

# AGENDA

## MEETING OF THE **HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL**

**To be held on**

**22 May 2023**

**At 5.30pm**

**In the**

**Council Chamber, Civic Centre**

**18 Roberts Avenue, HORSHAM**



**COUNCILLORS are respectfully requested to attend the Council Meeting  
of the Horsham Rural City Council to be held on 22 May 2023  
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm**

**Order of Business**

**PRESENT**

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

**1. PRAYER**

Almighty God, we pledge ourselves to work in harmony for, the social, cultural and economic well-being of our Rural City. Help us to be wise in our deliberations and fair in our actions, so that prosperity and happiness shall be the lot of our people. AMEN

**2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY STATEMENT**

Horsham Rural City Council acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagulk, Jaadwa and Jadawadjali people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community.

We pay our respects to the Elders, both past and present, and commit to working together in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect for the benefit of the broader community and future generations.

**3. OPENING AND WELCOME**

Chairman, Cr Robyn Gulline formally welcomed those in attendance to the meeting. The Mayor advised that the meeting will be recorded to maintain a video archive, which will be available on the Horsham Rural City Council website as soon as possible.

**4. APOLOGIES**

**5. LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS**

**6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**Recommendation**

That the minutes emanating from the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5:30pm on 24 April 2023 and 5:00pm on 8 May 2023 be adopted.

## 7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

### **Declarations of Interest**

A Councillor who has declared a conflict of interest, must leave the meeting and remain outside the room while the matter is being considered, or any vote is taken.

### **Members of Staff**

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, 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.

**8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

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<i>Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(f) –Personal Information</i>	
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<i>Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(f) –Personal Information</i>	

**CLOSE**

SUNIL BHALLA

Chief Executive Officer

## **REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION**

### **9. OFFICERS REPORTS**

#### **9.1 DRAFT BUDGET 2023-2024 AND UPDATE OF REVENUE AND RATING PLAN 2021-2024**

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Zac Gorman	<b>Director:</b>	Kim Hargreaves
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Management Accountant	<b>Directorate:</b>	Corporate Services
<b>Department:</b>	Finance	<b>File Number:</b>	F18/A07/000004

##### **Officer Conflict of Interest**

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

##### **Status**

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

##### **Appendix**

Draft Budget 2023-2024 (**Appendix 9.1A**)

Updated Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 (**Appendix 9.1B**)

##### **Purpose**

To present the Draft Budget 2023-2024 and the updated Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024.

##### **Summary**

- The Draft Budget 2023-2024 is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- The draft has been prepared through a process of consultation and discussion with Council Officers and Councillors, and aligns with objectives as set out in the 2021-2025 Council Plan. It has also been prepared with reference to the Annual Action Plan Year 2: 2023-2024.
- The Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 has been revised to incorporate some minor changes as a result of the budget development process. This reflects that consideration was given to the differentials and Municipal Charge within the Budget, and to reflect the increase in the Council component of the Pensioner Concession.

##### **Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Receive and note the Proposed Draft Budget 2023-2024 (**Appendix 9.1A**) and place it on Council's website to inform the community of council's planned expenditures and charges until 5pm Friday 9 June 2023.
2. Receive and note the updates to the Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024. (**Appendix 9.1B**)
3. Consider the Draft Budget 2023-2024 (**Appendix 9.1A**) and updated Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 (**Appendix 9.1B**) for adoption at its meeting on Monday 26 June 2023.

## REPORT

### Background

This year represents another year of budget preparation under the State Government's Fair Go Rates system which saw the introduction of rate caps in 2016. This year saw the rate cap set at 3.5 per cent by the Minister for Local Government and it is against that figure that this budget has been framed.

Council has a range of internal and external cost pressures to contend with, while still recognising the need to play an important role as the regional city for the western area of the state through the provision of quality services to more than just our own residents. There continues to be growth and development within the community, which puts pressure on service delivery costs such as the supply of parks and gardens, maintenance of roads and footpaths over time.

### Discussion

#### Key Statistics

- Total Revenue: \$62.0 million (2022-23 = \$59.6 million)
- Total Expenditure: \$56.1 million (2022-23 = \$55.6 million)
- Surplus/(Deficit)for the year: \$5.9 million surplus (2022-23 = \$4.0 million surplus)
- Underlying operating result: \$3.9 million deficit (2022-23 = \$5.7 million deficit)

### Budget Influences

In preparing the Draft Budget, several internal and external influences have been taken into consideration as they impact significantly on the services delivered by the Council in the budget period and resulting budget position. Further budgetary pressure is felt as a result of the current inflationary environment, particularly where cost increases of materials and services Council far exceeds the Rate Cap of 3.5 per cent.

### Capital Works

The proposed capital works budget is \$22.86 million which is made up of \$6.88 million of new projects, \$12.04 million in renewal and \$3.95 million in upgrades. The program will be funded by \$8.26 million of grant funding, \$13.67 million of Council cash from operations, reserves and investments, and \$400,000 of new borrowings.

### Capex Summary

The roads and related infrastructure capital program has a budget provision of \$6.8 million, of which some \$5.5 million relates to renewal of existing assets. There is also budget provision of \$4.2 million for further progress on the City to River works, featuring the City Oval netball courts and netball pavilion, the events stage, and initial works on the community centre/change room facility. The Wesley Performing Arts Centre refurbishment has a proposed budget \$1.958 million, dependent on significant grant funding of around \$1.4 million to enable these works to proceed.

### Rates and Charges

Council has increased its additional "Council funded" rebate to pensioners from \$30 to \$50. This is over and above the state government rebate. As the policy trigger of +3.5% of the Farm General Valuation has been met, the Differential has been reviewed but will remain at 50% of the residential rate.

Some of the reasoning behind this decision was that currently residential properties share the same percentage of the total CIV Value (approx. 46% of the total value of all properties respectively) but residential properties are now responsible for nearly double the rates revenue than Farm. This would indicate that both vertical and horizontal equity, benefits as well as residential “capacity to pay” have reached their limit concerning altering the differential in the 2023-2024 budget.

The Municipal Charge remains constant at \$200 with concern that any further drop this year would further disadvantage higher valued Farm and Residential properties, as a higher differential would have to be calculated. The flat fee provides horizontal equity to evenly spread the cost of services over the municipality and the differentials applied are as follows:

<b>RATING DIFFERENTIAL</b>	<b>RATING DIFFERENTIAL %</b>
General/Residential	100%
Farm	50%
Commercial	95%
Industrial	100%
Culture and Recreation	50%

### **Centralised Annual Valuations**

Since 2019 the Valuer-General Victoria (VGV) is the sole valuation authority to conduct annual valuations for rating purposes. The 2023-2024 Draft Budget includes preliminary valuation data from the VGV with valuations as at 1 January 2023. All rating information contained within the budget, including rates in the dollars, are based on these updated valuations. However, the preliminary valuations are yet to be certified by the VGV and are therefore subject to change prior to the budget adoption. The current draft valuation data suggests an average increase across the municipality of 17 per cent.

This does not mean Horsham Rural City Council will generate 17 per cent additional rates revenue, rather it will influence how much of the total rates revenue is contributed by each individual property (noting the cap at 3.5%). Movements in individual property valuations (Capital Improved Value or CIV) will have an impact on individual rate notices and are difficult to communicate through the 2023-2024 Draft Budget document.

Section 4.1.2(f) of the 2023-2024 Draft Budget provides an indication of the valuation movements for each rating differential group, however, individual property valuation movements will not be advised until the 2023-2024 annual rates notices for each property are distributed.

### **Financial Performance Indicators**

Section 5 of the 2023-2024 Draft Budget documents Council’s current and projected forecast across a number of prescribed indicators. These indicators are useful for analysing Council’s financial position and are further supported by the Financial Policy Statements adopted in Council’s 2022-2032 Financial Plan.

### **Options to Consider**

The Council Budget is a statutory requirement and must be adopted each financial year by 30 June.



### **Sustainability Implications**

Rate capping continues to place restrictions on Council's ability to raise its own source income and places and ever increasing reliance on grants from other tiers of government which can change over time. Council's share of the overall tax revenues of all tiers of government (approx. 3%) is also a factor as additional responsibilities and obligations are being given to Council without adequate consideration of the taxation implications. These issues mean that Council must be mindful of its own financial sustainability and therefore take a more conservative approach to debt than other levels of government and/or the private sector may take.

### **Community Engagement**

In relation to the draft budget, Council has already completed engagement with the community around the Annual Action Plan Year 2: 2023-2024. The community was provided the opportunity to provide feedback on the Annual Action Plan during February 2023 with the Plan then utilised to drive the development of the initiatives that sit within this budget. With these actions of community engagement now complete, Council is presenting the budget as an essentially finalised document with engagement at the IAP2 level of "informing the community".

In relation to the Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024, the document was adopted by Council in October 2022 and the only changes made since then reflect the Draft Budget notes and change to the Council funded pensioner rebate increasing from \$30 to \$50.

