

AGENDA

ORDINARY MEETING OF THE
HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL

To be held on
24 February 2020
At 5.30pm

In the
Council Chamber, Civic Centre
18 Roberts Avenue, HORSHAM



Horsham Rural City
Council urban rural balance

**COUNCILLORS are respectfully requested to attend the Ordinary Meeting
of the Horsham Rural City Council to be held on 24 February 2020
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

The Horsham Rural City Council acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagalk, 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

Welcome to distinguished guests or persons in the public gallery. The public are advised that the Council meeting will be recorded to maintain an audio archive.

4. APOLOGIES

5. LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Recommendation

That the minutes emanating from the Ordinary Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm on 28 January 2020 be adopted.

7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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.

8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

9. OFFICERS REPORTS	6
9.1 CITY TO RIVER FINAL MASTERPLAN	6
9.2 HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN	10
9.3 GENDER EQUITY IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT.....	13
9.4 SPORT AND RECREATION VICTORIA LOCAL SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE FUND 2020/21 PROGRAM	16
9.5 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT – JULY TO DECEMBER 2019	21
9.6 CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS	24
9.7 GRAMPIANS TOURISM VISITOR SERVICING REVIEW	27
9.8 SMALL BUSINESS FRIENDLY COUNCILS INITIATIVE	31
9.9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT	34
9.10 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S OPERATIONAL REPORT	40
10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	43
11. URGENT BUSINESS	44
12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS.....	45
13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS	46
13.1 ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS	46
<i>Council Briefing held on Monday 3 February 2020 at 5.00pm in the Reception Room, Civic Centre, Horsham</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Council Briefing held on Monday 10 February 2020 at 5.00pm in the Reception Room, Civic Centre, Horsham</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Council Briefing held on Monday 17 February 2020 at 5.00pm in the Reception Room, Civic Centre, Horsham</i>	<i>46</i>
13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.....	46
<i>Section 173 Agreement for 2 Lot Subdivision, 121 Bunworths Road, Laharum</i>	<i>46</i>
13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE.....	46
13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES	46
<i>Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting held on Wednesday 12 February 2020</i>	<i>46</i>
14. NOTICE OF MOTION	47
14.1 NOTICE OF MOTION NO 178.....	47
15. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS	48
15.1 PROPOSED PROPERTY SALE – 2 ELMES STREET, NATIMUK	48
<i>Section 89(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 1989 - personnel matters</i>	

CLOSE



SUNIL BHALLA
Chief Executive Officer

9. OFFICERS REPORTS

9.1 CITY TO RIVER FINAL MASTERPLAN

Author's Name:	Angela Murphy	Director:	Angela Murphy
Author's Title:	Director Development Services	Directorate:	Director Development Services
Department:	Economic Development	File Number:	F15/067/000017

Officer Direct or indirect Conflict of Interest

In accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 80C:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Information classified confidential in accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 77(2)(c):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Horsham: City to River Vision and Masterplan – January 2020 (**Appendix “9.1A”**)

List of Amendments to City to River Masterplan (**Appendix “9.1B”**)

Purpose

To receive and note the final City to River Masterplan, January 2020.

Summary

- In response to feedback received during an eight-week public engagement process (4 July to 30 August 2019), Council resolved to make a number of amendments to the City to River Masterplan and background documents, and take a number of actions.
- Amendments have since been made to the Masterplan in accordance with the changes resolved by Council at the 25 November 2019 Ordinary Council Meeting. The amended City to River Masterplan, January 2020 constitutes the endorsed Masterplan, allowing for the commencement of the Action and Implementation Plan.
- The City to River Masterplan Action and Implementation Plan will identify potential projects, their associated scope and estimated costs.
- The projects will be subject to prioritisation and consideration by Council as part of its annual and long-term capital works planning and budget allocation.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receive and note the final City to River Masterplan, January 2020, excluding the proposed regional outdoor sports facility, amended in accordance with the changes resolved by Council at the 25 November 2019 Ordinary Council Meeting.

That Council:

2. Receive and note the final City to River Masterplan, January 2020, excluding the proposed regional indoor multi-purpose sports facility, amended in accordance with the changes resolved by Council at the 25 November 2019 Ordinary Council Meeting.

REPORT

Background

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 25 November 2019, Council resolved to make a number of amendments to the City to River Masterplan and background documents and take a number of actions following an eight-week public engagement process from 4 July to 30 August 2019. Council received 740 written submissions during that time.

Discussion

Amendments have been made to the City to River Masterplan in accordance with the changes resolved by Council at the 25 November 2019 Ordinary Council Meeting (**Appendix "9.1A"**). The amended City to River Masterplan, January 2020 constitutes the endorsed Masterplan, allowing for the commencement of the Action and Implementation Plan. Individual projects within each sub precinct are subject to detailed concept and schematic design, stakeholder and community consultation, and Council endorsement. The Masterplan will be progressively updated as the detailed concept and schematic design work is completed.

Financial Implications

The City to River Masterplan Action and Implementation Plan will identify potential projects, their associated scope and estimated costs. The projects will be subject to prioritisation and consideration by Council as part of its annual and long-term capital works planning and budget allocation.

Links to Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

2019-2023 Council Plan

Goal 1 – Community and Cultural Development: Develop Horsham and the municipality as a diverse, inclusive and vibrant community

Four-Year Outcomes:

- 1.1 Contribute to building a vibrant, diverse and resilient community
- 1.2 Develop a safe, active and healthy community, encouraging participation
- 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

We'll track progress in terms of:

- Securing funding for CBD Revitalisation Project Stage 1 - improved urban design
- Develop plans for a Town Square by December 2018

Four-Year Priorities:

- 1.2.09 Activate the Wimmera River Precinct for the community and visitors (including lights and greater presentation)
- 1.2.10 Plan and progressively construct shared cycling and walking track paths along the Wimmera River – from Riverside Bridge to Horsham Weir – both sides, including improvements to lighting and other facilities
- 1.2.12 Encourage the development of a riverside café
- 1.2.13 Support planning for review of use of the Riverside Recreation Hub precinct as part of the Wimmera River strategy

Goal 2 – Sustaining the Economy: Lead in sustainable growth and economic development

Four-Year Outcomes:

- 2.2 Cultivate opportunities for the municipality to prosper and pursue possibilities for new development
- 2.3 Support initiatives for improved transport services in and around the municipality
- 2.4 Increase visitors to the municipality
- 2.5 Promote Horsham as a regional city

Horsham Rural City Council on an ongoing basis will:

- Encourage linkages with local business and tourism associations to assist growth and prosperity of the retail, commercial and tourism sectors
- Facilitate the attraction of major sporting events
- Promote and encourage safe bicycle use as a sustainable alternate mode of transport, including provision of bicycle parking facilities

Goal 3 – Asset Management: Meet community and service needs through provision and maintenance of infrastructure

Four-Year Priorities:

- 3.1.09 Identify and develop new off street parking areas on CBD fringe
- 3.1.10 Develop a master plan of streetscape themes and service levels for existing streets and new developments
- 3.2.02 Confirm and undertake design and planning for the relocation of the municipal depot including potential co-location of Tech Services planning and delivery staff
- 3.4.05 Develop improved entrances to all towns (street signage and landscapes)

Horsham Rural City Council on an ongoing basis will:

- Continue the Horsham central business district upgrade of streetscaping

Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence: Excel in communication, consultation, governance, leadership and responsible use of resources

Four-Year Outcome:

- 4.1 Continuously improve communication and engagement with the community through effective consultation

The City to River Project links to the following Council Plans and Strategies:

- Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017–2021
- Horsham Municipal Strategic Statement
- Sport and Recreation Strategy 2013–2018
- Horsham CAD Revitalisation Strategy 2017
- Horsham CAD Strategy 2013
- Imagine Horsham, Community and Stakeholder Engagement – Key Findings Summary 2016
- Tourism Master Plan 2016 – 2020, 2018 review
- Horsham Economic Development Strategy 2017–2021
- Horsham Municipal Bicycle and Shared Path Plan 2012–2016
- Horsham Municipal Parking Strategy 2017
- Horsham CBD Urban Design Framework
- Wimmera Sports Stadium Business Case and Concept Design 2017
- Horsham Growth Management Framework 2012

Consultation/Communication

Council made a strong commitment as part of preparing the Draft City to River Masterplan to deliver a genuine and thorough engagement process. This included using the results of earlier engagement activities undertaken in the study area and incorporating ideas already identified by the community.

Risk Implications

Risks associated with the implementation of the City to River Masterplan will be considered at an individual project level.

Environmental Implications

Environmental implications associated with the implementation of the City to River Masterplan will be considered at an individual project level.

Human Rights Implications

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

Conclusion

The amendments and actions made to the Draft City to River Masterplan directly respond to key concerns on fundamental ideas and design detail considerations raised through the 2019 community engagement process. The amended City to River Masterplan, January 2020 constitutes the endorsed Masterplan.

9.2 HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Author's Name:	Kevin O'Brien	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	Director Community Wellbeing	Directorate:	Community Wellbeing
Department:	Arts, Culture and Recreation	File Number:	F10/A02/000001

Officer Direct or indirect Conflict of Interest

In accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* –
Section 80C:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Information classified confidential in accordance
with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 77(2)(c):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Horsham Rural City Council Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan Progress Report (**Appendix "9.2A"**)

Purpose

To provide an update to Council on progress made on the implementation of actions contained in the Horsham Rural City Council Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.

Summary

- Background
- Actions completed/progressed

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the progress of actions contained in the Horsham Rural City Council Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.

REPORT

Background

In July 2016, Council resolved to establish the Horsham Rural City Council Aboriginal Advisory Committee (AAC) and adopted a Terms of Reference for this committee.

One of the objectives of the AAC is as follows:

- Provide input into the development, implementation and review of the first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

The Innovate RAP was endorsed by Reconciliation Australia in January 2019. The RAP is for the period December 2018 to December 2020.

Discussion

There are 73 individual actions in the Innovate RAP:

- 11 actions have been completed
- 32 actions are completed and are also considered ongoing
- 7 actions have commenced
- 23 actions are still to commence.

Actions completed are as follows (some of these actions are considered ongoing):

- Events conducted during National Reconciliation Week
- Aboriginal and Torres Star Islander trainees
- Participation in and support of NAIDOC Week events
- Cultural Awareness training for staff
- Support of Wimmera River Challenge
- Welcome to Country for major community events
- Acknowledgement of Country for significant staff meetings
- Display of Aboriginal and Torres Islander flags on major Council facilities
- Establishment of Internal RAP Working Group
- Virtual yarns monitor at Horsham and Grampians Visitor Information Centre
- Creation of opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander businesses through Council's procurement procedures.

Financial Implications

There is an allocation of \$50,000 in the Council Budget to support RAP initiatives with a particular focus on Aboriginal traineeships.

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

2019-2023 Council Plan

Goal 1 – Community and Cultural Development

Four-Year Priority 1.1.07 – Develop an Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan

Consultation/Communication

The RAP was developed by the RAP Working Group (Aboriginal Advisory Committee) through a workshop and input from across all Council business areas who have provided ideas for inclusion in our RAP and who are all committed to working towards positive reconciliation outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families, young people, organisations and businesses.

The RAP is being implemented through the RAP Internal Working Group. Regular reports are provided to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

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

Progress is being made on actions contained in the innovative RAP. There are some actions that are ongoing and there are some actions which are still to commence. Discussions are occurring with staff internally and also with the AAC to advance these actions.

9.3 GENDER EQUITY IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

Author's Name:	Renee Hollier	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	Gender Equity Officer	Directorate:	Community Wellbeing
Department:	Community Wellbeing	File Number:	F10/A04/000008

Officer Direct or indirect Conflict of Interest

In accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 80C:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Information classified confidential in accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 77(2)(c):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Gender Equity Community Engagement Audit Toolkit (Sections A and B) (**Appendix "9.3A"**)
Horsham Engagement Data and Advisory Committee Report (**Appendix "9.3B"**)
Increasing Methods of Participation (**Appendix "9.3C"**)

Purpose

To provide a final update on the Gender Equity in Community Engagement Project.

Summary

- The project achieved all objectives at Council.
- The project occurred within the allocated timeframe and budget.
- The Gender Equity Community Engagement Audit Toolkit is available for Council and other Victorian Councils to use to improve participation of women and girls, of varying abilities and backgrounds within community engagement.
- It is anticipated that Council will further embed gender equity changes required into the Community Engagement Policy and Procedure when the new Framework is developed.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Gender Equity in Community Engagement Project report and its implications for Council's Community Engagement Policy and Framework.

REPORT

Background

“Gender Equity in Community Engagement” was a twelve month project between Horsham Rural City (Council) and Hindmarsh, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack Shire Councils. This project received funding from the Victorian Government.

Discussion

All project objectives were achieved within the allocated project timeframe. The project was underpinned by eight core objectives. An overview of the objectives are as follows:

- A report was developed that analysed the presence of gender equality within Council’s community engagement processes.
- The Gender Equity Community Engagement Audit Toolkit was developed by Gwood Creative (**Appendix “9.3A”**). The audit when/if completed, should indicate which community engagement practices and processes require improvement and which are being performed well.
A report was developed that identified methods to increase participation from women of varying abilities and backgrounds in community engagement (**Appendix “9.3B”**).
- A gender lens was applied to Council’s current Community Engagement Policy and Procedure. The report has been shared with Council’s Governance and Information Department, so these elements can be incorporated into the future Policy and Procedure (**Appendix “9.3C”**).
- Gender equity training was administered by Women’s Health Grampians. This occurred with both staff and advisory committee members. In total, 21 people received the training.
- A gender lens was applied to the Horsham Rural City Council Advisory Committee Terms of Reference template. An Expression of Interest Form template was also developed. These have been embedded within Council processes.
- A support pathway has been developed that identifies support options for those experiencing domestic and family violence.

Financial Implications

The project was funded by the Victorian Government. The project has adhered to the allocated budget.

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

2019-2023 Council Plan

Goal 1 – Community and Cultural Development

Four-Year Priorities:

1.2.06 – Support family violence prevention programs and initiatives

1.2.15 – Support behaviours that reinforce respect and equality for women and address rising levels of family violence

2017-2021 Health and Wellbeing Plan

Preventing Family Violence Objective 2 – Address key drivers of gender inequality leading to violence against women

Consultation/Communication

Consultation occurred with the International Association for Public Participation, Women with Disabilities, Youth Affairs Council Victoria, Engage Victoria and Equality Advocates in the development of the Increasing Methods of Participation report.

All project objectives were reviewed by Women's Health Grampians. The Gender Equity Community Engagement Audit Toolkit and the Terms of Reference template were discussed and reviewed by the Gender Equity in Community Engagement Project Control Group.

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

Council has satisfactorily completed the objectives for the Gender Equity Community Engagement Project. It is expected that the changes made within Council and the resources developed as a result of the project, will increase the participation of women and girls of varying abilities and backgrounds in Council's community engagement activities.

9.4 SPORT AND RECREATION VICTORIA LOCAL SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE FUND 2020/21 PROGRAM

Author's Name:	Susan Surrige and Carolynne Hamdorf	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	Co-ordinator Community Relations and Advocacy Manager Arts Culture and Recreation	Directorate:	Community Wellbeing
Department:	Community Relations and Advocacy	File Number:	F10/A01/000001

Officer Direct or indirect Conflict of Interest

In accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* –
Section 80C:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Information classified confidential in accordance
with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 77(2)(c):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Nil

Purpose

To receive and note the submission of funding applications to the Sport and Recreation Victoria Local Sports Infrastructure Fund 2020/21 program.

Summary

This report identifies the following projects for application to the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund 2020/21 program:

- Horsham Regional Multi-Sport Precinct Feasibility Study – to progress development of the feasibility study following Council's endorsement of the final City to River Masterplan on 25 November 2019.
- Coughlin Park Bowls Club (two new synthetic greens) – a community driven project that has been developed in consultation with Council's Recreation Team to replace two lawn bowling greens with synthetic greens.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receive and note the submission of the Horsham Regional Multi-Sport Precinct Feasibility Study funding application to the Sport and Recreation Victoria Local Sports Infrastructure Fund 2020/21 program.
2. Receive and note the submission of the Coughlin Park Bowls Club (two new synthetic greens) funding application to the Sport and Recreation Victoria Local Sports Infrastructure Fund 2020/21 program.

REPORT

Background

The Sport and Recreation Victoria Local Sports Infrastructure Fund 2020/21 was open for application until the closing date of 14 February 2020.

This is Sport and Recreation Victoria's annual funding program that covers a range of funding areas with specific funding criteria for each area:

- Planning
- Female Friendly Facilities
- Community Facilities
- Strategic Facilities
- Aquatic Centres and Indoor Stadiums.

The funding round is only open to applications from Local Government across the State. Not-for-profit sporting clubs can make applications through Council as an auspice body (i.e., Coughlin Park Bowls Club).

Discussion

Following release of the new funding guidelines, Officers have assessed any current projects that are application-ready and suitable for funding through this program.

