

AGENDA

ORDINARY MEETING OF THE
HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL

on

20 November 2017

5.30pm

at

Civic Centre

HORSHAM

COUNCILLORS are respectfully requested to attend the Ordinary Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council to be held in the Municipal Chambers, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm on 20 November 2017.

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CLOSE



PETER F BROWN
Chief Executive

1. READING OF PRAYER AND THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY STATEMENT

2. WELCOME TO DISTINGUISHED GUESTS OR PERSONS IN THE PUBLIC GALLERY

3. APOLOGIES AND REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND SIGNING THEREOF

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL HELD IN THE MUNICIPAL CHAMBERS, CIVIC CENTRE, HORSHAM AT 5.30PM ON 6 November 2017

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL STATUTORY MEETING OF THE HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL HELD IN THE MUNICIPAL CHAMBERS, CIVIC CENTRE, HORSHAM AT 5.30PM ON 9 November 2017

5. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST AND DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest and is attending the Council meeting must make a full disclosure of that interest.

(a) by either –

- (i) advising the Council at the meeting of the details required under paragraphs (b) and (c) immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting; or
- (ii) advising the Chief Executive Officer in writing of the details required under paragraphs (b) and (c) before the meeting; and

(b) classifying the type of interest that has given rise to the conflict as either –

- (i) a direct interest under 77B; or
- (ii) an indirect interest and specifying the particular kind of indirect interest under:

Section 78 – close association

Section 78A – financial interest

Section 78B – conflicting duties

Section 78C – receipt of an applicable gift

Section 78D – consequence of becoming an interested party

Section 78E – impact on residential amenity; and

(c) describing the nature of the interest; and

- (d) if the Councillor advised the Chief Executive Officer of the details under paragraph (a)(ii), the Councillor must make a disclosure of the class of interest only to the meeting immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting.

Members of Staff

Under Section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989, officers or people engaged under contract to the Council providing a report or advice to Council must disclose any conflicts of interests in the matter, including the type of interest.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON THE MOTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

NIL

7.2 RECEPTION AND READING OF PETITIONS, MEMORIALS, JOINT LETTERS AND DEPUTATIONS

7.2.1 PETITION RECEIVED FROM 99 SENIORS CONCERNED ABOUT THE SENIORS MOVIE DAY

File Ref: F07/A05/000001

A petition has been received from Lenyce Donald on behalf of 99 seniors, concerned about the announcement that the Seniors Movie Day, which is held once a month for 9 months of the year, is to be cancelled in 2018 owing to funding cuts.

Details of the petition, including names are attached to **Appendix "7.2A"**.

Chief Executive Officer's Comments

Clause L8.55 of the Horsham Rural City Council's Local Law No 1 on Meeting Procedures read:-

"A petition, or joint letter presented to Council must lay on the table until the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council and no motion, other than to receive the petition or joint letter, may be accepted by the Chairperson, unless the Council unanimously agrees to deal with it earlier". The motion if carried then becomes an Order of the Day for the next Ordinary Meeting of Council on Monday 4 December, 2017.

Director Community Service's comments

Movie and a Meal is an unfunded activity run by the Home and Community Care (HACC) program for a number of years. Due to multiple changes to the funding model including the introduction of NDIS and a Commonwealth model of age care funding, Council will have to repay to the Commonwealth any surplus income not spent on service delivery and will not have access to the savings previously used to support this program.

Unfortunately, we prematurely announced the cessation of the program before we have been able to undertake a review, to understand whether we are able to continue the program through remodelling, finding other funding sources or whether it could move to another provider who is already funded to deliver social activities and connections for the aged community.

It is proposed that once a review is completed, a report would be provided to Council. Meanwhile the program would continue to operate with no changes.

Recommendation

1. That the petition from Lenyce Donald Lay on the Table until the next Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held on Monday 4 December, 2017.
2. That it is proposed to provide a further report to the next Ordinary Meeting of Council outlining when a review would be completed and reported to Council following further consultation with the group.

7.3 MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

NIL

7.4 COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

NIL

7.5 ORDERS OF THE DAY

NIL

8. OTHER REPORTS

8.1 ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS

Council Briefing meeting held on Monday 13 November, 2017 at 5.00pm in the Reception Room.

Refer to **Appendix “8.1A”**.

Recommendation

That Council note the Assembly of Councillors’ – Record of Meetings.

8.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

NIL

8.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE

NIL

8.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

8.4.1 Bicycle Advisory Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 10 October, 2017 at 5.00pm at the Civic Centre, Roberts Avenue, Horsham.

8.4.2 RoadSafe Wimmera Inc Meeting held on Monday, 13 November, 2017 at 7.00pm at the Horsham SES Building, MacPherson Street, Horsham.

8.4.3 Sunnyside Park Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 11 November, 2017 at 7.30pm at the Sunnyside Bowling Clubrooms.

Refer to **Appendix "8.4A"**.

9. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

10. OFFICERS REPORTS

10.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE

10.1.1 TRICENTENNIAL - HORSHAM, USA

SG Frankham File Ref: F06/A03/000001

Purpose

To provide details of a letter of congratulations sent to Horsham Township, USA on their 300th anniversary.

Background

This year marks the tricentennial of Horsham Township in Pennsylvania, USA. The township has been enjoying one large community event each month, culminating in a final gala celebration later this month.

Horsham Township has contacted Horsham Rural City Council and other Horshams in the world seeking a letter of congratulations and some history about our city.

The Mayor has forwarded a letter of congratulations and some images of our city to Horsham Township on behalf of the Horsham Rural City Council (**Appendix "10.1A"**). This letter will be read at their gala celebration later this month.

Issues

Horsham, USA is situated in the Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. The township covers an area of 14 square kilometres. At the 2010 census, the population was 18,842. Horsham is home to Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove and a number of major manufacturing industries. In 2007, Horsham Township was named the 15th best place to live in the United States.

Consultation/Communication

Not applicable

Financial

Not applicable

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

2017-2020 Council Plan:
Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

Provided for information of Council.

10.1.2 ARRANGEMENTS FOR ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

PF Brown File Ref:

Purpose

This report recommends arrangements for the acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) role following the departure of the current CEO on 22 December, 2017.

Background

It is a requirement under Section 94 of the Local Government Act 1989 that Council must appoint a natural person to be its CEO and that Council may only appoint an acting CEO for a period of up to 12 months.

It is a generally accepted principle that wherever possible the acting CEO arrangements should be for as short a time as possible to enable the efficient ongoing operation of the Council.

Issues

The current CEO has resigned effective from 22 December, 2017 and Council has commenced a process to employ a permanent CEO. While the appointment may be made prior Christmas, it is unlikely that a person would be in a position to take up the role until February or March 2018.

Other Councils have in the past appointed an external person as acting CEO. This is usually done in a circumstance where there are specific short term issues to be addressed within the Council or where there are no qualified internal candidates to take up the role.

Horsham Rural City Council is fortunate that all four current directors have the capacity, ability and experience to undertake the acting CEO role if required.

This report will recommend that the CEO role over the period be substantially filled by Graeme Harrison, Director Corporate Service and Angela Murphy, Director Planning and Economic.

Recommendation

1. That Council appoint Angela Murphy as Acting CEO from 23 December, 2017 to 1 January, 2018 and Graeme Harrison as Acting CEO from 2 January, 2018 to 31 March, 2018 or until a permanent CEO officially takes up the role whichever occurs first.
2. That should a permanent CEO not be in a position to take up the role by 1 April, 2018 that further consideration be given to this matter in March 2018.

10.1.3 VICTORIAN PARLIAMENT'S ECONOMIC, EDUCATION, JOBS AND SKILLS COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO FUEL PRICES IN REGIONAL VICTORIA

PF Brown File Ref:

Purpose

This report advises Council in relation to a presentation to the Victorian Parliament's Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills Committee inquiry into Fuel Prices in Regional Victoria.

Background

Horsham Rural City Council has been concerned for some time about the level of fuel prices in Horsham. This reflects concerns in the community as expressed by community members in the Wimmera Mail-Times and by the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF). Horsham is generally viewed as an expensive place to purchase fuel and there has been significant concern as other regional centres which have similar characteristics to Horsham such as Ararat and Stawell can provide fuel at lower prices than Horsham.

On 21 December, 2015 a report was provided to Council on Horsham fuel prices which is attached as **Appendix "10.1B"**. The report outlined the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) approach to views on what drove fuel pricing and is generally accepted that the main factors that drive fuel pricing are:

- Volume of sales
- Traffic numbers and route
- Location of outlets and distance to other towns
- Convenience store sales

It is bemusing that Horsham has high fuel prices that are rarely changed and yet we seem to meet the criteria for lower pricing, being on the Western Highway, with high traffic numbers and a significant number of outlets many of which have convenience store sales.

In September 2017 a report was provided to Council outlining a submission which had been made to the Victorian Parliament's Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills Committee's Inquiry into Fuel Prices in Regional Victoria. That submission is attached as **Appendix "10.1C"**.

Issues

On Monday 13 November, 2017 the Chief Executive made a presentation to the committee via a teleconference and in preparing for that presentation, the writer researched a number of other submissions which were also being presented on that day. Unfortunately only two members of the Committee were at the hearing being Nazih Elasmr, Chair of the Committee and Peter Crisp, National Party Member for Mildura.

Notwithstanding the low number of Parliamentary Representatives, there was considerable interest shown in the issues which Horsham faces and questions about Horsham's situation as presented in our submission and also about the wholesale fuel price issues which confront farmers and have been addressed in a separate submission by the VFF which is attached as **Appendix "10.1D"** to this report.

Submissions were also made by parties including "Informed Sources" and from APCO Service Station Pty Ltd an independent retailer in the petroleum sector. Submissions may be found at <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/eejsc/article/3148>.

One of the suggestions put to the Committee is that prices are likely to be lower where there is a strong independent operating in the local market. While this is certainly not the case for Horsham, the question was asked as to whether Council has undertaken any activities to encourage a strong independent to establish in Horsham.

This Council has not previously examined this aspect. It is suggested by the writer that while Council may assist with identification of appropriate land and providing a priority pathway through the planning system, that the issue is much more complex than simply Horsham's desire to have an independent fuel outlet.

Councillors will note that our submission in summary included three actions (listed below) and it is suggested that the Victorian Government in a wider look at fuel pricing, consider how it might support the establishment of strong independent suppliers and co-operatives in regional Victoria.

- Encourage the RACV to launch a statewide campaign promoting regional fuel users to seek the lowest price at all times in an attempt to reduce the higher costed operators.
- Encourage the ACCC to facilitate a meeting with Horsham Rural City Council to identify why and how the fuel prices are permanently set in Horsham 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for well over 12 months.
- As a result of the submissions for this inquiry, the State Government be requested to look into a broader review with the leading fuel companies as to how prices are set in regional Victoria and identify a transparent process to advise fuel users on a regular basis as to how the prices are reached.

As a side issue it should be noted that recently there have been issues for smaller communities being Hopetoun, Murtoa and Minyip with changes of ownership of petrol stations requiring new regulations from the EPA which may put those service stations at risk.

It is important to realise that the fuel business is very complex and this Council does not have and would not be able to gain a full understanding of the issues involved and will rely on the other tiers of Government and their agencies such as the ACCC to assist us in providing a solution.

Recommendation

That Council write to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission to seek a meeting to further discuss issues of high petrol prices in Horsham.

10.1.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEES OF MANAGEMENT

PF Brown File Ref: F019/A15/000001

Purpose

To endorse the allocation of Councillors to Committees.

Background

The Council Committees of Management for 2018 have been reviewed by the Mayor. Councillors have indicated that they wish to retain the committees they were allocated in 2017 for a further year. Refer to **Appendix "10.1E"**.

Cr Robinson has again declined to participate in any Council committees in 2018.

The Municipal Association of Victoria and the Victorian Local Governance Association require formal advice following resolution of the Councillors appointed to represent the Horsham Rural City Council on those bodies.

Recommendation

1. That Council notes the Council Committees of Management.
2. That Council nominates Cr Pam Clarke as Council's representative to the Municipal Association of Victoria and Cr Josh Koenig as the substitute representative.
3. That Council nominates Cr Pam Clarke as Council's representative to the Victorian Local Governance Association and Cr Josh Koenig the substitute.

PETER F. BROWN
Chief Executive

10.2 DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

10.2.1 COUNCIL FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

G Harrison

File Ref: F14/A04/000001

Purpose

To report the outcomes from the October 2017 Finance and Performance Committee meeting.

Background

Council's Finance and Performance Committee meets on a monthly basis to review both financial and non-financial information to support good decision making around resource allocation, provide assurance around the financial health of Council and allows Councillors to manage the financial resources that they are responsible for.

The following items are discussed:

- Comparisons of actual to budget for councils delivery of services, capital program and operational initiatives
- Reporting on new contracts, variations and exemptions from procurement
- Investments and borrowings analysis
- Tracking of progress for grant applications
- Horsham Town Hall Performing Arts report of operations
- Review of detailed payment summaries
- Other performance related KPI measures etc that may arise during the year
- Other financial matters from time to time

The minutes from the recent meeting of 13 November 2017, are included in the Assembly of Councillors minutes (**Appendix "8.1A"**).

Issues

The October Report was received and discussed with key matters reported that Council's Capital Program was well on track for this time of year compared to budget and prior year's performance and that the Horsham Town Hall Performances are tracking ahead of expectations and operational expenditure is within budget.

The final cash surplus from 2016/17 was also reported which showed a cash surplus result of \$521,489 which is 0.94% of Council's total revenue. For a total revenue budget of \$55.5m this is within expectations. Some reasons for the surplus are:

- Late appointment/replacement of staff
- Increased revenues from some program areas
- Savings in operations across a range of service delivery areas

The final cash result should not be confused with the annual financial surplus of \$8.292m as reported in the annual report. This result is obtained after applying all relevant accounting standards and principles and a reconciliation of these two reported figures has been provided to Council.

The final cash surplus is determined after allowing for expenditure from prior years plus projects not completed which are then carried forward. The total carried forward projects were \$5.0m or 9% of total revenue. These projects were either not fully delivered or not commenced as at 30 June 2017. Some general explanations of the reasons for non-delivery are:

- delays in programming due to scoping delays, tender matters or contractor availability
- flood mitigation works taking a priority
- delays in receiving grant notifications
- unexpected new grant opportunities taking priority

Any cash surplus is a one-off and should not be allocated toward any ongoing expenditure or reduction in revenues as these will not be sustainable. Council has discussed the allocation of the cash surplus funds to projects which will further improve the efficiency of operations or are one-off capital projects.

The following application of the funds is proposed:

1. \$319,000 be set aside in the Major Capital Works Reserve for decision at a later date. Projects identified at this stage for consideration are, Mockinya Fire Dam, support for Motocross International event, future co-contributions for major works such as the Indoor Sports Stadium, depot relocation and aquatic centre upgrades.
2. \$156,000 to fund a Business Analyst role for an 18 month period to review operational processes in order to drive efficiencies across the organisation and assist with implementation and integration of new Information Technology projects. (See **Appendix "10.2A"** for further information).
3. \$27,000 to implement an on-line timesheet module for Council's core management information system. This will allow for future electronic recording of staff time against projects and tasks. This is currently a manual system.
4. \$19,489 to be set aside in the sustainability projects reserve for use to implement projects for future solar panels, LED lighting or other energy efficiency projects across all of Council's facilities.

Consultation/Communication

The detailed reports and information provided has been discussed and reviewed by Council as part of the Finance and Performance Committee function.

Financial

Council's Final Cash Surplus of \$521,489 from 2016-17 has not been factored in to the 2017/18 budget. Whilst this amount is immaterial in the context of Council's total budget of \$57m, it is good governance process for these allocations to new projects be formally adopted by Council.

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

Council Plan Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

Recommendation

That Council approve the proposed allocations from the 2016-17 Financial Year Final cash Surplus.

10.2.2 ANNUAL CENTRALISED VALUATIONS

G Harrison

File Ref: F27/A01/000001

Purpose

To update Council on the new legislation to amend the *Valuation of Land Act 1960* to move to annual centralised valuations.