During May/June 2022 the documents will be provided online on Council's website for the community to review. Council will consider any comments provided by community and may make minor change in the final budget before adoption at its meeting on the 26 June 2023.

### **Financial Implications**

All matters under discussion impact on the 2023-2024 Council Budget.

### **Regional, State and National Plans and Policies**

The state policy with most significance for Council's budget is the Fair Go Rates system that sees the capping of councils rate increases at the level set by the Minister each year.

### **Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

The Budget and Revenue and Rating Plan have been prepared with reference to the Community Vision 2041, the 2021-2025 Council Plan, and the Annual Action Plan Year 2: 2023-2024.

### **Risk Implications**

The budget is a key document for the good governance and operations of Council and, as such, needs to be adopted by 30 June each year.

### **Conclusion**

The Draft Budget 2023-2024 and updated Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 are made available for community review and feedback during May/June.

## 9.2 HORSHAM NORTH LOCAL AREA PLAN

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Stephanie Harder	<b>Director:</b>	Kevin O'Brien
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Coordinator Strategic Planning & Heritage	<b>Directorate:</b>	Director Communities & Place
<b>Department:</b>	Investment Attraction and Growth	<b>File Number:</b>	F15/A07/000023

### Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

### Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

### Appendix

Horsham North Local Area Plan May 2023 (**Appendix 9.2A**)

Engagement Summary Report April 2023 (**Appendix 9.2B**)

Community Feedback Submissions (**Appendix 9.2C**)

### Purpose

To present the Horsham North Local Area Plan May 2023.

### Summary

- Council officers have updated the Plan following a six-week period of community consultation conducted between 28 September and 9 November 2022.
- Community feedback was sought on the draft Plan's vision, 10 goals and underpinning strategies.
- Council officers have reviewed and considered all feedback received and has made edits to the Plan where possible.
- Further clarification was provided within the Plan on why it has been prepared in accordance with a goal-setting framework.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt the Horsham North Local Area Plan May 2023 (**Appendix 9.2A**).
2. Receive and note the Community Engagement Summary Report April 2023 (**Appendix 9.2B**).
3. Note the following Horsham North projects currently being delivered and projects in the draft 2023-2024 budget that are proposed to be delivered in the next financial year:
  - (a) Ensure all streets have a footpath on at least one side
  - (b) Reinstate bitumen footpaths that have disappeared historically due to inadequate maintenance
  - (c) Improve safety issues through the completion of seven initial assessments currently underway
  - (d) Investigation of a third underpass and Rail Corridor Landscape Plan
  - (e) Develop Lukin Court Public Open Space
  - (f) Planting of 409 trees on nature-strips within Horsham North
  - (g) Completion of Dudley Cornell Reserve Master Plan
  - (h) Undertake a Housing Diversity and Affordability Strategy
  - (i) Undertake a third art work installation at the Horsham Silos site
  - (j) Land Acquisition of surplus Vic Track land in the Rail Corridor.

## REPORT

### Background

What is the Horsham North Local Area Plan?

The *Horsham North Local Area Plan* (the Plan) sets out a clear direction and strategic framework for Council and the community in addressing identified issues and responding to the opportunities that will make Horsham North more liveable and sustainable into the future. It does this by setting out a ten-year Vision, Ten Goals and underpinning Strategies relating to land use, built form, public realm, access to open space and transport matters.

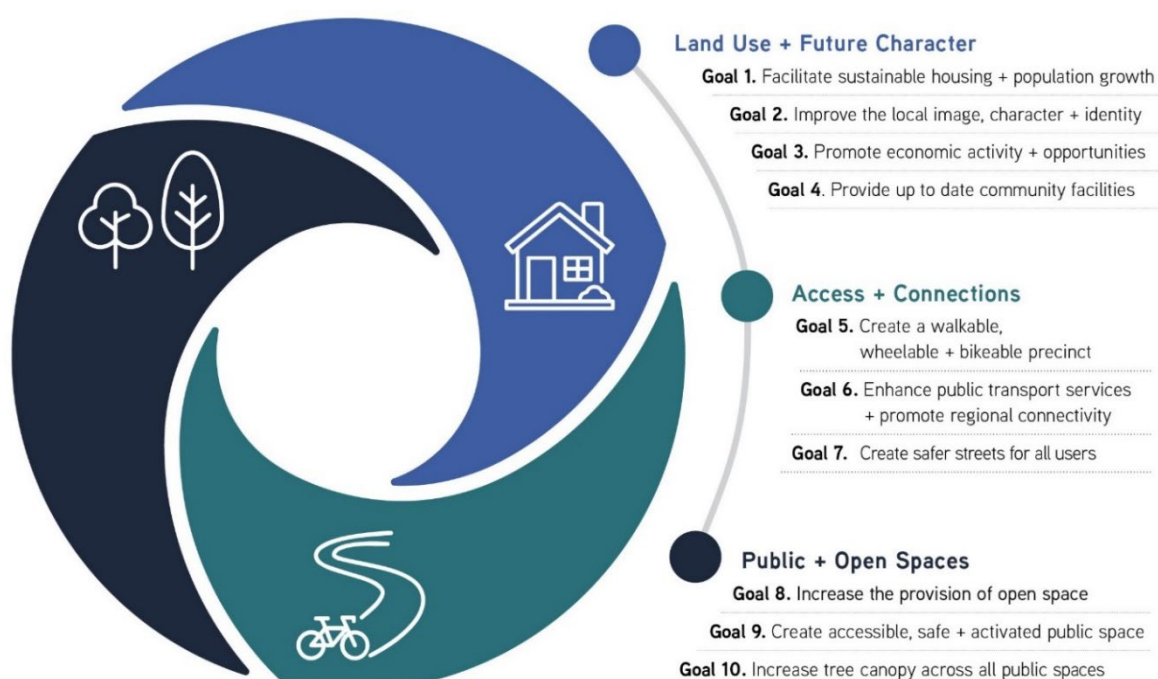
The Plan has been informed by previous background work, current research, investigation and valuable feedback from the Horsham North community, for which the Plan is intended to serve. The *Horsham North Issues and Opportunities Paper (March 2022)* forms the basis and background work for the Plan, providing the analysis and context for a goal setting framework to guide future change within the study area.

The Plan is centred on three key themes, creating a structure for analysis and goal setting. The themes categorise the various elements that influence the quality of the built environment and wellbeing of residents. The three themes are as follows:

1. Land Use and Future Character
2. Access and Connectivity
3. Public and Open Spaces

Ten Goals have been developed in accordance with the three themes. They are concise statements that the Plan aims to accomplish over its 10-year life cycle. They have been created in sequence with the Vision.

**Figure 1: Excerpt image from the Plan: 10 Goals for Horsham North**



## Methodology and Process

### Part 1

The project began in July 2021 with background investigation and research used to develop the Issues and Opportunities Paper (the Paper). This paper provided a contextual understanding of the precinct and its challenges to inform early community consultation. From March to May 2022, Council placed the Paper on public consultation and multiple community workshops and drop in sessions were held. The workshops focused on understanding and clarifying the issues and constraints as well as the opportunities that should underpin the future planning of the precinct.

### Part 2

This information has been used to develop the draft Plan and preferred direction for change and improvement. The draft Plan was available for comment to the wider community over September – November 2022 for a six-week period. A community workshop was held to determine whether the vision and goals were supported, if anything was missed, and which areas were of most importance in terms of prioritising. The Plan has since been finalised with consideration of the comments received during the consultation period.

