



Strategic Plan

Forward Phoenix 2030



Presented By: Toowong Football Club Inc.

Dunmore Park, 65 Lang Parade, Auchenflower | www.toowongfc.com.au



Table of Contents

<u>1. Message from the Committee</u>	3
<u>2. Introduction</u>	5
<u>3. Facilities</u>	7
<u>4. Members</u>	10
<u>5. Finances</u>	15
<u>6. Summary</u>	17

Toowong Football Club sits on Yuggera land, and we acknowledge the Turrbul and the Yuggera peoples who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet and play. We recognise their continued connection with the land, water and community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

1. Message from the Committee

1.1 What is “Forward Phoenix: 2030”?

Forward Phoenix: 2030 is our vision to build on the successes of the last decade and cement the Club’s status as a dedicated, community-minded organisation seeking to expand football opportunities to as wide a variety of community members as possible. Fundamental to this vision is ensuring that the Club values are strictly adhered to in all aspects of delivery:

We are a club driven by our community ethos and the benefits that this philosophy brings

We respect others by celebrating diversity and acting with integrity and honesty

We work to build a vibrant and brighter future for our membership and our immediate community

Our aim is to encourage participation and provide footballing facilities at a reasonable price for all age groups and genders, serving the local community and fostering a life-long love of the game in all our members.

1.2 What key areas need development?

Following on from the Towards 2021 Vision (adopted in 2014), the Club’s Committee continues to identify facilities, members, and finances as three areas that require development during the period.

For the past decade, facilities have been the primary driver for development, with significant effort directed towards facility improvements to promote the Club’s growth. With the delivery of a second full-size field, spectator seating and additional, modern changing areas allowing membership growth, we are now at the stage of focusing on cementing those successes.

Ensuring the sustainability and adaptability of our football activities is crucial for our development, especially in catering to a growing and diverse community. Since 2020 (the year prior to the Towards 2021 covered in the Club's prior strategic plan), community club football in Queensland has been significantly impacted by a series of challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic and floods.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented disruptions, leading to the suspension and cancellation of matches and competitions, as well as the implementation of strict health protocols. While Toowong FC weathered this event with minimal financial impact, it did contribute to reduced participation rates, and limited community engagement from 2020 to 2022.

Furthermore, severe flooding in 2022 caused significant damage to our infrastructure, including our football fields and facilities, adding additional burden and causing a change in focus for strategic planning for the foreseeable future.

Despite these challenges, the resilience and determination of Toowong FC and its members paved the way for innovative approaches, embracing digital platforms, promoting virtual engagement, and prioritising player and community welfare. These experiences have informed our planning and areas for priority moving forward.

1.3 How will we achieve this vision?

Building on our successes, we plan to achieve this vision by fully realising the potential of the Club and its members - broadening our membership base to service an increasingly diverse range of members, partnering with local businesses and organisations to continue to embed our club within the wider community, and focusing facility works on ensuring we are resilient to future adverse events.

We are fully committed to delivering the vision set out here and aspire to continue guiding our club to remain a prominent presence in Brisbane's community football scene.



Becky Ashelford

President



Will Vandenberg

Secretary

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

Toowong Football Club Inc. (the Club) has been a part of Brisbane football for more than a century, with our first recorded team registered in 1921.

More importantly, the Club is known across Brisbane as an organisation with a strong community presence with a friendly, open, and welcoming atmosphere. This has been encapsulated by our three core values:

- We are a club driven by our community ethos and the benefits that this philosophy brings
- We respect others by celebrating diversity and acting with integrity and honesty
- We work to build a vibrant and brighter future for our membership and our immediate community

The Committee continues to work tirelessly to embrace these values and is proud to have developed the Club to an organisation with a diverse membership base across the winter and summer seasons, with 666 full season members (players and volunteers) and 541 social summer members. We have 37 playing teams competing in MiniRoos, junior and senior competitions, spread across a number of playing divisions and age groups, as well as running in-house football for U6 and U7s.