Background

Currently the *Valuation of Land Act 1960* requires General Valuations to be completed biannually in every even calendar year. Councils currently have the option to nominate the Valuer-General as the valuation authority, engage an independent contracted Valuer or directly employ their Valuer.

In 2014, Horsham Rural City Council opted to nominate the Valuer-General as our valuation authority for the 2016 General Valuation. The Valuer-General subsequently awarded a sub-contract to local Horsham based Valuer Ben Sawyer from Preston Rowe Patterson. This arrangement is continuing for our 2018 General Valuation which is well underway.

Following the release of the Victorian Budget 2017/18, the State Government has introduced the *State Taxation Acts Amendment Bill 2017* to the Victorian Parliament. The Bill was initially withdrawn for a period of time whilst the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) held discussions and negotiations with the State Government on behalf of all councils.

Debate is due to resume in parliament the week commencing 13 November 2017.

The Bill proposes:

1. Valuations will be conducted annually by the Valuer-General
2. The Government will pay the full cost of annual valuations provided to councils by the Valuer-General
3. A council can opt-out of centralised valuations until 2022, and in doing so will continue to contribute 50 per cent of the cost for existing biennial valuations
4. Councils will pay the full cost of supplementary valuations undertaken by the Valuer-General.

Issues

The MAV has worked hard with the State Government and councils to get some amendment to the bill, which has led to items 2, 3 and 4 above. Councils that employ in-house valuers will be impacted more significantly.

Additional to the proposed changes there has been a high level in-principle agreement reached between Local Government and the State Government that states that Local Government will not be financially worse off as a consequence of the movement to annual valuations and the centralisation of the valuation function with the Valuer-General.

It also includes: provisional arrangements for in-house valuers, agreement about the Valuer-General covering the cost of any IT system changes, honouring existing valuer contracts, make provision for in-house costs from any additional workload on rates staff as a result of this change and agreement that the supplementary rates process would remain unchanged.

Horsham Rural City Council is less impacted by this change than some other Councils as Council already uses the Valuer-General for its valuation services.

Consultation/Communication

The State Government and Local Government sectors (through the MAV) have been in consultation on these changes. MAV is continuing to work with the Valuer-General to ensure that there is a commitment that they will continue to utilise the knowledge and expertise of local valuers in rural and regional areas.

The impact for the community and ratepayers is that fluctuations in property values and resultant rate variations are likely to be less severe with annual valuations than valuations every two years.

It may impact negatively on properties where values are increasing rapidly as these increases may be realised one year earlier than under the previous approach. However, it should always be noted that valuations are a “zero sum” game and that a rise in one area will lead to a reduction in another so impacts will always vary for individuals across the whole municipality.

Financial

The changes in the cost sharing arrangements will certainly lead to cost savings for Council of approximately \$25,000. However, there is anticipated to be additional workload on rates staff as a consequence of the annualised approach but the exact impact and the compensation that will be provided is as yet unknown.

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

Council Plan Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

Provided for information of Council.

10.2.3 ELECTRONIC RATE NOTICES – E-NOTICES

K Bell / T Barents

File Ref: F27/A01/000001

Purpose

To update Council on our latest campaign to increase the number of electronic notice (e-notice) registrations.

Background

As part of Council's direction to use digital technology for enhancement and efficiencies, a decision was made to offer ratepayers the option of electronic rate notices. An advertising campaign commenced with a flyer in the April 2015 fourth instalment notices. Since then we have included a flyer in our annual 2015/16 and 2017/18 annual notices. We have run two email campaigns where we extract the email address of all ratepayers in our database, and those who are not already registered receive an email inviting them to register. We have also held a competition each year for those who register, offering an iPad mini in 2015/16 (donated by our provider), a \$100 Town Hall voucher in 2016/17 and 'Win \$500 off your rates' in 2017/18 (this competition was run in conjunction with several neighbouring councils).

Formsexpress is the organisation that currently provides Council's rate notice printing and e-notice services. They offer two options of e-notice, a pdf document emailed to the ratepayer and available any time through their web portal or through BPay as a BPView document.

Issues

The following table compares last year to this year (as at the beginning of last month):

Rateables	Formsport 3/10/2016	Formsport 2/10/2017	Bpay View 3/10/2016	Bpay View 2/10/2017	Total 2016	Total 2017
12,168	917	1,773	111	297	1,028	2,070

Percentage 2016	Aus Wide Formsexpress Ranking 2016	Percentage 2017	Aus Wide Formsexpress Ranking 2017
8.45%	20	17.01%	5

Recently Council sent out the second Instalment notice for 2016/17 and 1,019 of 5,191 notices were sent electronically (19.6%).

Current top 20 ranking for e-notices across Formsexpress Australia-wide clients:

		Percentage 2016	Percentage 2017
Ipswich City Council	QLD	13.35	22.30
Townsville City Council	QLD	16.73	19.25
Borough of Queenscliffe	VIC	14.66	17.83
Nillumbik Shire Council	VIC	11.26	17.17
Horsham Rural City Council	VIC	8.45	17.01
The Hills Shire Council	NSW	13.09	16.91
Surf Coast Shire	VIC	8.61	16.91
Wagga Wagga City Council	NSW	14.29	16.79
Wyndham City Council	VIC	10.66	16.75
Griffith City Council	NSW	10.33	16.60
Blayney Shire Council	NSW	6.97	16.45
Byron Shire Council (Rates)	NSW	10.85	15.05
Burnside City Council	SA	1.92	14.98
Warrnambool City Council	VIC	5.67	14.93
Port Macquarie Hastings Council	NSW	13.85	14.64
Marrickville Council	NSW	10.97	14.44
Moonee Valley City Council	VIC	10.35	13.97
Mid Coast Council - Great Lakes	NSW	14.35	13.66
Northern Grampians Shire	VIC	6.19	13.49

Note: percentages may include rate notices and animal notices for some Councils.

The following future ideas are being investigated:

- To continue to email all new customers information on how to enrol for electronic rate notices – as a part of processing sales information in the rates department.
- To include a “Pay Now” button as part of the emailed notice to take ratepayers directly to a payment gateway.

- To introduce electronic notices for animal registration renewals. Email campaigns are by far the most successful way of obtaining new registrations and we will continue to run these annually.

Financial

Since 1 August 2017, Council has had 410 notices registered. This equates to savings of \$1,610 in postage for this year alone and will be roughly \$4,920 over three years. Costs have also been increasing above CPI with Formsexpress that have in part offset some of these gains.

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

Provided for information of Council.

GRAEME HARRISON
Director Corporate Services

10.3 DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC

10.3.1 HORSHAM CUP WEEKEND

A Murphy

File Ref: F06/07/000001

Purpose

To update Council on the evaluation of the Horsham Cup weekend.

Background

In 2011, the Public Holidays Act 1993 was amended to restore a regional Council's ability to make alternative local public holiday arrangements in lieu of Melbourne Cup Day.

As Council will be aware, Council resolved to declare Horsham Cup Day on Friday 3 November, 2017 as the official public holiday taking the place of Melbourne Cup Day on 7 November, 2017. Council agreed to this substitution for 3 years being 2017, 2018 and 2019. Council also resolved to work closely with the Horsham and District Racing Club and key business and community stakeholders to review the opportunities of the allocation of the public holiday in 2018.

This change presented an opportunity for business and community groups to work together to package and promote events across the municipality to present a viable tourist product for visitors.

Council's Business and Economic Development Manager facilitated a number of sessions with representatives from:

- Business Horsham
- Horsham Town Hall
- Horsham Agricultural Society
- Wimmera Business Centre
- Horsham and District Racing Club
- Horsham Plaza
- Visitor Information Centre
- Hospitality and Accommodation sector

to develop a package of events, and collectively market the weekend as Destination Horsham.

Council also facilitated a meeting of the schools in the Council area to identify and work through education needs given that schools plan their professional development, student absent days and holidays at least 12 months in advance.

Schools have agreed to take the Horsham Cup Day holiday on the Friday in 2018.

We will also seek feedback from the banking sector, government sector, GWMWater and Wimmera Health Care Group.

Issues

Since the weekend, Council officers have formally requested feedback from the above key stakeholders to present to a meeting on Wednesday 22 November to workshop the benefits and issues. The workshop outcomes will be collated into a report to be presented to Council.

Business Horsham has also requested an opportunity to present to a Council briefing on 11 December, 2017.

Consultation/communication

Council has facilitated meetings with key stakeholders to develop the package of events, and will continue to engage for the purpose of evaluation.

Links to Council Plan

Goal 1 Community and Cultural Development

- 1.3 Contribute to cultural activities that enhance our community
- 1.4 Develop the municipality as a desirable place to live, work and enjoy for people of all ages and abilities

Provided for information of Council.

ANGELA MURPHY
Director Planning and Economic

10.4 DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

10.4.1 CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

C Kelly

File Ref: F06/A03/000001

Purpose

To present to Council the draft Child Safe Policy and a Reporting a Child Safety Concern Procedure and recommend that these are approved.

The development and approval of a Child Safe Policy and a Reporting a Child Safety Concern Procedure are important steps in the phasing in of Child Safe Standards at Horsham Rural City Council as per legislative requirement.

Background

In April 2012 the Victorian Government initiated the *Betrayal of Trust Inquiry*. From this, 15 recommendations were made including compulsory minimum standards for creating child safe environments.

In November 2015, the Victorian Parliament passed the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment Act* to introduce Child Safe Standards.

There are seven Child Safe Standards as follows:

1. *Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements*
2. *A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety*
3. *A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children*
4. *Screening, supervision training and other human resources practices exist that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing staff*
5. *Process for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse*
6. *Strategies to identify and remove risk of abuse*
7. *Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.*

Council has a moral and ethical responsibility to provide and promote child safe environments. Alongside this Council is bound by legislative responsibilities to meet the requirements of the Child Safe Standards. Council is currently phasing in the Child Safe Standards as per legislation requirements. Council must develop relevant documentation, policies, procedures and practices that are reflective of the child safe standards.

Council has appointed a project officer to develop, plan and co-ordinate the roll out of the child safe standards in the organisation. A Child Safe Committee with relevant internal staff has been developed and two Child Safe Officers have been appointed and approved.

Issues

The following documents have been produced for approval:

- Child Safe Policy (see **Appendix “10.4A”**)
- Reporting a Child Safety Concern Procedure (see **Appendix “10.4B”**)

These documents address Child Safe Strategies 1, 2, and 5 and alongside the Code of Conduct – Adults Behaviour Toward Children applicable to Council staff, form the ‘backbone’ of Council’s management and response to the issue of child safety.

Further to this the documents give a clear message and direction for all staff around the issue of child safety, and help to provide a foundation for a change in organisational culture around this important issue. Training will be provided to all staff, volunteers and Councillors in relation to their child safe responsibilities.

Consultation/Communication

- The Council website has been updated to include a Child Safe standards page, which reflects our work to date including contact information for the two child safety officers. The policies and procedures once adopted will link to this page.
- A ‘statement of commitment’ has been added to the Council Plan (‘guiding principles’ section).
- Press release around the appointment of the child safety officers.
- Ongoing consultation with other local governments, Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Local Government Professionals (LGPro), Victoria Police and Child Protection.
- Changes to documentation used as part of the children’s programs run from the Horsham Town Hall and Art Gallery to inform families about child safety.

Financial

Funds have been allocated for a project officer to be a dedicated resource to phase in Child Safe Standards within the organisation.

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

Goal 4: Governance and Business Excellence

Ensure that Council has in place systems and processes to comply with relevant legislation requirements and obligations

Recommendation

That Council approves the Child Safe Policy and the Reporting a Child Safety Concern Procedure.

KEVIN O’BRIEN
Director Community Services

10.5 DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

10.5.1 ROADS TO RECOVERY – STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

John Martin File Ref:

Purpose

To present and discuss correspondence received from the Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister Chester, in relation to a Statement of Expectations for the Roads to Recovery funding.

Background

The Federal Government's Roads to Recovery funding program has provided a significant and valuable contribution to help renew and upgrade Council's roads across the municipality for many years. In 2017-18 Council has been provided with \$1.99 million from this program.

As outlined in the Minister's letter of 7 November 2017, attached as **Appendix "10.5A"**, many sources of Government funding have associated conditions or expectations linked to the funding.

In this case, the Minister has asked councils to:

- consider directing more of the Roads to Recovery funding to projects that reduce fatalities and serious injuries,
- provide more regular reports on the status of funded projects, and
- how all levels of government could improve road safety and the outcomes from investments in road infrastructure.

Issues

The requests from the Minister as outlined in his Statement of Expectations are quite appropriate, in particular the aim to address road safety.

Factors used by Council to assess priorities for investment in road reconstruction and upgrade include (sections of roads with):

- Curves with poor visibility/narrow road width
- Crests with narrow road width
- Narrow sections of road with higher traffic counts, especially higher truck counts (i.e. priority freight routes)
- Intersections, especially those of irregular configuration
- Sections of roads with narrow shoulders
- School bus routes
- Significant pedestrian or cycling activity
- Obstacles close to the road
- Excessive roughness / surface condition.

Projects which address these factors clearly achieve safety benefits.

An example of this is the nearly completed works on the Telangatuk East – Rocklands Road, which will improve safety on a narrow section of road on a curve in hilly terrain.

Discussion

It is proposed to include a specific criteria related to road safety in Council's prioritisation of road projects in the budget, based on the factors outlined above and potentially additional factors.

Consultation

Priorities for road works will be developed through a consultative process during the budget development process.

Financial

As indicated above, Council has received significant funding from the Federal Government's Roads to Recovery program in recent years. Totals over the past three years have been:

2017-18	\$1,990,890
2016-17	\$2,298,217
2015-16	\$2,843,980

Unfortunately, it has been advised that Council is expected to receive only \$990,000 in 2018-19. This will place a greater burden on rates revenue to renew Council's roads, including to address safety imperatives as sought in the Minister's Statement of Expectations.

Provided for information of Council.

10.5.2 WATER SKIING ON THE WIMMERA RIVER

Mandy Kirsopp

File Ref:

Purpose

To update Council on the status of water skiing on the Wimmera River in the Horsham Weir Pool area.

Background

A 2016 report to Council presented the results of community consultation regarding the potential for an increased level of water skiing on the Horsham Weir Pool. Council's resolution from that meeting was:

That Council endorse, in principle, the expansion of water skiing on the Wimmera River, subject to:

- 1. The development of water sharing arrangements and formal rules for the effective management of this skiing in a manner that is compatible with other uses and users of the river;*
- 2. Presentation of a further report to Council on these arrangements and rules, including the consultation undertaken in relation to establishment of these.*

A subsequent report to Council, presented in April 2017 referred to continued community consultation and the development of documents including draft rules relating to river usage and water exclusion zones, and a river use agreement. The report suggested that further consultation was required before an application could be made to Maritime Safety Victoria, a division of Transport Safety Victoria, for a formal rule change to the use of the river.

Issues

Water skiing is an exciting addition to activities on the water, but represents only a single use of the waterway.

A variety of factors must be considered to coordinate waterway activity. These include:

- activation of the river for the benefit of diverse and multiple groups within our community,
- management of exclusion periods and zones to ensure safety on the water,
- compliance with Native Title and
- support of activities to increase the health of the river within the Horsham Weir Pool.

Council is the designated Waterway Manager for several lakes within our municipality including the Horsham Weir Pool. Council's responsibility is to coordinate the shared and safe use of the water.

Planning is occurring for a range of projects to 'activate' the river - the waterway and river frontage. This is as a result of draft strategies and plans that include but are not limited to the:

- Wimmera River Corridor Plan,
- CBD Revitalisation strategy,
- Precinct planning occurring at Horsham Recreation Reserve,
- Municipal Bicycle Strategy and
- Completion of the Anzac Centenary Bridge.

Suggestions to increase activity along the banks and on the water include:

- Paddle boats for commercial operation, and
- 'pop up' cafes involving multiple food vans, temporary seating and music, similar to the recent 'Farm to Fork' event held in Roberts Place.

The river waterway and banks are multi-use areas and it is anticipated that increased activity by diverse groups will occur. Council plans and strategies endorse this increased activity.