The following two projects are recommended for a funding submission:

Horsham Regional Multi-Sport Precinct Feasibility Study

Council's endorsement of changes to the City to River Masterplan on 25 November 2019 included the requirement to undertake an independent feasibility study to consider the preferred location for the Horsham Regional Multi-Sport Precinct. Council's resolution directed the independent study to determine the economic and social impacts of the facility, be informed by the technical feasibility of each site, operational model and costs, and involve engagement with the Showgrounds Committee and Greyhound Racing Victoria to determine the cost of relocation.

Feedback from Sport and Recreation Victoria recognises that the new Feasibility Study will be informed by previous work completed by Council, including the Business Case and Feasibility Study of the Indoor Sports Stadium. The new study will explore the feasibility of a regional multi-sport facility (inclusive of indoor and outdoor sports) and will be required to undergo a site assessment process across multiple locations, just as the original Indoor Sports Stadium Feasibility did. This pre-condition ensures best practice and considers factors impacting a larger site footprint for both indoor and outdoor facilities. The crown land area at the Showgrounds precinct and the site near Jenkinson Avenue will be included in the site assessment process. Sport and Recreation Victoria have advised that, without undergoing this broader work, it is unlikely the project will be funded.

Pre-application discussion with Sport and Recreation Victoria has confirmed that the Planning Grant application must focus on four key principles to attract funding:

- Increased multi-sports programming
- Increased sporting participation
- Social benefits
- Economic benefits.

Sport and Recreation Victoria co-funded the Wimmera Regional Indoor Stadium Study in 2017. The proposed Horsham Regional Multi-Sport Precinct Feasibility Study will build on the analysis completed for the 2017 study to look at the co-location of indoor and outdoor sports in a multi-sports precinct.

This is a comprehensive and detailed piece of work that involves a range of considerations:

- Programming opportunities for a range of sports
- Impact on participation numbers for a range of sports
- Economic and social impact analysis of a new regional sports precinct in a range of possible locations – this analysis will include a funding and operational business plan that considers the cost/benefits of development on either purchased freehold or crown land including the impacts of any potential relocation of current user groups
- Detailed technical feasibility study of all possible sites including traffic management, geological conditions and flooding issues
- Engagement with a range of key stakeholders to assess the impact of the facility in each location
- Detailed concept designs and quantity surveying estimates for facilities at each location.

This work will be informed by a number of key strategic planning documents as follows:

- Wimmera Sports Stadium Business Case and Concept Design Report December 2017
- City to River Masterplan December 2019
- Horsham CAD Wimmera River Technical Report May 2019
- Horsham Sports Facility Demand Study Assessment December 2020
- Wimmera River Precinct and Central Activity District Background Report May 2019
- Open Space Strategy December 2019
- Social Infrastructure Plan (draft) 2020.

The total budget for this planning work is \$60,000. The funding application is seeking a maximum Sport and Recreation Victoria Planning Grant of \$30,000, matched by a proposed 2020/21 operating budget contribution from Council of \$30,000.

Coughlin Park Bowls Club (two new synthetic greens)

Over the past five years, bowling clubs within Horsham have transitioned from lawn greens to synthetic surfaces for a number of reasons including: drought and water supply issues, maintenance costs, burden on ageing volunteers, all year round useability, and ability to engage qualified and experienced green keepers. Council has supported successful funding applications through Sport and Recreation Victoria for the installation of two synthetic greens at Horsham City Bowling Club and Sunnyside Bowling Club. Horsham Golf Bowls Club have recently transitioned their single green from grass to synthetic. Coughlin Park has Horsham's last natural grass surface and they are now seeking to transition to two new synthetic greens.

The project scope includes conversion of two natural grass greens to new synthetic greens including accessible ramps. The total cash budget of \$335,000 will be funded by the maximum grant application of \$250,000, Coughlin Park cash contribution of \$75,000 and a \$10,000 request from Council. In addition to their cash contribution, Coughlin Park Bowls Club will provide in-kind support of \$75,000 (including the construction of two accessible ramps).

Note: It is proposed that the \$10,000 contribution by Council be allocated from the 2019/20 Community Grants Program, where there is allocation available to assist funding applications. Council provided \$10,000 to Sunnyside Bowls Club in the 2018/19 Community Grants Program funding round, and \$20,000 to the Horsham City Bowling Club in the 2017/18 round.

Financial Implications

As noted above, if the two applications are successful, Council will be required to contribute the following:

- \$30,000 in the 2020/21 operating budget for the feasibility study
- \$10,000 from the 2019/20 Community Grants Program.

Links to Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

Horsham Regional Multi-Sport Precinct Feasibility Study

2019-2023 Council Plan

Four-Year Outcomes:

- 1.1 – Contribute to building a vibrant, diverse and resilient community
- 1.2 – Develop a safe, active and healthy community, encouraging participation
- 1.4 – Develop the municipality as a desirable place to live, work and enjoy for people of all ages and abilities
- 2.3 – Increase visitors to the municipality
- 3.1 – Determine infrastructure needs and expectations through consultations with developers and the community
- 3.4 – Deliver works to develop and maintain Council's physical assets for long term sustainability, amenity and safety
- 5.1 – Promote sustainability by encouraging sound environmental practice

Coughlin Park Bowls Club (two new synthetic greens)

2019-2023 Council Plan

Four-Year Priorities:

- 1.2.07 – Development of positive ageing initiatives
- 1.2.15 – Support behaviours that reinforce respect and equality for all members of the community
- 3.1.05 – Develop a prioritised plan for upgrade of community recreation facilities
- 3.4.01 – Develop infrastructure that encourages greater participation and use of alternate transport options to the city (e.g., walking, cycling and public transport)

Horsham Rural City Council on an ongoing basis will:

Support sporting and community organisations to develop and upgrade community sport and recreation facilities through relevant funding programs in accordance with the Sport and recreation Plan and other Council Plans

Consultation/Communication

These projects have been fully developed to application stage through extensive consultation and engagement:

- Feasibility study – City to River engagement process, workshops and Councillor Briefings, Sport and Recreation Victoria
- Coughlin Park Bowls Club – the Recreation team have developed this project to 'shovel ready' stage through consultation with the Bowls Club, Coughlin Park Committee of Management, and Sport and Recreation Victoria.

Risk Implications

Horsham Regional Multi-Sport Precinct Feasibility Study – required by a resolution of Council on 25 November 2019. There is a reputational risk to Council of not allocating funding to this planning work.

Coughlin Park Bowls Club (two new synthetic greens) – minimal financial risk with \$10,000 community grant allocation. Council has considerable experience in working with local bowls clubs to install synthetic greens.

Environmental Implications

Synthetic greens will significantly reduce the watering required on the current grass greens and reduce drawing of water from the Wimmera River.

Human Rights Implications

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

Conclusion

The Horsham Regional Multi-Sport Precinct Feasibility Study and Coughlin Park Bowls Club (two new synthetic greens) project, were assessed as ready and suitable for a funding application to the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund 2020/21. Applications were submitted by the due date of 14 February 2020.

9.5 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT – JULY TO DECEMBER 2019

Author's Name:	Graeme Harrison	Director:	Graeme Harrison
Author's Title:	Director Corporate Services	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Corporate Services	File Number:	F18/A10/000001

Officer Direct or indirect Conflict of Interest

In accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* –
Section 80C:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Information classified confidential in accordance
with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 77(2)(c):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Quarterly Performance Report – July to December 2019 (**Appendix “9.5A”**)

Purpose

To receive and note the Quarterly Performance Report for the six months to 31 December 2019.

Summary

- The new Quarterly Performance Report is part of the continual improvement process of reporting back to Council and the community.
- The Quarterly Performance Report brings together a range of previous reports into a single document that is easy to read and understand.
- It reports all items over a consistent quarterly reporting timeline.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Quarterly Performance Report for the six months to 31 December 2019.

REPORT

Background

Council's operations are large and complex, with over 80 different broad service delivery areas from road maintenance and construction, waste collection, parks, building and planning, to early years, visual and performing arts. This diversity in services creates challenges in many facets of Council's operations, which then create challenges in reporting on these to Council and the broader community.

There are a number of statutory obligations under various legislation to report to Council and the community within specific timeframes:

- *The Local Government Act 1989* – requires quarterly financial reports at a meeting open to the public.
- *The Local Government Act 1989* – requires a half yearly review of Council's performance against actions in the Council Plan.
- Reporting Regulations – Provide at least a half yearly report on progress against the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework.

Council has in place a Financial and Performance Reporting Framework that provides some guidance on Council's reporting processes. These guidelines state the following:

"Councillors take ultimate responsibility for the performance of Council and are accountable to the ratepayers and community of the municipality. As Councillors are not involved in the day-to-day operations of the Council, they rely on policies, procedures and internal controls to provide assurance about the information reported to them and in turn reported to the community and other stakeholders."

The provision of relevant information on a regular basis is an important part of that internal control process and is necessary for the various levels of Council to carry out their responsibilities and obligations to the community in the management of Council business.

Central to Council's Financial and Performance Reporting Framework, are the following objectives:

- Council is committed to providing accurate, correct and quality information to the Community around its performance.
- Council is committed to providing high quality relevant internal and external reporting, in a timely manner.
- Council is committed to providing regular targeted reporting to Management, its Audit and Risk Committee, Council and the Community.
- Council is committed to sound governance through the alignment of performance reporting with its strategic direction.
- Performance reporting is not just a compliance exercise but is integral to better understanding of how Council is performing in its delivery of key strategies and operations from the Council Plan.

Discussion

As a part of the continual improvement process, this report takes a new approach to reporting back to Council and the community on these key strategic items, in what is hopefully a clear and concise manner that is readable and informative.

The report contains the following sections:

1. CEO Overview
2. Council Plan Actions and Local Government Performance Reporting Framework
3. Customer Service Targets
4. Business Improvements
5. Capital Works
6. Audit and Risk
7. Financials

The format for this reporting will evolve over time, but essentially will be mindful of the need to be relevant, reliable, comparable and understandable.

This first Quarterly Performance Report is essentially bringing together and aligning a number of reports that have been provided individually to Council in the past, but with different timeframes.

Financial Implications

This report is prepared using existing staff resources.

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

2019-2023 Council Plan

Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

Four-Year Outcome 4.1 – Continuously improve communication and engagement with the community through effective consultation

Consultation/Communication

The Quarterly Performance Report has been developed by the Governance Team, in consultation with the Executive Management Team and Departmental Managers. It has been reviewed by Council's Audit and Risk Committee and by Council, at a Council Briefing Meeting.

Risk Implications

Provision of good quality, regular reporting of financial and non-financial information to the community mitigates against the risk of poor financial governance and possible financial mismanagement. The Municipal Association of Victoria's Good Governance Guide states "the Council is ultimately accountable for the financial management ... it should not have a hands-on role ... but it needs to ensure that it has sufficient information to be satisfied that finances are in order and that budgetary and financial planning goals are being met".

Environmental Implications

Not applicable, although reporting on Council's environmental targets could possibly be incorporated into the Quarterly Performance Report, once strategies have been updated during 2020.

Human Rights Implications

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

Conclusion

The new report format will provide a regular quarterly report for Council and the community to assess how Council is performing financially and against its key objectives.

9.6 CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

Author's Name:	Kerrie Bell	Director:	Graeme Harrison
Author's Title:	Manager Governance and Information	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Governance and Information	File Number:	F06/A05/000001

Officer Direct or indirect Conflict of Interest

In accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 80C:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Information classified confidential in accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 77(2)(c):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Customer Commitment Charter (**Appendix “9.6A”**)

Customer Service Standards Procedure (including service commitments) (**Appendix “9.6B”**)

Purpose

To receive and note the revised Customer Commitment Charter and Customer Service Standards Procedure, including service commitments.

Summary

- The revised and enhanced Customer Commitment Charter has been developed in an easy-to-read format for the public.
- The Customer Service Standards Procedure provides specific actions and timeframe commitments for individual service responses across Council.
- These commitments will help embed an improved customer focused culture into the organisation.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Customer Commitment Charter and Customer Service Standards Procedure.

REPORT

Background

A number of projects were identified by the Leadership Group as suitable for cross-departmental collaboration, and four of these projects were given priority. A small team, led by the Director Development Services, volunteered to be a part of the working group which reviewed the Customer Service Standards Procedure and the Customer Service Charter, in accordance with the vision and values of the organisation and the needs of the community.

Other members of the review working group were: Director Community Wellbeing, Manager Governance and Information, Team Leader Customer Service, and Business Administration Trainee.

Discussion

The previous Customer Service Charter was amended and refreshed to become the Customer Commitment Charter (**Appendix "9.6A"**). Amendments included alignment with Council's recently adopted values and behaviours, and simple to read instructions for the making of service requests, feedback and complaints.

The previously adopted "Staff Standards and Procedures for Managing Customers" Procedure was reviewed and amended to the "Customer Service Standards" Procedure (**Appendix "9.6B"**).

This Procedure now includes service commitments across a range of identified services. These service commitments identify specific actions and timeframes that staff have developed as acceptable levels of responses to services across Council. They will be monitored on an ongoing basis and reported back to Council and the community.

Financial Implications

Costs to develop the revised Customer Charter and Procedure included staff time and graphic design costs, which were covered within existing budgets.

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

2019-2023 Council Plan
Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

Consultation/Communication

Staff were consulted and asked to provide feedback to the service commitments via their Department Managers. The working group also considered feedback from the 2019 Community Satisfaction Survey and data obtained from Council's customer request system (Merit) and the after-hours call centre.

Staff will be trained in the content and delivery of the Customer Service Standards Procedure and Customer Commitment Charter. These documents will also be made readily available to Council customers both in hard copy and via the website.

Risk Implications

Reputational risk to Council if customer service standards are not reviewed and continuously improved.

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

A customer focused organisational culture is embedded by continuous improvement, driven by listening and actioning feedback from Council customers via a variety of channels.

The Customer Service Standards Procedure and Customer Commitment Charter provide clear and consistent expectations for Council staff and our customers.

9.7 GRAMPIANS TOURISM VISITOR SERVICING REVIEW

Author's Name:	Angela Murphy	Director:	Angela Murphy
Author's Title:	Director Development Services	Directorate:	Development Services
Department:	Economic Development	File Number:	F15/A15/000001

Officer Direct or indirect Conflict of Interest

In accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* –
Section 80C:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Information classified confidential in accordance
with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 77(2)(c):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Grampians Tourism Visitor Servicing Review Report (**Appendix "9.7A"**)

Grampians Tourism Visitor Servicing Review 2019 (Summary) (**Appendix "9.7B"**)

Proposed Parking Plan (**Appendix "9.7C"**)

Purpose

To receive and note the Grampians Tourism Visitor Servicing Review Report.

Summary

- Grampians Tourism commissioned a review of regional visitor servicing in March 2019.
- The review considers the provision of visitor servicing through Visitor Information Centres and the growing ease of access to online information.
- The report makes recommendations for future provision of visitor servicing across the Grampians tourism region.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receive and note the Grampians Tourism Visitor Servicing Review Report.
2. Enter into a service level agreement to:
 - (a) Consolidate Horsham Rural City Council tourism marketing activities with Grampians Tourism across all distribution channels.
 - (b) Ensure Horsham specific market is delivered.
3. Implement the recommendations for the relocation of Horsham Visitor Information Centre and establish the Horsham Visitor Servicing Inspiration Centre at the Horsham Town Hall, including noting the proposed parking arrangements and development of a Key Stakeholder Communication Plan addressing steps and timelines.

REPORT

Background

- A Victorian State-wide review of visitor servicing was undertaken in 2018. The review concluded that there was a clear need to pool visitor servicing resources in regions.
- In March 2019, Grampians Tourism commissioned a report to consider the role and relevance of Visitor Information Centres and the visitor services operating model with a view to improving cost efficiencies, exploring partnership and co-location opportunities.
- The report is the culmination of work following extensive industry and Local Government stakeholder consultations.

Discussion

- In the year ending December 2018, Visitor Information Centres in the Grampians had a total of 155,955 visitors. Horsham had 16,294 for the same period.
- Domestic overnight visitors to the Grampians Tourism region were 1.1 million (up by 11.7% on the previous year).
- Visitor Information Centres in the Grampians had a total of 155,955 visitors representing less than 15% of domestic overnight visitors.
- Visitors that use Visitor Information Centres value the service highly, 99% of visitors will recommend an accredited Visitor Information Centre to friends and family (Victorian Accredited Visitor Information Servicing Survey, Half Yearly Results 2018/19).
- Access to information has changed with increased use of the internet and, more recently, mobile technology.
- The report recommends the Horsham Visitor Information Centre be relocated into the arts precinct and incorporates stronger links to online information (through a Grampians-wide Omnichannel Strategy).
- A Grampians Omnichannel Strategy would consolidate tourism marketing across the region, providing clarity for visitors and reduce duplicated effort, including for tourism operators.
- Tourism operators are asked to participate in multiple opportunities. Currently:
 - Horsham Rural City Council manages a visitor focused website, www.visithorsham.com and produces a number of hard copy brochures and guides
 - Grampians Tourism manages a website, www.visitgrampians.com, Facebook page, Instagram, Twitter and a Youtube channel – Additionally they produce a number of hard copy brochures and guides.
- Utilising the marketing channels managed by Grampians Tourism will provide access to greater levels of professional resourcing and external funding.
- Consolidated online information is a pre-requisite of any relocation of visitor servicing.

Financial Implications

Horsham Visitor Information Centre has an annual budget of approximately \$240,000.