2.2 Our vision – Sustainability, Diversity, Community

Towards 2021 was instrumental in growing the Club during its delivery timeframe. In order to capitalise on the success of this strategy, we are looking to pivot from a growth-oriented approach for several reasons. Firstly, focusing solely on growth can lead to resource strain, potentially compromising the Club's ability to meet the needs of existing members and maintain infrastructure and facilities.

By shifting our focus, the Club can prioritise long-term stability, ensuring financial viability, maintaining quality facilities, and providing a supportive environment for players, volunteers and the broader community. This will allow the Club and its members to focus on building strong relationships, fostering a sense of belonging, and promoting community engagement, ultimately enhancing the Club's long-term success and impact, both on and off the pitch.

This framework, vision, and goal for the Club is titled “Forward Phoenix: 2030”.

2.3 Areas of strategic focus

To achieve our Forward Phoenix: 2030 vision, we will continue following three areas to be fully addressed and strategically mapped:

Facilities

Members

Finances

The Club's previous strategic plan focused on growth, with Towards 2021 successfully delivering on most of its targets, including:

- Facility improvements and expansions (second field, additional changing rooms, spectator and viewing areas, kitchen upgrade)
- Membership base increase in volume and diversity (from 337 to 578 playing members)
- Improvements to revenue streams (sustainable sponsorship model, continued application for and use of grants for multiple sources, and improvements to our canteen).

Moving forward, the Club will be focusing on strengthening and delivering in the following areas:

- Sustainability (environmental, financial, operational)
- Diversity (membership, funding models, football offerings)
- Community (community club, but more broadly to engage with local businesses, schools etc.)

3. Facilities

What is required?

3.1 Requirements

Our growth and success over the last eight years have tracked with the improvement of our facilities. With a second field, additional change rooms, improved spectator seating and enhanced canteen kitchen facilities delivered, we've been able to achieve our envisaged membership growth.

Following major flooding in February 2022, we allocated substantial resources to repair and rebuild, ensuring the resumption of football activities. Disaster events will recur, similarly impacting the Club and its facilities. The Club's focus moving forward is to curate and manage facilities that are resilient to future disasters, which are also able to be maintained economically and in a way that minimises our impact on the local community and wider environment as best possible.

Table 1 outlines the necessary facility improvements required, the current issue/s the Club is facing, the direct benefit and the required timeframe to achieve our aims.



Table 1 | Facilities required to achieve our aims

Development area	Current issues	Direct benefit	Timeframe for delivery
Flood recovery & resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to clubhouse from flood events in Feb 2022 • Design of some internal fittings are not flood resilient and require replacement following flood events • No documented Disaster Preparedness Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit damage sustained in future disasters, enabling football activities to resume as quickly as possible • Reduce impact on volunteers following disasters • Allow for swift action prior to disaster events to prevent loss of equipment and damage to facilities 	2024-2026
Improvements on field 2 to expand usability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue with trees blocking lighting and impacting field (roots) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise use of field 2, enabling better distribution of football activities across fields • Increase participation • Safer playing environment 	2024
Viewing area improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncovered seating for one-third of field 1, particularly covering one of the fields used for MiniRoos games • Limited seating in the field 2 spectator area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a covered awning to the primary field viewing area improves spectator amenity, protects from environmental factors such as sun and rain • Provide covered seats adjacent to the second field to improve the spectator experience at that field 	2025

Table 1 | Facilities required to achieve our aims (cont.)

Development area	Current issues	Direct benefit	Timeframe for delivery
Investigate potential energy grid upgrade & energy efficient field lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient power from the energy grid is currently impacting full use of our facilities, particularly canteen operations • Cost of providing field lighting will continue to increase with outdated lighting infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent disruption to operations and allow us to provide more fulsome catering options • Direct savings on utility expenses • Reduced carbon emissions 	2025/26
Field resurfacing and irrigation improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field resurfacing last completed in 2016 • Irrigation system aging and inefficient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved playing surface quality, ensuring more consistent playing conditions • Enhanced drainage and flood resilience • Long-term cost savings 	2027/28

3.2 Timeline

The Committee has made a commitment to allocate club funds to the extent possible to support the plans. Nevertheless, there will be a significant dependence on securing grants from local, state, and federal sources to facilitate the primary projects, such as flood recovery and resilience, as well as field lighting and surface improvements. More details regarding the financial aspects are provided in the Finances section.

