Fuel Corporation's regional and corporate advertising and promotional strategies to develop a state-wide approach to communications. Developed corporate style guidelines for printed material, signage and stationery to ensure a consistent corporate image.

- Developed Gas & Fuel Corporation's marketing strategies for all markets in the Yarra Valley Region for 1992/93 and 1993/94 FYs including an innovative corporate loyalty program for new customers that provided response rates of 27% for data base establishment and ongoing sales activity.

Research, Standards & Procedures

- Developed the Kinetik Energy corporate identity and brand plan based on
 - o competitor positioning analysis and customer and business needs to provide clear differentiation for a competitive market.
 - o a segmentation strategy that identified key market targets and opportunities for Kinetik Energy to win in a national competitive market.
- Developed Gas & Fuel Corporation's product development process based on customer needs analysis and financial benefits with a focus on delivery to key competitive position, financial analysis and speed to market.
- Introduced customer value segmenting of the Gas & Fuel Corporation's residential market to provide the basis for strategy planning and in particular product development and customer retention programs. Included qualitative and quantitative analysis. Restructured marketing and sales around value segments to establish clear priorities for development processes.
- Initiated and coordinated viability study into the extension of the Gas & Fuel Corporation's natural gas reticulation system into the township of Healesville. This \$8 million project commenced in April of 1994. Developed a communication strategy that resulted in better than 50% of the total available market being connected to supply within the first six months of natural gas being available. This result was 300 connections above the break-even requirements of the proposal.

- Established FOCUS program to Gas & Fuel Corporation that identified customer life cycle analysis and provided a program for staff to identify initiatives to improve service levels to customers. Program was awarded the PRIA internal communications award for excellence in 1998

- Introduced the first contracted meter-reading base at the Gas & Fuel Corporation's Vermont centre. This subsequently resulted in a benchmark for Gas & Fuel Corporation meter reading and halved the average cost per read. As a direct result staff numbers in meter reading reduced from 34 in July 1992 to 7 by 30th June 1994 with 230,000 meter being read by contractors. Remaining staff meter reading base costs reducing to 50c per meter read (68c per meter in June of 1993).

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