Moving Visitor Servicing functions to integrate with other existing Council services will provide ongoing operational efficiencies.

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

2019-2023 Council Plan

Goal 2 – Sustaining the Economy

Four-Year Outcome 2.3 – Increase visitors to the municipality

Goal 3 – Asset Management

Horsham Rural City Council on an ongoing basis will:

- Improve and enhance facilities in Horsham including the Horsham and Grampians Visitor Information Centre, Horsham Aquatic Centre and Botanical Gardens to attract more visitors to the municipality

Consultation/Communication

The Grampians Tourism Visitor Servicing Review engaged directly with Councils, volunteers, operators and State agencies.

Discussions between visitor servicing and Horsham Town Hall staff is ongoing to begin assessment of options and issues associated with any potential integration.

Consultation has occurred with the Tourism Advisory Committee and ongoing dialogue is occurring with volunteers.

The accreditation guidelines for visitor information services states that the facility be accessible (i.e., easy access for visitors to access via public transport or their own vehicle) and have adequate car and coach parking in close proximity to meet demand.

Definition of close proximity:

- (a) Within five minute walk of the facility
- (b) If a shared tenancy is in place, designated visitor parking with adequate signage is required
- (c) Where the facility is located in a highly populated area, drop off zones are required in front or as close to the Visitor Information Centre building as possible.

Consultation with neighbours regarding long vehicle parking in the vicinity of the Horsham Town Hall has occurred, and a proposed layout is attached For Council's information (**Appendix "9.7C"**). There is also a drop off zone and coach parking available.

Risk Implications

Management of any changes to the operations of the Visitor Information Centre have potential reputational risks, particularly where these impact on volunteers.

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

Globally, visitors are finding information from a range of sources, and the nature of visitor servicing is changing. Traditional models of Visitor Information Centres are catering for a small market sector.

Adopting a regional visitor servicing model has service benefits for operators and visitors. It also has the potential to increase the economic value of tourism in the Grampians Region.

9.8 SMALL BUSINESS FRIENDLY COUNCILS INITIATIVE

Author's Name:	Angela Murphy	Director:	Angela Murphy
Author's Title:	Development Services	Directorate:	Development Services
Department:	Economic Development	File Number:	F15/A01/000001

Officer Direct or indirect Conflict of Interest

In accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* –
Section 80C:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Information classified confidential in accordance
with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 77(2)(c):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Small Business Friendly Councils Charter (**Appendix "9.8A"**)

Purpose

To sign the Small Business Friendly Councils (SBFC) Charter and commit to achieving the initiatives within 12 months.

Summary

- The SBFC Charter is an initiative of the Victorian Small Business Commissioner (VSBC) and aims to increase the effectiveness of interactions between Local Governments and small businesses.
- The SBFC Charter is an initiative to increase communication and positive interactions between Local Government and small businesses.
- Signing the Charter commits Council to achieving the following six elements within 12 months:
 - Work with small businesses disrupted by infrastructure projects
 - Support the creation of small business networks across Victoria
 - Faster permit approvals processes for small businesses
 - Prompt payment to small businesses
 - Easy to read, easy to understand, information for Victorian small businesses
 - Open channels of communication between the VSBC and local Councils.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Commits to supporting small businesses by signing the Small Business Friendly Councils Charter.
2. Undertakes business improvement initiatives to achieve the commitments of the Small Business Friendly Councils Charter within 12 months of signing.

REPORT

Background

The Victorian Small Business Commissioner launched the SBFC Charter in May 2019. At that time, Horsham Rural City Council was undertaking process improvements as part of the Victorian Governments Better Approvals initiative.

Discussion

The SBFC Charter sets out six areas for Councils to increase their communication and effective support for Victorian small businesses. Horsham Rural City Council already undertakes activities that meet some of the requirements of the Charter, for instance, faster permit approvals through the Better Approvals project.

Committing to the Charter will send a strong signal that Horsham Rural City Council supports local small businesses and intends to continually improve its service provision where possible, to provide better outcomes for these businesses.

By signing the Charter, Council commits to:

- Work with small businesses disrupted by infrastructure projects
 - Refer to the VSBC's Small Business Engagement Guidelines when planning new works and request that external project managers do the same
 - Provide small businesses with the VSBC's Guide for Small Businesses on Managing Disruption.
- Support the creation of small business networks across Victoria
 - Distribute the VSBC's guide to building Stronger Networks
 - Actively engage with small business networks and identify new opportunities for development
 - Include representatives of associations in conversations concerning small businesses.
- Faster permit approvals processes for small businesses

Work towards faster permit approvals for new small businesses. This may mean:

 - Registering with the Better Approvals Project and completing this as scheduled (completed)
 - Implementing strategies to streamline permit approvals processes for small businesses.
- Prompt payment to small businesses
 - Initiate processes to ensure invoices from small businesses are paid promptly
 - Commit to signing up to the Australian Supplier Payment Code to pay small businesses within 30 days.
- Easy to read, easy to understand, information for Victorian small businesses
 - Link your business with the resources available at www.business.vic.gov.au
 - Provide the VSBC Retail Lease Checklist to prospective tenants
 - Identify opportunities for the development of new resources for your business.
- Open channels of communication between the VSBC and local Councils
 - Notify the VSBC of issues affecting local small business communities
 - Refer commercial disputes to the VSBC dispute resolution team as appropriate
 - Provide details of the VSBC's dispute resolution services on its website.

Financial Implications

There will be a need for a Project Officer to oversee the implementation across multiple business units. It is anticipated this can be provided through current staffing levels without additional cost.

Council already pays promptly, often in less time than the 30 day timeframe included in the Charter. It is not anticipated that this element will have a negative effect on Council.

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

2019-2023 Council Plan
Goal 2 – Sustaining the Economy

Consultation/Communication

Internal discussions with the Corporate Service directorate to identify any issues with the prompt payment requirement.

Risk Implications

Horsham Rural City Council has a potential reputational risk as a Council that supports business if it does not become a signatory to the Charter.

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

Signing the SBFC Charter will be a public commitment by Council to support local small businesses.

Council is already meeting or exceeding a number of the requirements of the Charter.

There is no additional cost to Council but potential cost, and other benefits to local small businesses.

9.9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Author's Name:	Joel Hastings	Director:	Angela Murphy
Author's Title:	Acting Manager Economic Development	Directorate:	Development Services
Department:	Economic Development	File Number:	F15/A06/000001

Officer Direct or indirect Conflict of Interest

In accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* –
Section 80C:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Information classified confidential in accordance
with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 77(2)(c):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Nil

Purpose

To receive and note the Economic Development Report for January 2020.

Summary

The Economic Development Report provides a summary of economic development activities in the municipality during the reporting period.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Economic Development Report for January 2020.

REPORT

Background

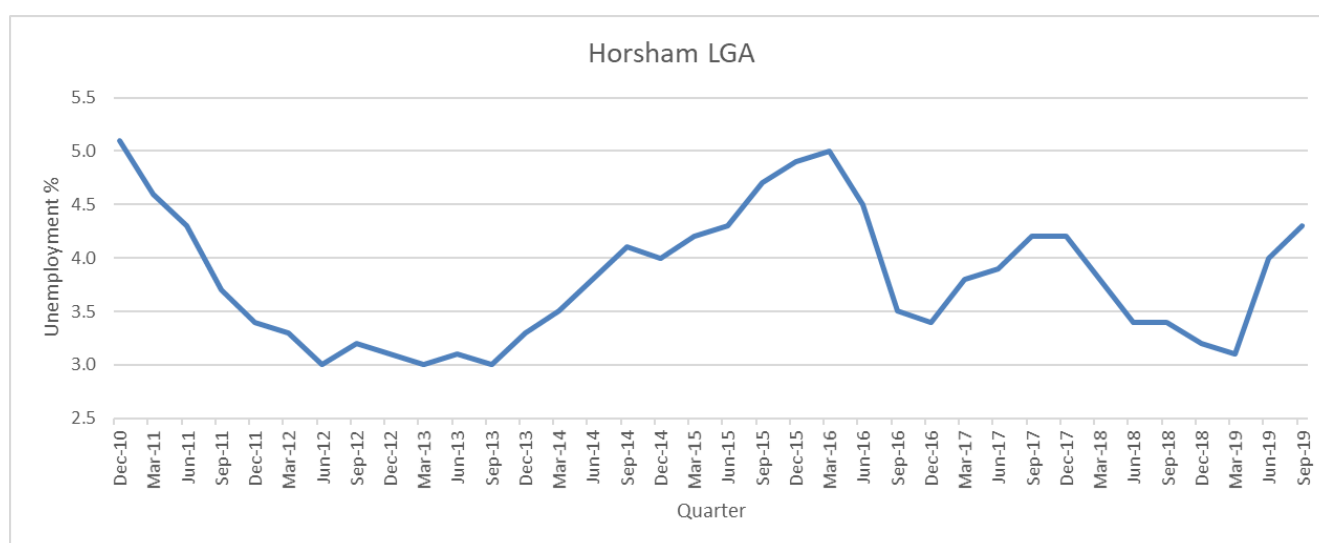
At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 26 August 2019, it was resolved that a regular Economic Development Report be tabled on the Ordinary Council Meeting agenda.

Discussion

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

Economic Benchmarks and Data

Unemployment



Region	Unemployment
Australia	5.1%
Victoria	4.7%
Horsham (LGA)	4.3%

Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Businesses; Small Area Labour Markets – September quarter 2019

Planning Applications Determined

	Number	Cost	YTD	YTD cost of development
January 2020	10	\$2,620,215	76	\$13,789,173
January 2019	0	\$-	50	\$-
Change	10	+\$2,620,215	26	+\$13,789,173

Building Permits Issued

	Number	Total cost of development	YTD	YTD cost of development
Council	7	\$371,400	58	\$3,955,109
Private surveyors	7	\$3,368,098	106	\$30,333,456
Total	14	\$3,739,498	164	\$34,527,556

Summary of building permits issued YTD

	Number	Total Value	Commercial		Domestic	
			No	Value	No	Value
Council	58	\$3,955,109	12	\$1,868,485	46	\$2,086,624
Private Surveyor	106	\$30,333,456	26	\$12,614,211	80	\$17,719,245
Total	164	\$34,527,556	38	\$14,482,696	126	\$19,805,869

Business Engagement

Direct business engagement

	Number	YTD
General business	4	122
New or expanding business	0	26
Event organisers	12	63
Total	16	211

Networking and business event breakdown

	Number	YTD
Networking & business events	0	22

Networking attended	Attendees	Details
WDA – Climate Change Forum	20	Attended presentation by Ross Garnaut and WDA forum to assist with planning for a regional approach Climate Change.
Total	20	

Facilitated business events	Attendees	Details
Total	-	

Tourism and Events

	Number	YTD
Notice of intention to hold an event applications	11	72
Visitor information Centre visits	988	8,448
Visithorsham.com web visits	3,567	24,264

Strategic Planning

Horsham South Structure Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project is needed in order to ensure that South Horsham develops in a coordinated way, ensuring infrastructure needs such as traffic and transport connectivity, sewer, water and drainage to be developed in a sequenced way, avoiding land use conflicts and development limitations in the future Over November-December 2019 the community were invited to be involved in developing the vision and strategic directions. Approximately 61 people chose to participate in the process. Feedback has been reviewed and changes to the draft vision and strategic directions are being prepared. Development scenarios, used to realise the vision and strategic directions are currently being drafted and the community will be consulted on the draft development scenarios in March-April 2020.
Horsham Aerodrome Business Plan review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An assessment of both the previous Aerodrome Business Plan and Aerodrome Masterplan has been undertaken along with stakeholder engagement. The full master plan is required to establish a business case for future growth and planning protections. Further strategic planning will be subject to the 2020 budget process.
City to River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On 25 November 2019, Council resolved to make a number of amendments to the City to River Masterplan and background documents and take a number of actions following an eight-week public engagement process from 4 July to 30 August 2019. Council received 740 written submissions during that time. Following the 25 November 2019 Ordinary Council meeting, amendments were made to the City to River Masterplan and supporting documents in accordance with the changes resolved by Council. The amended City to River Masterplan, January 2020 constitutes the endorsed Masterplan, allowing for the commencement of the Action and Implementation Plan.
Horsham Rural City Flood Amendment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion with DELWP and Wimmera Catchment Management has occurred. Preliminary amendment preparation has been initiated

Infrastructure Development

Enhanced Broadband Project (Connecting Regional Communities Program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding of \$1.7million has been announced in 2019 to install high speed broadband at one gigabit per second in both directions in the Horsham Rural City Council area • The telecommunications towers and other infrastructure has been completed at a number of sites across Horsham. • Spirit Telecom has begun advertising services to businesses.
Horsham Regional Livestock Exchange roofing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully received funding under the Building Better Regions Fund to roof the Livestock Exchange for \$1.49million towards a total project of \$3.03million to improve animal and human welfare, value of sheep from improved shelter conditions, water savings and efficiencies in cleaning the facility. • A tender was awarded and construction is currently underway.

Projects and Programs

Environmental Upgrade agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has agreed to offer Environmental Upgrade Agreements (EUA's) that assist businesses and commercial property owners in Horsham by providing access to Environmental Upgrade Finance. This scheme gives access to finance for energy and environmental efficiency upgrades to buildings with repayments made through council's rates system. • Interest has been positive and further agreements are expected.
Wimmera Business Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the centre and its operations is being undertaken to look at the current offerings from the Business Centre, review practices in other centres and to identify start up trends. • Engagement through this process has quantified a level of interest in a co-working space in Horsham. • Further workshops with small and home based businesses are being arranged.
Horsham Visitor Information Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VIC review is continuing in association with Grampians Tourism who are undertaking a Grampians wide Visitor Servicing review. • The final report has now been received and is being evaluated.

Business Development, Tourism and Events

Major Sporting Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horsham will be hosting a double header series of National motocross championships over one weekend in May 2020. This events is estimated to be worth close to \$500,000 in income to Horsham and the region.
Localised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Localised project aims to raise awareness of local businesses, prevent spending leakage from the region and facilitate business to business communication. This has been a major business engagement tool with currently 82 profiles across the Wimmera.
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Victoria tourism review is looking at revising the number of regional tourism boards across Victoria.

Financial Implications

Not applicable

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

2019-2023 Council Plan

Goal 2 – Sustaining the Economy

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

The Economic Development report for January 2020 is provided for the information of Councillors.

9.10 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S OPERATIONAL REPORT

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

Officer Direct or indirect Conflict of Interest

In accordance with *Local Government Act 1989* –
Section 80C:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Information classified confidential in accordance
with *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 77(2)(c):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Nil

Purpose

To receive and note the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for February 2020.

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 February 2020.

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

Dr Anne Webster: The Chief Executive Officer and Mayor met with Dr Anne Webster, Member for Mallee on Wednesday 22 January 2020. Among the items for discussion were the City to River project, passenger rail for Horsham, mining development and the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal.

Regional Emergency Management Funding: Advice has been received from Minister Somyurek that funding for the Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program (MERP) is ongoing and funding agreements are being renewed to 30 June 2024.

B. Community Engagement

Premier's Active April: The Recreation and Open Space Planning Team are part of a working group, including health services, schools, and sports clubs, to plan improved co-ordination and increased participation in this year's Premier's Active April event.

Dogs in the Botanical Park Survey: At the December 2019 Council meeting, Council resolved to conduct a survey to gauge public sentiment on the issue of allowing dogs in the Horsham Botanic Gardens. The survey is currently being conducted and will provide Council with current information drawn from the community, to make an informed decision on this issue. Surveying is being undertaken by Operations and Recreation and Open Space Planning staff.

Wimmera Australians in Retirement: The Chief Executive Officer was guest speaker at a recent Wimmera Australians in Retirement meeting and provided to the group an update on key Council priorities and projects.

Mount Arapiles Information Session On Wednesday 29 January 2020, Parks Victoria held information sessions about cultural heritage rediscoveries at Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park. Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park contains Aboriginal cultural places and as further information about these values is revealed through cultural heritage assessments, Parks Victoria will continue to keep the community informed through regular updates and community meetings. Further information is available on the Parks Victoria website.

C. Projects and Events

Australian Road Research Board Tour: Members of the Western Highway Action Committee (WHAC) recently inspected the Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) facility in Port Melbourne. Council's representative on the WHAC Cr David Grimble, along with Strategic Asset Manager, Krishna Shrestha and John Martin, Director Infrastructure, participated in the tour. The ARRB facility features a road materials testing laboratory, garaging for the fleet of pavement testing vehicles, and experts investigating road safety, new technology and a range of other advances in roads and transport.

Installation of Solar Panels: Solar panels were recently installed on the Wimmera Regional Library Corporation roof consisting of 66 panels and a 28.3KW system, and the Horsham Aquatic Centre, which consists of 249 panels and a 99.64KW system. Both installations are being done by KUGA electrical from Melbourne.

The Horsham Town Hall solar panel installation is also complete, comprising of 268 panels and a 69.6KW system. This installation was undertaken by Wade's, in partnership with CHS Electrical.

These three installations are being funded through a grant from Sustainability Victoria as well as Council's Sustainability Reserve.