4. Members

What are our plans?

4.1 Current membership

After incorporating a second field and implementing various facility upgrades, the Club experienced a membership surge, witnessing an increase of over 60% compared to the 2014 figures. We now consistently accommodate playing members numbering in the mid-500s each year, with steady summer membership numbers season after season.

For the 2023 season, the Club's committee faced the challenging decision to withdraw from participation in the premier men's competition (FQPL). This choice was driven by our commitment to maximise field space utilisation and maintain affordable fees for our members. As a community-focused club, we operate within constraints, primarily related to field space, volunteer availability, and funding.

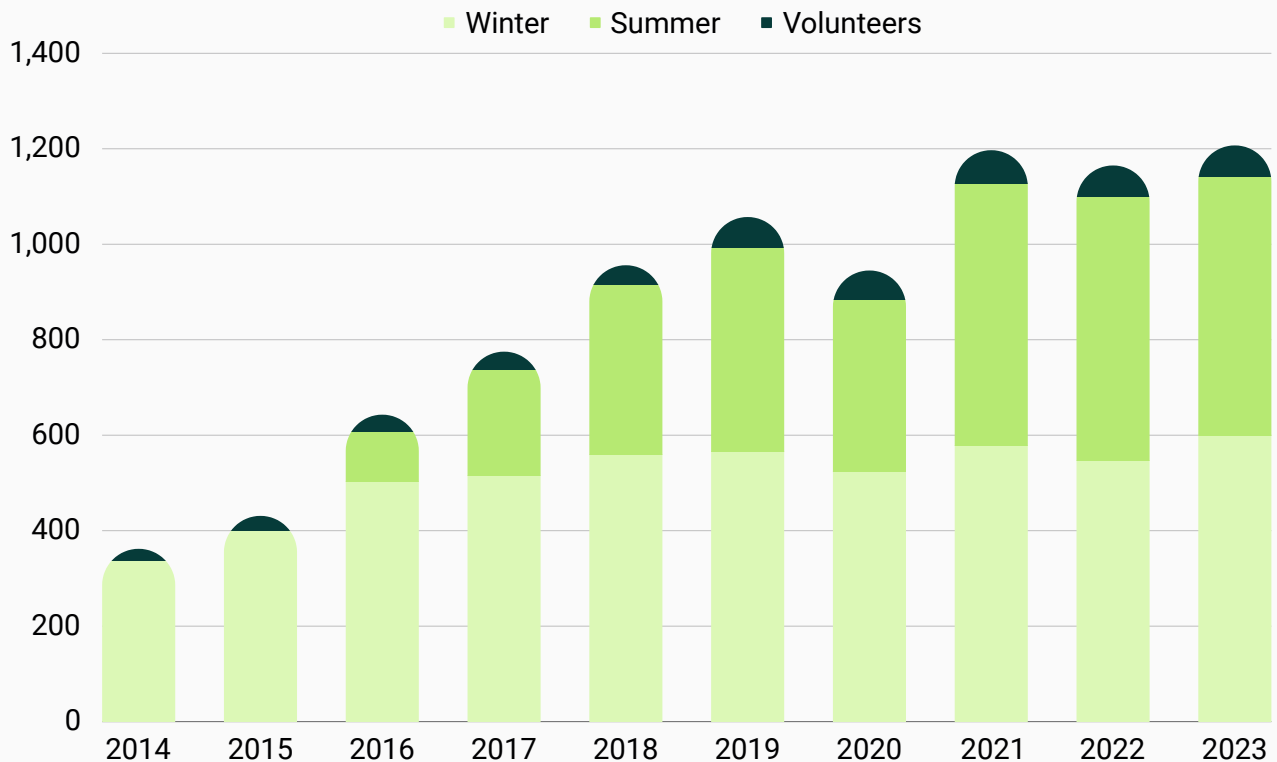


Consequently, we must make thoughtful decisions regarding the allocation of these resources. Overextending in any of these areas would hinder our ability to provide the high-quality experience and opportunities our members rightfully deserve.