Water skiing requires temporary 'exclusion zones' where non-registered users of the water are excluded from entering the water. Exclusion from the water needs to be carefully managed to ensure the shared and equitable use of a community facility. Extended periods of exclusion are not compatible with plans to increase activity on the river.

A submission from the Natimuk Lake Water Ski Club (July 2015) suggested eight months of water skiing and exclusive use of a designated area - from Apex Island to the Wimmera River bridge, September until April. This was proposed to involve:

- Two training nights per week from 4 pm until one hour before sunset,
- Weekend competition on Saturday or Sunday from 10 am until one hour before sunset (to be negotiated with other river users).

Maritime Safety Victoria has indicated it will not approve the extended exclusion periods as proposed. The river is a community asset and extended exclusive usage is not compatible with principles of access and the effective management of a community resource. Although precedents for extended exclusion zones exist in other parts of Victoria, these are either historical and reflect earlier understandings of river usage, or reflect different waterway conditions.

The Wotjobaluk Native Title consent determination recognises the existence of limited native title rights and interests along the bed and banks of the Wimmera River. The Wotjobaluk People were recognised as holding the following rights: 'to hunt fish, gather and camp for personal, domestic and non-commercial communal needs'. (Adapted from: Victorian Government Solicitor's Office)

The Native Title Act 1993 requires that before activity on the water or foreshore occurs, the registered native title bodies corporate, Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) must be notified and given an opportunity to comment.

Environmental health of the river banks, flora and water are carefully managed by Wimmera Catchment Management Authority (CMA) and involve environmental flows and periods of low water level to support regeneration of plant growth and other aspects of river ecology and hydrology. Water management by the CMA is being incorporated into a calendar of events of river activity that will be carefully coordinated to maximise access by a diversity of water users.

Consultation

BGLC as the legal entity representing Traditional Owners has been extensively consulted regarding water usage and activities along the banks of the river. Preliminary discussions have identified the need to establish processes for notifying BGLC of waterway activities, not just of events such as water skiing but also when work occurs at the weir or remediation work occurs along the river frontage.

The Aboriginal Water Officer at the CMA is providing advice regarding heritage flows, significant sites, proposed public art opportunities and river health.

An initial meeting has been held with Natimuk Lake Water Ski Club. Water skiing on the Horsham Weir Pool is encouraged and supported with recent events including a Come and Try weekend, and practice sessions and skiing demonstration for the Kanamaroo weekend. Skiing events, tournaments and displays will be supported, as opposed to allowing a single extended period of exclusive use of the river.

Financial

Activation of the Horsham Weir Pool has the potential to generate tourism and financial benefit for the community. Visitors to the city crossing the Wimmera Bridge can clearly observe activity on the river and may be encouraged to spend time by the water.

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

Council Plan - Goal 1 - Community and Cultural Development

- 1.2 Develop a safe, active and healthy community, encouraging participation
- 1.2.09 Activate the Wimmera River precinct for the community and visitors (including lights and greater presentation)

Next Steps

The planned next steps in development of water skiing on Horsham Weir Pool are:

- Further liaison with BGLC, CMA and other agencies to ensure the effective management of waterway activities, and
- Development of policy and procedures to guide waterway and foreshore activity within the Horsham Weir Pool.

Provided for information of Council.

JOHN MARTIN
Director Technical Services

11. URGENT BUSINESS

APPENDICES

F07/A05/000001
Kevin O'Brien
12 NOV 2007

Horsham Rural City Council

16 Kooyong St. (Mayor, C's), CE
 HORSHAM 3400 - Report -

53823008 or 0438538230

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

We have been informed there is to be a decision made about the Seniors Movies and have collected a petition to support the continuation of the Movies and would like you all to consider the enclosed petition.

Thanking you Yours Truly
Senior Citizens.

Lenyce Donald on behalf of many concerned



Lenyce J Donald

To Whom it may Concern on the Horsham Rural City Council.

Dear Sirs,

It has been announced that the Seniors Movie Day which is held once a month for 9 months of the year is to be cancelled in 2018 owing to Funding Cuts.

This is a big disappointment to most seniors who enjoy the outing knowing that Jackie Bennet is there to help in any way needed.

If this is a cost cutting exercise to save money you are disappointing many Senior Citizens most who have been Rate Payers for Years. We hope that you will reconsider this suggestion.

Thanking you.

Ben Stephens
 Cheryl McDonald.
 Kathryn Hardy
 Flora Tancos
 Nola Clark
 Maureen Davis
 Peter Schmidt
 Janine Bester
 Jane Leah
 Elaine Cooper
 Esna Wood
 Bob Schilling
 Marion Keyte
 Avenel Keyte.

Lara Gudz.
 L. Uhe
 Anne Leberg
 Theresa O'Loughlin
 Shirley Schilling
 Joyce Smith.
 Helen Arnott.
 Rose Backler
 B's Harris
 Bokouckin
 Jean Bonnie
 Francis Dunsing.
 Jocelyn Merle
 Lois Miatke
 May Elover
 P. Glover.

Debra Ryan
 Frances Hill
 G Mulhader
 S Mulhader
 Dobbie Coyle.
 Milt
 A J. Clackton
 Kerry Flynn.
 John Flynn
 A Hill.

To Whom it may Concern on the Horsham Rural City Council.

Dear Sirs,

It has been announced that the Seniors Movie Day which is held once a month for 9 months of the year is to be cancelled in 2018 owing to Funding Cuts.

This is a big disappointment to most seniors who enjoy the outing knowing that Jackie Bennet is there to help in any way needed.

If this is a cost cutting exercise to save money you are disappointing many Senior Citizens most who have been Rate Payers for Years. We hope that you will reconsider this suggestion.

Thanking you.

Lauren Downward

W.S. Bennett

R.D. Bennett

Jan Dues

Thana Class

Norma Hudson

Lorraine Armstrong

A.A.

P.J. Larkins

C. Kelly

P. Pinky

Deanne Lewis

Benny & wife

64

M. Soroleto

A. Rosole

C. Bell

B. B. B.

James McKenzie

at my friend.

Nancy Kennedy

Doraine Barrons

Cred. Bell

**COUNCIL BRIEFING HELD IN THE RECEPTION ROOM
ON MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2017 AT 5.07PM**

Present: Cr P Clarke, Mayor, Cr MA Radford, Cr D Grimble, Cr J Koenig, Cr A Gulvin, Cr L Power, Cr J Robinson; Peter Brown, Chief Executive; Graeme Harrison, Director Corporate Services; Angela Murphy, Director Planning and Economic; Kevin O'Brien, Director Community Services; John Martin, Director Technical Services; Heather Proctor, Finance Manager (item 3 only); Zac Gorman, Management Accountant (item 3 only); Cassandra Kelly, Governance Officer Early Years (item 4.1 only); Anne Donovan, Community Development Manager (items 4.2 and 5 only); Annie Mintern, Alcohol Change Project Officer (item 4.2 only); Mandi Stewart, Human Services Manager (item 4.3 only)

Apologies: Nil

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Cr Clarke welcomed everyone.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST SEC 79, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1989
(AS AMENDED)**

Nil.

3. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Heather Proctor and Zac Gorman attended.

3.1 Disclosure of Conflict of Interest
Nil

3.2 2016/17 Annual Accounts
Discussed

3.3 Carried Forward Cash Surplus from 2016/17
Discussed

3.4 Monthly Report
Discussed

3.5 Town Hall Report
Discussed

3.6 Creditor Payments
Discussed

4. DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Child Safe Standards
Cassandra Kelly attended to discuss draft report including policies and procedures.

4.2 Alcohol Culture Change Project

Annie Mintern and Anne Donovan attended to provide an update on the project and planned activities.

4.3 Age Friendly Communities

Mandi Stewart attended to discuss the Age Friendly Communities Project.

4.4 Parking Strategy

Discussed

4.5 Economic Development Strategy

Discussed

4.6 Street Name Request – Harnath, McManus and Thamm

Discussed

Meeting adjourned for dinner 7.05pm.

Meeting reconvened at 7.30pm.

5. MITRE COMMUNITY PLAN

Anne Donovan and Bernie Dunn in attendance.

6. CLOSE

7.55pm



MINUTES

Bicycle Advisory Committee

Held on Tuesday 10 October 2017 at 5.00 pm
Civic Centre, Roberts Ave, Horsham

Present:	Grant Hollaway	Cycling Community (Chair)
	Cr Alethea Gulvin	Councillor
	Gary Aitken	Wimmera River Improvement Committee
	Rudy Panozzo	Cycling Community
	Gillian Vanderwaal	Cycling Community
	Janine Harfield	Health Sector
Apologies:	Alan Bedggood	Cycling Community
Ex Officio	Martin Duke	Manager, Infrastructure
	Mandy Kirsopp	Project Officer, Sustainability and Recreation

- **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and noted that Gillian Vanderwaal needed to leave the meeting at 6.00 pm

- **Disclosure of Conflict of Interest**

None declared.

- **Confirmation of Previous Minutes**

Moved: Rudy Panozzo **Seconded:** Grant Hollaway **CARRIED**
That the Minutes of the meeting 16 August 2017 were an accurate record of the meeting.

- **Guest Speaker**

Dan Sonogo - unable to attend tonight's meeting. Deferred to the next meeting.

- **Business arising from previous minutes**

5.1 and 5.2 Grampians Regional Cycling Tourism Workshop

Noted that Damien and Dan from Horsham Cyclery were contacted and invited to attend the workshop. Also that Grant Hollaway, Rudy Panozzo, Alethea Gulvin, Martin Duke and Mandy Kirsopp attended the various workshops.

5.3 Grampians Regional Cycling Tourism Master Plan

Martin Duke obtained a copy of the master plan and distributed it to members.

5.4 Template of cycle routes - Grant Hollaway

Grant has emailed the template to Martin Duke and also distributed to members of the committee. The template provides a mechanism for collecting data re: areas requiring attention. Template sent to all the members

Committee members to add to the template for discussion at meetings

5.5 Contact with company re: cycle trails and tourism

Mandy Kirsopp has been in contact with the company - an agency providing consultancy services in the field of cycle trails and tourism. No further action at this stage.

5.6 Hamilton St Cycling Upgrade

Martin Duke has made suggested changes to the submission and has incorporated Alan Bedggood's suggestion re: green lanes. Changes also involve: widening of the kerb to create a continuous riding path (no stop/starting required). The revised plan is more costly to implement and if the submission is successful will require additional funding.

Action - The revised plan was presented to the committee and was endorsed by the committee.

5.7 Strategic linkages between Council plans

Refer also Item 8. Mandy Kirsopp will identify linkages between cycling and other Council plans and strategies. Information will be presented at the next meeting.

5.8 Wimmera River Improvement Committee (WRIC)

Gary Aitken reported the WRIC is delighted to have the pedestrian bridge open but noted that currently, no cycling is allowed on the bridge.

The WRIC is anxious to complete the track on the southern side of the river but is waiting on developers to release their land.

The WRIC is seeking support to build an additional boardwalk approximately 1 km downstream from the existing boardwalk. The crossing will create a connection between Curran and River Heights Rds. The area is managed by DELWP.

Action: None identified at this stage

MOTION

That Anzac bridge be shared with cyclists and pedestrians and that a centre line be marked along the length of the bridge, consistent with the treatment of the Barnes Boulevard pathway

Moved: Grant Hollaway

Seconded: Rudy Panozzo

CARRIED

Action arising if Motion is adopted:

Martin Duke to arrange the removal of signs requiring cyclist to dismount and arrange that appropriate signage be erected at the northern and southern entrances to Anzac bridge.

- **Correspondence**

- **6.1 TAC application - Hamilton St Cycling Upgrade**

- Application has been submitted. Expect to be notified of the outcome in 6-8 weeks.

- **Business arising from correspondence**

- None

- **Strategic Planning - cycle routes and priorities for works**

- Grant Hollaway led a general discussion re: the importance of developing a strategic plan. The current plan 2012-2016 requires review and will reflect new priorities and understanding. A range of comments were made and include:

- Council is focussed on cars; the Depot is focused on cars
 - We need to create a road network that is cycling friendly
 - We need to increase our footprint for recreational cyclists
 - The river should be fully utilised
 - Bikes should be viewed as a form of transport
 - Cyclists, up to Year 10, can't safely ride along bike routes to the Lutheran school
 - More cyclists, more active, more often

It was agreed that a sub-committee would form to develop a cycling strategic plan. Janine Harfield, Grant Hollaway, Alethea Gulvin and Mandy Kirsopp volunteered to develop the framework of a draft strategic plan for review and input by the committee.

The sub-committee will meet after 11 November and will present draft information to the committee Wednesday 6 December.

Action: Mandy Kirsopp to coordinate a meeting of the strategic planning sub-committee

- **General Business**

- **9.1 Whiteboard Issues**

- The committee agreed that minor cycling and access issues would be recorded on a whiteboard for either future discussion or immediate action (via Merit/ Customer request program)

- **9.2 Ride to Work**

- Janine Harfield encourage committee members to support the annual Ride To Work day, Wednesday 18 October. Mandy Kirsopp volunteered to coordinate the activity within HRCC. Janine Harfield to provide the information pack. It was noted that the Ride to Work activity is Action 7 of the 2012-2016 Bicycle strategy.

- **9.3 Guest speaker - Chris Gulvin**

- Chris was an impromptu guest speaker and presented information regarding active cycling - where mountain bikes are used for Enduro cycling - mountainous, downhill,

adrenalin riding. The Wimmera area lacks mountainous tracks and cyclists travel to Bright for adventure cycling. Ballarat is the closest centre for maintain cycling. Chris identified that Horsham has some adventure tracks: from the helipad at Baillie St to the maze (towards Dooen and the Riverside Recreational Reserve) and tracks at Williams Rd. Chris suggested Horsham needs a pump track - a skills track with 'jumps and bumps' where cyclists can complete the track without pedalling.

Following Chris' presentation there was agreement that the composition of the committee needed to be expanded to reflect the diversity of cycling interests in our community.

Action: No action was recorded

- **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday 6 December 2017** commencing at 5.00 pm at the Reception Room at the Civic Centre, Roberts Ave, Horsham.

- **Meeting Close**

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm.

Grant Hollaway
Chairperson

RoadSafe Wimmera Inc.
(Reg No A0033850U ABN 35 010 755 766)

Minutes for Meeting 13 November 2017 at 7.00 pm
Venue: - Horsham SES Building, MacPherson Street, Horsham.

1. Present

Nola Smith (Chair)	SES local representative
David Rule	Road Safety Officer
Noel Austin	Road Transport Representative, Kaniva
Martin Duke	Horsham Rural City Council
Charie Cockroft-Basham	Wimmera Police – Divisional Intelligence

2. Apologies

Richard Hicks	West Wimmera Shire Councillor
Rhonda Armour	Driving Instructor – light
Alastair Griffiths	Hindmarsh Shire
Jean Wise	Councillor Yarriambiack Shire
Dale McIvor	Edenhope Police

Moved N. Austin, seconded C. Cockroft-Basham, that the apologies be received.

Carried

3. Minutes of previous meeting June 19th. 2017 and business arising

- *Christmas Dinner – Horsham Sports and Community Club – separate room booked.*
- *Exec. Off. to seek advice about checks for volunteer drivers.*

Moved M. Duke, seconded C. Cockroft-Basham that previous minutes and business arising be accepted.

Carried

4. Correspondence November 13th. 2017

Inwards.

Number	Date	From	Issue
1.	Aug. 22 nd .	Stawell Secondary Coll.	Look After Our Mates delivery.
2.	Aug/Sept.	Wimmera Mobility Group	Supportive funding request
3.	Sept.12 th .	VicRoads	Funding – final payment 2016-17 and first payment 2017-18
4.	October	3WM	Breathometer use.
5.	October	VicRoads	Half year reporting discussion.
6.	November	Michael Hodges	TAC application unsuccessful.