Shop Art Re-Opening: The Gallery Shop at the Horsham Regional Art Gallery has been reconfigured into a new and improved space, showcasing local artists and artisans and was relaunched on 31 January.

D. Staff Matters

60 Years of Wimmera Rock: The Horsham Town Hall staff worked in partnership with the 60 Years of Wimmera Rock group to host a community festival on 7 to 9 February 2020. The festival celebrated the region's long history and passion for live music. It is 10 years since the very successful 50 Years of Wimmera Rock, which saw enthusiasm from bands to return to Horsham and perform. This event was held at multiple venues in Horsham including the Soundshell, Horsham Town Hall Theatre, Heritage Hall and other local venues.

Cultural Awareness Workshop: The Executive Management Team attended a Cultural Awareness workshop on 10 February 2020, which was delivered by Joanne Clarke, Barengi Gadjin Land Council accredited trainer. Topics discussed included: significant cultural heritage sites, Native Title, Treaty, Australia Day and projects proposed on the Wimmera River as part of the City to River Project. The discussion that took place was greatly valued by participants, maturing the Executive's knowledge in relation to these topics.

Financial Implications

Not applicable

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

2019-2023 Council Plan
Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

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 February 2020.

10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cr Mark Radford, Mayor

- 28 January 2020 – Meeting with David Eltringham to discuss the WW2 Memorial
- 28 January 2020 – Council Ordinary Meeting
- 29 January 2020 – ABC radio interview
- 29 January 2020 – Launch of the new bus routes with Minister Horne
- 29 January 2020 – Community Transport at Centre of Participation with Minister Horne
- 29 January 2020 – Wimmera River Improvement Committee
- 29 January 2020 - Mt Arapiles information session at Natimuk
- 30 January 2020 – City to River film clip
- 30 January 2020 – Media briefing
- 31 January 2020 – ABC TV interview regarding the government grants process
- 31 January 2020 – Triple H radio interview with Di Trotter
- 2 February 2020 – Letter to 60 Years of Rock organisers
- 3 February 2020 – ABC radio interview re aged and disability changes
- 3 February 2020 – Welcome to visitors from China
- 3 February 2020 – Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- 3 February 2020 – Council Briefing
- 4 – 15 February 2020 – Tasmania trip
- 15 February 2020 – Farewell to Police Superintendent Paul Margetts
- 17 February 2020 – ABC radio interview
- 17 February 2020 – Letters for Overland Train retention
- 17 February 2020 – Budget Meeting
- 18 February 2020 - 50th Anniversary of Tidy Towns at Government House
- 20 February 2020 – Community information sessions for aged and disability services
- 20 February 2020 – Ovarian Cancer Morning Tea
- 20 February 2020 – Horsham Community and Police Consultative Committee Meeting
- 22 February 2020 – CFA Victorian Fire Brigade State Junior Championships

11. URGENT BUSINESS

12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

13.1 ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS

Council Briefing held on Monday 3 February 2020 at 5.00pm in the Reception Room, Civic Centre, Horsham

Council Briefing held on Monday 10 February 2020 at 5.00pm in the Reception Room, Civic Centre, Horsham

Council Briefing held on Monday 17 February 2020 at 5.00pm in the Reception Room, Civic Centre, Horsham

Refer to **Appendix “13.1A”**

13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

Section 173 Agreement for 2 Lot Subdivision, 121 Bunworths Road, Laharum

13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE

Nil

13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting held on Wednesday 12 February 2020

Refer to **Appendix “13.4A”**

Recommendation

That Council receive and note agenda items:

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

14. NOTICE OF MOTION

14.1 NOTICE OF MOTION NO 178

Given by Cr David Grimble

TAKE NOTICE that it is my intention to move the following motion at the Ordinary meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council to be held at the Civic Centre, Roberts Avenue, Horsham, on Monday 24 February 2020.

“Council resolve to include a financial sum of \$150,000 in the 2020/21 budget development and consideration phase as its contribution to the State Government for planning an alternative truck route, in the form of a South West Link through Horsham’s industrial area and associated Wimmera River crossing.”

RATIONALE:

At its Ordinary Meeting on 27 January 2019, Council adopted the Horsham Urban Transport Plan. Council resolved to:

“Advocate to and collaborate with relevant State Government agencies and other stakeholders, including Barengi Gadjin Land Council, to determine the most appropriate route for removal from Horsham’s CBD of through truck traffic from the Western, Wimmera and Henty Highways, including consideration of a possible south west link through Horsham’s industrial area.”

Significant regional and Horsham urban transport objectives as identified can be achieved initiating this local transport planning work.

It creates opportunity to leverage funds from other government sources whilst actively establishing a key position in a collaborative way.

It progresses the community and industry identified priorities:

- Reduction in truck traffic in the CBD whilst improving safety, amenity and congestion
- Additional River crossing
- South West link generating freight efficiency and access in to the Industrial area.

Cr David Grimble

CIVIC CENTRE
HORSHAM 3400
20 February 2020

Horsham: City to River

Vision & Masterplan

JANUARY 2020

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Horsham Rural City Council gratefully acknowledges the valuable contributions made by businesses, government and referral agencies, special interest groups, community representatives, traditional owners and residents for attending consultation sessions and providing input into this project.

Council would also like to thank groups and individuals who made submissions and provided feedback on the draft Masterplan and supporting documents.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Horsham Rural City Council acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagalk, 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.



PROJECT CONSULTANTS:



Contents

<u>Overview</u>	01
<u>Study Area</u>	02
<u>Vision Statement</u>	03
<u>Objectives</u>	04
<u>Masterplan</u>	09
<u>Transformative Projects</u>	15
<u>Land Use, Redevelopment and Investment</u>	16
<u>Staging</u>	21
<u>Where to From Here?</u>	22

Overview

Horsham Rural City Council is planning for the long-term future of the Wimmera River Precinct and Central Activities District (CAD). The aim is to transform and revitalise the area to make it a more attractive place to live, work, visit and invest in.

This project forms part of *Transforming Horsham*, a suite of projects being undertaken concurrently by Council with a view to creating a brighter future for Horsham over the coming decades. *Transforming Horsham* is about imagining together, talking together, working together and moving forward together.

This document is a long term Vision and Masterplan for central Horsham and will be used to guide the revitalisation of the area over the next 20 to 30 years. The Vision and Masterplan is informed by independent research, analysis and consultation with representatives of community groups, organisations, businesses, Government agencies and traditional owners.

To respond to research and analysis, initiatives were identified where they could materially improve one or both of the following principles:



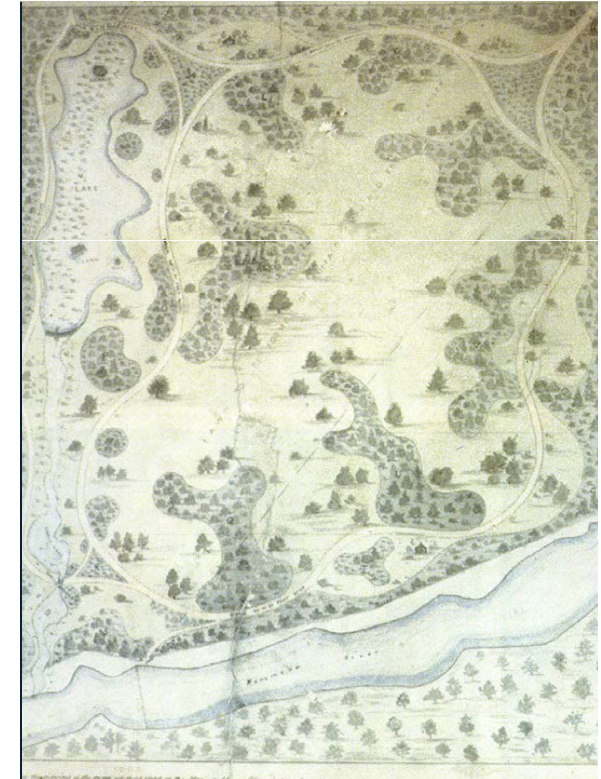
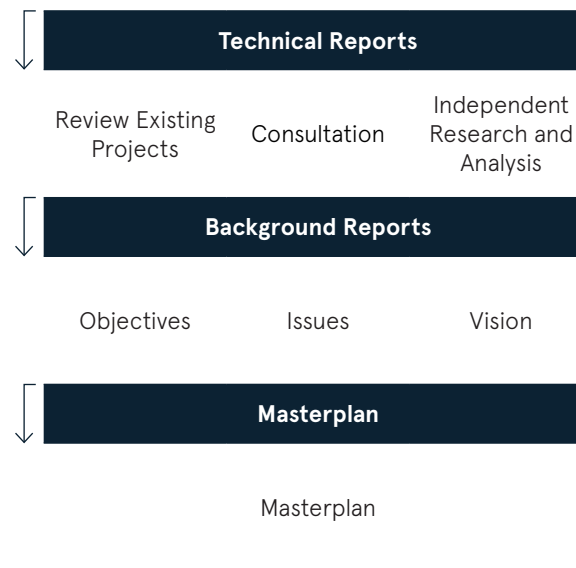
Liveability



Economic Resilience

THE PROCESS

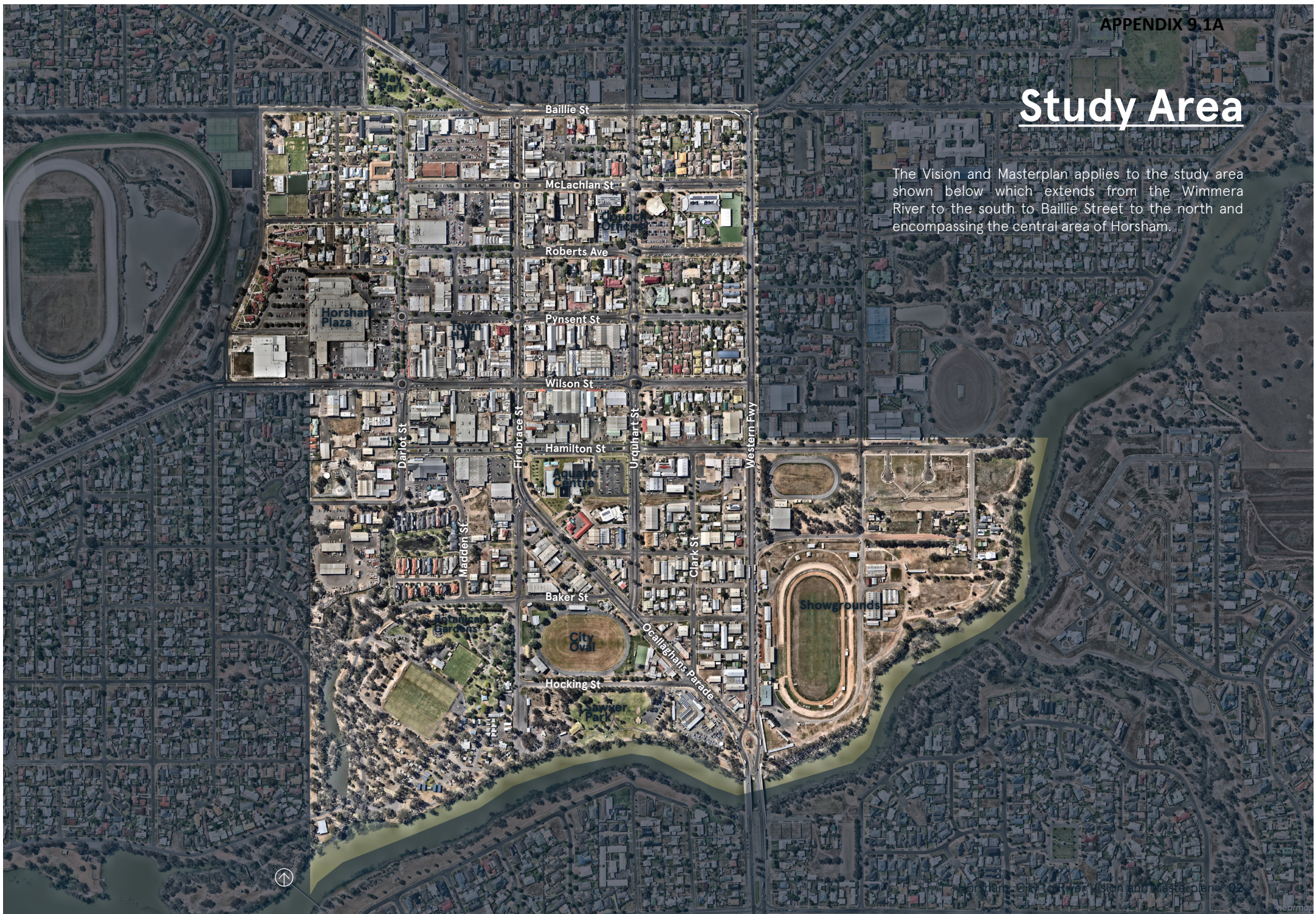
The Vision and Masterplan is the culmination of a series of steps depicted in the graphic below. The detailed research and analysis is included in the Technical Reports and Background Report.



William Guilfoyle's plan for the Horsham Botanical Gardens (1880)

Study Area

The Vision and Masterplan applies to the study area shown below which extends from the Wimmera River to the south to Baillie Street to the north and encompassing the central area of Horsham.



Vision Statement

Horsham is the heart of the Wimmera and supports the region's economy and communities. The success of the City is linked to its rich history, strong community and resilient economy.

The centre of Horsham is a thriving commercial, cultural, civic and recreation hub that will continue to evolve over time to meet the needs of the community, support and grow business activity and support and grow visitors to the region. The CAD will be better connected to highly accessible and quality open spaces, will incorporate substantially more shade and active transport opportunities and will accommodate more housing.

Horsham celebrates its connection to the Wimmera River, its greatest natural asset. The cultural, recreation and tourism potential of the riverfront precinct will be maximised to increase recreation, socialising, play, events, activities and infrastructure for visitors and residents. The riverfront will be better connected with surrounding areas, provide opportunities for public and private investment and creatively communicate the history and ongoing importance of Indigenous culture in the area.

By focusing on improvements which support liveability and economic resilience, the area will promote the attraction and retention of population and investment which will preserve the City's critical role for Horsham and the Wimmera region.

Together, the Horsham Central Activities District and the Wimmera riverfront will form an attractive, prosperous and sustainable destination that residents are proud of, businesses thrive within, investors covet, and visitors enjoy.



Objectives

The following objectives have been identified to guide the achievement of the vision across four main areas.

OBJECTIVE ONE

Wimmera River Precinct

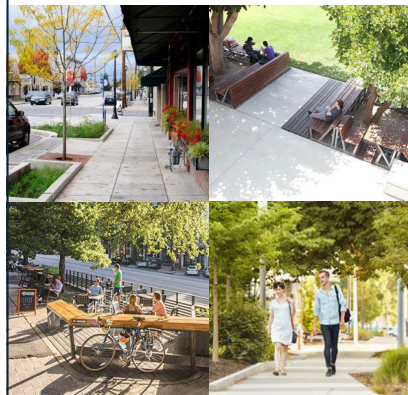
Activate, connect and add value to the Riverfront Precinct to establish an iconic community, recreation and tourist destination.



OBJECTIVE TWO

Horsham's Central Activities District

Improve the amenity of the CAD and the diversity of land uses to strengthen the existing business environment, attract more visitors and accommodate greater housing, hospitality, open space and events.



OBJECTIVE THREE

Transport and Connectivity

Better integrate and improve the connection between the CAD and the Riverfront and improve access to, and connectivity within the study area.



OBJECTIVE FOUR

Sport and Recreation

Adopt a long term strategic approach to developing sporting infrastructure that meets contemporary standards, promotes participation, accommodates regional events, makes efficient use of public land and integrates with urban and river areas.



OBJECTIVE ONE

The Wimmera River Precinct

The following key directions are designed to support the objective for the Wimmera River Precinct.

1: Activate the riverfront to increase utilisation by residents and visitors:

- Construct a dedicated meeting place;
- Formalise and upgrade walking/cycling trails;
- Introduce a water play area;
- Develop and upgrade recreational fishing and boating infrastructure;
- Upgrade the soundshell at Sawyer Park;
- Public art and indigenous interpretive content; and
- Improve street furniture, upgrade lighting and public toilets.

2: Improve the integration and accessibility of existing areas within the Riverfront Precinct

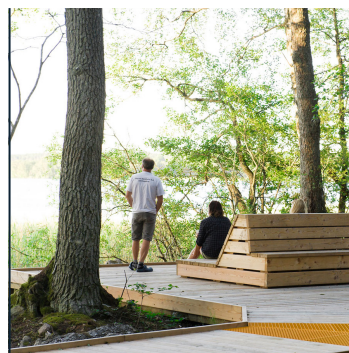
Including: City Oval, Sawyer Park, Caravan Park, Botanic Gardens, Horsham Lawn Tennis, Croquet and the Showgrounds precinct.

Enhance integration and connectivity of the regional Croquet facility through measures including the removal of permanent fencing.

3: Leverage activation to establish commercial and tourism development opportunities.

Identify sites and encourage development of:

- Hospitality – destination restaurant / café;
- Visitor accommodation;
- Business event facilities; and
- Arts and cultural spaces (e.g. Horsham Museum).



OBJECTIVE TWO

Horsham’s Central Activities District

The following key directions are designed to support the objective for the Central Activities District.