Currently, our club boasts 600 playing members, comprising 242 MiniRoos, 110 juniors, and 248 seniors, with a gender distribution of 340 males and 260 females, spread across 37 teams. Furthermore, the Club can rely on the support of 66 registered volunteers, along with 541 social summer players, contributing to 989 unique members across these groups.

Figure 1

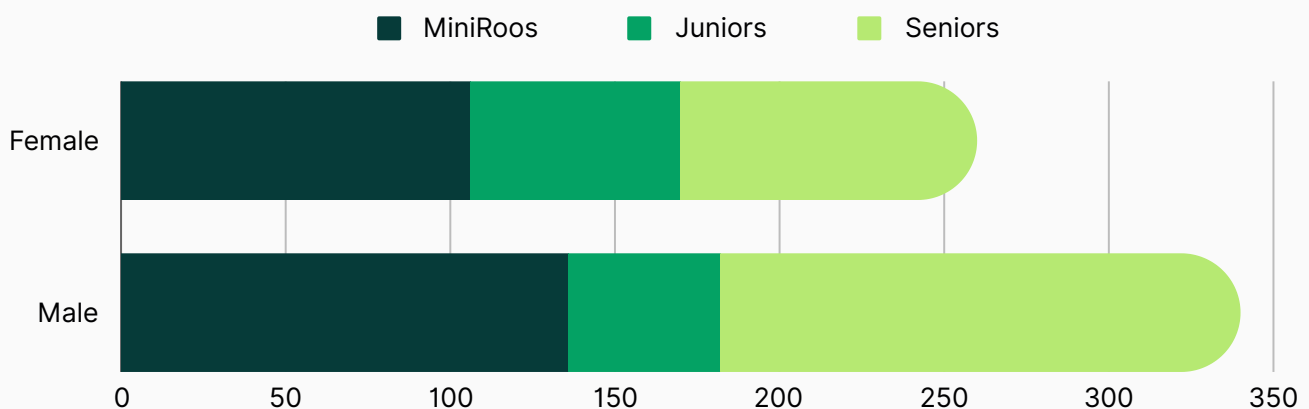
Membership across age groups (2014–2023)



The ratio of male to female players is currently 56/44%, with a significantly larger distribution of females in the MiniRoos and junior membership. In recognition of this achievement, Toowong FC was named as Queensland Club of the Year in 2023's Female Football Week. This is a major improvement on our 2013 ratio of 63/37% and places us close to achieving Football Australia's stated goal of achieving 50:50 gender parity in 2027.

Figure 2

Current gender distribution across all winter playing members (2023)



4.2 Proposed distribution

The establishment of female teams from U8 through to U17 has dramatically increased the opportunities for youth female participation in our catchment area, helping to balance the gender distribution across our entire membership.

We are firmly committed to Football Australia's goal to reach gender parity across all age groups by 2027 (if not before). We are aiming to modestly increase current membership numbers, with a focus on additional registrations for our youngest age groups and improved retention of junior players. To supplement our winter season membership, we plan to continue delivering strong social membership numbers in the off-season and reaching new membership groups across the year.