### Community Consultation

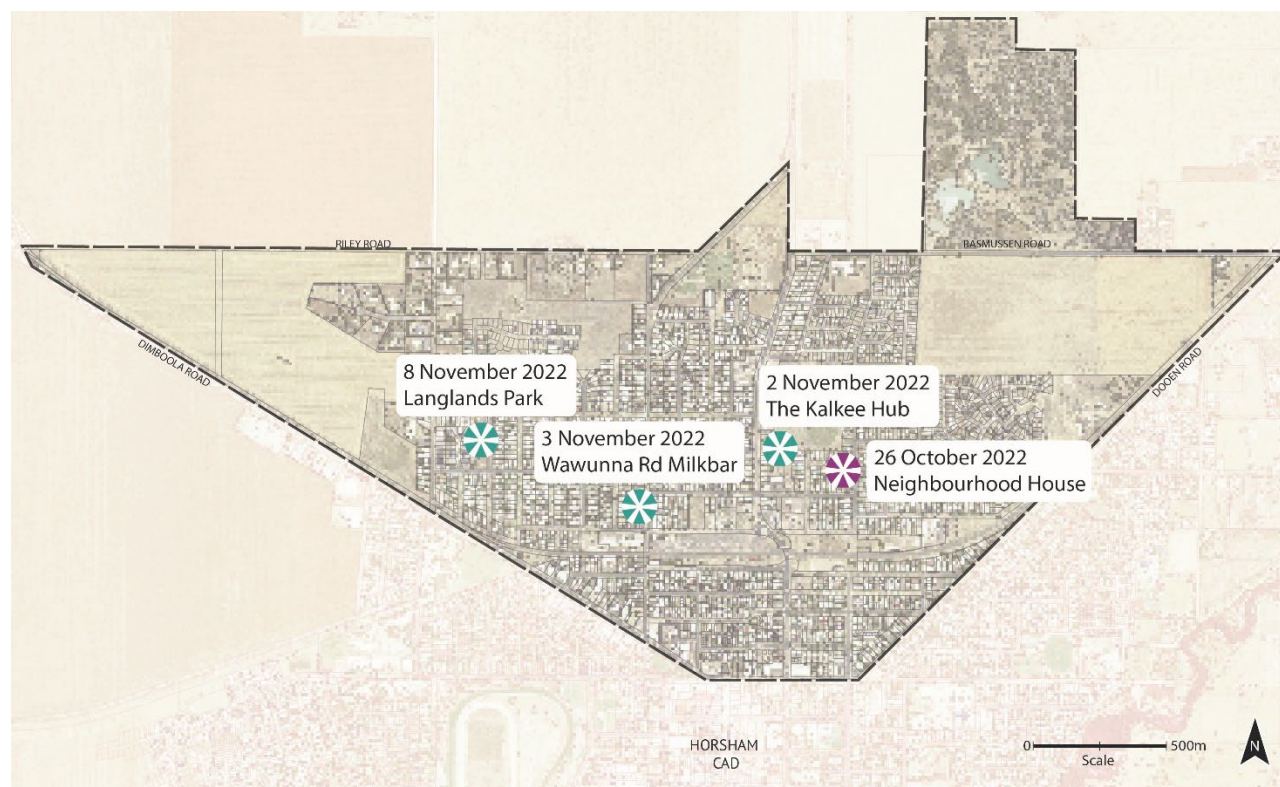
The draft Plan was made publicly available for community feedback for a six-week period, from 28 September 2022 to 9 November 2022.

The focus of community engagement was on understanding whether Council officers had accurately reflected the community's preferred vision in the Plan's 10 Goals and underpinning Strategies. The team sought to understand what elements of the report were supported, what the community thought was missed or overlooked and what could be modified to better reflect community values and areas of concerns.

Engagement activities were promoted through the HRCC webpage, corporate social media channels and postcards sent to all dwellings within the study area. Engagement activities consisted of:

- A return postcard questionnaire
- An online and printed survey
- One face-to-face community workshop (26 October 2022 at the Neighbourhood House)
- Three community conversation pop-ups
  - 2 November 2022 at the Kalkee Children's Hub
  - 3 November 2022 at the Wawunna Road Milk Bar
  - 8 November 2022 at Langlands Park

Figure 3: Study Area and locations of community consultation conducted



The following open and close-ended questions were used as a guide across all engagement activities to ensure consistency:

- *What is your connection to Horsham North?*
- *How satisfied are you with the draft Key Outcomes identified and discussed in the Horsham North Draft Local Area Plan?*
- *Please let us know why you ticked the above preference.*
- *How satisfied are you with the Goals and Strategies within the Horsham North Draft Local Area Plan?*
- *Please let us know why you ticked the above preference.*
- *Please select your three most important Goals for Horsham North.*
- *Out of the three Goals selected above, which one is the most important to you and why?*
- *Tell us which ideas of the Draft Local Area Plan reflect the future direction you hope for Horsham North.*
- *Tell us which ideas that concern you or have been missed, and why.*
- *What are your priorities for Horsham North?*
- *Please provide any further feedback on the overall Draft Local Area Plan.*

## Discussion

### Engagement Findings:

The *Engagement Summary Report April 2023 (Appendix 9.2B)* provides a summary of the feedback received on the draft Plan as well as three attachments tabling written feedback, survey feedback and verbal feedback recorded during in person consultation.

In total, the engagement received:

- One returned postcard questionnaire
- Eight online survey responses
- Zero hard copy survey responses
- Four written submissions
- Overall, Council officers engaged with around 40 individuals in person at the community conservation pop-ups and community workshop.

Refer to **Appendix 9.2C** for individual submissions.

Key changes to the Plan:

- *2021 ABS Census Data*

The 2021 ABS Census Data (Horsham Community Profile) was not available during the development of the draft Plan. Council Officers have since prepared a 'Demographic Profile' chapter for the final Plan providing a summary on 2021 Census findings and new housing provision data.

Social-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) offers a measure of socio-economic conditions / assessment of welfare by geographic areas. 2021 data still remains unavailable and it is proposed that as part of the 12-month review, SEIFA data is analysed and incorporated as part of that review.

- *Revised format of the Plan*

One of the messages that emerged from community consultation was that the document was complex. It is important that the Plan is understood and easily followed by the community, however, the Plan has multiple audiences and various needs that must be considered and addressed (i.e. State Government, government processes and decision making, statutory amendments and potential funding sources). This was explained at the Community Workshop in November 2022.

Council Officers have nonetheless endeavoured to better explain the framework designed to present the ideas of the Plan to ensure its strategic objectives, internal processes and needs of external stakeholders are adequately addressed. It has also reformatted and reordered the Plan's content to improve its readability.

The Plan now discusses in more detail the purpose and importance of using a 'Goal Setting Framework'. The framework has been used for the development of actions whereby actions are mapped against the Plan's goals and strategies. This will ensure actions are carried out in pursuit of the relevant goal. Importantly, it will also be used to guide Council's budget cycles, providing strong justification and evidence when specifying resources required to carry out an action or when external funding opportunities become available.

As a result of the development of the *Horsham North Local Area Plan* and *Implementation Action Plan 2023 Onward* there are a number of projects currently being delivered and projects that are in the draft 2023/2024 budget that are proposed to be delivered in the next financial year. Some of these key projects are listed below.

- Ensure all streets have a least one side footpath
- Reinstate bitumen footpaths that have disappeared historically due to inadequate maintenance
- Improve safety issued through the completion of seven initial assessments currently underway
- Investigation of a third underpass and Rail Corridor Landscape Plan
- Develop Lukin Court Public Open Space

- Planting of 409 trees on nature-strips within Horsham North
- Develop Dudley Cornell Reserve Master Plan
- Undertake a Housing Diversity and Affordability Strategy
- Undertake a third art work installation at the Horsham Silos site
- Land Acquisition of surplus Vic Track land in the Rail Corridor.

### Options to Consider

#### Option 1

Resolve to:

1. Adopt the *Horsham North Local Area Plan May 2023*.
2. Receive and note the *Community Engagement Summary Report April 2023*.
3. Note the Horsham North projects currently being delivered and projects that are proposed in the 2023-2024 budget.

#### Option 2

Resolve to not:

1. Adopt the *Horsham North Local Area Plan May 2023*.
2. Receive and note the *Community Engagement Summary Report April 2023*.
3. Note the Horsham North projects currently being delivered and projects that are proposed in the 2023-2024 budget.

### Sustainability Implications

The purpose of the Plan is to set out a clear direction and strategic framework for Council and the community in addressing identified issues and responding to the opportunities that will make Horsham North more liveable and sustainable into the future. Planning for change in Horsham North has been based upon considering environmental, social and economic elements in an integrated manner.

### Community Engagement

This has been discussed in the report and is addressed in more detail in **Appendix 9.2B**.

### Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Plan establishes a goal setting framework that reflects community aspirations, Council's strategic intentions and evidence based judgements. The framework has been used for the development of actions mapped against the goals and strategies. It will ensure actions are carried out in pursuit of the relevant goal.

### Collaboration

Not applicable

### Financial Implications

A number of actions identified in the implementation action plan are already funded and align with the Council Plan 2021-2025 and recently adopted 2023- 2024 Annual Action Plan. Aligning future reviews of the HNLAP Implementation Action Plan with the Council Plan, Annual Action Plan and budget processes will support the financial implication of delivering on the actions.

### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

- Wimmera South Mallee Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) 2022
- Wimmera Mallee Tourism Strategy 2022-2027

### Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

The following strategies provide the most up to date and relevant strategic direction with actions specific (or relevant) to Horsham North:

- Horsham Urban Transport Plan 2020
- Open Space Strategy 2019
- Greening Greater Horsham – A Municipal Tree Strategy 2021-2031
- Horsham Social Infrastructure Framework 2020
- Horsham Early Years Plan 2019-2023
- Destination Horsham – Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan

### Risk Implications

- Continued poor planning outcomes
- Poor design quality (impacting upon equitable access and safety)
- Lack of resourcing and funding to implement the Plan

### Conclusion

A significant amount of work has been undertaken in finalising the *Horsham North Local Area Plan* and the *Implementation Action Plan* is an important phase in ensuring the Plan transforms into reality. The Horsham North community will continue to provide important input as various projects in the plan are delivered.