1: Implement the recommendations of the CAD Revitalisation Strategy

This includes improving streetscapes, prioritising pedestrian/cycling transport and connectivity and better integrating the CAD and the riverfront precinct with clear visual connections and landscaping.

2: Develop a series of meeting places in the CAD

Establish a series of meeting places in the CAD, which link with other CAD anchors including the Town Hall, May Park and the Riverfront.

3: Investigate the potential to redevelop/develop a high-quality purpose-built Government facility in the CAD

Investigate the opportunity to co-locate a range of Government agencies (e.g. Local and State Government departments, agencies, Police).

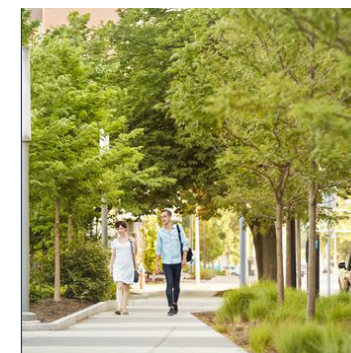
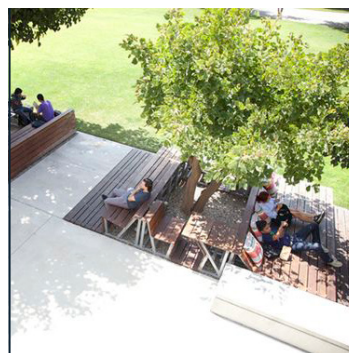
4: Identify sites or precincts suitable for urban renewal between the riverfront precinct and Wilson Street.

These sites could both transition unsuitable industrial uses to other locations and accommodate new housing and commercial uses in the CAD. This includes relocating the Council Depot to an alternative location and encouraging land use transition along key pedestrian routes between the riverfront and CAD. Consider Burnt Creek Estate or Enterprise Estate as a location for any industrial uses wishing to relocate.

5: Transform the Wimmera Business Centre.

to meet contemporary business needs including reconsidering the operating model, physical requirements and optimum location. Potential to provide an integrated model that co-locates multiple uses including permanent and co-working office accommodation, temporary meeting rooms, community uses (e.g. small library space / gallery space / education facilities) and a café.

Encourage and support private sector urban renewal.



OBJECTIVE THREE

Transport and Connectivity

The following key directions are designed to support the objective for Transport and Connectivity.

1: Implement the transport recommendations of the CAD Revitalisation Strategy.

2: Create safe crossing points over the Western Highway and advocate for the downgrading of the road / creation of an alternative truck route

to remove large vehicles from the CAD given proximity to schools and the need to improve access to recreation facilities to the east of the highway.

3: Improve north-south routes connecting the riverfront with the CAD

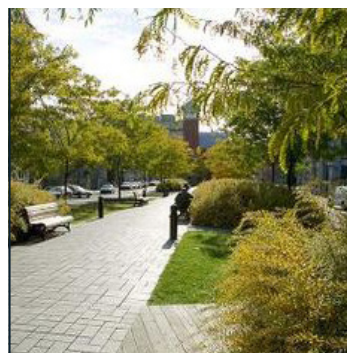
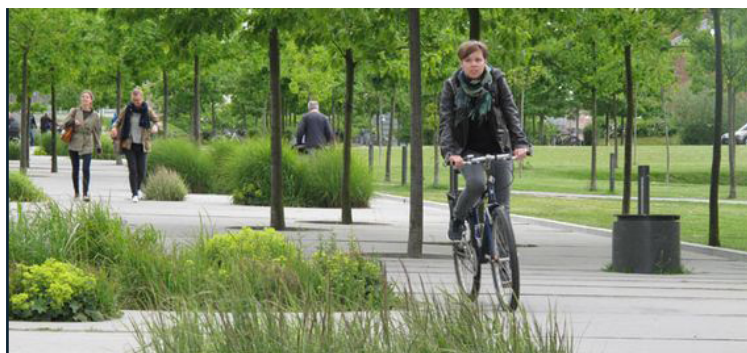
using existing road reserves as well as opportunities for 'off road' or laneway connections.

4: Establish an east-west linear trail along the existing drainage easement

commencing at Hamilton Street and Western Highway and extending in a south west direction past the Aquatic Centre to Madden Street.

5: Establish a pedestrian bridge at Hamilton Street

to provide an off-road connection between residential areas, schools, the river corridor and the CAD and to create a continuous north and south bank trail loop along the river in conjunction with the ANZAC bridge.



OBJECTIVE FOUR

Sport and Recreation

The following key directions are designed to support the objective for Sport and Recreation.

1: Upgrade City Oval as Horsham’s premier regional AFL/cricket venue

Upgrade City Oval to a regional standard to enable regional AFL and cricket sporting events and other non-sporting events to be hosted. Upgrades required are likely to include expansion of the size of the field, a new multi-purpose pavilion and clubrooms (including fully accessible and female friendly facilities) and covered spectator areas. Delivery of a second netball court would assist in club training and matches.

2: Develop a Regional Indoor Sports Precinct

Investigate the opportunity to develop a regional indoor multi-purpose sports facility which considers the Crown Land showgrounds site and the Horsham West option (Jenkinson Avenue site).

Key sports facilities considered for inclusion include basketball, netball, badminton, table tennis, volleyball and squash.

3: Develop an outdoor multi-purpose sports precinct

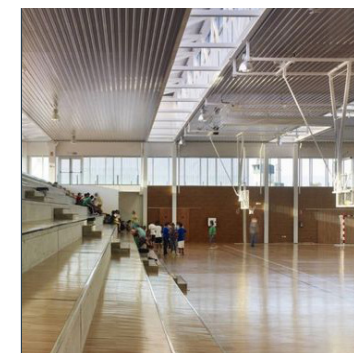
Strategic opportunity to develop a new multi-purpose shared outdoor sports precinct on the crown land reserve at the Horsham showgrounds precinct.

As a preliminary concept this should include the provision of multipurpose sporting facilities. Key sports facilities considered for inclusion include athletics (including 8 lane grass track and associated athletics facilities), soccer/rugby fields, a synthetic hockey pitch and tennis courts.

Consideration should also be given to the inclusion of a shared use oval for AFL/ Cricket training and matches, this could be delivered as part of a multi-purpose grass field that has the capacity to accommodate multiple sports (i.e. soccer, rugby, AFL, cricket). Consideration could also be given to the inclusion of tennis courts with the synthetic hockey facility.

An independent feasibility study is required relating to directions 2 and 3, to assess the site located on crown land reserve at the Showgrounds and the Horsham West site (Jenkinson Avenue).

The study should assess the economic and social impacts of the proposals, assess the technical components relating to traffic, geology and flooding, determine appropriate operational models, costs and include consultation with relevant stakeholders such as the showgrounds committee and Greyhound Racing Victoria.



Masterplan

A Masterplan for the study area has been prepared by landscape architects based on the vision, objectives and directions for the area.

The Masterplan shows the desired indicative long-term layout of the study area, in particular those areas that are proposed to transition from their existing uses to new or improved uses.

The Masterplan shows an indication of potential building locations, public realm upgrades, sporting precincts and other open space proposals, however the exact locations and layouts within each site may change depending on more detailed planning.

The most important role of the Masterplan is to show the desired long term direction for land within the area and an overarching physical aspiration that Council will seek to achieve through a range of actions, investment and partnerships over time.

Detailed elements of the Masterplan are shown on the following pages.

Individual projects are subject to:

- Council endorsement and are subject to detailed concept and schematic design, stakeholder and community consultation; and
- Prioritisation and availability of funds as part of Council's budget planning process and attraction of funding from other sources (e.g. government or private).





Legend

- 1 Firebrace Street redesigned to major pedestrian / shared space route
- 2 Precinct entry: junction remodelled
- 3 Baker Street remodelled. Parking
- 4 City Oval redevelopment to regional standard.
 - New Oval re-aligned and enlarged
 - Community netball courts
 - Improved pavilion and amenities
 - Public access through area increased
- 5 Hocking Street repurposed for car parking and shared use
- 6 Family, Tourism and Recreation Precinct (including opportunities for miniature railway & waterplay area)
- 7 New paths and connections
- 8 Explore commercial opportunities at Wilson Bolton site
 - Iconic gateway building
 - Generous public riparian access
 - Building activation on Riverfront face
 - Public amenity
- 9 Events provision enhanced at Sawyer Park and connected to City Oval
- 10 Meeting Place and plaza
- 11 New cafe / Restaurant on river-front
- 12 New waterfront destination
- 13 Improve integration and permeability of caravan park
 - Existing public toilets to be considered as part of redevelopment.
- 14 New gardens and caravan park entry
- 15 Indigenous/cultural facility
- 16 New recreational fishing and boating infrastructure
- 17 Restored major pedestrian boulevard through gardens to river
- 18 Horsham Croquet Club
 - Enhance integration and connectivity (including the removal of permanent fencing) of the regional Croquet facility.
- 19 Horsham Lawn Tennis Club
 - Retain existing footprint pending a review of future needs and demand (Ref. to objective 1 direction 2 and objective 4 direction 3)
- 20 New parking and shade planting
- 21 Existing caravan park
 - Public through access with key avenues
 - Permeable and transparent boundaries
 - Services centrally located
 - Caravan park size reduced
- 22 Existing Playground
- 23 War Memorial retained
- New public meeting or gathering space

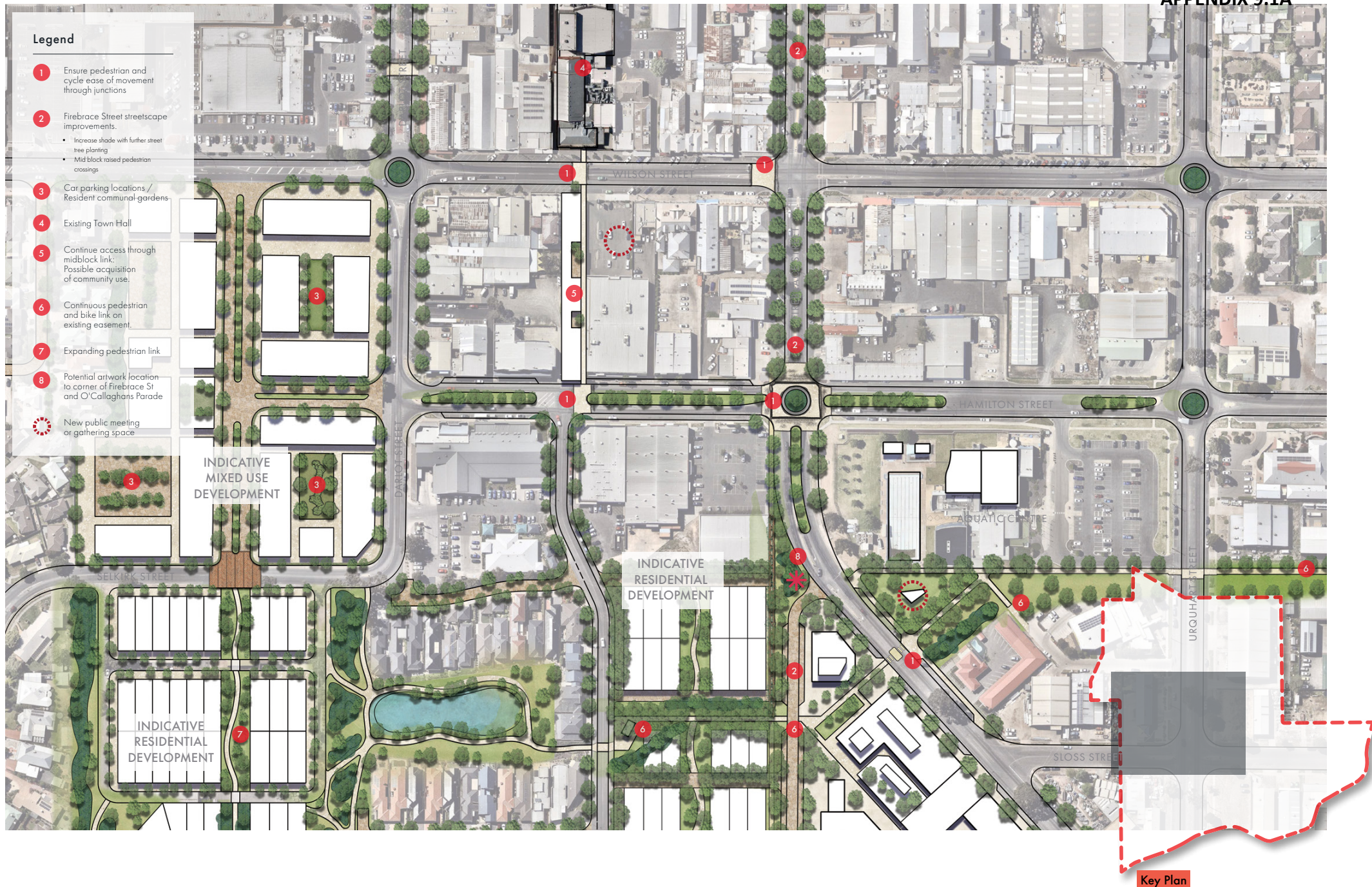
Key Plan

Legend

- 1 New tourism/hospitality site
 - Existing site heritage elements to be reflected in final design
- 2 New waterfront access and boulevards; lookouts
- 3 Cultural and arts facilities with transitional uses
 - Further investigation for a potential museum site.
- 4 Parking locations
- 5 New multi-purpose regional sports and events facilities precinct. Indicative only
 - Generous public riparian access
 - Improved street frontages
 - Multiple sport use
 - Closer/realignment of McBryde St. subject to further traffic management planning.
- 6 Extend river-front bikeway and shared paths
- 7 New pedestrian and cycle bridge
- 8 Pedestrian and bike way continues on opposite bank of river
- 9 Opportunity for a regional multi-purpose indoor sporting precinct subject to feasibility study
- 10 Investigate the opportunity for a regional multi-purpose outdoor sporting precinct subject to feasibility study.
- 11 New precinct entry to work in with heritage gates
- 12 New road frontage planting and boundary treatment
- 13 Existing velodrome retained
- 14 Proposed New Pavilion
- 15 Existing Basketball Building to remain
-  New public meeting or gathering space

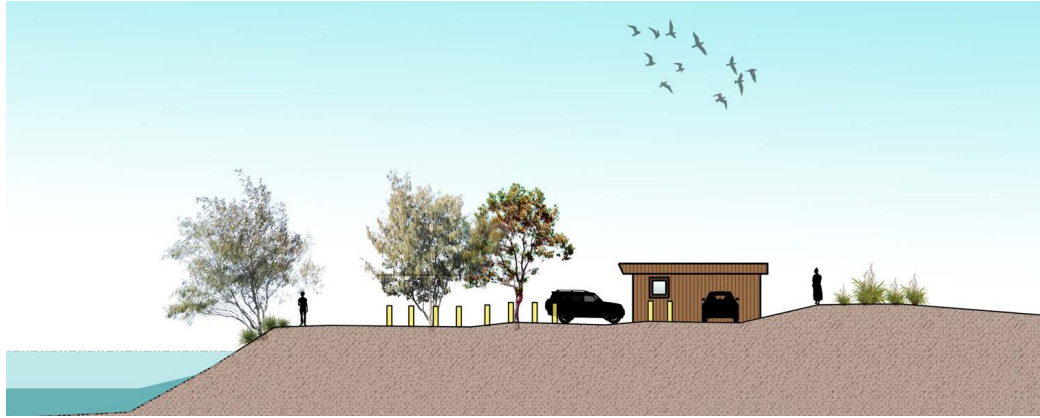


Key Plan





Riverfront Precinct



Before

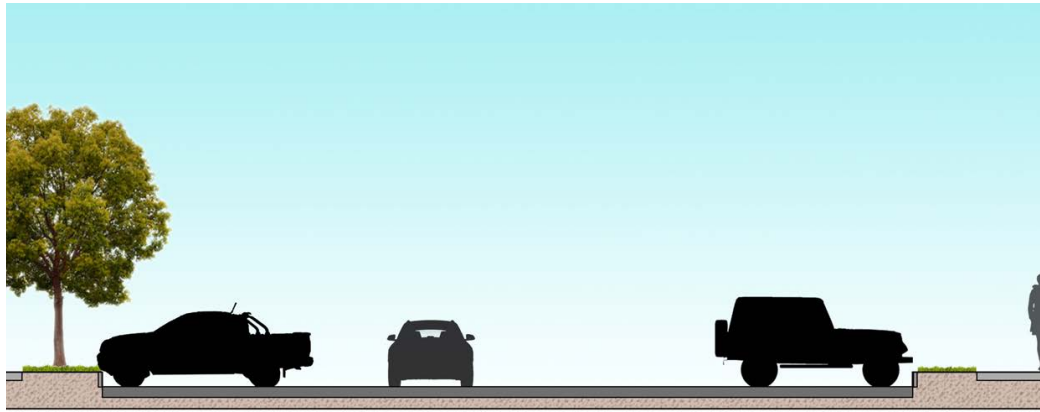
Source: Tract, 2019



After

Source: Tract, 2019

Firebrace Street (River End)



Before

Source: Tract, 2019



After

Source: Tract, 2019

Transformative Projects

A number of transformative projects are proposed as part of the Vision and Masterplan, particularly within public land near the Wimmera Riverfront.