Figure 3

Membership growth over time

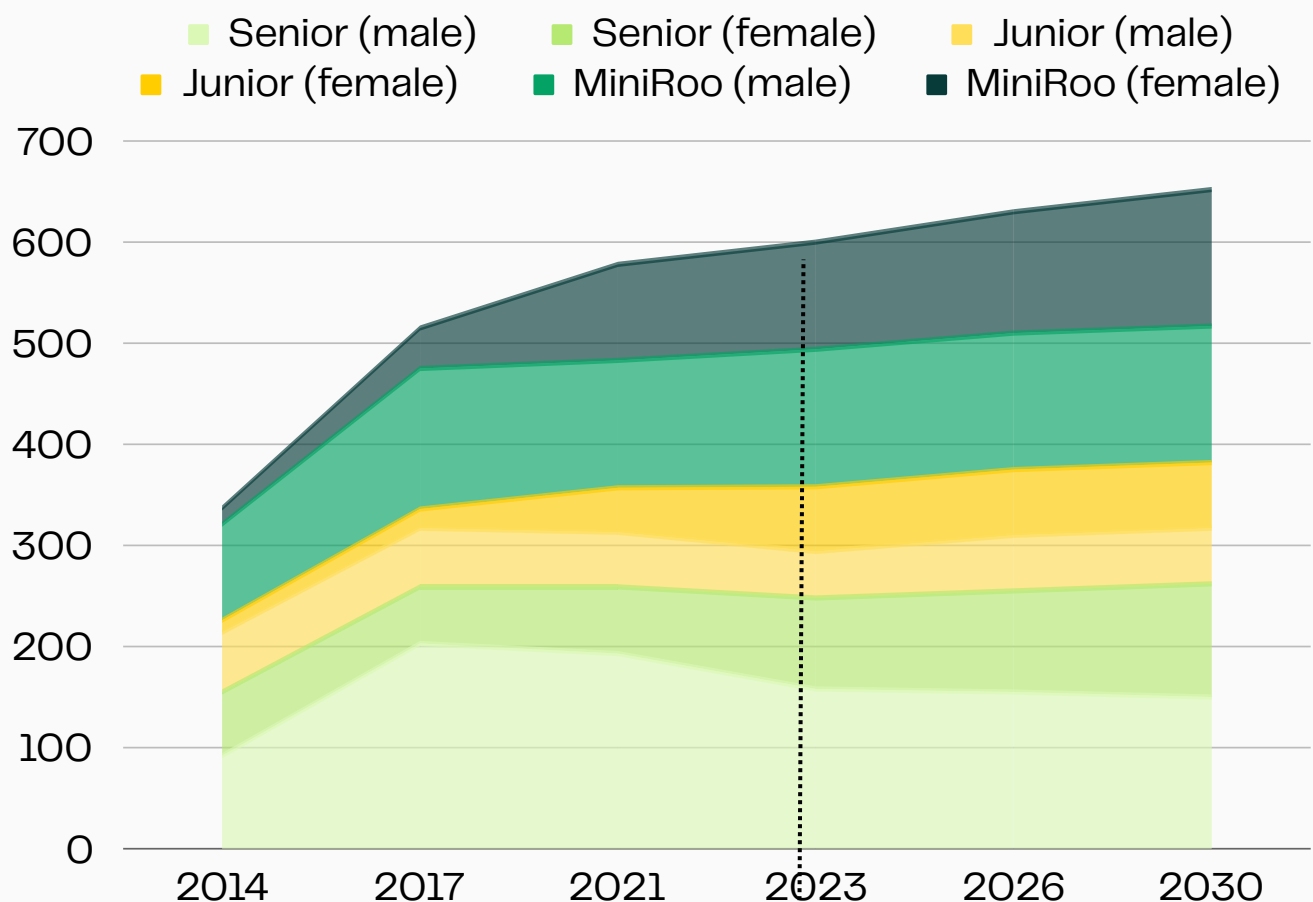
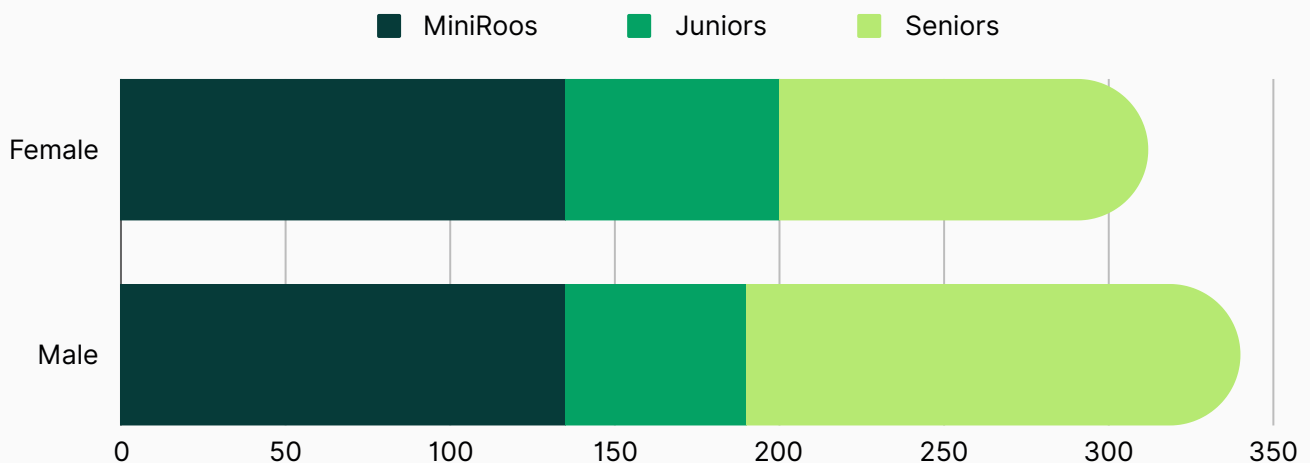