### 9.3 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN GRAMPIANS TOURISM INC. AND MEMBER COUNCILS

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Fiona Gormann	<b>Director:</b>	Kevin O'Brien
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Manager Investment Attraction and Growth	<b>Directorate:</b>	Director Communities and Place
<b>Department:</b>	Investment Attraction and Growth	<b>File Number:</b>	F23/A12/000026

#### Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

☐ Yes ☒ No

Reason: Nil

#### Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

☐ Yes ☒ No

Reason: Nil

#### Appendix

Memorandum of Understanding between Grampians Tourism Inc. and member Councils (**Appendix 9.3A**)

#### Purpose

To seek Council endorsement to enter into a four-year Memorandum of Understanding between Grampians Tourism Inc. and Horsham Rural City Council, Ararat Rural City Council, North Grampians Shire Council and Southern Grampians Shire Council.

#### Summary

The agreement will:

- Establish the relationship between Grampians Tourism and the member Councils
- Define particular goals for Grampians Tourism that meet the strategic intent of member Councils in the visitor economy
- Commit to a minimum annual financial contribution from partner Councils to support Grampians Tourism in achievement of local government partner goals.

#### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Approve and enter into a four-year Memorandum of Understanding between Grampians Tourism Inc. and member Councils as per **Appendix 9.3A**.
2. Provide an annual financial contribution of \$75,000 over the life of the agreement.

## REPORT

### Background

Grampians Tourism is a regional tourism board, established with the ongoing support of the Victorian State Government, to develop the visitor economy in the Grampians Region.

The member Councils are key stakeholders in Grampians Tourism and share a commitment to the development and growth of the Grampians as a key tourism destination.

### Discussion

Grampians Tourism and the member Councils agreed to the following five key priorities for Grampians Tourism during the term of this Agreement.

1. Destination Marketing
2. Industry Development
3. Product Development
4. Partnerships
5. Investment Attraction

The Chief Executive Officer of each member Council shall be a member of the Grampians Tourism Board.

The Agreement may be terminated at any time by any member by providing 30 days' notice in writing.

### Options to Consider

1. Council can choose to sign and continue the memorandum of understanding for a period of four years.
2. Council can choose not to sign the memorandum of understanding.
3. Councils can choose to contribute \$75,000 annually over the next four financial years or not.

### Sustainability Implications

Nil

### Community Engagement

Not applicable

### Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not applicable

### Collaboration

Collaboration has been between Grampians Tourism and member Councils being Horsham Rural City Council, Ararat Rural City Council, North Grampians Shire Council and Southern Grampians Shire Council.

### Financial Implications

The minimum annual financial contribution of each member Council will be \$75,000.

### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Invest in the Grampians – The Grampians Way

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

**2021-2025 Council Plan**

Theme Three - Sustainability - Horsham Rural City Council will actively lead in sustainable growth and development of the community and the economy.

Strategy 2: A sustainable economy where local business, agriculture, tourism and other diverse industries thrive.

Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan

**Risk Implications**

Not applicable

**Conclusion**

This agreement continues to strengthen the Grampians Tourism branding with the four member Councils who have financially contributed to this partnership for over a decade.

## 9.4 SUBMISSION TO THE AVONBANK MINERAL SANDS PROJECT INQUIRY AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN REGARDS TO THE AVONBANK MINERAL SANDS PROJECT ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS STATEMENT (EES)

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Fiona Gormann	<b>Director:</b>	Kevin O'Brien
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Manager Investment Attraction and Growth	<b>Directorate:</b>	Communities and Place
<b>Department:</b>	Investment Attraction and Growth	<b>File Number:</b>	F13/A03/000531

### Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

### Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

## Appendix

Avonbank Mineral Sands Project Environment Effects Statement (EES) Submission (**Appendix 9.4A**)

### Purpose

To seek approval for lodgement of the submission to the Avonbank Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory Committee, which needs to be lodged online by 26 May 2023.

### Summary

Council's key areas of interest in relation to the Environment Effects Statement relate to:

- Radiation
- Monitoring
- Heavy Minerals Haulage – Road verses Rail
- Socio –Economic Impacts
- Noise and Vibration
- Land Use Planning.

Given the significant economic benefits which will result from the Project, and its view that the issues can be adequately managed, Council supports progression of a carefully regulated mine project in which any potentially adverse environmental impacts are addressed via the relevant regulatory instruments.

Significant local procurement and employment benefits are expected to arise in the Horsham Rural City municipality, with further diversification of the economic base of the region also seen as a positive to support future social and economic wellbeing.

### Recommendation

That Council endorse the lodgement of the Avonbank Mineral Sands Project (WIM Resource) Environment Effects Statement (EES) submission to the Avonbank Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) as per **Appendix 9.4A**.

## **REPORT**

### **Background**

An Environment Effects Statement (EES) has been prepared for the Avonbank Mineral Sands Project (the Project) located in western and south-western Victoria. The Project entails the mining and processing of mineral sands to produce a Heavy Mineral Concentrate (HMC) and the transport, storage and loading of HMC for overseas export from the Port of Portland (PoP). The EES addresses all aspects of the environment including the physical, biological, heritage, cultural, social, health, safety and economic aspects of human surroundings, including the wider ecological and physical systems within which humans live.

The purpose of the EES is to describe the Project, and assess the potential environmental impacts that may occur as a direct or indirect result of Project activities, providing measures through which adverse impacts can be avoided or minimised so far as reasonably practicable. The EES considers all Project related activities undertaken throughout construction, operation and rehabilitation/closure. The EES enables stakeholders and decision-makers to understand how the Project will be designed, constructed, operated, progressively rehabilitated and closed, and the likely environmental and socioeconomic impacts of implementing the Project.

The EES has been prepared to address the Scoping Requirements for the Avonbank Mineral Sands Project (DELWP, 2020). These Scoping Requirements detail the specific matters to be investigated in the EES and the evaluation objectives against which the Project is to be assessed.

The Project comprises mining of the Avonbank mineral sands ore body, processing works to produce HMC, road transportation, and loading of HMC for overseas export at the PoP. The Project will be owned and operated by WIM Resource Pty Ltd (WIM). The area in which mining and processing will occur is approximately 15 km north-east of the City of Horsham and 5 km north-east of the township of Dooen, within the Horsham Rural City (HRC) local government area (LGA) in the Wimmera Southern Mallee (WSM) region of Victoria. Project works, including construction, active mining (approximately 30 years) and rehabilitation/closure will extend to 36 years.

The Avonbank ore body comprises mainly zircon, titanium-rich mineral concentrate and minor amounts of rare earth products. Mining activities will be conducted on a mining licence (MIN) to be secured within a granted retention licence 2014 (RL 2014).

The development extent of the Project will total 3,546 ha, comprising mining and related activities within the proposed mining licence (3,426 ha) and secondary processing within the WIM Base Area (WBA) (90 ha). There will also be a linear infrastructure corridor to the WBA for power and water, which will extend 14 km (~30 ha). Of this area, 2,215 ha will be mined over the life of the Project.

Standard heavy earth moving methods and equipment will be used to mine the ore body progressively over the life of the Project. Using this 'moving pit' mining method at any given time, the extent of Project disturbance will be, on average, less than 300 ha. Mining will involve excavation to a target depth of 24 - 30m. The mining method involves the direct return of tailings and overburden into the mined cell, as the mining front advances. This enables progressive site rehabilitation and therefore minimises disruption to productive agricultural land use.

Mining operations will be undertaken over a period of around 30 years. The progressive mining method will enable each area to be mined and rehabilitated within four years after initial disturbance. The disturbed land will be rehabilitated to a safe, stable and sustainable state to enable the return of the disturbed area to its previous productive land use.

Secondary ore processing to concentrate the target minerals (HMC) will take place adjacent to the mining licence at the WBA, primarily located in the Special Use Zone established within the Wimmera Freight Intermodal Terminal (WIFT) Precinct. The Special Use Zone was established for industrial purposes, including the processing, storage and handling of mineral sands. Minor utilities (power and water) infrastructure will extend from their respective terminal stations to the WBA.

Conventional mineral sands processing techniques will be used to produce around 12.75 Mt of HMC over the life of the Project. Target minerals will be separated from non-mineralised fine and coarse sands by means of a simple wet gravity circuit to produce the HMC product. No chemicals will be used in the ore processing circuit, but the fine tailings stream will be dosed with a polymer flocculent to promote water recovery. Support infrastructure for mining and processing includes roads, offices, warehouses, workshops, laydown areas, fuel storage, pipelines and power lines.

The HMC product will be transported approximately 230 km in B-double articulated trucks from the WBA to the PoP using the Henty Highway, passing through the areas of Dooen, Horsham, Cavendish, Hamilton, Branhholme, Heywood and Portland. An estimated 26 loads of HMC will be transported to the PoP each day.