Representatives of existing public land uses that will be impacted during implementation of the Vision and Masterplan will be directly consulted by Council in relation to the appropriate timelines and processes for the transition of public land use in the study area.

The following design principles should be followed for the major transformational projects:

City Oval Redevelopment:

- Maintain the current sporting role and upgrade to meet all contemporary facility standards including Universal Design;
- Increase public access to and through the site by allowing greater permeability, removing fences, encouraging passive recreation and creating an inviting public realm and interface;
- Improve integration with surrounding areas including Swayer Park, the Riverfront and key pedestrian access routes to the CAD.

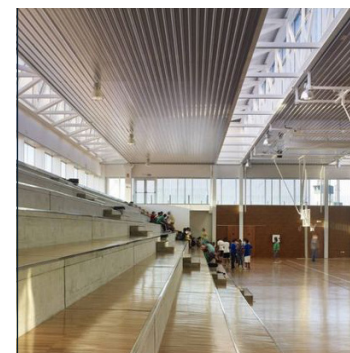
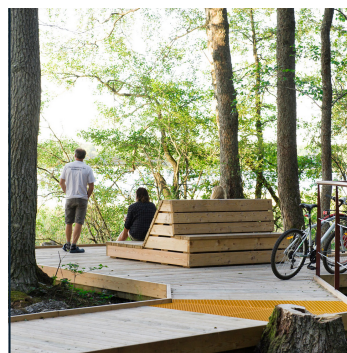
Riverfront:

- Maximise public use of the Riverfront for residents and visitors, particularly for passive open space, socialising, trails, play and events;
- Restore elements of the original Botanic Gardens Plan;
- Improve physical connections and integration with surrounding areas; and
- Incorporate Indigenous interpretation into design.

Showgrounds Precinct:

- Maximise shared use of public land for sports, passive open space and events;
- Make efficient use of shared facilities including car parking, pavilions and infrastructure;
- Consider the need to retain elements of cultural significance such as Showgrounds gates;
- Ensure a high degree of connectivity and integration between all elements of the precinct including velodrome, indoor stadium, outdoor sports, Riverfront and major tourism site;
- Establish an attractive southern gateway to Central Horsham and high quality interface with the Western Highway, including pedestrian access to the western side of the Highway.

These principles apply to the preferred vision for the precinct as a sporting precinct, which is subject to the confirmation of technical and financial feasibility through an independent study.



Land Use, Redevelopment and Investment

The Horsham CAD and Riverfront Precinct currently accommodates a broad range of land uses. This diversity is a great strength which enables a variety of economic, civic and recreational functions to be performed within a relatively compact urban form.

The Masterplan identifies a range of major projects that will primarily occur within public land. Importantly, these projects are designed in many instances to improve investment conditions for the private sector to take advantage of greater activity and visitation. Investment could take a number of forms, including individual businesses or property owners making improvements or expansions to premises, right up to major redevelopment of key sites to establish new tourism, residential or hospitality facilities.

It is important that clear direction is provided to the market as part of this Vision and Masterplan. This includes identifying the type and location of land use and investment priorities that Council will encourage, support and facilitate over the planning period. This will provide greater direction and certainty to the business, property and investment markets when making decisions.

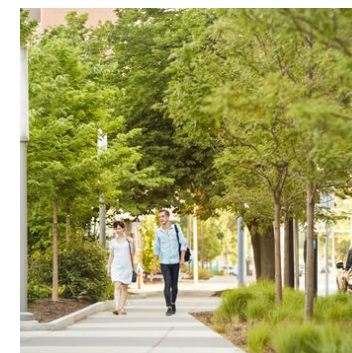
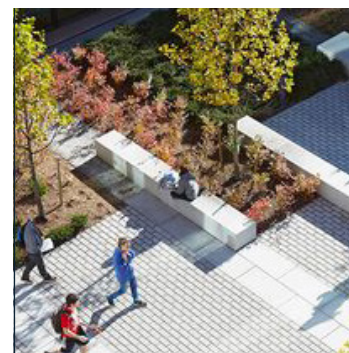
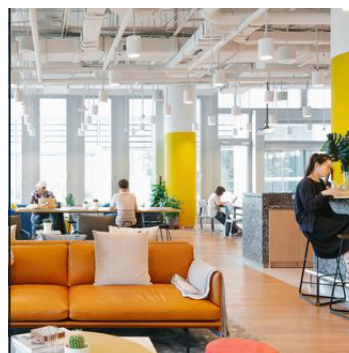
Research and consultation undertaken as part of this project and previous studies identified a range of opportunities to strengthen the land use mix to respond to market needs and capitalise on proposed public investment.

In particular, greater residential, tourism and hospitality uses have been identified as key opportunities for the area, while it is also important that existing retail, commercial, civic and business roles are retained and supported.

The land use priorities and key investment opportunities for each broad precinct as part of this Masterplan are shown in Figure 1.

'Major sites' shown on the plan indicate the locations where particular developments could be undertaken to capitalise on the economic and tourism opportunities identified for the area, with a particular focus on creating new sites for tourism and hospitality investment in proximity to the Wimmera River.

A wide range of other sites across the Study Area will also be appropriate to accommodate redevelopment and investment.



LAND USE PLAN
AND KEY INVESTMENT
OPPORTUNITIES

LEGEND

- Tourism
- Passive Open Space
- Sports and Events
- Retail/Commercial (CAD Revitalisation)
- Employment
- Urban Renewal Opportunity (CAD)
- Pedestrian Connection
- Riverfront & Connection
- Civic/Gov Hub
- Major Sites

1. Council Depot & Batching Plant
2. Rowing Club
3. Firebrace St River Arrival
4. Wilson Bolton
5. Strategic Site
6. Agricultural Society
7. Government Hub



CAD RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL FOCUS

The CAD accommodates the majority of retail, commercial and civic land uses. It is important that a compact commercial core is maintained to encourage trip sharing and to enable a concentration of economic and social activity to occur within the central area.

Demand for new retail and commercial floorspace is not expected to result in the need for any significant extensions to the core area – therefore the vision for this area is to continue to improve the physical conditions and infrastructure for visitors and businesses through public realm and transport initiatives.

There are opportunities for the public realm to perform a greater linear open space role to promote recreation and social activity in appropriate locations in the CAD. This will encourage greater visitation, footfall and length of stay in the area, leading to greater private sector investment across a variety of retail, commercial, hospitality and creative opportunities.

Opportunities for commercial and retail uses to extend to the south towards the river precinct are proposed in the vicinity of Firebrace Street and Darlot Street as part of two mixed-use 'urban renewal' areas – this is discussed in the following section.

Artist's impression of Firebrace Street (toward riverfront)



Source: Tract, 2019

CAD TO RIVERFRONT TRANSITION AREA: BUSINESS AND URBAN RENEWAL

The section of land between the retail and commercial core and the Wimmera River (the 'transition area') currently accommodates a variety of industrial, commercial, retail and residential land uses. Land uses in this area are relatively inconsistent and there are a number of examples of sub-optimal interfaces, for example between heavier industrial and residential uses.

The land use vision for this area is provided in two parts:

- Land in the eastern section of the transition area has many attributes that support ongoing employment and retail-focused land uses, including good exposure and accessibility from main roads and separation from residential areas. The vision for this area is to remain as an employment area within the Commercial 2 Zone with existing businesses encouraged to continue operations and reinvest.
- By contrast, land in the western section of the transition area presents an opportunity for urban renewal. This could be achieved by replacing existing industrial uses with a mix of housing and business uses. These opportunities have been identified in two areas that are strategically located in close proximity to the retail core, open space and recreation assets, existing residential uses and proposed north-south and east-west linear open space connections through the precinct. This applies to:
 - Land currently occupied by the Council Depot and neighbouring concrete batching plant; and
 - Properties fronting Firebrace Street between Baker Street and Hamilton Street.

RIVERFRONT: RECREATION, EVENTS, TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY FOCUS

The land use and investment vision for the riverfront area is to establish a continuous corridor of complementary tourism, hospitality, recreation and events uses which capitalise on the substantial natural advantages offered by the Wimmera River.

Major improvements are proposed in the Masterplan to upgrade and activate the open space along the riverfront and improve and expand the sports and events infrastructure at City Oval, Sawyer Park and the Showgrounds. A number of opportunities have been identified for tourism and hospitality investment to occur on both public and private land in this precinct, with a focus on visitor accommodation and hospitality uses.

The catalyst for private sector investment in the riverfront precinct will be activation of the key public assets in the area to increase visitation, activities and events.

Council's role will focus on providing the strategic and policy support for this investment to occur and pursuing catalyst projects which can improve investment conditions for the private sector.

Artist's impression of the Riverfront Area



Source: Tract, 2019

Staging

The vision for the study area will require a broad range of projects and actions over a long period of time. It is important that these actions are delivered in a staged manner so that public projects can catalyse private sector investment, and to enable budget allocations to be staged.

Staging is indicative only and will be confirmed in the action and implementation plan.

INDICATIVE TIMING	CENTRAL ACTIVITIES DISTRICT	TRANSITION AREA	RIVERFRONT PRECINCT
Early			
(0-5 years)	Deliver public realm and public space initiatives	Deliver east-west linear open space	Deliver early stages of riverfront works (Firebrace St entrance) and linear connections, including Hamilton Street Bridge
	Plan for new north-south link	Plan for urban renewal	Progress the redevelopment and upgrade of City Oval
	Investigate the opportunity for a government precinct		Investigate the regional multi-purpose sport opportunity Showgrounds precinct
Medium term			
(5-15 years)	Deliver new north-south link	Relocate Council depot	Deliver indoor sports stadium (subject to the outcomes of further work required)
	Facilitate new civic precinct development (subject to the outcomes of further work required)	Finalise all urban renewal actions	Redevelopment of Wilson Bolton site
		Deliver all Firebrace Street public realm improvements	Establish tourism investment opportunity at Showgrounds
		Establish access improvements across Western Highway	Deliver remaining stages of riverfront works
Long term			
(15+ years)	Realise government precinct outcomes (subject to the outcomes of further work required)	Realise urban renewal outcomes	Deliver Showgrounds vision, including sporting infrastructure and relocated greyhounds and show site (subject to the outcomes of further work required)

Where to From Here?

This Vision and Masterplan provides a clear blueprint for the future of the centre of Horsham. Without a long term vision and broad participation by the Horsham community, meaningful change, investment and improvement will not be possible.

A detailed action and implementation plan will be prepared. Council will seek funding for major projects in partnership with other levels of Government, to support the vision and masterplan for the study area.



Horsham:
City to River

List of Amendments to City to River Masterplan in accordance with changes resolved by Council at the November 25, 2019 Council meeting.

No.	Resolution	Amendments to C2R Masterplan
1.	Acknowledge and thank all groups and individuals who made a formal submission to the Draft City to River Masterplan and supporting documents.	Text added to Acknowledgments
2.	Note key concerns and support highlighted through the Draft City to River Masterplan public engagement process	Reflected in City to River Engagement Report
3.	Amend the Draft City to River Masterplan to divide into sub-precincts to facilitate implementation through targeted community and stakeholder engagement.	Shown on page 17
4.	Note that a large proportion of the feedback is relevant to the detailed concept and design stage and will be considered as part of the engagement for each project at a sub-precinct level.	Reflected in City to River Engagement Report.
5.	Endorse the Horsham Sporting Facilities Demand Assessment (May 2019) subject to the following amendment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of Horsham Croquet as a Regional Facility and Lawn Tennis as a local facility in the Botanic Gardens sub-precinct. 	In progress
6.	Endorse the Wimmera River Precinct and Central Activity District Background Report, May 2019 (Appendix "9.1B") subject to the following amendment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of the regional role of Horsham Greyhound Racing Club. 	In progress
7.	Amend the Draft City to River Masterplan to show that individual projects on the Masterplan are subject to Council endorsement and may change based on detailed concept and schematic design and stakeholder and wider community engagement.	Text added to page 9.
8.	Amend the Draft City to River Masterplan to show that individual projects in the Masterplan are subject to prioritisation and funding as part of Council budget planning process and availability of funds from other sources, be it government or private.	Text added to page 9.
9.1	Botanic Gardens Sub-Precinct - Amend the Draft Masterplan to show the Horsham Croquet Club in the Botanic Gardens with enhanced integration and connectivity (including removal of permanent fencing), as a regional facility, noting that a number of the lawn tennis courts are used to support regional tournaments	Amendments to page 5 and 10 (point 18 in the legend)

<p>9.2</p>	<p>Botanic Gardens Sub-Precinct – Amend the Draft Masterplan to show lawn tennis courts with enhanced integration and connectivity (including removal of permanent fencing), and work with the Lawn Tennis Club, Tennis Victoria and Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) to review future needs and demand for lawn tennis in the broader context of other tennis facilities and proposed regional tennis facility in Horsham, noting that the current footprint is to remain pending the aforementioned review.</p>	<p>Amendments to page 5, 8 and 10 (point 19 in the legend).</p> <p>Reviewing the future needs and demand for lawn tennis in the broader context of other tennis facilities and proposed regional tennis facility in Horsham will be identified as an action to implantation of objective 1, direction 2 and objective 4 direction 3.</p>
<p>9.3</p>	<p>Botanic Gardens Sub-Precinct – Amend the Draft Masterplan to remove the proposed lake.</p>	<p>Amendments to page 10.</p>
<p>9.4</p>	<p>Riverfront Sub-Precinct – Amend the Draft Masterplan to acknowledge the role of miniature railway in activation of the riverfront sub-precinct and work with the Wimmera Live Steam and Model Engineering Society to explore design options and a viable operating model as part of the design process.</p>	<p>Amendments to page 10, under point 6.</p> <p>Work with the Wimmera Live Steam and Model Engineering Society to explore design options and a viable operating model as part of the design process will be identified as an action to implantation of objective 1, direction 1.</p>
<p>9.5</p>	<p>Riverfront Sub-Precinct – Commence implementation of concept and schematic design for the riverfront improvements, including the splash park and site selection for the café/restaurant.</p>	<p>In progress</p>

9.6	Riverfront Sub-Precinct – Undertake a market sounding and expression of interest process for the development/operation of the café/restaurant.	Pending Action and Implementation Plan.
9.7	City Oval and Sawyer Park Sub-Precinct – Commence concept and schematic design process for City Oval and Sawyer Park area which considers options for the configuration of City Oval and Sawyer Park layout.	Pending Action and Implementation Plan.
9.8	Showgrounds Freehold Sub-Precinct – Work with the Horsham Agricultural Society to advance the precinct planning and assist in the development of the site, which aligns with their operating model.	Pending assistance sought by Horsham Agricultural Society.
9.9	Key Connection Sub-Precinct – Commence schematic designs for the key connection along Firebrace Street.	Pending Action and Implementation Plan.
9.10	CAD Renewal Sub-Precinct – Encourage and support the private sector in urban renewal including preparation of a development plan for the concrete batching plant site	Amendments to page 6. Action undertaken through council’s business support and investment attraction unit.
9.11	CAD Revitalisation Sub-Precinct – Commence schematic and detailed designs	Pending Action and Implementation Plan and Governance Structure
9.12	CAD Revitalisation Sub-Precinct – Note that the planning for the GovHub will be subject to further engagement with State Government Agencies.	Amendments to page 6, Objective 2, key direction 3.
9.13	CAD Revitalisation Sub-Precinct – Note that there are no plans to change the existing angle parking arrangements in the CAD and any reconfiguration will be subject to further consultation with business and other stakeholders as part of the schematic and detailed design stage.	No specific strategic direction is given to parallel parking in the Masterplan or background document.

		The Horsham CAD Revitalisation Strategy (2017) outlines interventions currently planned or under investigation and outlines some recommended approaches to consider when implementing the improvements. The Strategy refers to parallel parking by saying that <i>“Removal of on-street parking or replacement of angle-parking with parallel parking on selected cycle routes can also improve safety for cyclists”</i> (page 9)
9.14	CAD Revitalisation Sub-Precinct – Amend the Draft City to River Masterplan to show a series of meeting places in the CAD	Reflected on page 6, Objective 2, key direction 2. Amendments made to page 13, point 10.
10.	Seek grant funding for projects in the Draft City to River Masterplan as the funding opportunities arise	Ongoing
11	That Council revoke McBryde Street as its preferred location and conduct a feasibility study independently which considers Crown Land showgrounds site and the Horsham West option (Jenkinson Avenue site) noting that the study will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the economic and social impacts of the proposed regional outdoor multi-purpose sports facility • Be informed by the technical feasibility (including traffic, geology and flooding), operational model and costs • Involve stakeholder engagement including with the Showgrounds Committee and Greyhound Racing Victoria in determining cost associated with relocation. 	Amendments to page 8 and 11.

12	<p>That Council revoke McBryde Street as its preferred location and conduct a feasibility study independently which considers Crown Land showgrounds site and the Horsham West option (Jenkinson Avenue site) noting that the study will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine the economic and social impacts of the proposed regional indoor multi-purpose sports facility <p>Be informed by the technical feasibility (including traffic, geology and flooding), operational model and costs.</p>	Amendments to page 8 and 11.