Outwards

Number	Date	From	Issue
1.	Aug. 22 nd .	Stawell Secondary Coll.	Look After Our Mates delivery.
2.	Aug/Sept.	Wimmera Mobility Group	Supportive funding request
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4.	October	3WM	Breathometer use.
5.	October	VicRoads	Half year reporting discussion.
6.	November	Michael Hodges	TAC application unsuccessful

David Rule

Complete as at 2.30 p.m. 13 November 2017

Moved C. Cockroft-Basham, Seconded M. Duke, that correspondence be accepted. Carried**Business arising from correspondence: -**

- *Moved C. Cockroft-Basham, seconded N. Austin that Roadsafe Wimmera provide \$100.00 of support to Wimmera Mobility Group. Carried*
- *Moved M. Duke, seconded C. Cockroft-Basham that Di Nevett be invited to Roadsafe Wimmera Christmas dinner. Carried*
- *Meeting agreed that Roadsafe Wimmera continue to assist Kaniva Hub in its TAC community application for a user-pay breathometer. Richard Hicks suggested as someone who could add local input to the next application.*

5. Financial Report**14.August to 13 November****For Ratification.****Balance****\$13,096.78**

6/9/2017	Telstra - June Account	48.99	201289
6/9/2017	ACE Radio Broadcasters - Long Weekend	168.71	201290
6/9/2017	Fairfax media - Road Rules	176.00	201291
6/9/2017	Program delivery September 2017	2,833.00	201292
6/9/2017	Travel costs and recoups - Aug. 14 to Sept.6 - '17	191.00	201293
Total		3,417.70	

Balance**\$9,679.08**

20/9/2017	Wimmera Office Equipment	396.00	201294
20/9/2017	Weekly Advertiser - School holidays	535.37	201295
20/9/2017	FIT2Drive - Murtoa, Kaniva, Dimboola	4,020.50	201296
Total		4,951.87	

Balance**\$4,727.21**

12/9/2017	Deposit VIC Roads - Kew 002800	30,857.75	
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Balance**\$35,584.96**

2/11/2017	Deputy Commissioner of Taxation (July-Sept. BAS)	2137.00	201297
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**For
Approval****Balance****\$33,447.96**

13/11/2017	Fit 2 Drive Inc. - Stawell & Goroke Secondary Coll.	3,179.00	201298
13/11/2017	The Weekly Advertiser	733.32	201299
13/11/2017	Telstra	97.98	201300
13/11/2017	West Wimmera Advertiser (Sporting ads)	210.00	201302
13/11/2017	Program Delivery	2,883.00	201303
13/11/2017	Travel 14th August to Nov. 13th. (exc. leave)	30.00	201304
Total		7,133.30	

Balance**\$26,314.66**

Note: - Cheque number 201301 was not issued due to being missed when the cheques were written out. It will be used in the next batch of cheques.

David Rule

Complete as at 2.30 p.m. 13 November 2017.

Moved, M. Duke, seconded C. Cockroft-Basham, that accounts paid be ratified and accounts to be paid be passed for payment. Carried

6. RSO report for 13 Novembers 2017.

Activities as described in correspondence report.

2017- 18 Funding Summary

Program	Funding (Inclusive of administration) \$
Looking After Our Mates	\$ 2875.00
Alcohol and Other Drug Intervention	\$ 5405.00
Community Engagement	\$ 8625.00
Driver Reviver	\$ 575.00
Fatigue Presentation	\$ 1150.00
Fatigue Intervention	\$ 8625.00
Motorised Mobility Devices	\$ 1150.00
Safe Driver	\$ 1150.00
Older Road User Intervention	\$ 0.00
Safer Speed Intervention	\$ 5750.00
Fit2Drive	\$ 10800.00
TOTAL PROGRAM FUNDING	\$ 46,105.00

Half year program comments

Looking After Our Mates (LAOM)

The LAOM presentation has been reviewed and changed. It is important that the new presentation is assimilated into Roadsafe Wimmera programs as soon as possible. Delivery of the program to year 12 students and sporting groups is on-going. Perseverance with encouraging participation rates is a challenge.

Alcohol and Other Drugs Intervention

Alcohol and drugs continue to feature in crash statistics in the region. Awareness advertising, particularly at key times – long weekends, sporting fixtures (particularly finals), race meetings, festive occasions and times when drivers are likely to mix pleasure and travel continue to be targeted.

Community Engagement'

Roadsafe Wimmera continues to move across a range of community groups with mobile. Easy to digest, road safety information sessions including Safe Drive (for Older Drivers), Motorised Mobility Devices (for those with mobility issues), Looking After Our Mates (young to mature drivers) and Fatigue management advice (all drivers). The group continues to take the messages to as many locales as possible. Encouraging participation is an on-going challenges but preferable to holding one-off events which do not generate discussion like social, interest based of professional groups do.

Driver Reviver

Fatigue continues to be associated with around fifty percent of crashes in the region. Awareness advertising, particularly at key times - – long weekends, sporting fixtures (particularly finals), race meetings, festive occasions and times when drivers would normally be resting rather than driving continue to be targeted. Attracting groups to participate in fatigue only presentations is a challenge. Roadsafe Wimmera currently incorporated fatigue awareness and management strategies into all presentations.

Fatigue Presentations

Roadsafe Wimmera currently incorporated fatigue awareness and management strategies into all presentations. The group also seeks broader audiences (e.g. radio programs) whenever possible to spread awareness as widely as possible.

Fatigue Interventions

Intervention funding provides the opportunity for Roadsafe Wimmera to reinforce Fatigue awareness and management strategies across the region through a mix of region wide and local media outlets to add value to Driver Reviver and Fatigue presentation programs.

Motorised Mobility Devices

Roadsafe Wimmera is a founding member of the Wimmera Mobility Group. It is operated by, and made up of Mobility Device Users. It has been in operation in Horsham for four years and promotes safe device use in a range of settings. The group has attracted interest from other Wimmera towns including Dimboola and Warracknabeal with the view to forming similar groups.

Safe Drive

The VicRoads accredited safe drive presentation provides an excellent opportunity for groups of mature aged drivers to consider and discuss relevant driving habit and issues. Roadsafe Wimmera offers the program to regional groups including service clubs, senior citizen groups, health day care centres and Men's sheds.

Safe Speed Intervention

Roadsafe Wimmera has proactively promoted speed management to Wimmera councils through facilitating funding applications for and speed monitoring us of VMS trailers. Horsham Rural City Council and Hindmarsh Shire have been recipients of the program. An application has been facilitated for West Wimmera Shire in 2017. The approach provides groups best place to promote safe speed with resources and program support.

Fit2 Drive

The take up of the Fit2Drive program by regional secondary colleges has been most pleasing. Support by local groups including Bendigo Bank and various service clubs have enabled Roadsafe Wimmera to cover the cost of the program for all colleges involved. At time of writing, sufficient additional funding should fully fund the program for around another 12 months at current VCRSG funding levels.

David Rule

Complete as at 2.30 p.m. 13 November 2017.

Moved, M. Duke, seconded C. Cockroft-Basham, that RSO report for 13 November 2017.

Carried

General Business

1. Mission statement and policy discussion

Moved M. Duke, seconded N. Austin that the following mission statement be provided to members for consideration at futures meetings.

Carried

Roadsafe Wimmera's mission is to promote and gain wide acceptance of the view that each time drivers get behind the wheel of a vehicle, they enter a contract with other road users to travel in a manner which keeps them and the other road users safe until they reach the end of the journey. The contract is on-going and commences every time someone drives.

The Roadsafe Wimmera committee endeavours to bring a diverse representation of views and experiences to program development and implementation.

Driver attitudes and behaviour relate directly to how drivers manage road safety issues including speed, drinking, drug taking, distraction, fatigue, driving habits and consequences following infringements and/or crashes.

Influencing all drivers to accept and safely manage these responsibilities is the core of the group's activities. It operates by the use of volunteers in a committee form to help regional concerns and initiatives to be recognised and worked through.

Roadsafe Wimmera use the recognised established statistics and processes to help in its decision making and education campaigns.

Recruitment policy.

The committee read through a generic recruitment policy as a starting point to establishing a Roadsafe Wimmera policy. It was agreed that the Executive Officer customise the policy to match Roadsafe Wimmera operations and its constitution. Draft document to be provided to members once it is complete.

Membership

Kelly Fletcher has moved on from her position with Road Trauma Services and will not be attending further meetings. Executive Officer has acknowledged Kellie's Road Trauma Services representation on behalf of the committee

Bill Erhardt has relinquished his leave of absence with the committee due to work commitments.

Moved M. Duke, seconded C. Cockroft-Basham that acknowledgement of K. Fletcher's contribution to the group be endorsed and Bill Erhardt be contacted in writing to thank him for his input to the group and invite him to the group's Christmas dinner if he is available. Carried

Member Contributions

Noel Austin

Road Transport Representative, Kaniva

- *Would be interested to know more about checks and balances for volunteer drivers. Executive Officer to follow up.*
- *Suggested a reminder to regional travel during holiday period to stay seated and seat belted at all times. Executive Officer to follow up.*

Charie Cockroft-Basham

Wimmera Police – Divisional Intelligence

- *Interested in providing information to assist funding processes where possible.*

7. Meeting closed: - 8.40 pm

Next meeting: -11 December 2017 Wimmera Sports and Community club.

MINUTES

**Sunnyside Park Advisory Committee Meeting
 Held on Wednesday, 11 October 2017 at 7.30 pm
 Sunnyside Bowling Clubrooms**

Present:

David Hogan	Community Representative / Chairperson
Ivan Mills	Sunnyside Bowling Club
David Johns	Homers Tennis Club
Cr Alethea Sedgman	HRCC Councillor
Rhonda McNeil	Manager, Sustainability and Recreation
Mandy Kirsopp	Project Officer, Sustainability and Recreation
Carley Gunn	Kalkee Football & Netball Club
Carlo Sordello	Horsham 298 Primary School

Apologies:

Di Bell	Community Representative
Simon Hopper	Homers Cricket Club
Jillian Coutts	Sunnyside Bowling Club

1. Welcome

All present were welcomed to the meeting

2. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

3. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Moved: Ivan Mills

Seconded: David Johns

That the minutes of the meeting Wednesday, 30 August 2017 were a true and accurate record of that meeting.

CARRIED

4. Business arising from previous minutes

4.1 Facility Booking – Rhonda McNeil

Council is developing signage to assist with bookings of community spaces. The signage is largely generic and will provide consistency of information between sites. The committee approved the draft wording of the signage. Three locations for the placement of signs was identified: west of the tennis courts, at the east main entrance to the cricket clubrooms and at the Baillie St (south end) of the cricket nets.

It was suggested that QR technology be explored and incorporated into the signage.

Action – Rhonda McNeil will investigate.

4.2 Precinct Plan – Mandy Kirsopp

A concept proposal from Jeavons landscape architects was shared. The plan includes details of work to be completed, consultation and project outcomes. "What to keep and what to take out".

The development of a plan will be based on an Existing Conditions Report. It was suggested that a vacation engineering student might complete the report as part of their program of study. This would occur in January 2018.

The money for the project comes from money transferred when the Committee of Management was dissolved.

Moved: Ivan Mills **Seconded:** David Johns

That the Sunnyside Park Advisory Committee recommend the Recreation Department proceed with concept planning for the Park. **CARRIED**

It was noted that the development of a community friendly, safe gathering place will be a key link with Council's recently endorsed Health and Wellbeing Plan.

4.3 Defibrillator Information

Council is collecting information re: the location of defibrillators throughout our community. This is so the location can be identified but also so that arrangements can be made for the systematic replacement of batteries and pads required of the machines.

A defibrillator is located at Horsham 298 PS and replacement parts are managed by the school.

5. Correspondence

A letter has been sent to the Principal of the Holy Trinity Lutheran PS inviting the school to nominate a representative for the committee.

6. Business arising from correspondence

None

7. General Business

7.1 My Community Directory – Mandy Kirsopp

My Community Directory replaces the Wimmera Information Network's bi-annual Community Directory. The Directory will be electronic but can also be downloaded and printed (sections or entirety) if required.

The Directory has an added advantage that Clubs can promote their group by posting information about events (similar to a webpage).

7.2 Meeting Schedule 2018

Most Advisory committees for sporting groups, meet four times each year but the current Terms of Reference has Sunnyside meeting six times. Rhonda apologised for the oversight in identifying only four meetings in 2018 (rather than six) and asked the committee to consider the preferred number of meetings.

The decision was deferred until the next meeting, but it was suggested the committee might meet on the following dates in 2018:

April 11

June 13

August 8

October 10.

7.3 Review of Actions List

7.3.1 An on-site meeting to discuss the location of the fence on two sides of the playground has been organised. The meeting will involve: Dave Hogan, Di Bell, Rod Lawson and Rhonda McNeil.

7.3.2 Storm water drainage – the gravel has been levelled.

7.3.3 Bollards near the cricket nets. The bollards have been installed as a continuation of the line of the cricket nets. This is currently unsafe and they need to be angled at 45 degrees to accommodate the line of the ball.

It was also reported that 80-90 young people are playing cricket each Thursday.

7.3.4 A security light at the east of the hall is not working. Ivan Mills offered to follow this up for the committee.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 11 April 2018 commencing at 7.30 pm in the Sunnyside Bowling Clubrooms.

9. Meeting Close The meeting was closed at 8.55 pm.

Dave Hogan
Sunnyside Park Advisory Committee
Chairperson
11/10/2017

Our Reference: F06/A03/000001:PC:sf

8 November 2017

Mr Mark L Hudson
Director of Administration
Horsham Township
1025 Horsham Road
Horsham, PA 19044
USA

Dear Mark

Happy 300th Birthday Horsham

On behalf of the citizens of Horsham, Australia, we congratulate Horsham, USA, on your 300th birthday.

As your namesake Australian city, I provide you with some details of our history.

Horsham is situated on the floodplain of the Wimmera River in north-west Victoria, mid-way between Melbourne and Adelaide. Horsham Rural City is a vibrant, diverse community, covering an area of 4,267 square kilometres. We have a population of 20,000, with almost three quarters of residents living in the urban area of Horsham.

Horsham is the major provider of retail, community and government services in the Wimmera, with dryland broadacre agriculture being our major industry. There are a range of quality educational and health care facilities including secondary colleges, a university and an agricultural college. We also have a diverse array of natural assets including recreational lakes, wetlands, the Wimmera River, Mount Arapiles, the Wartook Valley and the Grampians National Park is nearby.

The first inhabitants of the area were the Djura Balug indigenous Australian tribe who spoke the Jardwadjali language. Major Thomas Mitchell was the first European to pass through the area, naming the Wimmera River in 1836. Horsham was named by James Monckton Darlot, the first squatter to take up land in 1842, 175 years ago. The town was named after his native town in Horsham in Sussex, in the south of England.

The Horsham Post Office opened in 1848 and an elaborate post office building and clock tower erected in 1880. In the 1870s, when squatting runs were divided up for smaller selection, a large German population settled in the area and many descendants still remain today. The main railway from Melbourne (Victoria's capital city) reached Horsham in 1879 and was later extended to Adelaide (the capital of South Australia).

- 2 -

Horsham was officially declared a town in 1932 and a city in 1949. Horsham has been named Victoria's Tidiest Town seven times, most recently in 2015 and 2016. In 2001, we held the title of Australia's Tidiest Town.

From one Horsham to another, we convey our very best wishes to you as you celebrate this important milestone in your community.

Yours sincerely



Cr PAM CLARKE
Mayor



IMAGES OF HORSHAM, AUSTRALIA



The Horsham central business district today (above) and circa 1940 (below)





The T & G Building is a prominent Horsham landmark



**The Wimmera River is an inland river that runs through Horsham
– it is the major waterway for the region**



**Mt Arapiles is widely regarded as the top rock climbing area in Australia
(canola crop in the foreground)**



Dryland broadacre agriculture is Horsham's major industry

9.3.8 FUEL PRICES IN HORSHAM

Colin Kemp

File Ref:

Purpose

To advise Council on the current situation with fuel pricing in Horsham.

Background

At its Consultation meeting of 2 November, Council discussed the comparatively high fuel prices in Horsham, requesting a report.

Horsham is generally viewed an expensive place to purchase fuel. Whilst we are positioned on one of the busiest highways in the State, Horsham has a reputation as being an expensive place to purchase fuel. Many things impact on the price of fuel with one of the main ones being competition. As Horsham has grown and businesses have evolved we have seen a reduction in the number of retail outlets offering fuel as well as a reduction in wholesale fuel suppliers.