At the PoP, the HMC will be temporarily stored in a leased bunker prior to loading and shipment to offshore markets. The PoP is a commercial deep-water port specialising in the export of bulk commodity products, including mineral sands.

The Project will operate on a 24 hour, 365 days per year basis, directly employing approximately 150 personnel during construction and 230 personnel during operation. The workforce is expected to reside primarily in Horsham and surrounding areas during Project operation.

## Discussion

This section presents a summary of Council's key areas of interest in relation to the EES. Further information in support of these key points, and information on a range of additional points are presented in the *"Detailed Discussion of Key Matters"* section of Council's submission. **(Appendix 9.4A)**

### 1. Radiation.

Council obtained independent advice to help it form a view that the assessment of radiation impacts appears to be thorough and that the impacts of radiation on people and the environment are generally well below (within) accepted dose limits.

Having said that, Council is mindful that operations of the mine must strictly adhere to the framework established in the EES documents to ensure that this remains the case. In this regard, Council has identified the following areas where there is some uncertainty:

- Management of tailings returned to the mine pits. While initially moist, the tailings are intended to dry out prior to placement of overburden. As the material dries it has the potential to generate more dust. How has this been taken into account in the calculations of dust and radiation exposure?

- A key assumption is that the HMC stockpiles remain moist, and that therefore the generation of dust, and the associated conveyance of radioactive material is negligible. The reports do not appear to assess the risk of the impacts of the stockpiles drying out nor sufficient measures to manage this risk.

These two issues are presented in further detail in the “*Detailed Discussion of Key Matters*” section of Council’s submission. **(Appendix 9.4A)**

Council seeks to be a stakeholder in the process to review the operational plans to manage radiation. It is assumed that all mitigation and control strategies identified in the EES documents will be included into the appropriate Radiation Plans.

## 2. Monitoring

Related to the above points re adherence to the operational framework established in the EES documents, Council seeks to understand how the various Government agencies will appropriately resource the monitoring of the mine’s operations for the life of the Avonbank Mineral Sands project. Council has a reservation that the lack of presence of some key agencies within the region will lead to a lower than optimum level of supervision by regulators, and a reliance solely on reporting by the mine operator.

Council seeks to be an ongoing stakeholder in a reference group (or similar) for review of compliance reporting of the Project to help ensure that the measures emanating from this EES process are effective in managing the impacts of the Project on the environment and our community.

## 3. Heavy Minerals Haulage – Road verses Rail

Council considers that the Project should utilise rail to haul the HMC to the Port of Portland. The consideration of the use of rail has not been sufficiently addressed in the EES documents, however Council acknowledges that it is not immediately possible for this to occur.

The Project should use rail transport, with a preference for daytime movements, once the Maroona to Portland rail line and associated Port of Portland infrastructure have been upgraded, to help reduce amenity and safety impacts associated with road transportation.

Council is committed to working with WIM Resource and other stakeholders to gain a commitment from the State and Federal Governments for the required upgrades.

Council also seeks a commitment from WIM Resource to provide rail infrastructure from its site to enable the use of rail as soon as this can be achieved.

The use of rail instead of road for this transport would address the following risks identified in the EES documents:

- Greenhouse gas production reduction
- Reduced amenity and noise risks through some urban areas, including Horsham, where this material is transported adjacent to the CBD area
- Freight efficiency, and reduced freight movement on roads, with associated road safety benefit.

4. Socio-Economic Impacts

The creation by this Project of additional jobs in the region is welcomed by Council. Associated with this will be a range of socio-economic impacts which, with good management, will help to enhance the vitality of the municipality. Key areas of concern relate to housing, childcare and early education, and workforce impacts.

Council recommends that a strategy that addresses issues associated with the workforce, childcare, education, health and housing, is developed prior to operations commencing.

5. Noise and Vibration

Council considers that the impact of noise and vibration has been understated in the reports, in particular in relation to the impact of night-time movement of the HMC trucks along the Henty Highway in populated areas. In particular, the EES documents do not account for those residential areas in Horsham which directly front the Henty Highway (excluding the section that is also part of the Western Highway which carries high levels of night-time traffic). In these areas, the additional transport associated with this project represents a significant increase in night-time traffic levels and health impacts. It is proposed that relatively simple treatments, such as slurry seals to improve the road surface, could mitigate this impact.

6. Land Use Planning

The proposed mining activity will have significant implications on land use and development in an around the Dooen and the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Precinct (WIFT). Council acknowledges that mining area will be managed through the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990 and other environmental legislation, and that the processing plant is proposed to be located outside this area and will be subject to the requirements of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the Horsham Scheme.

In consultation with Council and State Government Agencies the proponent has considered these complexities and seeks to include an incorporated document to provide a clear framework for approval and ongoing compliance. It should be noted that regulation of mining activity is not a core role of the Responsible Authority and ongoing compliance and enforcement presents some challenges for Horsham Rural City.

Council understands that it is normal practice for ore processing to form part of a Work Authority administered and regulated by Earth Resources Regulation and that for other major projects the Minister for Planning retains the role of Planning Authority and Responsible Authority.

It is unclear why the proponent is seeking to separate the processing plant from the mine area and Council seeks the Panel's consideration of the burden and impracticality the ongoing enforcement and compliance would have on Council.

To avoid uncertainty, Council proposes that the whole mine site, including the Processing Area should be included under the Work Authority under the provisions of the MRSD Act.

7. Council's support for the progression of the Project

Overall, Council supports the progression of the Project subject to appropriate regulatory consideration/controls. Council believes the current EES process provides the appropriate assessment framework for this to occur.



While Council has formed a view that the EES documents present sufficient evidence that support that the Project should proceed, Council is also mindful of the significant disruption that the Project will cause to many of its residents in and near the mining area. Council is keen to understand from the EES process about the impacts the community perceives the Project will have on them. Council is committed to working with the community and WIM Resource to address these issues as the mine proceeds.

Further information in support of these key points, and information on a range of additional points are presented in the *Detailed Discussion of Key Matters* section of this submission, refer to **Appendix 9.4A**.

### Options to Consider

1. Council can choose to lodge a submission to the Avonbank Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory Committee.
2. Council can choose not to make a submission to the Avonbank Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory Committee.

The preferred option is for Council to lodge a submission to the *Avonbank Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory Committee*. The submission prepared has made consideration to each EES Chapter, Appendix and Attachment and has provided further information for consideration by the Advisory Committee.

### Sustainability Implications

The EES indicates that the Project will create and sustain significant long-term employment and economic activity in the WSM region and in the state of Victoria. If the Project were not to proceed, the socio-economic benefits explained in the EES may not be realised.

Avonbank Mineral Sands Project Page 1-7 Royalties for the State of Victoria will be approximately \$180 million over the 30-year Project life (approximately \$6 million per annum). Over the operational life of the Project, an increase in the Gross State Product (GSP) for Victoria of \$5,772 million is projected, and a gross revenue output in the WSM of \$335 million per annum.

The Project offers a significant opportunity for local and regional businesses to provide a range of goods and services. The Project will provide economic benefit to Horsham, the WSM region and the State of Victoria and offers increased and diversified job opportunities.

The Project will result in the direct employment of approximately 150 personnel during construction and 232 personnel through its 30-year operational life. During operation, the Project is projected to result in the creation of 588 FTE jobs per annum in the WSM region and 967 FTE jobs per annum in Victoria. Annual operational economic impacts on the State and regional economy Area Gross Revenue Employment Wages and Salaries Value Added Victoria \$512.8 million 967 FTE jobs \$93 million \$192.4 million WSM Region \$335 million 588 FTE jobs \$56.7 million \$116.7 million This represents a significant positive economic impact on the State and the region.

### Community Engagement

During the EES preparation period, community feedback was sought by WIM Resource through a range of key community stakeholder meetings and site tours, community information sessions (held in Horsham, Murtoa, Jung and Dooen), video-conferencing with focus groups, community information sessions and committee meetings. One-on-one meetings were held with directly and indirectly affected landowners and families, where possible.

The identified community encompasses groups, stakeholders or individuals that include potentially affected parties, interested community organisations and government bodies. These community stakeholders typically have a direct link (physical, social, historical, cultural, and/or political) with the Project or the area in which the Project will operate

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Not applicable

**Collaboration**

Not applicable

**Financial Implications**

Cost associated with enforcement and compliance management of the processing plant if separated from the mine area.

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies**

Not applicable

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme 3 - Sustainability

- Advocate for mining in our region to meet world's best practice
- Prepare submission for the EES for the Avonbank mining project to ensure that the licence reflects world best practice

Destination Horsham Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan 2022 onwards

**Risk Implications**

If world best mining practices are not adopted through the EES process, then we are at risk of impacting on the health and wellbeing of our community. There will need to be ongoing monitoring from the State Government of mining operations to ensure best practice standards are met.