Horsham Rural City Council
Innovate
Reconciliation Action Plan
December 2018 – December 2020
Progress Report (February 2020)

Our vision for reconciliation is to create an improved understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, hopes and future aspirations through fostering strong, respectful, inclusive and meaningful relationships within our communities.

Relationships

Focus Area	We will develop and strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, organisations and networks through existing partnerships and by proactively engaging in and promoting significant cultural events so we understand the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and improve our engagement with the community.				
Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline	Progress	
1) Develop respectful, open, honest and transparent relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop a local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander demographic profile to assist Council in its planning strategies. 	Manager Arts, Culture and Recreation	May 2019	Commenced	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and groups to develop a specific plan to ensure effective engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders peoples supported by a communication strategy. 	Community Facilitator	December 2018	Commenced	
2) Council proactively engages in local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander activities and events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively promote, attend and participate in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community activities (Aboriginal Children's Day, Close the Gap Day, Mabo Day, the Anniversary of the Apology to the Stolen Generation and the Barengi Gadjin Settlement Date). 	Community Projects Officer	December 2018, December 2019	Commenced	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council proactively supports, identifies and engages in local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' celebrations and events (i.e. sporting events like Hoops Against Violence). 	Coordinator Recreation & Open Space Planning	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council develops a calendar of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events with the local community, which is promoted throughout Council and in the wider community. 	Team Leader Visitor Information Centre	April 2019	Commenced	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to plan for Sorry Day. 	Manager Arts, Culture and Recreation	December 2018	Completed/Ongoing	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Horsham Community Directory includes the registration of all Aboriginal organisations, groups and communities ensuring that events and activities are promoted. 	Community Projects Officer	September 2019	
<p>3) The RAP Internal Working Group* (RWG) actively monitor RAP development, including implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting.</p> <p>* A group of Council staff members responsible for actions in the RAP. The RWG includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Terms of Reference for the RWG. 	Director Community Wellbeing	December 2018	Completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Council RAP champions to actively promote the RAP across the organisation and community. 	CEO	December 2018, December 2019	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RAP Internal Working Group (RWG) oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP. 	Director Community Wellbeing	December 2018	Completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RWG meets four times over the two years of the Innovate RAP to monitor and report on RAP implementation. 	CEO	December 2018, May 2019, December 2019 May 2020	Completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are represented on the RWG 	Director Community Wellbeing	December 2018	Completed
<p>The Aboriginal Advisory Committee (AAC)* continues to actively monitor RAP development, including implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting.</p> <p>*AAC is an external committee which has Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on its membership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress reports are provided to the quarterly Aboriginal Advisory Committee meetings in relation to progress of RAP. 	Director Community Wellbeing	December 2018 & 2019, February 2019 & 2020, May 2019 & 2020, August 2019 & 2020	Completed/Ongoing

<p>4) Actively promote and participate in local National Reconciliation Week activities and events by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to plan National Reconciliation Week (NRW) activities. 	<p>Manager Arts, Culture and Recreation</p>	<p>November 2019, November 2020</p>	<p>Completed/Ongoing</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council hosts at least one internal event for NRW in 2019 and 2020. 	<p>Manager Arts, Culture and Recreation</p>	<p>May 2019, May 2020</p>	<p>Completed/Ongoing</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register all NRW events via Reconciliation Australia’s NRW website. 	<p>Manager Arts, Culture and Recreation</p>	<p>April 2019, April 2020</p>	<p>Completed/Ongoing</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support an external NRW event. 	<p>Manager Arts, Culture and Recreation</p>	<p>May 2019, May 2020</p>	<p>Completed/Ongoing</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our RWG participate in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	<p>Director Community Wellbeing</p>	<p>May 2019, May 2020</p>	<p>Completed/Ongoing</p>
<p>5) Raise awareness of RAP commitments and progress internally and externally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders. 	<p>Media & Communications Officer</p>	<p>December 2018</p>	<p>Completed/Ongoing</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include information on our RAP in Council’s induction training for all Councillors, Directors and staff. 	<p>Manager People & Culture/Human Resources Leave</p>	<p>December 2018</p>	<p>Completed/Ongoing</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders. 	CEO Directors Managers	December 2018, December 2019	
--	---	------------------------------	---------------------------------	--

Respect

Focus Area

We will show respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, histories and stories and will be responsive to their needs and will encourage the community to value the unique contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to society. This is important to our organisation as the role of council includes taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision making, fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

Action

Deliverable

1) Demonstrate respect and increase organisational understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display the Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Islander flag at Council offices. 	Director Infrastructure	December 2018, December 2019	Completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display Aboriginal artworks in the Council foyer area and ensure that artworks are acknowledged appropriately. 	Art Gallery Director (Co-ordinator Visual Arts)	October 2019	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display Aboriginal designed banners in our public streets. 	Community Projects Officer	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the local Traditional Owners to identify suitable Aboriginal language names for new streets and public places and facilitate applications through the RAP Aboriginal Advisory Committee. 	Co-ordinator Rates	July 2019	Not Commenced

2) Engage employees in understanding the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, to ensure there is a shared meaning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country that is provided to Council and shared on the Council website. 	CEO	June 2019	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships. 	CEO Executive Assistant	December 2018	Completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite a Traditional Owner Elder to provide a Welcome to Country at significant events, including Civic receptions and citizenship ceremonies. 	CEO	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all Council events and functions. 	CEO	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an Acknowledgement of Country plaque on all major Council buildings and facilities, key public spaces and on boundary signage. 	Director Infrastructure	December 2019	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage staff to include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of key staff meetings. 	Directors	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display a statement of Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners on the Council website and on email signatures. 	Media & Communications Coordinator	December 2018	Completed/Ongoing

3) Improve Councillors, staff and Council understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and achievements by engaging them in continuous cultural learning opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness training strategy for all Councillors, Directors and staff which defines cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of our business and considers various ways cultural learning can be provided (online, face to face workshops or cultural immersion) 	Manager People & Culture/Human Resources Lead	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities to work with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants to develop cultural awareness training. 	Manager Organisational Development	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for RWG members, RAP champions, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in cultural training. 	Director Community Wellbeing	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite Elders and community leaders to attend once a year Council staff lunchtime yarning sessions to share local stories and increase staff awareness of local Aboriginal histories, cultures and achievements. 	Director Community Wellbeing	December 2018, December 2019	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to be involved in culturally significant site visits run by the Traditional Owners. 	Manager Regulatory Services	December 2018, December 2019	Not Commenced
4) Provide opportunities for Councillors, staff and the wider community to engage in NAIDOC Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with their culture and communities by celebrating NAIDOC Week. 	Directors and Managers	July 2019, July 2020	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR Policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week. 	Manager People & Culture/Human Resources Lead	March 2019, March 2020	Completed/Ongoing

5) Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures through the Visitor Information Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display on TV screen, videos of local Elders telling local stories about Wotjobaluk Country 	Team Leader Visitor Information Centre	May 2019	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a place for the Virtual Rivers Yarns interactive monitor 	Team Leader Visitor Information Centre	December 2018	Completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide brochures on the key Aboriginal Culturally significant sites 	Team Leader Visitor Information Centre	November 2019	Not Commenced

Opportunities

Focus Area	We will contribute to ‘closing the gap’ of disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by providing opportunities which support cultural, social and economic development, including employment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and supporting education opportunities. Council will achieve this through its service delivery function and facilitation/advocacy roles. This is important because Council has a responsibility to improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community. Also to ensure that services and facilities provided by Council are accessible and equitable.			
Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline	
1) Investigate opportunities within Council to increase and improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment agencies and the RAP Aboriginal Advisory Committee to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment opportunities within Council. 	Manager Organisational Development	December 2018	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and the RAP Aboriginal Advisory Committee to consult on employment strategies, including professional development. 	Manager People & Culture/Human Resources Lead	June 2019	Not Commenced

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively promote employment opportunities and vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media. 	Manager People & Culture/Human Resources Lead	December 2018	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and support Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traineeship program. 	Manager Organisational Development	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review, update and improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traineeship program. 	Manager Organisational Development	March 2018, March 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect information on our current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment opportunities. 	Manager People & Culture/Human Resources Lead	March 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Retention strategy 	Manager People Culture	December 2019	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and future applicants participating in our workplace. 	Manager People & Culture/Human Resources Lead	December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
2) Investigate opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within our organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update procurement policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers for procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. 	Director Corporate Services	May 2019	Completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services. 	Director Corporate Services	May 2019	Completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned business. 	Director Corporate Services	May 2020	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation membership. 	Director Corporate Services	May 2019	Completed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities to purchase native plants and trees from Wall Nursery. 	Director Infrastructure Services	May 2019	APPENDIX 9.2A Not Commenced
3) Encourage greater participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Council initiatives, programs and plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage through local media, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community participation in the Wimmera River Challenge. 	Manager Arts, Culture and Recreation	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to have opportunities in art and design and creative arts through participation in a dedicated program at the Horsham Regional Art Gallery 	Art Gallery Director (Coordinator Visual Arts)	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks in Council facilities and public spaces. 	Relevant Directors	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a communications plan to Promote Council's Community Grants Program in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through holding sessions . 	Grants Officer	January 2019	Completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community children and adults in Council's Gallery. 	Coordinator Visual Arts	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative is involved in developing Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan, Wellness and Re-ablement Plan, Diversity Plan, Early Year's Plan and other social planning processes. 	Relevant Directors	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing

Tracking Progress and Reporting

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline	
1) Review and Refresh RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements. 	Director Community Wellbeing	October 2019	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review. 	Director Community Wellbeing	February 2020	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit draft RAP to reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement. 	Director Community Wellbeing s	June 2020	Not Commenced
2) Report on Horsham Rural City Council's Reconciliation Action Plan implementation from 2018 to 2020 to Reconciliation Australia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and submit the Reconciliation Action Plan Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 	CEO	September 2019, September 2020	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide and publish regular RAP updates and reports to all Councillors Directors and staff and our external stakeholders. 	Director Community Wellbeing	December 2018, December 2019	Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate participating in the RAP Barometer. 	Director Community Wellbeing	May 2020	Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWG to collect data for the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire. 	Director Community Wellbeing	July 2019, July 2020	Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWG to seek internal approval to submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 	Director Community Wellbeing	August 2019, August 2020	Not Commenced

3) Report on Horsham Rural City Council's Reconciliation Action Plan implementation from 2018 to 2020 to internal and external stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings. 	Mayor	February 2019, August 2019, February 2020, August 2020	APPENDIX 9.2A Not Commenced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate Council Reconciliation Action Plan outcomes to all stakeholders through annual reports published, emailed and shared on our website. 	CEO	July 2019, July 2020	Completed/Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide and publish regular RAP updates and reports to all Councillors, Directors and staff and our external stakeholders. 	Director Community Wellbeing	December 2018, December 2019	Completed/Ongoing
4) The RAP Aboriginal Advisory Committee meets to review progress of the Reconciliation Action Plan implementation bi-annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review progress of Council Reconciliation Action Plan 	Director Community Wellbeing	February 2019, August 2019, February 2020, August 2020	Completed/Ongoing

GENDER EQUITY

- SECTION A -

Community Engagement
Audit Toolkit



Horsham Rural City
Council urban rural balance

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Gender Equity Community Engagement Audit Toolkit was developed by Hindmarsh Shire, Horsham Rural City, West Wimmera Shire and Yarriambiack Shire Council. Thanks to the Municipal Association of Victoria and Melissa Morris from Women's Health Grampians for their assistance. The Gender Equity Community Engagement Audit Toolkit is supported by the Victorian Government through the Free from Violence Local Government Grants program.

Council recognises the five Traditional Owner groups of this land: the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagulk, Jaadwa and Jadawadjali people.

While this resource refers to gender between men and women, girls and boys we acknowledge that some people's gender identities are not binary. We acknowledge that LGBTQI+ people also experience family violence.

KEY TERMS

The following terms have been adapted from the Our Watch Respectful Relationships Education Toolkit.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT is a planned process with the specific purpose of working across organisations, stakeholders and communities to shape the decisions or actions of the members of the community, stakeholders or organisation in relation to a problem, opportunity or outcome. (IAP2, 2014)

DRIVERS are the underlying causes that are required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life, but which must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

GENDER refers to the socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women. Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time.

GENDER EQUALITY involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between women and men and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality. It is about recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all and therefore often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities.

GENDER EQUITY refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of rights, responsibilities and resources between women and men according to their respective needs.

KEY TERMS

GENDER DISAGGREGATED DATA is data on individuals broken down by gender. Allows for the measurement of differences between women and men on various social and economic dimensions. (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2019)

GENDER INEQUALITY is the unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity and value afforded to women and men in a society due to prevailing gendered norms and structures.

GENDER STEREOTYPES are simplistic assumptions about the behaviours, attributes, skills, differences and roles of women and men. These attributes are often perceived as natural or innate but are more often the result of women and men being socialised in different ways. Some common gender stereotypes that are heard include 'women are naturally caring and nurturing' or 'men can't communicate their emotions very well', but they are usually incorrect and based on generalised assumptions about how we believe people will act, what people are good at or what people will like and dislike, simply because of their gender.

INTERSECTIONALITY is about taking an approach that considers the complexity of a person's lived experience. It considers the multiple forms of discrimination that can be experienced as they relate to a person's identity (or many identities), and how systems and structures interact to reinforce the discrimination. (DVR CV, 2018)

PRIMARY PREVENTION is about changing attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices to prevent an undesirable consequence.

SEX refers to the biological and physical characteristics used to define humans as female or male.

BACKGROUND

One of the **key drivers of violence against women is gender inequality.**
(Our Watch, 2015) This toolkit aims to increase gender equality by:

- INCREASING THE DECISION MAKING CAPABILITIES OF WOMEN
- CHALLENGING GENDER STEREOTYPES AND ROLES
- CREATING RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE COMMUNITY

In areas where there is higher levels of equality, there is less domestic violence.
(Patty Kinnersly, 2019)

This resource has been developed as part of a primary prevention activity which aims to reduce the prevalence of domestic and family violence. Primary prevention is about changing attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices to prevent an undesirable consequence.
(Our Watch Respectful Relationships Evaluation Toolkit)

FACTS:

- 1 woman is killed every 9 days and 1 man is killed every 29 days by a partner.
- 1 in 6 women have experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or previous partner since the age of 15.
- 1 in 16 men have experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or previous partner since the age of 15.
- Aboriginal adults are 32 times as likely to be hospitalised for family violence as non- Indigenous adults.
- People with a disability were 1.8 times as likely to have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from a partner in the previous year, compared with people without a disability.
- People living in remote and very remote Australia are more than 24 times as likely to be hospitalised for domestic violence compared to those living in major cities.

(Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019)



WHY SHOULD WE CONDUCT THIS AUDIT?

Effective decision making ensures all community members have the opportunity to voice their opinion. When council fails to engage equitably they are potentially making poorly informed and implemented decisions. (Victorian Auditor-General's Office, 2015) Section A enables any council to audit gender equity within community engagement.

One of the **key drivers of violence against women is gender inequality.**

(Our Watch, 2015) This audit is a preventative activity to reduce the prevalence of domestic and family violence. The content found in the audit improves gender equality by assisting council to **increase the decision making capabilities of women, challenge gender stereotypes and roles and create respectful relationships in the community.**

Prior to this resource being developed, an analysis of community engagement was conducted at four Victorian local governments. Some of the key findings included the following:

- Youth councils had high levels of participation from females. Males were often underrepresented. This trend changes as men and women become older.
- Engagement processes with a sporting theme, had low participation rates from females. Alternatively engagement that focused on the arts and families resulted in low participation from males. It appears that the theme of engagement impacted the participation rates.
- Females had high levels of engagement via Facebook and other digital engagement. They also had high levels of participation when they were members of reference, action and steering groups that have a specific goal to complete.
- Town Committees had positive levels of participation from males and females. A town committee delegates powers, duties and function to its members. The level of power and ability to affect change may have impacted participation rates.
- Men preferred to engage via traditional engagement methods such as listening posts, advisory committees and written submissions.

WHY SHOULD WE CONDUCT THIS AUDIT?

Research undertaken for this project highlighted that there has been limited work conducted within Australia in relation to gender equality and community engagement. This audit will help councils investigate their engagement practice, identify who is engaging with Council and what actions can occur to improve gender equity in community engagement.

In the instance that a council is not ready to conduct an audit or have already conducted an audit, it is suggested that Section B is used to identify methods that can improve their community engagement processes.

The IAP2 Australasia is the peak engagement body in Australia. The organisation is highly regarded and has extensive knowledge within community and stakeholder engagement. The IAP2 (2014) definition of community engagement will be used throughout this resource.

Community Engagement is a planned process with the specific purpose of working across organisations, stakeholders and communities to shape the decisions or actions of the members of the community, stakeholders or organisation in relation to a problem, opportunity or outcome.

The *Local Government Act 1989* states that the role of a council includes acting as a representative government by taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision making.

Community engagement within local government can be a very broad process, dependant on the nature of the issue and the methods of engagement being used.