Currently Horsham has four outlets supplied by Caltex, two by BP and one by Shell. The Haven Store also retails fuel on Hamilton Road as an independent operator. Road transport operators have been well catered for by four 24Hr a day unmanned outlets. Whilst this represents reasonable choice for consumers they generally feel that prices are too high in Horsham relevant to other regional areas.

Issues

To try and understand the process for setting fuel prices we approached fuel companies to ask what factors they used when setting their prices. Many of the local providers advised that their pricing was set by parent companies, some of these operating from interstate; prices are emailed to the outlets for them to post. All major outlets share their pricing information online and then set pricing accordingly. This replaces the old system of driving around to note and compare.

The fuel companies advised that these factors influenced fuel pricing:

- Volume of sales
- Traffic numbers and route
- Location of outlets and distance to other towns
- Convenience store sales

When approached, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) advised that many areas believed that fuel prices were too expensive. The ACCC are price monitors but have nothing to do with price setting. The ACCC are looking for competition and fair

trade. Retailers are free and encouraged to set prices independently. The ACCC look for anti-competitive actions of retailers and act accordingly once identified.

The ACCC advised fuel prices are influenced by many factors, including overseas and local market forces. Fuel prices can go up and down due to a combination of factors:

- changes in international benchmark prices
- the value of the Australian dollar relative to the US dollar
- levels of competition in different areas
- pricing decisions by wholesalers and retailers.

Like any other business, fuel wholesalers and retailers have different costs they need to recover through their prices. These can include wharfage, freight, insurance, transport, storage, salaries, rent, power and other utilities. On top of this, wholesalers and retailers need to make a profit in order to make their businesses viable. This margin is ultimately determined by the level of competition in the marketplace.

Transportation and storage of LPG is more expensive than for petrol and diesel because LPG must be kept as a liquid which requires specialised storage and transportation.

All retail fuel prices in Australia include GST at the rate of 10 per cent (or 1/11th of the total price paid). For unleaded petrol (regular or premium grades) and diesel the price you pay includes Australian Government excise of 38.60 cents per litre (cpl).

From 1 July 2013 automotive LPG fuel has been subject to excise at the rate of 7.5 cpl. This is scheduled to increase in annual increments of 2.5 cpl to a final rate of 12.5 cpl from 1 July 2015.

On December 15 the ACCC put out its fourth quarterly report into Australian petroleum industry for 2015 The report examines petrol prices up to September 2015.

The associated press release quotes:

“Retail petrol prices did not fall by as much as international prices, in part due to a weaker Australian dollar,” ACCC Chairman Rod Sims said.

“The exchange rate can have a huge impact on prices at the pump. For instance, if the AUD–USD exchange rate was at the same level as it was in January 2013 (USD 1.05), retail petrol prices in the September quarter 2015 would have been around 20 cpl lower.”

The report also shows that gross retail margins (or GIRDs) in the September quarter were at their highest level since the ACCC began monitoring in 2002. Average GIRDs in the five largest cities were 11.8 cpl, an increase of 1.3 cpl from the June quarter.

During the quarter the differential between retail petrol prices in regional locations and in the five largest cities increased from 0.7 cpl in June 2015 to 5.3 cpl in September 2015. This was well below the peak differential of 17.6 cpl in January 2015.

“The very high differential we saw in late 2014 and early 2015 was a result of regional prices being slow to fall following large decreases in international prices,” Mr Sims said.

“In contrast, the very low differential in June 2015 was due to prices in regional locations being slow to rise following a large rebound in international prices. We are now seeing the differential return to a point more in line with historical levels.”

*Mr Sims also noted some of the work being done by the ACCC into petrol markets in regional locations. Refer to ACCC press release at **Appendix “9.3G”**.*

The report comments that as in the five largest cities, movements in retail petrol prices in regional locations are largely driven by changes in international refined petrol prices and the AUD–USD exchange rate. However, prices are generally higher in regional locations. A number of factors may contribute to these higher prices: a lower level of local competition; lower volumes of fuel sold; distance/ location factors; and lower convenience store sales. The influence of these factors varies significantly from location to location. This means that there may be substantial differences in prices between specific regional locations.

Communication

The Wimmera Mail Times have been running a fuel price watch for some time that indicates regional fuel prices at given times, these generally show Horsham as being a more expensive place to purchase fuel. They have tried to investigate pricing with the larger wholesalers but have received very little feedback.

The Wimmera Branch of the Victorian Farmers Federation are also concerned with the regional fuel prices and have written to the both BP and Caltex Australia seeking further information relevant to the fuel prices in Horsham. Refer to **Appendix “9.3H”** for VFF Letters.

Links To Council Plans

Sustaining the Economy and Environment.

Provided for information of Council.



Submission to the Victorian Parliaments Economic, Education, Jobs & Skills Committee's Inquiry into Fuel Prices in Regional Victoria September 2017

Introduction

Horsham Rural City Council is pleased to submit to the Victorian Government's Inquiry into Fuel Prices in Regional Victoria. This submission covers a number of issues we believe are relevant to the inquiry.

Background – Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC)

Horsham is the regional centre of the Wimmera Southern Mallee and services an area of 33,977km² covering five municipalities, and a population of 55,000. Horsham Rural City Council has a population of 20,000. Horsham is strategically located on the Western Highway and National Freight Route 300km west of Melbourne and 400km east of Adelaide. Horsham is part of the Regional Cities Victoria, one of the ten largest regional councils in Victoria.

HRCC advocates for the importance of regional cities to ensure strong and sustainable regional and rural areas. This includes having: a pro-active stance on development; effective regional advocacy; strong community engagement; embracing innovation and new technology; good strategic planning for sustainable growth and equity and financial fairness in the cost of living including fuel prices.

HRCC has been invited to make a submission to the Victorian Parliament's Economic, Education, Jobs & Skills Committee's inquiry into fuel prices in regional Victoria. Horsham is generally viewed as an expensive place to purchase fuel. Whilst we are positioned on one of the busiest highways in the State, Horsham has a reputation as being an expensive place to purchase fuel. Many things impact on the price of fuel with one of the main reasons being competition. As Horsham has grown and businesses have evolved we have seen an increase in the number of retail outlets offering fuel with all commercial suppliers maintaining the same price every day of the week.

Issues

On the 21 December 2015, a report was provided to Council on Horsham fuel prices. As part of compiling the report, fuel companies were approached and asked what factors they used when setting their prices. Many of the local providers advised that their pricing was set by parent companies, some of these operating from interstate; prices are emailed to the outlets for them to post. All major outlets share their pricing information online and then set pricing accordingly. This replaces the old system of driving around to note and compare. The fuel companies advised that these factors influenced fuel pricing:

- Volume of sales
- Traffic numbers and route
- Location of outlets and distance to other towns
- Convenience store sales

When approached at the time, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) advised that many areas believed that fuel prices were too expensive. The ACCC are price monitors but have nothing to do with price setting. The ACCC are looking for competition and fair trade. Retailers are free and encouraged to set prices independently. The ACCC look for anti-competitive actions of retailers and act accordingly once identified.

The ACCC advised fuel prices are influenced by many factors, including overseas and local market forces. Fuel prices can go up and down due to a combination of factors:

- changes in international benchmark prices
- the value of the Australian dollar relative to the US dollar
- levels of competition in different areas
- pricing decisions by wholesalers and retailers.

Like any other business, fuel wholesalers and retailers have different costs they need to recover through their prices. These can include wharfage, freight, insurance, transport, storage, salaries, rent, power and other utilities. On top of this, wholesalers and retailers need to make a profit in order to make their businesses viable. This margin is ultimately determined by the level of competition in the marketplace.

In recent years, the Wimmera Mail Times have been running a fuel price watch for some time that indicates regional fuel prices at given times. These generally show Horsham as being a more expensive place to purchase fuel. They have tried to investigate pricing with the larger wholesalers but have received very little feedback.

Also, the Wimmera Branch of the Victorian Farmers Federation were also concerned with the regional fuel prices and have written to the both BP and Caltex Australia seeking further information relevant to the fuel prices in Horsham.

Current Situation

The Wimmera Southern Mallee is represented by a designated 'peak body' economic development organisation (Wimmera Development Association - WDA) covering the five local government areas. This body has identified infrastructure development, education and training, retail sectors and agricultural productivity as the key drivers of investment and employment in our region and notes that a strong level of private and public partnerships are already in place. All of these industry areas are key growth sectors and are adversely affected by the price of fuel in Horsham in terms of profit and loss balances and the cost of doing business.

Horsham Rural City is serviced by 8 commercial outlets of which 3 operate over 24 hours with the rest open 7 days with a variety of different opening times.

BP	43 O'Callaghans Parade
BP Vantage Fuels Horsham	4 Dimboola Road
The Foodary Caltex Horsham	88 Stawell Road
Caltex Horsham (Baillie Street)	129 Baillie Street (Cnr of Urquhart St)
Caltex Horsham (Poolside)	2 O'Callaghans Parade
Caltex Woolworths/Safeway	113-115 Wilson Street
Coles Express Shell Horsham	170-172 Baillie Street
Riordan Fuels Haven	Old Hamilton Road

Planning applications for two On The Run (OTR) new service stations and convenience stores in Horsham will be considered by Council in September.

Business Horsham, the local business representative body for Horsham Business undertake a Business Sentiment survey every quarter to identify economic conditions, business climate, forecasting, business sentiments and questions to help identify local business development issues. In the survey of January 2016, a question was posed as to business perceptions of petrol prices in Horsham. Some of the comments are stated below as to local perceptions:

"Something really needs to be done about it, we like to support local businesses, but whenever possible we buy petrol out of town".

Fuel prices in Horsham are a major concern when Ararat and Stawell can provide fuel at lower prices than Horsham you have to ask the question of greed of our fuel outlets".

"To use Caltex as an example, fuel sold in Ararat and Beaufort by Caltex is around 15c a litre than Horsham Caltex".

"We NEVER buy fuel in Horsham. We travel frequently and always plan to get fuel out of town".

Leading Organisations Position

The RACV provide a snap shot map on their website of regional fuel prices across Victoria on a daily basis. Throughout the month of September 2017, the average fuel price across the state was \$116.9c a litre (unleaded) and motorists were advised not to pay any more than \$115.5c a litre. *All of the above service stations in Horsham have had prices permanently fixed every day of the week for over 12 months on 129.9c a litre (Unleaded)*

The ACCC monitors fuel prices in around 190 regional areas across Australia and receives enquiries and complaints from consumers and businesses. Due to the limited number of retail sites in many country towns, the ACCC also pays particular attention to potential changes in ownership to ensure that a sale will not result in a substantial decrease in competition. When they identify a particular concern about petrol prices in a regional area the ACCC:

- review recent price movements and the structure of the local market;

- may visit the town and talk to local retailers to determine whether there is a need for further investigation.

If the ACCC believe any retailers have broken competition and consumer laws, they will investigate the issue further and may take action.

According to the ACCC, “ fuel prices are set by competitors in the marketplace, generally based on the cost of getting fuel products to the market (including the actual cost of the fuel, taxes and other costs and margins) and the level of competition in a particular area. Movements in retail fuel prices in regional locations are largely driven by changes in international benchmarks and the Australian/United States dollar exchange rate, just as they are in Australia’s capital cities.

However, fuel prices in regional locations tend to be higher and more stable than in the city for a number of reasons, including lower levels of local competition, lower fuel volumes and higher transport and storage costs. Fuel prices in regional locations are also influenced by a range of other factors like the location of fuel retail sites (for example, on a busy highway there will be higher turnover) and whether there is a convenience store or other business activities attached to the site”. (source: ACCC fact sheet)

Summary

- Encourage the RACV to launch a statewide campaign promoting regional fuel users to seek the lowest price at all times in an attempt to reduce the higher costed operators.
- Encourage the ACCC to facilitate a meeting with Horsham Rural City Council to identify why and how the fuel prices are permanently set in Horsham 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for well over 12 months.
- As a result of the submissions for this inquiry, the State Government be requested to look into a broader review with the leading fuel companies as to how prices are set in regional Victoria and identify a transparent process to advise fuel users on a regular basis as to how the prices are reached.



EEJSC Submission No. 36
Received 2 October 2017

2 October 2017

Nazih Elasmr
Chairman
Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills Committee
Parliament House
Spring St
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Dear Chairman,

Re: Inquiry into fuel prices in regional Victoria

On behalf of the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) I would like to thank the Victorian Parliament's Economic, Education, Jobs & Skills Committee' for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Inquiry into Fuel Prices in Regional Victoria.

Agriculture is an important driver of the Victorian economy, producing \$13.16 billion in food and fibre each year and directly employing 91,000 people. To grow and maintain Victoria's agricultural productivity, however, it is essential that a number of issues relating to fuel prices in regional Victoria are addressed.

Fuel has played a significant role in agriculture's productivity gains over the last fifty years. From the exponential growth in broadacre production through the use of harvesting machinery, to the efficient transportation of food and fibre to both domestic and international markets, fuel remains a crucial element of modern agricultural production.

This dependence on fuel, however, leaves farmers vulnerable to price fluctuations. As one of the largest input costs for farm businesses, a rise in prices by even a couple of sense per litre can have a significant impact on farm profitability. Unlike other industries, farmers cannot pass these costs onto consumers. Ensuring competitive fuel prices is therefore critical for the ongoing viability of the Victorian agricultural industry.

To safeguard the ongoing productivity of agriculture industry and continued growth of Victoria's GSP it is essential the following fuel pricing issues are addressed:

Security of supply:

As a provider of an essential service, and a key driver of the Victorian economy, it is critical the Victorian agricultural industry has access to a secure supply of fuel. The 2012 Geelong Shell diesel refinery breakdown highlighted the vulnerability of Victoria's agriculture industry to fuel shortages. During this period diesel had to be rationed after the Geelong Refinery (which



supplies more than 50% of Victoria's fuel requirements) was damaged, resulting in farmers being unable to access adequate quantities of fuel during the peak of harvest.

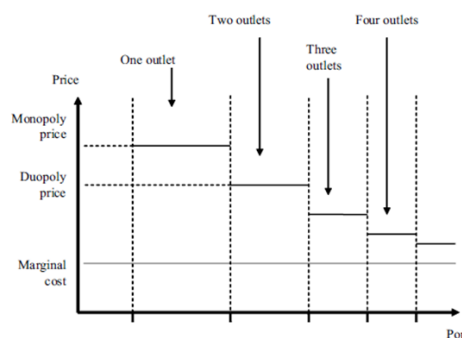
As producers of perishable goods, security of supply and timelines of supply are essential. The harvest period in Victoria (spanning the months of October through to January) represents a high risk period for Victorian producers with any delays placing a farm businesses' annual revenue stream at risk through downgrading of quality and price, and/or increased exposure to market price movements.

The VFF are concerned that the closure of half of Australia's domestic refineries since 2000 has left Australia more vulnerable to fuel shortages as production is now concentrated in fewer facilities and Australia has little fuel in reserve. Engineers Australia's submission to the 2015 Senate inquiry into the country's transport energy resilience and sustainability noted that Australia's current total stockholdings of oil and liquid fuel only comprise five to 12 days' supply at refineries, two weeks of supply at sea, and three days at service station which is considerably lower than the 90 days of fuel reserves required of members of the International Energy Agency.

To protect Victoria's ongoing food security and the future viability of the agricultural industry, it is imperative appropriate policies are in place to ensure Victoria has secure fuel supplies.

Competition:

A competitive fuel market is crucial for ensuring farmers are able to access quality fuel at affordable prices and deliver efficiency gains to the economy. As noted in the Australian government's Energy White Paper-April 2015, "effective competition is the best way to deliver energy products and services that consumers want at the lowest possible cost". Indeed, ACCC's report 'Petrol Prices and Australian Consumers' found limited competition to be one of the key causes of price differentials in regional Australia. As the below chart indicates, even one additional outlet in a town can have a significant impact on fuel prices.



Source:

<https://www.accc.gov.au/system/files/Report%20on%20the%20Australian%20petroleum%20market%20June%20quarter%202017.pdf>

This is only further exacerbated by the increasing consolidation of the Australian fuel retail and wholesale distributor markets. The recent flurry of mergers and acquisitions within the fuel industry has meant there are now fewer options for consumers at both a service station and wholesale distributor level. The VFF are particularly concerned by BP's proposed purchase of Woolworth's Limited's service station sites which the ACCC is currently reviewing. Woolworth's have played an important role in placing downward pressure on other retailers' petrol prices and we are concerned that its purchase will have a negative impact on fuel prices.