**Conclusion**

Overall, Council does not believe there are any impacts of the project that cannot be managed. A commitment to address the issues raised in this submission should be provided by WIM Resource.

Council requests that all environmental issues raised by relevant authorities and community members be carefully assessed and appropriately mitigated by the proponent should the State Government approve the Project, including impacts on the community's health and wellbeing for the life of the project.

It is noted that the current EES process provides the appropriate assessment framework for this to occur.

## **REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

### **9.5 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND GROWTH DEPARTMENT REPORT**

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Fiona Gormann	<b>Director:</b>	Kevin O'Brien
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Manager Investment Attraction and Growth	<b>Directorate:</b>	Communities and Place
<b>Department:</b>	Communities and Place	<b>File Number:</b>	F15/A06/000001

#### **Officer Conflict of Interest**

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

#### **Status**

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

#### **Appendix**

SpendMapp Report March 2023 (**Appendix 9.5A**)

#### **Purpose**

To present the Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report for March 2023.

#### **Summary**

The Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report provides the progress and outcomes achieved through the delivery of the investment attraction strategy and implementation plan during the reporting period.

#### **Recommendation**

That Council receive and note the Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report for March 2023.

## REPORT

### Background

An Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report is tabled monthly at the Ordinary Meeting of Council.

### Discussion

The work undertaken across Investment Attraction and Growth Department includes Strategic Planning, Statutory Planning, Building Services, Business Development and Tourism.

The Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan progress and key achievements for the month of February are articulated in the information and tables, as follow.

Actions are measured by goals and set timelines. The timelines are indicated by years which relate to financial years.

Year 1 - 2022-2023

Year 2 - 2023-2024

Year 3 - 2024-2025

Year 4 - 2024-2025

Year 5+ 2025+

The teams will focus on delivering actions with in the current financial year whilst carrying out the necessary planning to ensure targets are meet in sequential years.

## INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured by	Progress
2.10 (ongoing)	Undertake regular meetings between the Wimmera Development Association and Investment Attraction Department to inform and discuss economic development opportunities	10 forums held per year	Meeting held in March between WDA and HRCC Investment & Business Development Team
2.8.1 (2 years)	Support the Development of Mt Zero Resort	Planning Permit	Planning Permit Issued Beneficiary of State Funding \$8.5M. EPA requirements progressing well. Building contract to be signed in May.
(2 years)	Prepare and implement the recommendations from the Aerodrome Masterplan	Aerodrome Masterplan development	Community and Industry engagement has commenced with a survey being distributed and face to face interviews to be held in April.
5+years	Investigate with stakeholders on the potential for Burnt Creek to become a green industrial area through vegetation offsets and carbon sequestration	Investigation outcomes reported to Council	Consultants engaged to undertake a 10yr Off-set Reserve Management Plan.
3.5 (ongoing)	Advocate for mining in our region to meet world's best practice	Website updated and investment prospectus developed	Northwest Victorian Mineral Sands Project networking event was held in March and attended by Investment Attraction team.

			Great opportunity for collaboration between the Mining companies.
3.5.1 (2 years)	Prepare submission of the EES for the Avonbank mining project to ensure that the licence reflects world best practice	Statutory Planning to prepare submission for consideration by council	EES will go on public exhibition from 14 April for six weeks.
3.6 (ongoing)	Widely promote the advantages of establishing solar and wind farms in the Horsham region	Website updated and investment prospectus developed	Esco Pacific held an information session in March regarding opportunities for local industries to be involved with the Horsham Solar Farm project. This event was attended by the Business Development team.

## **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

### Spendmapp

Spendmapp report attached.

### **Wimmera Machinery Field Days**



The Investment Attraction and Growth Team attended the Wimmera Field Days in March to promote the Investment Attraction Strategy and current development opportunities within our municipality.

The Business and Tourism team had a focus on promoting Agritourism and spoke to interested farmers about farm gate opportunities.

### **GRAMPIANS TOURISM – March 2023 News**

Visit Victoria invites Grampians operators to save the date for Destination Victoria at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) on 16-17 May.

The annual tourism conference aims to energise, educate and inspire our industry with insightful information and practical tools to ensure strong and sustainable growth for the Victorian Visitor Economy. They would also like your help to shape the conference program to ensure it meets the needs and expectations of our tourism, events and hospitality industries.

### Grampians Grape Escape

Grampians Grape Escape will celebrate its 30 year on the first weekend of May and all are invited to help make this the greatest festival ever.

### **Live the Grampians Way**

The March month report:

- There are 21 local businesses that have now registered as an employer on the site.

Overall employers are looking for candidates with skill sets in the following top 4 areas:

- Agricultural and Construction Maintenance
- Allied Health
- Building Construction
- Hospitality

#### Business Visitations for the Month of March 2023

Month Visitation	Retail Services	Hospitality & Accommodation	Event notifications and contacts	Over all contacts for the month
February	13	8	15	36
March	35	6	12	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>89</b>

#### Occupied Businesses:

Street and Number of Businesses	February FY 22-23 Businesses Occupied	March FY 22-23 Businesses Occupied	March FY 22-23 Businesses Vacant	March FY 22-23 Percentage Businesses Occupied
<b>Darlot St – 43</b> car wash and businesses operating from a house included	41	40	3	93%
<b>Firebrace St - 99</b>	93	90	9	91%
<b>Hamilton St - 17</b>	17	16	1	94%
<b>Wilson St – 34</b>	27	28	6	82%
<b>Pynsent St – 28</b> Cinema included	24	24	4	86%
<b>Roberts Ave – 27</b> Coles included	25	26	1	96%
<b>McLachlan St – 24</b> CFA & GWM included	21	21	3	87%
<b>Total 272</b> Post February 2022 there were 262 shops identified in the study area	<b>248/272</b>	<b>245/272</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>90%</b>

(Businesses are determined by whether they are 1. A premises, 2. Have customers 3. Exchange money; i.e Centre Link and the Cinema are included, and the Public Library is excluded). There are four known shops that are not suitable for occupancy as they require major renovations or are being used as a secondary business not requiring a retail front. These shops are reflected in the vacant shop numbers and unfortunately reduce the percentage of occupied businesses.

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured By	Progress
2.1.2 (ongoing)	Design, promote, participate and support municipal activities and events as scheduled including NAIDOC, Volunteers, International Women's Day & Seniors Week	Events reported on in the Investment Attraction and Growth monthly Council Report	This is an ongoing process, all lodged event forms are internally processed with initial tasks issued to ensure as successful delivery of the event.  Furthermore, all events lodged are also registered on the Australian Tourism Database Warehouse site. This listing process is undertaken by the VIC staff
2.6.1 (ongoing)	Promote recreational activities in our natural environment to increase destination tourism and visitation	Activities reported on in the Investment Attraction and Growth monthly Council Report	The Apex Shed has been approved by the minister for use, awaiting facility upgrades (23-24 budget year) before putting out a joint expression of interest for the lease of the paddle boats and building.
2.7.1 (ongoing)	Identify and seek out commercial opportunities to activate the riverfront	Commercial opportunities reported on in the Investment Attraction and Growth monthly Council Report	The pop up café site along the riverfront was completed in March and a soft launch was held during the Long Weekend to coincide with the Horsham Fishing competition. Coffee and doughnut trucks were set up at the site along with a DJ for a few hours during the afternoon. Positive community feedback was received regarding the use of the site.
3.1.3 (2 years)	Develop and implement the Natimuk Social and Economic Plan	Plan Developed & Progress report to Council	The Natimuk Project Advisory Committee Terms of Reference was endorsed in March.
3.2.1 (ongoing)	Work with local business leaders throughout the municipality to develop business confidence and growth	2 business forums held annually	CAD Community Reference Group (CRG) has been finalised and first CAD CRG meeting to be held on 5 <sup>th</sup> April.
(ongoing)	Ensure constant communication through e-mails and business newsletters with tourism operators and local businesses regarding what is happening in the region	A minimum of 10 business newsletters distributed annually 4 business forums are held annually	1 business newsletter was sent in March The newsletter received 725 opens and 120 clicks.
3.4.2 (ongoing)	Work with local business to activate the Horsham city centre	Investment Attraction and Growth monthly Council Report	The CAD CRG has now been established with their first meeting being held in April. They will be involved in the implementation of the CAD Revitalisation Plan.

**Officers Reports**

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured By	Progress
	Promote Agritourism opportunities to industry by developing an information kit that outlines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supply chain partnerships</li> <li>• How to transition to smart farm practices</li> <li>• Local markets</li> <li>• Case studies of value-adding practices in the region</li> </ul>	Completed	The business and tourism team attended the Wimmera Field Days to promote Agritourism. A toolkit was developed and distributed to interested farmers at the event.
(ongoing)	Advocate for value-add opportunities with existing and future farmers through innovative practices such as smart farm practices, planting native perennial vegetation and implementing renewable energy sources on farms	Attend the Horsham Field Days to host conversations with farmers.	Investment Attraction team members attend the Wimmera Machinery Field Days in March 2023. They promoted Agritourism and the Investment Attraction Strategy.
(ongoing)	To promote Live the Grampians Way to local businesses and engage with people who show an interest in moving to the region	Ensure every person who contacts Live the Grampians Way has received a welcome/information sheet and follow up phone call	Detailed information below.