Figure 4

Projected gender distribution across all winter playing members 2030



The graphs show forecast membership distribution for 2030, including a gender distribution across the whole membership. Direct comparison to the current figures provided previously clearly shows that our targets will continue to increase female participation, one of our key values. Toowong FC's girls' program is growing consistently year on year. In 2023, the Club fielded girls' teams from U8 to U17, with several teams having to turn away interested players due to reaching capacity. This steady pipeline of players, as well as solid connections to the wider senior women's cohort, places the women's FQPL in a strong and sustainable position.

The demand for our boys' program fluctuates from year to year, often resulting in last-minute additions or withdrawals of team nominations as we work to finalise the competition draw and secure participant numbers. There's nothing to suggest that this pattern will change. As many clubs in our area have established advanced pathways for boys, we will continue to focus on offering opportunities for community league teams, with the option of transitioning to our senior men's Metro teams.

In addition to the organic growth that will occur by providing additional teams and opportunities, the Committee is strongly committed to maximising our marketing strategy in our local area for both juniors and seniors.



We are positioned in a fantastic geographic location, making the Club very accessible for both families and adults alike, and by increasing local school advertising, targeted social media campaigns and through local sponsorship and advertising, we can maintain and sustainably grow our membership.

We will also seek to provide diverse football offerings, including walking football and partnerships with groups like Deaf Futsal and Football QLD, to cater to a wide range of participants and promote inclusivity. By offering this, the Club creates an opportunity for individuals of all ages and abilities to engage in the sport, fostering a sense of belonging and social interaction. Moreover, embracing diversity through various offerings helps the Club to expand its reach, attract new members, and contribute to the overall growth and sustainability of the Club.

4.3 Member development

As well as focusing on player numbers and distribution, expanding the number of the Club's members with certified referee and coaching qualifications is crucial. With the inclusion of more individuals holding refereeing and coaching qualifications, we are poised to elevate the overall standard of our club. Referees equipped with proper training ensure fair play, uphold the integrity of the game, and create a positive environment for competition. Similarly, a greater number of coaches armed with the right credentials translates to more personalised and effective player development and retention. This strategic expansion will not only strengthen our community football club internally but also enable us to make a more significant impact on the broader football community.

We aim to ensure the distribution of these roles will share a similar gender parity to our wider membership. Females are currently underrepresented in our coaching and refereeing ranks, with females representing only 15% of registered coaches in 2023. By ensuring a balanced representation of both male and female coaches, we create an environment where diverse perspectives and coaching styles can thrive. This not only provides equal opportunities for aspiring coaches but also enriches the learning journey for players.

We strive for operational sustainability by empowering qualified members to manage Club affairs. Succession planning ensures smooth leadership transitions, vital for stability and ongoing success. Clear documentation of roles and processes is crucial for preserving knowledge, facilitating onboarding, managing risk, and ensuring effective decision-making. In the dynamic landscape of community football, such planning is essential for maintaining Club cohesion, efficiency, and effective service to members and the community.

5. Finances

How will we support our operations?