Transparency:

Similarly, increased fuel price transparency is vital for the Victorian agricultural industry. Improving transparency is shown to decrease fuel prices by empowering consumers to make informed choices about their fuel consumption and rewarding retailers who have lower prices. To improve fuel price transparency, many states have implemented fuel price monitoring schemes. Western Australia's FuelWatch is a key example of the positive impact a fuel price monitoring scheme can have on fuel prices. As the below charts indicate. Western Australia's fuel market is now much more stable in comparison to Victoria's.

Chart 4.3: Seven-day rolling average petrol prices in Melbourne and Victorian regional locations: 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017

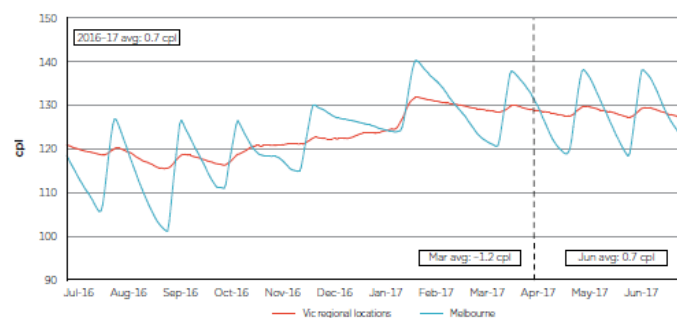
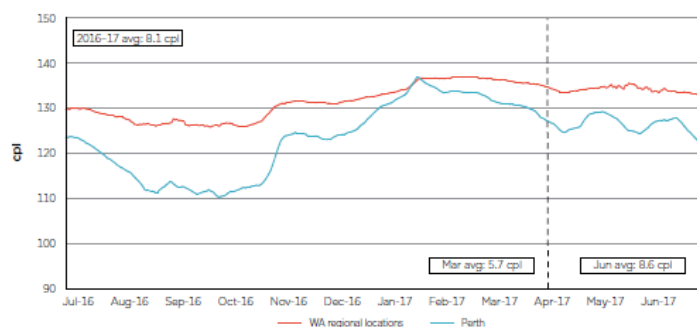


Chart 4.6: Seven-day rolling average petrol prices in Perth and Western Australian regional locations: 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017



Source:

<https://www.accc.gov.au/publications/quarterly-reports-on-the-australian-petroleum-industry/quarterly-report-on-the-australian-petroleum-market-june-quarter-2017>



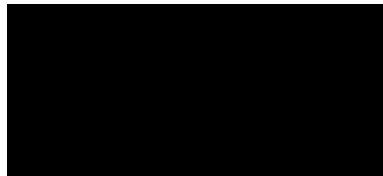
The Victorian government should implement a similar system which monitors fuel prices at both a retail and wholesale distribution level to improve fuel prices and competition for consumers.

Quality:

The VFF also questions whether regional consumers in Victoria are receiving fair value for the price of the fuel they purchase. Many of our members have cited instances of purchasing fuel (especially diesel) from independent fuel suppliers which has had an adverse effect on their farm machinery and vehicles. A report by Choice has found that less-frequented service stations operated by smaller companies in areas further away from cities are more likely to sell contaminated fuel. Many of the contaminations were the result of service station storage sites not being adequately maintained or inspected regularly. This is clearly a price issue as suppliers have an obligation to supply fuel to the standard of the product being advertised, as well as a legal obligation to meet national fuel standards.

The VFF appreciates the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry. Further information on specific matters mentioned in this submission can be provided on request and all enquiries should be directed to Stephen Sheridan, Acting Policy Director, on [REDACTED] or by email [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely,



**President,
Victorian Farmers Federation**

COMMITTEES WITH COUNCILLOR INVOLVEMENT – 2018

Committee	Officer	Council Representative/s	Frequency	Day/Time
Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Peter Brown/ Kevin O'Brien	Mayor Cr Power (sub)	Bi-monthly	1 st Mon 2pm from Feb
Audit Committee ¹	Graeme Harrison	Mayor Cr Grimble	Quarterly	
Australia Day Committee ¹	Angela Murphy	Mayor Cr Gulvin	Twice/yr	2 nd wk Oct/Dec No Set Day (10am)
Bicycle Advisory Committee	Martin Duke	Cr Gulvin	Bi-monthly	
Chief Executive Evaluation	Peter Brown	All Councillors	Occasional	No Set Day
Children's Hub PCG	Kevin O'Brien	Mayor Cr Power	Monthly	3 rd Thu 11.30am
CBD Action Group	John Martin	Cr Power	Monthly	TBC
Community Halls	TBC	Mayor	Annually	November
Domestic Animal Management Advisory Group	Angela Murphy	Cr Power Mayor (sub)	Monthly	3 rd Fri 12.00pm
Drug & Alcohol Taskforce	Anne Donovan	Cr Radford	Monthly	No set day
Finance Performance & Reporting	Graeme Harrison	All Councillors	Monthly	2 nd Mon 5pm
Grampians Central West Waste & Resource Recovery Group Forum	John Martin	Cr Grimble	Quarterly	
Greater Grampians Roundtable		Cr Grimble		
Green Lake COM	Rhonda McNeil	Mayor or available councillor as required	Quarterly	TBC
Haven Recreation Reserve CoM	Rhonda McNeil	Cr Radford	Bi-Monthly	TBC
Henty Highway Action Committee	John Martin	Cr Grimble	3 Monthly	
Horsham Aerodrome Advisory Committee	John Martin	Mayor or available councillor as required	Bi-monthly	2 nd Tuesday 5.30pm
Horsham Aquatic Centre Advisory Committee	Kevin O'Brien	Cr Power	Bi-monthly	2 nd Mon 12.00pm from Feb
Horsham Basketball Stadium CoM	Rhonda McNeil	Cr Radford Cr Gulvin (sub)	TBC	
Horsham College/Community Oval CoM	Rhonda McNeil	Cr Gulvin	Quarterly	
Horsham Performing Arts Company	Kevin O'Brien	Mayor Cr Koenig Cr Power	Quarterly	
Horsham Racecourse Reserve Advisory Committee	Rhonda McNeil	Cr Grimble	Quarterly	TBC
Horsham Recreation Reserve CoM (City Oval)	Rhonda McNeil	Cr Gulvin	Quarterly	TBC
Horsham Regional Art Gallery CoM	Anne Donovan	Cr Gulvin	Bi-monthly	1 st Thu 5.15pm (even months)
Horsham Regional Livestock Exchange Advisory Board	John Martin	Cr Grimble	Bi-monthly	3 rd Thu 5.00pm
Horsham Town Hall Fundraising Committee	Kevin O'Brien	Cr Clarke Cr Radford	As required	
Kannamaroo Festival CoM	John Martin	Cr Koenig	Fortnightly Aug-Nov	
Local Advisory Fire Prevention	Martin Duke	Cr Power	March/October	2 nd Tue 10.00am

¹Mayor ex-officio

APPENDIX 10.1E

Committee	Officer	Council Representative/s	Frequency	Day/Time
Multi-Purpose Stadium PCG	John Martin	Cr Radford	Monthly	4 th Wed 4.30pm
Municipal Association of Victoria ¹	Peter Brown	Mayor Cr Koenig (sub)		
Municipal Emergency Management Committee ¹	John Martin	Mayor or available councillor as required	Quarterly	3 rd Thu 10.30am
Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee	John Martin	Cr Power	Quarterly	3 rd Tue 10.30am
North Western Municipalities Association ¹	Peter Brown	Mayor Cr Radford	Quarterly	Fri 10.30am
Parking Consultative & Advisory Committee	Angela Murphy	Cr Power	Monthly	Thursday 12.00pm
Planning Sub-Committee	Angela Murphy	All Councillors	Fortnightly	2 nd /4 th Mon 5.30pm
Police Community Consultative Committee	John Martin	Cr Radford	Bi-monthly	3 rd Thu 10.00am Feb-Oct
Public Art Committee	Kevin O'Brien	Mayor	Bi-monthly	2 nd Thu 1.30pm
Rail Freight Alliance	Peter Brown	Cr Grimble	Bi-monthly	Thu
Regional Cities Victoria ¹	Peter Brown	Mayor	Bi-monthly	Thu 10.00am
Regional Recreation Water Users Group	John Martin	Cr Power	Six-monthly	No Set Day 10.00am
Roadsafe Wimmera	Martin Duke	-	Bi-monthly	2 nd Mon 7pm
Sport & Recreation Advisory Committee	John Martin Rhonda McNeil	Cr Radford Cr Gulvin (sub)	Quarterly	TBC
Seasonal Conditions Committee	Peter Brown Kevin O'Brien	Mayor	As needed	Usually Fri
Sunnyside Recreation Advisory Committee	Rhonda McNeil	Cr Gulvin	Quarterly	TBC
Tidy Towns Advisory Committee	John Martin	Cr Power	Monthly	3 rd Tue 12.30pm
Tourism Advisory Committee	Matthew Gould	Mayor Cr Radford (sub)	Monthly	2 nd Tue 11.00am
Victorian Local Governance Association ¹	Peter Brown	Mayor Cr Koenig (sub)		No Set Day
Waste Strategy	John Martin	Cr Grimble	Monthly	TBC
Western Highway Action Committee	John Martin	Cr Grimble	Bi-monthly	4 th Fri 10.00am
Wimmera Business Centre Advisory Board	Angela Murphy	Cr Koenig	Bi-monthly	1 st Thu 1.30pm
Wimmera Development Association	Angela Murphy	Cr Koenig	Monthly	2 nd Tue 6.30pm
Wimmera Disability Access Forum	Anne Donovan Wendy Lynch	Cr Koenig	Approx 6 per year	Thu 10.30am
Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Advisory Committee	Angela Murphy	Cr Grimble	Quarterly	4 th or 5 th Wed 1.30 pm
Wimmera Mallee Sustainability Alliance	John Martin Rhonda McNeil	Mayor Cr Gulvin (sub)	Bi-monthly	2 nd Mon 10.00am
Wimmera Regional Library Corporation	Kevin O'Brien	Cr Koenig	Bi-monthly	Fri 10.30am
Wimmera River Improvement Committee	John Martin	Cr Radford	Monthly	4 th Wed 4.30pm
Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN	Mandi Stewart	Cr Gulvin	Bi-monthly	Thu 6pm
Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Group	John Martin	Cr Grimble	Bi-monthly	2 nd Fri 12.00noon

¹Mayor ex-officio

Committees with Councillor Involvement 2018

Cr Clarke

- Aboriginal Advisory committee
- Audit Committee¹
- Australia Day Committee¹
- Chief Executive Evaluation
- Children's Hub Project Control Group
- Community Halls
- Domestic Animal Management Advisory Group (sub)
- Early Years Planning Committee
- Finance Performance and Reporting Committee
- Horsham Performing Arts Company
- Horsham Town Hall Fundraising Committee
- Municipal Association of Victoria¹
- Tourism Advisory Committee
- North Western Municipalities Association¹
- Planning Sub Committee
- Public Art Committee
- Regional Cities Victoria¹
- Seasonal Conditions Committee
- Victorian Local Governance Association¹
- Wimmera Mallee Sustainability Alliance

Cr Grimble

- Audit Committee
- Chief Executive Evaluation
- Finance Performance and Reporting Committee
- Grampians Central West Waste and Resource Recovery Group Forum
- Greater Grampians Roundtable
- Henty Highway Action Committee
- Horsham Racecourse Reserve Advisory Committee
- Horsham Regional Livestock Exchange Advisory Board
- Planning Sub Committee
- Rail Freight Alliance
- Waste Strategy
- Western Highway Action Committee
- Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Advisory Committee
- Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Group

Cr Gulvin

- Australia Day Committee
- Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Chief Executive Evaluation
- Finance Performance and Reporting Committee
- Horsham Basketball Stadium Committee of Management (sub)
- Horsham College/Community Oval Committee of Management
- Horsham Recreation Reserve (City Oval) Committee of Management
- Horsham Regional Art Gallery Committee of Management
- Planning Sub Committee
- Sport and Recreation Advisory Committee
- Sunnyside Recreation Reserve Advisory Committee
- Wimmera Mallee Sustainability Alliance (sub)
- Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN

¹Mayor ex-officio

Cr Koenig

- Chief Executive Evaluation
- Finance Performance and Reporting Committee
- Horsham Performing Arts Company
- Kannamaroo Festival Committee of Management
- Municipal Association of Victoria (sub)
- Planning Sub Committee
- Victorian Local Governance Association (sub)
- Wimmera Business Centre Advisory Board
- Wimmera Development Association
- Wimmera Disability Access Forum
- Wimmera Regional Library Corporation

Cr Power

- Aboriginal Advisory Committee (sub)
- CBD Action Group
- Chief Executive Evaluation
- Children's Hub Project Control Group
- Domestic Animal Management Advisory Group
- Finance Performance and Reporting Committee
- Local Advisory Fire prevention
- Horsham Aquatic Centre Advisory Committee
- Horsham Performing Arts Company
- Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee
- Parking Consultative and Advisory Committee
- Planning Sub Committee
- Regional Recreation Water Users Group
- Tidy Towns Committee

Cr Radford

- Chief Executive Evaluation
- Drug and Alcohol Taskforce
- Finance Performance and Reporting Committee
- Haven Recreation Reserve
- Horsham Basketball Stadium Committee of Management
- Horsham Town Hall Fundraising Committee
- Multi-Purpose Stadium Project Control Group
- North Western Municipalities Association (sub)
- Planning Sub Committee
- Police Community Consultative Committee
- Sport and Recreation Advisory Committee
- Tourism Advisory Committee (sub)
- Wimmera River Improvement Committee

Cr Robinson

- Finance Performance and Reporting

REPORT TO FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE
13 NOVEMBER 2017
BUSINESS ANALYST ROLE

Purpose

To provide some background information on the proposal to appoint a Business Analyst role at Council for an 18 month period from January 2018 to June 2019.

Background

Following the resignation of two staff members in the Information Communication Technology (ICT) Unit a review of the ICT services has been undertaken to look at the various functions of the current staff positions and proposed re-alignment of roles and responsibilities. (A detailed service review document is being developed).

The Chief Executive has to date been encouraging all staff to look for improved and better ways of doing business in the digital age and has been encouraging staff to implement new and improved systems and processes.

The Digital Age is raising customers' expectations for electronic means of engagement with Council across all of its services. But as the numbers of systems grow, ICT becomes more complex and a systems approach really needs to be undertaken during the procurement evaluation phase and during implementation.

Significant efficiencies are to be gained by ensuring that processes are also reviewed during the evaluation and procurement phase. Whilst it is useful to implement new technology solutions, in doing so it is important to identify the problem and to scope out requirements accurately in order to make the correct procurement decision. These outcomes cannot often be effectively or comprehensively achieved with current staff resources.

Issues

Encouraging new system development has been successful in getting a number of new projects under way, but it has also led to an expansion of the demand on the ICT Unit and Project Management Resources. Often unrealistic expectations have been made that existing staff can project manage an ICT Project in addition to their existing work commitments.

This has led to long lead times for implementation and delays in realizing the benefits of improved systems and processes.

Current ICT Staff Resources are already fully occupied with maintaining current software and hardware and so each new implementation puts extra demand on the limited amount of time available for Project Implementation.

It was evident on the resignation of the ICT Coordinator that new system requirements have placed some significant demands on that position to resolve complex technological problems with very limited time availability.

Employment of a Business Analyst will help ensure that process and other efficiencies and all associated cost-savings are realized as soon as possible, that systems are implemented in a timely manner and are integrated with council's core management systems.

Currently there are 22 projects either in-train or in need of execution. Some of these are complex and will demand significant resources others are simpler but will need to be done with an integrated approach with other systems. A full list of the current projects is at the end of this report.