**STATUTORY PLANNING AND STRATEGIC PLANNING**
**Strategic Planning**

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured By	Progress
1.3.5 & 1.3.6 (1 year)	Develop and implement the Horsham North Local Area Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horsham North Local Area Plan adopted by Council</li> </ul>	Officers are currently preparing the <i>Engagement Summary Report</i> and making edits to finalise the Plan.
(4 years)	Prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the Horsham Cinema	Management plan endorsed by Council	Project currently out in the market for tender.
2.10.2 (2 to 3 years)	Develop and implement a Housing Affordability and Diversity Strategy	Strategy developed and implemented through a planning scheme amendment	Tender opened 31 March.
2.10.3 (2 years)	Prepare and implement the Horsham South Structure Plan (Stage 2)	Plan adopted by Council	Land owners received project update.



## Statutory Services

### Planning Applications Determined

Below are the number of Planning Permits issued for the month of February 2023 and a comparison with the same period last year.

Type	MARCH 2023		MARCH 2022	
	No.	*Value \$	No.	*Value \$
Miscellaneous Domestic	4	2,072,839	4	1,165,500
Industrial/Commercial	3	2,241,000	2	207,882
Subdivisions	3 (112 lots)	600,000	5 (25 lots)	
Other	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4,913,839</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1,373,382</b>

(\*Please note: Not all applications have a \$ figure)

Total number of planning permits issued in the Horsham Rural City Council area from 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023 is 109 compared to 103 in the same period in 2021-2022.

Planning permits issued for subdivision have permitted 290 new lots from 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023 compared to 107 in the same period in 2021-2022.

### Building Services

Below are the number of building permits issued for the month of **March 2023** and a comparison with the same period last year.

### Permits issued by Horsham Rural City Council for this Municipality

Type	2023		2022	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	2	475,204	1	726,735
Alterations to Dwellings	-	-	1	129,100
Dwelling re-sitings	-	-	-	-
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	3	68,160	3	39,507
Removal/Demolish	1	7,000	2	52,360
Industrial/Commercial	1	26,125	-	-
Signs	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>576,489</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>947,702</b>

Permits issued by other Private Building Surveyors for this Municipality or by Government Departments:

Type	2023		2022	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	4	1,661,725	6	2,397,490
Alterations to Dwellings	3	75,735	5	110,939
Dwelling re-sittings	-	-	-	-
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	13	367,220	16	531,061
Removal/Demolish	-	-	-	-
Industrial/Commercial	8	3,325,961	7	8,302,824
Signs	-	-		
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>5,430,641</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>11,342,314</b>

A total of 32 Building Permits have been issued by the Horsham Rural City Council at a total value of \$2,728,990 from 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023 compared to 66 Building Permits at a total value of \$5,036,555 in 2021-2022.

Private Building Surveyors have issued 181 Building Permits at a total value of \$39,905,854 from 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023 compared to 230 at a total value of \$61,831,368 in 2021-2022.

#### Options to Consider

Not applicable – no decision required

#### Sustainability Implications

Report provides overview of the development and business activity across the region with no direct sustainability implications.

#### Community Engagement

Report has been prepared in consultation with range of agencies and will be made publicly available to Wimmera Development Association, West Vic Business, and Grampians Tourism and on Council's website.

#### Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Report provides overview of activity and assists with continuous improvement.

#### Collaboration

Report has been prepared in collaboration with Council officers across Planning, Building and Business Development and Tourism Support.

#### Financial Implications

Nil

#### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable – no direct relationship or requirements

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

**2021-2025 Council Plan**

Theme Three – Sustainability - Horsham Rural City Council will actively lead in sustainable growth and development of the community and the economy.

Strategy 2: A sustainable economy where local business, agriculture, tourism and other diverse industries thrive.

**Risk Implications**

Not applicable – no decision required

**Conclusion**

The monthly Investment Attraction and Growth Department report provides the opportunity to give Council and the community an insight into the projects being undertaken to grow our municipality and Horsham as a regional city.

## 9.6 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S OPERATIONAL REPORT

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Sunil Bhalla	<b>Director:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Chief Executive Officer	<b>Directorate:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Department:</b>	Chief Executive Office	<b>File Number:</b>	F06/A01/000001

### Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

☐ Yes ☒ No

Reason: Nil

### Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

☐ Yes ☒ No

Reason: Nil

### Appendix

Nil

### Purpose

To present the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for May 2023.

### Summary

The Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report highlights issues and outcomes affecting the organisation's performance and matters which may not be subject of Council reports or briefings.

### Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for May 2023.

## REPORT

### Background

At the 24 June 2019 Ordinary Meeting of Council, it was resolved that the Chief Executive Officer provide an operational report to Council.

### Discussion

Key items of interest for the report period are summarised below.

#### **A. Advocacy/Funding Announcements**

**Joint State-Local Government CEO Forum:** CEOs, Municipal Association of Victoria and Local Government Victoria attended the forum held on 3 May 2023. Discussions were held on Council safety and security.

**Rural Council's Corporate Collaboration (RCCC) Board Meeting:** The RCCC board met on Friday 5 May 2023. Items discussed included an update on the project implementation and procurement activities for the additional modules.

**Quarterly Wimmera Regional Mayor/CEO Meeting:** The Mayors and CEOs from Horsham, Yarriambiack, West Wimmera, Buloke, Northern Grampians and Hindmarsh met on Thursday 11 May 2023. Key topics of the discussion included an update on the Wimmera Southern Mallee Development strategic plan and projects, and updates from each of the Councils'.

**Regional Development Victoria (RDV):** The CEO and Director Communities and Place met with the RDV Deputy Secretary and other representatives on 11 May 2023 to discuss progress of key projects in Horsham.

**Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership Meeting (WSMRP):** The CEO attended a WSMRP and Grampians Health meeting on 16 May 2023 (virtually). Discussions included an update on the implementation of the Grampians Health strategic plan.

**Regional Cities Victoria (RCV) CEO Meeting:** The CEO attended the RCV CEO meeting on 18 May 2023. Key topics of discussion included the current hybrid working trends and future of workplaces.

#### **Funding Opportunities:**

Green Lake Aids to Navigation	Better Boating Fund 2022-2023	\$30,000
KISP Support Grant	KISP Support Grants	\$42,000
Workforce Planning Grant (Kindergartens)	Workforce Planning Grant	\$40,000

#### **B. Community Engagement**

**Community Conversations:** Councillors and staff met with the Dooen community at the Dooen Hall on Monday 15 May 2023. The meeting was an opportunity for the community to raise local issues and questions for Council.

**Community Vision Panel Dinner:** On May 1, Council were pleased to host members of the Community Panel to discuss the progress made in implementing the Community Vision and associated recommendations. The Community Panel are a group of residents selected following an invitation to every household within HRCC back in 2021 after the Horsham Rural City Talks community consultation. A group of 26 individuals were independently selected as a representative sample of the community who then used the information received from the Talks to develop the Community Vision adopted by Council on 26 July 2021.

Following the adoption of the Vision, the Mayor wrote to all the Panel members outlining Council's response to their recommendations. The meeting with the panel members this month provided an update on what Council had done since their recommendations were made and outlined the delivery Council had achieved against the commitments made.

Enthusiasm was re-ignited among those Panel members who attended the briefing and the conversation with Councillors continued both during dinner and beyond. Council would like to thank the Panel members who attended for their ongoing contribution and insights.

### ***C. Projects and Events***

**Grampians Grape Escape Festival:** This Halls Gap festival has been operating for three decades by people with a vision wanting to showcase the best in food and wine from our region. The festival has an extensive drawcard of attendees from across Victoria and Interstate.

Hence, the HRCC Investment Attraction and Growth Team along with a representative from the Horsham Visitor Information Centre, took the opportunity to take part in the festival under the umbrella of "Live the Grampians Way".

The concept of Live the Grampians Way, is a marketing campaign aimed at attracting new residents and skilled workers to the region identified by the four partnering municipalities of Horsham Rural City Council, Ararat Rural City, Northern Grampians and Southern Grampians Shire.

The two day festival gave the four councils of the Grampians an opportunity to showcase our region to those from other areas, as a place to consider investing in with a lifestyle of open spaces and tranquillity.

**One Hour Out Marketing Opportunity:** Council's Business Team engaged with One Hour Out (OHO) to deliver a marketing campaign showcasing the Wartook Valley and Dadswells Bridge operators. OHO is a website and social media platform profiling all the best outdoors and cultural experiences. Starting One Hour Out from Melbourne with options for 2 and 3 hours out into regional destinations. The online publication dedicated to telling the stories of regional people and places.