5.1 Current process

The primary source of revenue for the day-to-day operations of the Club is membership subscriptions. The annual fee is calculated in such a way to ensure the financial impact to the member is minimised as far as possible, while all base costs for the year are covered. These costs include (non-exhaustive): ground lease, rates, electricity, water and sewerage charges, participation fees, referee fees, ground maintenance, coach training, and administration costs.

The cost associated with being a MiniRoo, junior or senior player varies greatly, so the fee structure is set such that each band contributes fairly.

Secondary sources of revenue that are used to supplement financial income are obtained through sponsorship and grants. Sponsorship money is typically used to enhance participation (i.e. training equipment, team wear, membership benefits), while grants play a large and fundamental part of all facility development projects.

A third revenue stream is canteen and merchandise sales, with consistent returns now expected after previously operating on a cost cover basis.

We believe that the financial structure described above is typically in accordance with most standard community clubs' approach, maximising the opportunity for involvement, and encouraging members to remain at the Club year after year.



5.2 Proposed areas of development

The Committee has committed to maintaining this community model as part of our strategic plan, most notably that the cost of MiniRoo and junior participation should be minimised as far as possible, reducing impacts to local families, with a firm commitment that there will be no subsidy of the senior teams incorporated into their fees.

Costs will increase year on year with inflation, and also as the level of coaching improves (paying the costs associated with maintaining coaching credentials at the higher levels of competition is essential), however the fees charged across all bands will be reviewed annually and monitored to ensure that maximum value is provided.

Although a secondary revenue stream, sponsorship is likely to become more important to achieving a sustainable model going forward, with our increased membership base unlocking additional sponsorship potential, allowing this revenue stream to be maximised going forward.

The Committee is committed to ensuring that any sponsor partner that becomes affiliated with the Club shares our values and our vision.

Grants played a significant part in achieving the Towards 2021 vision, and moving forward, obtaining local, state and Commonwealth grants will be key to our planned facility improvements. We will continue using grant funding to enhance facilities, with a view to improving environmental sustainability, and prioritising flood resilience. This dual-purpose initiative safeguards our facilities against flooding while minimising our ecological footprint and reducing utility costs. By implementing flood-resistant designs, we're ensuring continued access for players and showcasing our commitment to both our community and the environment.

Additionally, the Club aims to continue to improve the canteen experience, with redevelopments necessitated following the flood events of 2022 allowing us to focus on expanding and adapting our offerings in a measured way.