The Business Analyst will report to the Director of Corporate Services, with the following key responsibilities:

- Establish improved processes for ICT project development and justification, to improve the overall governance processes surrounding ICT Projects
- Review current processes to clearly identify the problem that is in need of being addressed (Business process re-engineering)
- Assist with the scoping of any ICT Business case, End user requirements elicitation and documentation, and where applicable any related capital bid requirements
- Participate in the procurement process for ICT Systems (including software evaluation) to ensure that they meet Council's need and can integrate with other existing systems at council (where applicable)
- Be the ICT contact, during systems implementation, for any systems integration issues including integration with third party systems such as payment gateways.
- Liaise with ICT staff re issues around server hosting of software, hardware requirements and other relevant software issues
- Play an active support role to ICT Project Managers in implementing new systems
- Change management associated with ICT system changes.

It is anticipated that the position would be employed for an 18 month period where-upon many of the current and proposed ICT projects should be completed and fully implemented. Further resourcing beyond this point has not yet been identified, but the end of the 18 month term will align this decision with the 2019/20 budget cycle.

Consultation/Communication

The Director of Corporate Services has had conversations with other Councils regarding similar roles as this and discussed the approaches that have been used to fund them, such as the capturing of savings when project efficiencies are gained across the organisation.

Financial

The cost of engaging a Band 7 Business Analyst for an 18 month period is \$156,000 (includes all council on-costs). The efficiencies which would be associated with the establishment of this position (in processes and human resources) will create savings over time which would indirectly off-set this investment.

Graeme Harrison
Director Corporate Services

Type	Category	Status	Project	Project Brief Description
Software	Forms	Not Started	Online Bookings for Community Facilities	Online Bookings for Recreation Reserves etc, linked to invoicing. Links with HTH Venue Ops program and also with new Opencies website.
Software	Forms	Not Started	Online Event Forms	Currently, event organisers are required to complete an Event Notification Form and other forms manually. Often the event is an annual event and so only minor changes should be required in future years. The Event Notification Form has been included under the Greenlight technology.
Software	Forms	In Progress	Online Forms	Project to look for a council wide solution for the production of on-line forms. Product investigated was Nintex forms. Other solutions are being used across council - would be good to have one standard product if that were possible.
Software	Implementation	In Progress	Asset Management System (Assetfinda)	Purchase of AssetFinda will work inconjunction with MapInfo. SQL database running locally. Will integrate with Community Map, Civica, Reflect & Merit (maybe also Recfind)
Software	Implementation	In Progress	Civica - Online Leave and Timesheets (Employee Kiosk)	Only a few employees have access to online leave through the Employee Kiosk at this point. Payroll has been trialling Online Leave Applications to a few staff and we hope to roll this program out to all staff once we go to Civica 6.11 in March/April 2017. Payroll is also looking at introducing Online Timesheets throughout the organisation which will be directly uploaded into the Civica Payroll System.
Software	Implementation	In Progress	Community Map	The Community Map is a shared GIS platform to allow all shires/councils to have an online GIS presence. A working group was established consisting of members from Hindmarsh Shire Council, Horsham Rural City Council, West Wimmera Shire Council, Yarriambiack Shire Council and Northern Grampians Shire Council. The group was supported by representatives from Grampians Wimmera-Mallee Water (GWMW) and Wimmera CMA and was facilitated by the Wimmera Development Association (WDA).
Software	Implementation	In Progress	Electronic Purchase Orders	Currently HRCC uses paper based purchase orders (PO). Employees that have delegated financial authority can use the current paper based PO's to engage businesses in providing HRCC with goods and services. The employee is responsible in ensuring that the transaction they initiate are within their delegated authority, in line with HRCC's policies and procedures, within the approved budget and in line with HRCC's strategic objectives. The move to Online Requestioning (OLR) will also mean that HRCC will need to embrace changes that include electronic request for quotation (RFQ), recognising commitments, electronic approval and the different communications options available to let suppliers know of approved orders i.e. purchase orders sent by email.
Software	Implementation	In Progress	Fire and Emergency Planning	Crisisworks - training for staff, no linkages to councils records systems, cloud based, used infrequently
Software	Implementation	Not Started	GIS Data Input and Assistance	Project to support the inputing of data to the Community Map and the use of the Community Map on council's website and perhaps internally to staff from Intranet
Software	Implementation	In Progress	Greenlight ICT Implementation	AWS VPN for Greenlight, GIS integration, Authority Integration, Mobile devices purchased and tested, Data migration
Software	Implementation	In Progress	iFerret Implmentation	Implementation of unified search system is complete - now need to manage a roll-out further across Council
Software	Implementation	In Progress	Reflect	System to manage scheduling of operations work???? Outdoor staff need for IT access, linkages to civica for timesheets and job costing, asset system??? Little known of exactly what functions this fulfills.
Software	Implementation	Not Started	SMS Reminders for appointments	This is part of the Greenlight system. Essentially, people will be able to book their own building inspections online through Greenlight, and Greenlight will send them a reminder prior to the appointment. The SMS feature also updates applicants on the status of their applications. For example, if a planning permit has been referred to, say Vicroads, for comment, the applicant will be updated by SMS that this has now happened. The applicant will be able to opt-out of receiving these SMS messages or may receive them by email.

Type	Category	Status	Project	Project Brief Description
Investigation		Not Started	BI Management Dashboard reporting	Dashboard style reporting that pulls together data from different systems for dashboard style reporting
Investigation		Not Started	Centralised Database - NAR	At present there are multiple databases that hold names and addresses throughout the organisation. It has been suggested that a centralised database be developed.
Investigation		Not Started	Electronic events register	e.g. Firearms use, impounded animals (including re-housing pad numbers), cat traps, office abuse etc. Currently these events are captured using paper based systems. Maybe requires separate systems.
Investigation		Not Started	Electronic Permits	For application, issuing and policing of local laws permits
Investigation		Not Started	Improvements to customer request capture and tracking	Including a script that customer service staff can use to capture the required information for events that rangers need to respond to. Also the ability to assign merit requests to multiple officers where more than one is required
Investigation		Not Started	Interactive Search of Delegations	A system where council officer can search for and find details about what delegations are currently in place for a particular role and what the legislative requirements are for that delegation
Investigation		Not Started	Officer Tracking system	To support working in isolation policy. System to monitor the whereabouts of officers when on potentially dangerous jobs.
Investigation		Not Started	Timesheets integration with Civica from various work management systems	It would be helpful if Civica could source data for timesheets from various work mgmt system (e.g. Reflect) so that staff who need to apportion their time between various roles don't need to double enter the data into multiple systems.
Investigation		Not Started	Visitors Sign In System	The issue of visitor access into the Civic Centre building has been of concern to staff for some time. This has been discussed at EMG level and a visitor access procedure was drafted in August 2015. The draft procedure was emailed to all staff asking for feedback. A summary of responses received are listed below –



Horsham Rural City
Council urban rural balance

Council Policy

CHILD SAFE

1. PURPOSE

This policy reflects the strong commitment of the Horsham Rural City Council, management, staff and volunteers to child safety and the establishment of Council as a child safe organisation. It provides an outline of the measures Council has developed to keep people safe from any harm, including abuse, and reflects Council's legislative responsibility in meeting the requirements of Child Safe Standards.

2. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Horsham Rural City Council is committed to providing and promoting child safe environments. Council has zero tolerance to child abuse and aims to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and secure and have fun. This includes the physical, emotional, cultural and social wellbeing of all children.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Councillors, staff, volunteers, contractors, sub-contractors and individuals involved in Horsham Rural City Council services or activities.

This policy acknowledges that there is a continuum of abuse of children and views all such events, regardless of whether they are seen as 'harm' or 'abuse', as damaging.

4. BACKGROUND

In April 2012 the Victorian Government initiated the *Betrayal of Trust Inquiry*. From this, 15 recommendations were made including compulsory minimum standards for creating child safe environments.

In November 2015, the Victorian Parliament passed the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment Act* to introduce Child Safe Standards.

5. DEFINITIONS AND KEY TERMS

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Child - A person under the age of 18 who identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Abuse - Any act committed against a child that involves:

- neglect or abuse of a physical, emotional, psychological or cultural nature
- Physical violence
- Sexual offences

Child/children - A person under the age of 18

Child Safety Officer - A council employee with a specific responsibility for responding to any issues associated with child safety

Child safe organisation - An organisation which takes deliberate steps to protect children from physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and cultural abuse, and neglect. Child safety is proactively embedded in all areas of the organisation.

Failure to Disclose - When an adult has a 'reasonable belief' that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child they have an obligation to report it to police, (unless exemptions apply). Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence.

Failure to Protect - Applies to people within organisations who knew of a risk of child sexual abuse by someone in the organisation and had the authority to reduce or remove the risk, but did not act to protect the child. This is a criminal offence.

Harm - Describes an event that is seen as possibly less detrimental than 'abuse' but is clearly not in a person's best interest of promoting their safety and wellbeing.

What is child abuse

Emotional/psychological	Occurs when a person engages in inappropriate behaviours, such as rejecting, ignoring, humiliating, isolating, threatening or verbally abusing a child, or allowing others to do so. Because this kind of abuse does not leave physical injuries, it is often hidden and underestimated.
Grooming	Is a criminal offence which targets communication by an adult, including online communication, with a child or their parents with the intent of committing child sexual abuse.
Neglect	Is failing to meet a child's basic needs, such as providing adequate food, drink, shelter, clothing, supervision, hygiene and medical attention.
Physical	Is intentionally causing, or threatening to cause, physical injury to a child, or inadvertently causing injury as a consequence of physical punishment or physically aggressive treatment of a child. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures.

Racial, cultural, religious abuse	Is conduct that demonstrates contempt, ridicule, hatred or negativity towards a child because of their race, culture or religion. It may be overt, such as direct racial vilification or discrimination, or covert, such as demonstrating a lack of cultural respect (attitude and values) and awareness (knowledge and understanding) or failing to provide positive images about another culture.
Sexual abuse	A child is sexually abused when any person uses their authority over the child to involve the child in sexual activity. Child sexual abuse involves a wide range of sexual activity including fondling genitals, masturbation, vaginal or anal penetration by a finger, penis or any other object, voyeurism and exhibitionism.
Sexual exploitation	Is considered a specific form of sexual abuse because children, by virtue of their age and development, are unable to give informed consent. It can include children being involved in sexually exploitive relationships, exposing a child to pornography, receiving money, goods, drug or favours in exchange for sex with one or more adults, or being exploited in more 'formal' forms of sex work.

6. PRINCIPLES

6.1 Our Children

Council staff and volunteers encourage children to express their views. As an organisation and as individuals we listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children who use our services to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

Wherever applicable, we teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children, or their parents, raise with us. We do this by actively soliciting feedback from children and parents on their experiences interacting with Council.

6.2 Valuing diversity

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families
- welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation
- seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural backgrounds.

6.3 Recruitment

Council applies the best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers. We interview and conduct referee checks on all staff and volunteers and require police checks and Working with Children Checks for relevant positions. Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all relevant advertisements.

6.4 Supporting staff and volunteers

Council seeks to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We have developed a Code of Conduct of behaviour by adults towards children to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code.

6.5 Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

Council will appoint two appropriate Child Safety persons with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or children. Details of the appointed Child Safety persons will be made available on the intranet and internet. The associated complaints processes are detailed in the Reporting a Child Safety Concern or Complaint Procedure.

6.6 Privacy

While safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern, Council is committed to protecting an individual's right to privacy. All personal information considered during the process of report or investigation will be dealt with in accordance with Council's privacy policy unless there is a legislative requirement to disclose.

6.7 Risk Management

Council recognises the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and this informs all associated policies, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, Council proactively manages the risks of abuse to the physical, emotional, cultural and social wellbeing of all children.

7. COMMUNICATION

Internet, intranet, posters, handouts, annual report, staff and volunteer induction /guidance documents and material (including Code of Conduct)

8. RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner: Director Community Services

The policy will be reviewed every two years and Council undertakes to see views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.

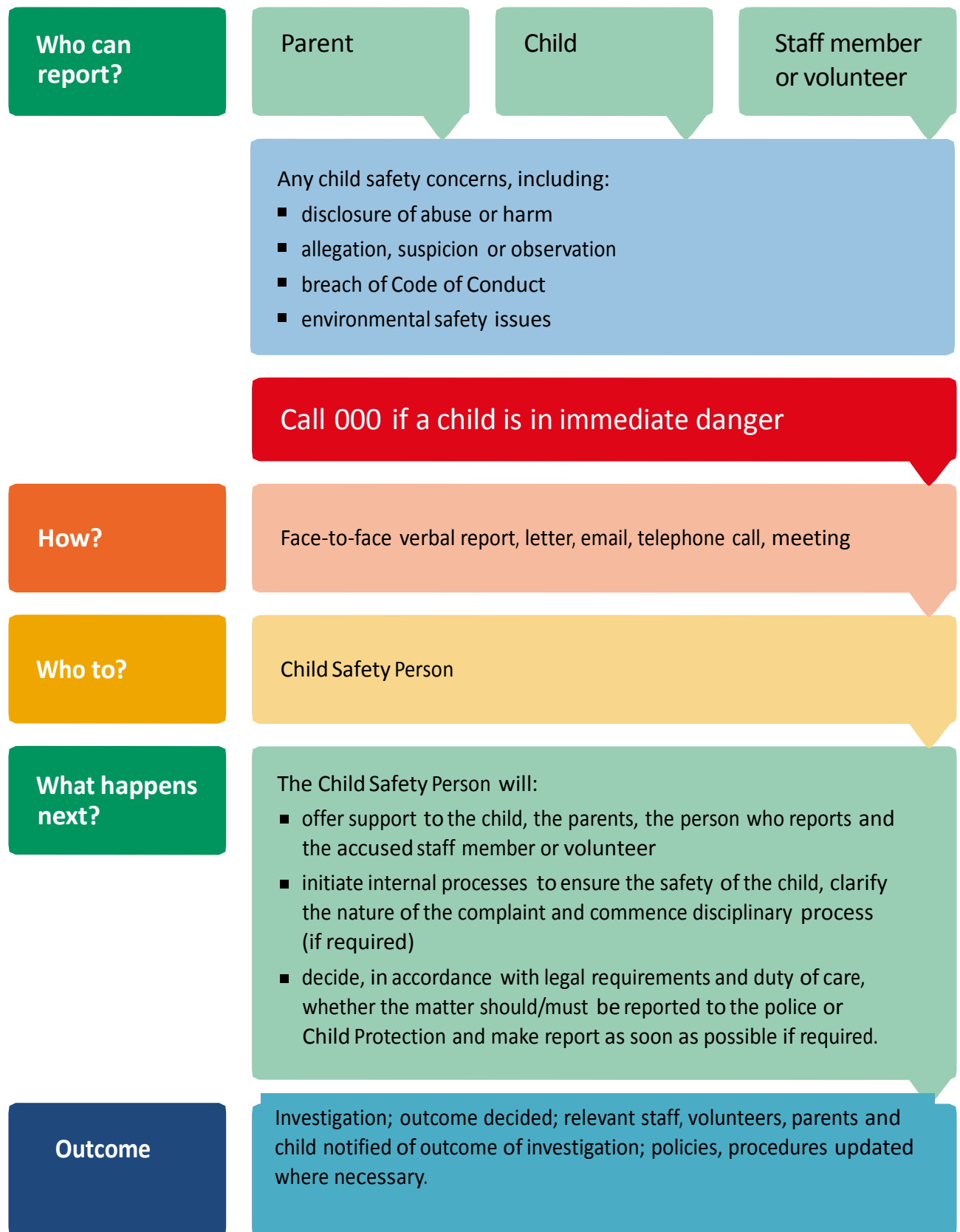
9. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Document	Location
Victorian Child Safe Standards	Internet (Victorian Department of Human Services)
Betrayal of Trust Inquiry Report	Internet (Victorian Department of Justice)
<i>Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012</i>	Internet
<i>Working with Children Act 2005</i>	Internet
HRCC Working with Children Policy and Procedure	Intranet
<i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005</i>	Internet
<i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i>	Internet
HRCC Code of Conduct of Behaviour by Adults Towards Children	Intranet
HRCC Staff Code of Conduct	Intranet
Reporting a Child Safety Concern or Complaint Procedure	Intranet
United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child	Internet
Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities	Internet
Reporting a Child Safety Concern Procedure	Intranet

10. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version Number	Approval Date	Approval By	Amendment
01		Council	New Policy

Flowchart: Child safety reporting process





Horsham Rural City
Council urban rural balance

Council Procedure

REPORTING A CHILD SAFETY CONCERN

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is for Council to make staff and the community aware of the processes associated with reporting a child safety concern.