The target audience for followers of One Hour Out are 25 to 40 year olds trend setters who may live in inner Melbourne and the like. The project aim is to create a better understanding of the regional offerings in particular the Wartook Valley and Dadswells Bridge areas, by improving connections between those who live and work in the city to the regional centres.

As part of the project, OHO had undertaken a photo shoot of businesses including a range of other regional attractions along with a feature article in order to ensure our region has a presence on the OHO social media outlet from the very start.

The businesses selected by HRCC Business Team will receive follow up social media promotions and their profiles remain on the website ongoing.

#### Wartook Valley engaged the following businesses:

Kailash Ashram Yoga, Rosehaven Farm, Mt Stapylton Wines, Meringa Springs, Old Rosemont Quilts, Grampians Olive Co, Happy Wander Holiday Resort.

#### Dadswells Bridge engaged the following businesses:

Grampians Edge Caravan Park, Dadswells Bridge Precinct (Giant Koala, Indian Restaurant, Deutscher's Turkey Farm), Old Dadswells Town and Mt William Creek Nature Trail.

Many thanks go to our wonderful regional operators who were willing to take part in the campaign.

## **Staff Matters**

**Australasian Management Challenge:** On Monday 1 May 2023, HRCC participated in the Australasian Management Challenge, our first entry to this competition since its inception in 2004.

The Australasian Management Challenge is a development program that provides real life problem solving experiences and produces outcomes that translate into relevant, tangible and enduring benefits for people, teams and organisations.

It was fantastic to see representation in the Council team from staff across the Civic Centre, Kalkee Children's Hub and the Town Hall. It would be great to see Horsham field a team again in future years.

**Shine the Light:** On Thursday 4 May, staff took part in a candlelight vigil walk from Ward Street lawn area from 6:00pm to the Soundshell, where there was a short ceremony and sausage sizzle.

May each year, the Wimmera Committee Against Family Violence (WCAFV) marks Domestic and Family Violence Prevention month to raise awareness in the Community.

In the year 2022 there were 511 Family Violence incidents in Horsham alone. Victorian statistics taken from <https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/> show that for the calendar year 2020-2021 there were 93,241 recorded Family Violence incidents. In the year 2021-2022 there were 90,431 recorded Family Violence incidents.

## **Financial Implications**

Not applicable

## **Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies**

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme 5 - Leadership

## **Consultation/Communication**

Not applicable

## **Risk Implications**

Not applicable

## **Environmental Implications**

Not applicable

## **Human Rights Implications**

This report complies with the rights listed in the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

## **Conclusion**

That Council receive and note the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for May 2023.

## 10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Cr Robyn Gulline (Mayor)

Committee Representation	
27/04/2023	Regional Cities Victoria
20/05/2023	Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) with CEO
Other Council Activities	
25/04/2023	Anzac Day – Dawn Service, Saluting Ceremony and Commemorative Service
26/04/2023	ABC Wimmera Radio interview with Rebekah Lowe
27/04/2023	Wimmera Southern Mallee “Our Health, Our Community” Workshop
27/04/2023	Triple H Radio interview with Di Trotter
27/04/2023	Netball at Central Park
28/04/2023	Croquet 100 Years – High Tea and Celebration Dinner
01/05/2023	Department of Transport regular catch up with Director of Infrastructure
04/05/2023	“Seeing Eye to Eye” by Mars Drum – Art Exhibition opening
04/05/2023	Shine the Light Walk and ceremony at Soundshell
05/05/2023	Suessical the Musical and Gala
10/05/2023	Managing the Twilight Years
11/05/2023	Quarterly Wimmera Regional Mayors and CEO Forum
11/05/2023	“The Book Club” Movie Night fundraiser for Friends of the Foundation
12/05/2023	Chatty Café at Horsham Neighbourhood House
13/05/2023	Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal Concert
14/05/2023	Mother’s Day Classic
17/05/2023- 20/05/2023	Australian Local Government Women’s Association National Conference

### Cr Bob Redden

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
12/05/2023	Attend Rail Freight Alliance – Victorian Councils’ lobby for improved railways
Other Council Activities	
05/05/2023	Horsham Art Gallery launch of ‘Mars’ exhibition



**Cr David Bowe**

<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
Date	Description
26/04/2023	Electric Vehicle Charging for Local Government Webinar - An Introduction – via Microsoft Teams – Institute for Sensible Transport
27/04/2023	Transport Emissions in Australia Webinar: The challenges and opportunities in meeting our targets – via Microsoft Teams – Institute for Sensible Transport
01/05/2023	Council Briefing Meeting– Council Chambers
01/05/2023	Community Vision Panel Presentation & Dinner – Council Reception
08/05/2023	Councillor Workshop with Leading Teams- Horsham Golf Club
12/05/2023	Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) Connect Live Panel Discussion: Flood Recovery – via zoom
15/05/2023	Council Briefing Meeting– Council Chambers
15/05/2023	Dooen Community Conversations – Dooen Hall
18/05/2023	Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Members Briefing - Council safety and security – via zoom
18/05/2023	Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) & Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) Global Executive Panel: Long Term Financial Sustainability & Stability of Local Governments– via zoom

**Cr Claudia Haenel**

<b>Committee Representation</b>	
Date	Description
28/04/2023	Western Highway Action Committee meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DOT planning consultation with First Nations People on Alternate Truck Route to reduce amount of trucks in Horsham city centre taking into account culturally sensitive areas</li> <li>- Road works patching asphalt north and south of Dadswells Bridge</li> <li>- Increase in animal strikes along the highway</li> </ul>
10/05/2023	CEO Performance Review
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
22/04/2023	Wimmera Steampunk Festival supporting Horsham Rural City Band
23/04/2023	ANZAC Day Sawyer Park putting up the crosses with Horsham RSL Committee
23/04/2023	Horsham Rural City Band Summer Series May Park
24/04/2023	April Council meeting
25/04/2023	ANZAC Day Dawn Service, Horsham RSL community breakfast & ANZAC Parade
27/04/2023	Transport Emissions in Australia: The challenges and opportunities in meeting our targets - webinar
27/04/2023	Australian Local Government Women’s Association Vic Branch (ALGWA Vic) – AGM via Zoom
27/04/2023	Global Local Executive Panel: Delivering in a cost of living crisis - via Zoom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dignified and timely approaches for councils delivering in times of crisis</li> </ul>
01/05/2023	Council Briefing Meeting following by Community Vision Panel Dinner
02/05/2023	Community lunch Salvos Horsham
03/05/2023	Coffee with Cr Claudia
05/05/2023	Shining the Light on Domestic Violence walk to Sawyer Park Horsham

**Councillor Reports and Acknowledgements**

08/05/2023	Additional Council Meeting
08/05/2023	Council Briefing Meeting
10/05/2023	Coffee with Cr. Claudia – online
11/05/2023	Chat with Cr Claudia at RSL Horsham
15/05/2023	Council Briefing Meeting
15/05/2023	Dooen Community Conversations
16/05/2023	Salvos Horsham - helping at community lunch
17/05/2023	ALGWA Vic 2023 National Conference
21/05/2023	Salvos Red Shield Appeal
22/05/2023	Council meeting

**Cr Penny Flynn**

<b>Committee Representation</b>	
Date	Description
Nil	Nil
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
Date	Description
25/04/2023	ANZAC Day – Horsham War Memorial Cenotaph – Dawn and 11am Services
28/04/2023	Horsham City Netball Association Opening Round – Park Drive
04/05/2023	Seeing Eye to Eye by Mars Drum: Exhibition Opening – Art Gallery
04/05/2023	Shine a Light on Family Violence Walk – CBD to Wimmera River
05/05/2023	Horsham Arts Council Production – Seussical the Musical! – Town Hall
09/05/2023	Councillor Workshop – Horsham Golf Club
14/05/2023	Mother’s Day Classic – Wimmera River
17/05/2023	Wimmera Pride Project IDAHOBIT Breakfast – May Park
17/05/2023– 20/05/2023	ALGWA Victoria & National Conference – Cape Schanck Mornington Peninsula

## **11. URGENT BUSINESS**

Nil

## **12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS**

Nil

## **13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

### **13.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS**

- Council Briefing Meeting held on 1, 8 & 15 May 2023
- Community Conversations meeting held at Dooen on 15 May 2023

Refer to **Appendix 13.1A**

### **13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

Nil

### **13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE**

Nil

### **13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Advisory Committee meeting held on 15 February 2023.

Refer to **Appendix 13.4A**

#### **Recommendation**

That Council receive and note agenda items:

- 13.1 Informal Meetings of Councillors – Record of Meetings
- 13.2 Sealing of Documents
- 13.3 Inward Correspondence
- 13.4 Council Committee Minutes.

**14. NOTICE OF MOTION**

Nil