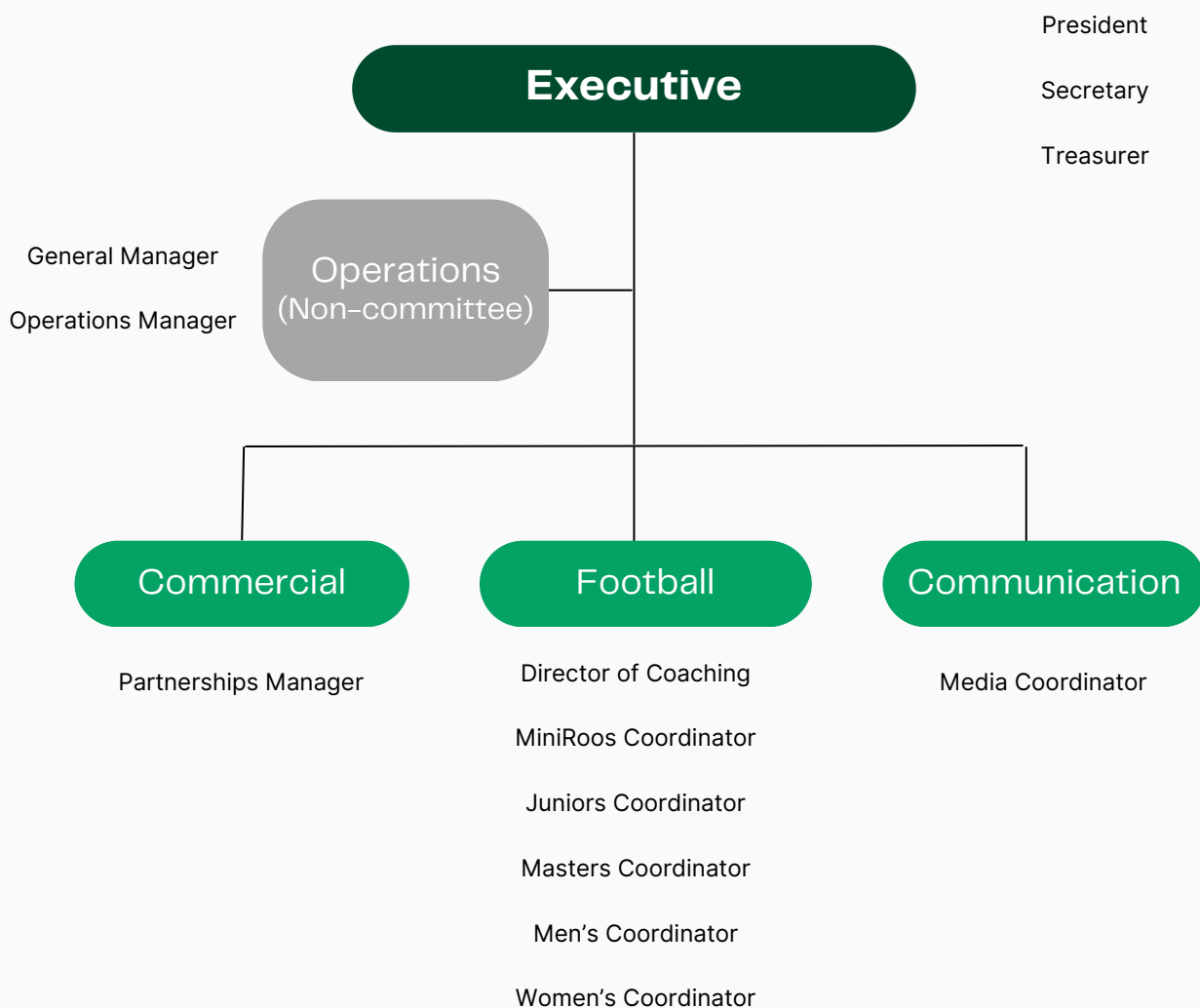


6. Summary

How will we achieve “Forward Phoenix: 2030”?

6.1 Current governance

The current Committee is in accordance with the model rules (Constitution), as illustrated below:



In Towards 2021, it was noted that the committee excelled in managing the day to day running of the Club but was often inflexible regarding strategic planning. To address this disparity, a part-time paid General Manager position was created in 2019 to undertake a majority of the operational duties at the Club, allowing the committee to focus more on strategic matters and planning.

6.2 Governance 2024 and beyond

Effective governance is the cornerstone of Toowong FC's success, with a strategic committee structure at its heart. By cultivating a transparent and accountable decision-making process, we work to ensure that every member's voice is heard, fostering a sense of ownership and unity, with the Club also achieving 40% female committee representation in 2023.

6.2.1 Future structure

In order to address current gaps in our volunteer coverage, we will seek to add two positions to the current governance structure to help meet strategic and operational goals, particularly around our Facilities:

- Grants Manager [Commercial]
- Maintenance Officer/s [Operations]

This structure not only guides the Club's direction but also supports the comprehensive development of players, coaches, and volunteers.

6.2.2 Member development

We will continue to strive to maintain the community benefits associated with volunteer contributions, while balancing this with a willingness to pay for support in key operational areas.

Through the implementation of systematic coaching programs, we empower our coaches to nurture players' skills, ensuring their holistic growth. Additionally, volunteers will receive continuous training and recognition, creating a vibrant support network. This commitment to good governance enhances our club's performance both on and off the field, fostering a resilient, well-rounded, and united community of football enthusiasts.



6.3 Endorsement

In conclusion, the current Committee of Toowong Football Club fully endorses this vision and will actively monitor and review it annually, ensuring that it delivers maximum success.

We envisage that the Club will evolve as set out in the vision, while fully retaining our values throughout the journey and beyond.

Toowong FC Committee

15 January 2024





toowong fc

assist@toowongfc.com.au | www.toowongfc.com.au