The Horsham Rural City Council is required under legislation to effectively manage the risk of abuse occurring toward children, and report on any offences that occur. Effective management of child safety requires Council to commit to the **Reporting a Child Safety Concern Procedure**. This document should be read in conjunction with the **Child Safe Policy**.

2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all Councillors, staff, volunteers any individual performing employment-related duties on behalf of Horsham Rural City Council.

3. DEFINITIONS

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Child - A person under the age of 18 who identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Abuse - Any act committed against a child that involves:

- neglect or abuse of a physical, emotional, psychological or cultural nature
- Physical violence
- Sexual offences

Child/children - A person under the age of 18

Child Safety Officer - A council employee with a specific responsibility for responding to any issues associated with child safety

Child safe organisation - An organisation which takes deliberate steps to protect children from physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and cultural abuse, and neglect. Child safety is proactively embedded in all areas of the organisation.

Failure to Disclose - When an adult has a 'reasonable belief' that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child they have an obligation to report it to police, (unless exemptions apply). Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence.

Failure to Protect - Applies to people within organisations who knew of a risk of child sexual abuse by someone in the organisation and had the authority to reduce or remove the risk, but did not act to protect the child. This is a criminal offence.

Harm - Describes an event that is seen as possibly less detrimental than 'abuse' but is clearly not in a person's best interest of promoting their safety and wellbeing.

What is child abuse

Emotional/ psychological	Occurs when a person engages in inappropriate behaviours, such as rejecting, ignoring, humiliating, isolating, threatening or verbally abusing a child, or allowing others to do so. Because this kind of abuse does not leave physical injuries, it is often hidden and underestimated.
Grooming	Is a criminal offence which targets communication by an adult, including online communication, with a child or their parents with the intent of committing child sexual abuse.
Neglect	Is failing to meet a child's basic needs, such as providing adequate food, drink, shelter, clothing, supervision, hygiene and medical attention.
Physical	Is intentionally causing, or threatening to cause, physical injury to a child, or inadvertently causing injury as a consequence of physical punishment or physically aggressive treatment of a child. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures.
Racial, cultural, religious abuse	Is conduct that demonstrates contempt, ridicule, hatred or negativity towards a child because of their race, culture or religion. It may be overt, such as direct racial vilification or discrimination, or covert, such as demonstrating a lack of cultural respect (attitude and values) and awareness (knowledge and understanding) or failing to provide positive images about another culture.
Sexual abuse	A child is sexually abused when any person uses their authority over the child to involve the child in sexual activity. Child sexual abuse involves a wide range of sexual activity including fondling genitals, masturbation, vaginal or anal penetration by a finger, penis or any other object, voyeurism and exhibitionism.
Sexual exploitation	Is considered a specific form of sexual abuse because children, by virtue of their age and development, are unable to give informed consent. It can include children being involved in sexually exploitive relationships, exposing a child to pornography, receiving money, goods, drug or favours in exchange for sex with one or more adults, or being exploited in more 'formal' forms of sex work.

4. INTRODUCTION

Horsham Rural City Council has zero tolerance to child abuse and is committed to promoting and protecting children from child abuse. Council takes all allegations of child abuse seriously and is committed to:

- Proving processes for reporting allegations of child abuse
- Ensuring an efficient and thorough investigation and /or referral where required
- Maintaining adequate record keeping and reports of child abuse
- Ensuring our staff know what to do and who to tell if they suspect or observe child abuse
- Reporting allegations of child abuse to the appropriate authorities

5. ACTIONS

It is the responsibility of all staff to report any child safety concerns as soon as practical. To ensure compliance with legislation and the protection of children, **any** adult who has a reasonable belief that a child has been or is at risk of abuse whether in their organisation or not, has an obligation to report in accordance with this policy.

5.1 Good Faith Reporting

Reports by staff should be made in good faith. The law generally protects those that report in good faith from legal repercussions and in some cases also prevents the disclosure of the name/identification of the person who has made a report.

5.2 Risk management issues

Where complaints are received on matters that have resulted in physical injury or pose such a threat, these are handled through Council's risk management system and will not be handled through the reporting a child safety concern policy.

5.3 Reporting

Individuals must report when they observe or suspect that a child is or has been the subject of abuse including physical violence, sexual abuse, serious emotional or psychological abuse and serious neglect.

A suspicion may exist if:

- A child tells of conduct that constitutes abuse or neglect
- A child displays indicators of abuse or neglect

Staff are also required to report general concerns such as:

- Physical environmental risks to children
- Breaches in the code of conduct (adults behaviour toward children)
- Observing inappropriate or uncomfortable interactions between adults and children

- Observing concerning changes in a child's behaviour

As per the child safety reporting flowchart (appendix 1), all child safety concerns should be reported to the child safety officer as soon as practicable.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse call 000.

5.4 Responding to Incident Disclosure

If a child or family discloses an incident of abuse to you:

- Stay calm and remain objective
- Explain that there is a process for dealing with the report
- Explain that the information will need to be shared with others including the police
- Keep a written record of the report
- Contact the Child Safety officer as soon as practicable

5.5 Reports concerning a Councillor or employee of HRCC

If the allegation involves a member of the organisation:

- Explain that there are processes for dealing with the complaint
- Contact the Child Safety officer as soon as practicable

The Child Safety officer will then:

- **Call 000 if they believe a child is at immediate risk of child abuse**
- accurately record the report in their own words and complete a child safety incident report (appendix 2)
- Alert the police and or child protection
- Alert the CE and other relevant personnel in the organisation
- Assist the child/family to access appropriate counselling and advocacy
- Inform the child/family of the steps that the organisation will take

5.6 Investigating

If required, the Police and Child Protection may decide to conduct an investigation. All staff, contractors and volunteers must fully comply with any such investigation.

Whether or not a criminal investigation is pursued by the police, the CE will consult with the Child Safety officers to determine if an internal investigation should take place.

The CE will:

- Await police clearance on any criminal matters before commencing any investigation
- Make every effort to maintain and ensure confidentiality during the investigation process
- coordinate the investigation with the relevant authorities

5.7 Responding

If the allegations involve a staff member, contractor or volunteer then the person concerned may be stood down (with pay, where applicable) until the investigation is complete, (as per the Dispute Resolution policy).

If the investigation concludes that there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct- Adults behaviour towards children, then any of the following actions may occur:

- Dismissal
- Cessation of involvement with HRCC
- Reports made to the relevant Authorities

At all stages the child/family should be aware of the processes under taken and the resulting actions.

6. COMMUNICATION

Website, customer service points of contact, Intranet, staff meetings.

7. RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner: Director Community Services

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

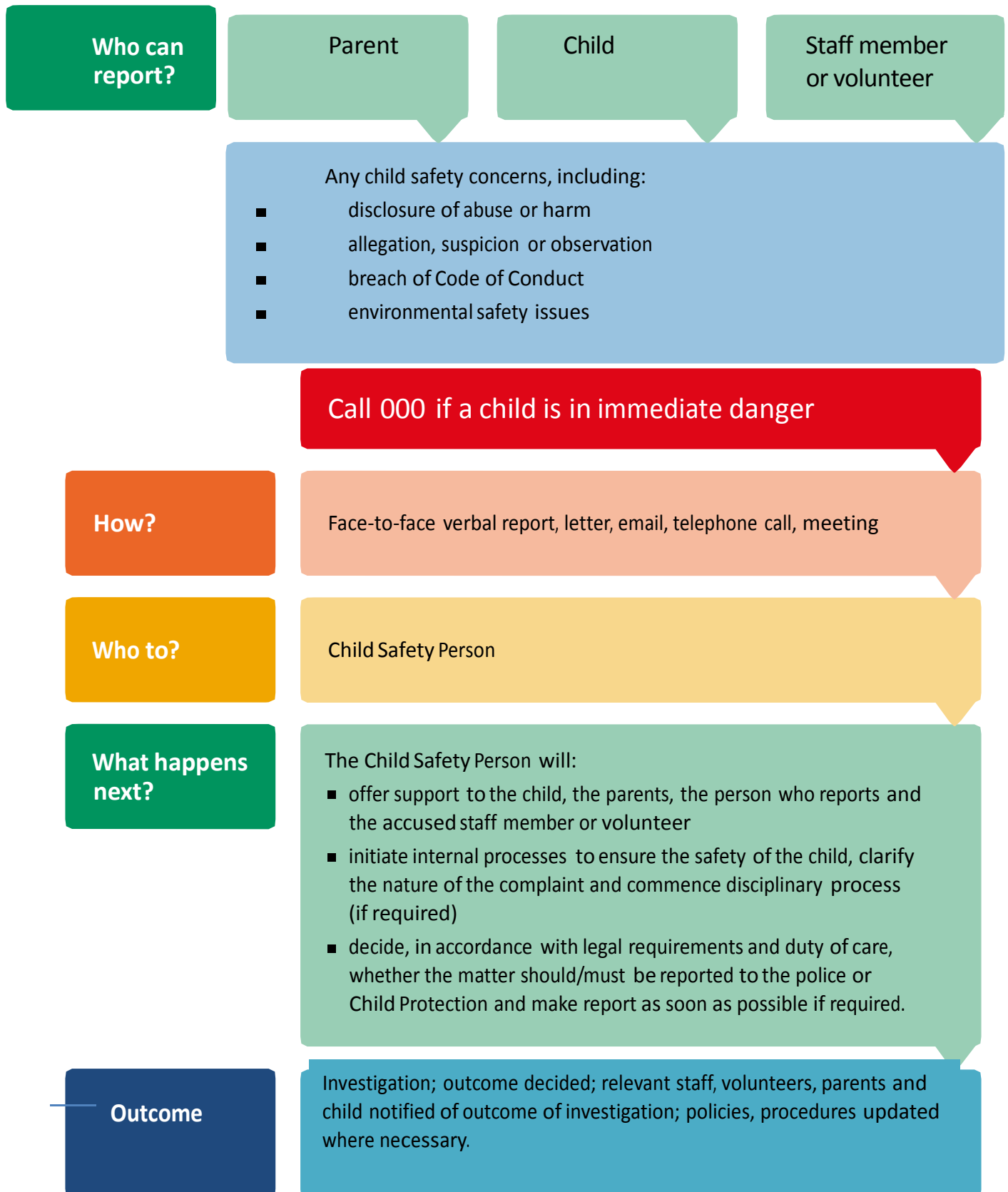
Document	Location
Code of Conduct- Adults Behaviour Towards Children	Intranet
Child Safe Policy	Intranet
Disputes Resolution Policy	Intranet
Councillors Code of Conduct	Intranet

9. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version Number	Approval Date	Approval By	Amendment	Review Date
01		EMG	New Procedure	Xxxx 2020

Appendix 1

Flowchart: Child safety reporting process



Appendix 2

Child Safe Incident Report

Incident details

Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Name(s) of child/children involved:	
Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved:	

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Does the child identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

N
o

Yes, Aboriginal

Yes, Torres Strait
Islander

Please categorise the incident

Physical violence

Sexual offence

Serious emotional or psychological abuse

Serious neglect

Please describe the incident

When did it take place?	
Who was involved?	
What did you see?	
Other information	

Parent/carer/child use

Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Name(s) of child/children involved:	
Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved:	

Office use:

Date incident report received:	
Staff member managing incident:	
Follow-up date:	
Incident ref. number:	

Has the incident been reported?

Child protection	
Police	
Another third party (please specify):	

Incident reporter wishes to remain anonymous?*(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)*

Yes No



The Hon Darren Chester MP
 Minister for Infrastructure and Transport
 A/g Minister for Regional Development
 A/g Minister for Local Government and Territories
Deputy Leader of the House
Member for Gippsland

The Mayor
 Horsham Rural City Council
 PO Box 511
 HORSHAM VIC 3402

HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL	
FILE No.	F20/A10/000001
REFERENCE	John Martin
13 NOV 2017	
REG. No.	
COPIES	CE, Mayor,

Dear Mayor

I am writing to advise you that I have issued a Statement of Expectations for the Roads to Recovery (R2R) Program. This statement is to bring R2R in line with other Australian Government programs where funding is issued with a set of expectations. This statement is the first one for the R2R Program and it aims to improve road safety for all Australians.

I am constantly reminded of the good use to which councils have put their R2R money, but I believe that more needs to be done to encourage more road safety outcomes from the funding.

The statement asks councils to consider directing more of their R2R funding to projects that are likely to reduce fatalities and serious injuries in crashes and to work with my Department to improve the reporting of safety and other outcomes from the R2R Program. A more formal evaluation by councils of their R2R projects will also make it easier for us to show how they have benefitted the local network and the community.

Reducing road trauma is a responsibility for us all. It's about safer drivers, safer cars and safer roads. Your support to help save lives and reduce the economic burden of road trauma will be greatly appreciated by your community.

The Australian Government has demonstrated its firm commitment to the R2R Program by providing an additional \$50 million on an ongoing basis from 2019-20, to bring the annual allocation to \$400 million across all councils in Australia, and by ensuring that the program did not contain a sunset clause under the *National Land Transport Act 2014*, meaning no new legislation is required for the continuation of the program.

I would be grateful if you would ensure that the Statement of Expectations is circulated to elected members and to council officers involved in selecting and administering R2R projects within your council.

The contact officer in my Department on this matter is Ms Sylvia Vincent at sylvia.vincent@infrastructure.gov.au or 02 6274 7387.

I look forward to continuing the successful relationship between the Australian Government and local councils through the R2R Program. By working together, we can make a difference to improve road safety.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Chester', written in a cursive style.

DARREN CHESTER

Encl

7 November 2017



The Hon Darren Chester MP
Minister for Infrastructure and Transport
A/g Minister for Regional Development
A/g Minister for Local Government and Territories
Deputy Leader of the House
Member for Gippsland

ROADS TO RECOVERY STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

The Roads to Recovery (R2R) Program makes a valuable contribution to safety, economic and social outcomes in communities through supporting maintenance of the nation's local roads.

In the 2016-17 Budget, the Australian Government took a decision to provide an additional \$50 million on an ongoing basis to the R2R Program from 2019-20, to bring the annual allocation to \$400 million across all councils in Australia.

The Government also ensured that the R2R Program did not contain a sunset clause under the *National Land Transport Act 2014*, safeguarding the continuation of this important program.

1,300 people died on Australian roads last year and the Australian Government has been working closely with all levels of government to develop a strategy to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on our roads.

The current National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 sets out a plan using the safe system approach, safer vehicles, safer speeds, safer people and safer roads to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes by at least 30 per cent. This approach calls for a holistic view of the road transport system and the interactions among roads and roadsides, travel speeds, vehicles and road users.

Unfortunately, after a decade of good results, the trend over the last two years has been going in the wrong direction.

In reviewing the outcomes of the R2R Program, I am pleased to see that 27 per cent of funding received by councils has been spent on road safety across the life of the current program. A further 34 per cent of spending has been to maintain the road asset, which also has safety benefits.

There is a considerable body of knowledge that indicates that well-designed road improvements reduce the rate of road crashes and serious injuries.

A study of the Australian Government's Black Spot Program in 2012 examined the crash reduction benefits of a variety of road treatments based on a sample of 1,599 projects across the country.

I am also requesting councils provide the Department with more regular updates on the status of projects which are receiving funding under R2R. I know previously some councils have informed us once works have been completed rather than before they have begun. I would like councils to inform us of every project which will receive R2R funding before they commence work on them and update us on their progress each quarter. A higher level of engagement than we have previously requested will allow both of us to benefit by keeping the local community informed of works underway.

The Commonwealth Government is committed to using Federal funding to improve employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians and I ask for this consideration to be applied to projects using R2R funding.

Lastly, I invite councils to write to me with ideas of how all levels of government could be improving road safety and the outcomes from the considerable investment we all make in the country's roads.

DARREN CHESTER

7 November 2017