CREATING A SUCCESSFUL AUDIT

TO PRODUCE A SUCCESSFUL AUDIT FOLLOW THESE STEPS.

STEP 1) RECEIVE APPROVAL

If you are considering conducting the audit it is important to receive approval from the Chief Executive Officer as some components will impact the entire organisation.

If you do not have approval, use Section B to improve gender equity within community engagement.

STEP 2) ESTABLISH AN AUDIT GROUP

It is suggested that this audit be overseen by a small audit group. Members that may be valuable within this group are engagement or communications staff and staff that have an interest in advancing equality. It is also helpful to have high level management present within this group to orchestrate change. There may be an existing group with similar priorities who could assist in facilitating this audit.

THE ROLE OF THE AUDIT GROUP IS TO:

- Conduct the audit
- Champion the audit
- Compile and analyse the data
- Identify actions to improve equity after the audit is complete

STEP 3) INFORM STAFF

This can occur through any applicable communication mediums that are used within the organisation.

THIS CORRESPONDENCE SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- Purpose of the audit
- Role of staff in the audit
- Length of the audit
- How the audit will occur
- Contact details of the audit group

CREATING A SUCCESSFUL AUDIT

STEP 4) CONDUCT THE AUDIT

As community engagement occurs on a needs basis it is important to audit a selection of past engagement processes. If a council conducts a substantial amount of community engagement then a six month audit may be appropriate. If they conduct very little engagement they may benefit from conducting a longer audit. It is the responsibility of the Audit Group to determine the time frame of the audit.

To support the Audit Group conducting the Audit 1 and Audit 1.1, a fillable document has been created that information can be inputted into. This document can be used for each individual engagement process and can also be saved. This is an appendix to the resource.

STEP 5) ANALYSE THE RESULTS

As part of this resource, an Excel Worksheet has been developed for the Audit Group to input all information obtained. This is an appendix to the resource.

GENDER EQUITY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AUDIT

Throughout the audit, the terms *community engagement method* and *community engagement process* will be used often. It is important to understand the clear distinction between these two phrases.

A community engagement process encompasses the different stages such as planning, operation and evaluation.

A community engagement process uses multiple engagement methods. There are a wide range of community engagement methods that are suitable for different purposes and stakeholders. (IAP2, 2014) Examples are a survey and a committee.

AUDIT 1

Title of Community Engagement Process:

The information found in the below table should be inserted into the Excel Spreadsheet titled 'Method of Engagement.'

Q1. WHAT ENGAGEMENT METHODS HAD PARTICIPATION FROM MALES AND FEMALES?

Please select the correct option/s and record the gender of the participants.

Table 1

	METHOD USED	FEMALE	MALE	GENDER DIVERSE
Action Group				
Appreciative Inquiry				
Advisory Committee				
Blog				
Board of Management				
Briefing				
Card Storming				
Citizens Jury				
Co-design				
Collaborative Governance				
Community education program				
Community visioning				
Conversation cafes				
Deliberative forum				
Doorknocking				
Drop in session				
Fishbowl method				
Focus Group				

	METHOD USED	FEMALE	MALE	GENDER DIVERSE
Hotline				
Information Session				
Interactive online tools				
Interview				
Listening Post				
Open House				
Project Control Group				
Public Display				
Public Meeting				
Q & A Session				
Reference Group				
S86. committee				
Social media. Eg Facebook, Instagram, Twitter				
Steering Committee				
Study Circle				
Summit				
Survey				
Tours				
Voting				
Webinar				
Working Group				
Workshop				
World cafe				
Written Submissions				
TOTAL:				

Data not recorded

If other, please list:

The information found in the below table should be inserted into the Excel Spreadsheet titled 'Diversity of Engagement.'

To complete the following section of the audit, the following terms may be of assistance to you.

The phrase *varying abilities and backgrounds* is a prompt to consider the needs of a broad selection of the community. People of varying abilities and backgrounds may include:

- ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE
- CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE PEOPLE
- OLDER PEOPLE
- PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS
- PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
- RURAL AND REGIONAL COMMUNITIES
- YOUTH

Q2. WHAT METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT HAD PARTICIPATION FROM PEOPLE OF VARYING ABILITIES AND BACKGROUNDS?

Please record the relevant methods of engagement.

Table 2

	METHOD OF ENGAGEMENT
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	

Please input the correct information and record the gender of the participants.

Table 3

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL
People with disabilities	Female								
	Male								
Culturally & linguistically diverse people	Female								
	Male								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	Female								
	Male								
People of immigrant & refugee background	Female								
	Male								
Youth	Female								
	Male								

The information found in the below table should be inserted into the Excel Spreadsheet titled 'Engagement Process.'

Q3. HOW MANY MEDIUMS OF COMMUNICATION WERE USED TO NOTIFY THE COMMUNITY OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS?

Please select the correct option/s

Table 4

Brochures	
Letterbox Drop	
Media Release	
Newsletters	
Newspaper Advertisement	

Posters	
Public Display	
Radio	
Social media	
Text message	
Television	
Website	
TOTAL:	
Data not recorded	

If other, Please list:

AUDIT 1.1

To complete the following section of the audit, the following terms may be of assistance to you.

The *phrase support mechanisms* refers to different services that council have in operation to assist community members to participate in community engagement. This may include but is not limited to things such as financial assistance for childcare, transport assistance and interpretation services.

The information found in the below table should be inserted into the Excel Spreadsheet titled 'Audit 1.1.'

Table 5

Criteria	Action Complete		Evidence
	Yes	No	
Planning			If yes:
<p>Were both males and females involved in its development?</p> <p><i>The unique experiences of each gender can be helpful in identifying key issues before they are released to the public for comment.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>Were the different needs of males and females identified in its development?</p> <p><i>Effort needs to be taken to ensure council is not being 'blind' to different needs within the community.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>Did council consider how the proposed changes may impact males and females differently?</p> <p><i>What may be a positive change for some, may have a negative impact for others.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>Did council consider how the proposed changes may impact people of varying abilities and backgrounds?</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Diversity	Yes	No	If yes:
<p>Were steps taken to ensure females from organisations and associations had an opportunity to voice their opinion?</p> <p><i>When council engages with an organisation or association it is common to engage with a person of authority such as a president or manager. This position is more likely to be held by a man. Council may unintentionally exclude the voices of women if they are not actively aware.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

<p>Were steps taken to engage with a group in the community whose voice is often not heard? Eg. Young people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.</p> <p><i>Council policy should support engagement from the whole community.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Selecting an engagement method	Yes	No	If yes:
<p>Was any thought given to the most appropriate methods of engagement for those whose voices are not always heard? Such as women and people of varying abilities and backgrounds.</p> <p><i>The method of engagement selected can affect the participation levels from diverse groups.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Barriers to participation	Yes	No	If yes:
<p>Was effort taken to identify potential barriers that men and women, girls and boys of varying abilities and backgrounds may experience when participating in the engagement process?</p> <p><i>Men and women are both interested in contributing their opinion. In some instances council needs to modify the design features of community engagement to assist some voices to participate.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>Were specific strategies developed to mitigate any of the barriers identified?</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Targeted Activities	Yes	No	If yes:
<p>Did any advertising material target a specific gender?</p> <p><i>Advertisements stating who council would like to see engagement from can help increase representation from diverse groups of people. This helps develop an inclusive environment.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
GENDER EQUITY AUDIT- PAGE 15			

Support Mechanisms	Yes	No	If yes:
<p>Were councils engagement support mechanisms advertised during the engagement process?</p> <p><i>Such as transport assistance, accessibility assistance or childcare assistance.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Engagement Delivery	Yes	No	If yes:
<p>Were engagement activities held on different days?</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>Were engagement activities held at different times?</p> <p><i>It is important to hold engagement activities at multiple times to allow people with different schedules and commitments the opportunity to participate. If all methods are conducted at the same time council is at risk of engaging with the same demographics.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>Were any engagement methods held in locations that are familiar to the participants?</p> <p><i>This helps participants who may not have previously engaged feel more comfortable. The formal local government buildings may be confronting for new participants.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>Do data collection instruments record the gender of participants? And other key characteristic information?</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>Were participants updated on how their input shaped the decision making process?</p> <p><i>Participants are more likely to re-engage with council when they can see how their input affected the decision making process.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

<p>Was there a clear understanding of the level of influence that participants could have over the decision making process?</p> <p><i>Women are more inclined to engage when there is a transparent process in place.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>Were participants given the opportunity to provide feedback on the engagement method used?</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Gender considerations	Yes	No	If yes:
<p>Was a gender lens applied to any part of the community engagement process?</p> <p><i>This helps improve gender equity by getting council staff to actively consider any differences that may be experienced by men and women.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>Was a gender based organisation consulted during the community engagement process? Eg. A woman's organisation.</p> <p><i>These organisations have advanced insight into gendered issues. Use their skills in the same way a council uses other professional services.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Making Decisions	Yes	No	If yes:
<p>Was the data analysed from the perspective of each gender?</p> <p><i>Data should be analysed by gender for council to gain a better understanding of the different opinions and needs that men and women have.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

<p>Was the data analysed from the perspective of key populations in the community?</p> <p><i>Such as people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people of different age groups and people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>At the conclusion of the process, did council compare the levels of engagement between men and women?</p> <p><i>Effective decision making ensures all community members have the opportunity to voice their opinion.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>If there was a gender imbalance, were steps taken to rectify the levels of engagement?</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
After engagement	Yes	No	If Yes:
<p>Was gendered data used to inform the decision making process?</p> <p><i>Making decisions based on the differences in data helps to produce equitable outcomes for men and women. When the differences in opinions are ignored, outcomes can be produced that may negatively impact certain groups.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>Does work produced include imagery of women of varying abilities and backgrounds?</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<p>Does work produced include imagery that challenges gender stereotypes?</p> <p><i>Council can play an important role in reversing harmful gender stereotypes and roles that may exist.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

AUDIT 1.2

The questions in the table are used to audit governing community engagement practices, policies and procedures. The table below uses the phrase 'engagement framework' to refer to these resources. Ensuring these documents includes gender equitable considerations, is important for the process to operate effectively.

This activity should be completed by a member of the Audit Group or relevant community engagement staff. This information does not need to be input into the Excel Spreadsheet as it is not completed by multiple staff.

Table 6

Criteria	Meets		Evidence
	Criteria		
Improving Equality	Yes	No	If yes:
The engagement framework demonstrates a commitment to promoting gender equality when conducting community engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The engagement framework encourages council to strive for equal engagement between males and females	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The engagement framework demonstrates a commitment to the Victorian Local Government Women's Charter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The engagement framework specifies that equity and diversity should be considered when making decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Diversity	Yes	No	If yes:
The engagement framework identifies that different strategies are required to engage with harder to reach groups such as women, youth, people with disabilities and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

The engagement framework provides specific recommendations for engaging women and girls of varying abilities and backgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The engagement framework references the diversity of the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The engagement framework seeks to engage with a representative population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Equitable processes	Yes	No	If yes:
The engagement framework specifies that council will provide feedback to the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The engagement framework specifies that engagement methods should be inclusive, accessible and appropriate for the stakeholder	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The engagement framework encourages the use of a variety of communication mediums	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The engagement framework encourages the use of multiple engagement methods for each process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The engagement framework advises that budgets need to be allocated accordingly to conduct successful community engagement processes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The engagement framework emphasises the need to mitigate barriers to participation for harder to reach groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Data	Yes	No	If yes:
The engagement framework places an emphasis on analysing data by gender and other key characteristics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
The engagement framework stipulates that data collection instruments need to record gender and key demographic details where applicable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

REFERENCES

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2019). Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019- in brief, Canberra. Retrieved from https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/b180312b-27de-4cd9-b43e-16109e52f3d4/aihw-fdv4-FDSV-in-Australia-2019_in-brief.pdf.aspx?inline=true.

Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria. (2018). Intersectionality at Our Watch. Retrieved from <https://www.dvrcv.org.au/knowledge-centre/our-blog/intersectionality-our-watch>.

Engage Victoria. (2019).

Federation of Canadian Municipalities. (2004). Increasing women's participation in municipal decision-making processes: strategies for more inclusive Canadian communities. Ontario, Canada.

Gregory, J. (2007). A framework of consumer engagement in Australian health policy, Health Issues, vol. 91, pp.22-27.

IAP2 Australasia (2014). Certificate in Engagement, Engagement Essentials, Australia.

Our Watch, Overview: Our Watch Respectful Relationships Education Toolkit. Retrieved from

<https://www.ourwatch.org.au/getmedia/2eedc071-01f9-40b1-8efd-75a33c61aba8/RRE-toolkit-Overview-AA.pdf.aspx>.

Victorian Auditor-General's Office. (2015). Public Participation in Government Decision-making: Better practice guide. Retrieved from <https://www.audit.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/20150130-Public-Participation-BPG.pdf>.

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation. (2016). Applying a gender lens in the work place; Learnings from the Generating Equality and Respect program. Retrieved from <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/-/media/ResourceCentre/PublicationsandResources/PVAW/GEAR-tools/Applying-a-gender-lens-in-the-workplace>.

GENDER EQUITY

- SECTION B -

Community Engagement Toolkit



Horsham Rural City Council urban rural balance

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Gender Equity Community Engagement Audit Toolkit was developed by Hindmarsh Shire, Horsham Rural City, West Wimmera Shire and Yarriambiack Shire Council. Thanks to the Municipal Association of Victoria and Melissa Morris from Women's Health Grampians for their assistance. The Gender Equity Community Engagement Audit Toolkit is supported by the Victorian Government through the Free from Violence Local Government Grants program.

Council recognises the five Traditional Owner groups of this land: the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagulk, Jaadwa and Jadawadjali people.

While this resource refers to gender between men and women, girls and boys we acknowledge that some people's gender identities are not binary. We acknowledge that LGBTQI+ people also experience family violence.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS PG 1

KEY TERMS PG 3, 4

BACKGROUND PG 5

IMPROVING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PG 6

MAKING MEETINGS INCLUSIVE LIST PG 7, 8, 9

This checklist includes easy actions to trial in an upcoming meeting. It is the perfect start for an officer who wants to improve equity in a meeting to ensure all participants have an opportunity to voice their opinion. Requires no permanent changes.

TERMS OF REFERENCE CHECKLIST PG 9, 10, 11

This checklist will improve gender equity by modifying the Terms of Reference template. Try using this checklist in consultation with the Making Meetings Inclusive Checklist to improve the operation of any committee or group meetings.

PLANNING FOR ENGAGEMENT CHECKLIST PG 12, 13, 14

Use this checklist to better consider the needs of a diverse range of community members.

Improving gender equity during the planning stages can improve participation levels throughout the entire process. Council may benefit by incorporating elements of this checklist into an existing Community Engagement Policy.

CONDUCTING ENGAGEMENT CHECKLIST PG 16

An important tool to improve the operation of engagement methods and ensure that those present at engagement methods are effectively contributing to the decision making process. This is a core tool to create an inclusive environment.

REFLECTING ON ENGAGEMENT CHECKLIST PG 19

A great opportunity to identify where improvement is needed to produce better outcomes for the community.

PARTICIPANTS EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE PG 20

A questionnaire for anyone who participates in an engagement process. This evaluation tool can be helpful in identifying themes that often stop or limit community members from participating in community engagement. Can be used independently by any officer.

KEY TERMS

The following terms have been adapted from the *Our Watch Respectful Relationships Education Toolkit*.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT- is a planned process with the specific purpose of working across organisations, stakeholders and communities to shape the decisions or actions of the members of the community, stakeholders or organisation in relation to a problem, opportunity or outcome. (IAP2, 2014)

DRIVERS- are the underlying causes that are required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life, but which must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

GENDER- refers to the socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women; gender defines masculinity and femininity. Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time.

GENDER EQUALITY- involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between women and men and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality. It is about recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all and therefore often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities.

GENDER EQUITY- refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of rights, responsibilities and resources between women and men according to their respective needs.

KEY TERMS

GENDER DISAGGREGATED DATA- data on individuals broken down by gender. Allows for the measurement of differences between women and men on various social and economic dimensions. (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2019)

GENDER INEQUALITY- is the unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity and value afforded to women and men in a society due to prevailing gendered norms and structures.

GENDER ROLES- are the functions and responsibilities expected to be fulfilled by women and men, girls and boys within a given society.

GENDER STEREOTYPES- are simplistic assumptions about the behaviours, attributes, skills, differences and roles of women and men. These attributes are often perceived as natural or innate but are more often the result of women and men being socialised in different ways. Gender stereotypes can be positive, for example 'women are naturally caring and nurturing' or negative, for example 'men can't communicate their emotions very well', but they are usually incorrect and based on generalised assumptions about how we believe people will act, what people are good at or what people will like and dislike, simply because of their gender.

INTERSECTIONALITY- is about taking an approach that considers the complexity of a person's lived experience. It considers the multiple forms of discrimination that can be experienced as they relate to a person's identity (or many identities), and how systems and structures interact to reinforce the discrimination. (DVRCV, 2018)

PRIMARY PREVENTION- is about changing attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices to prevent an undesirable consequence.

SEX- refers to the biological and physical characteristics used to define humans as female or male.

BACKGROUND

One of the **key drivers of violence against women is gender inequality.**
(Our Watch, 2015) This toolkit aims to increase gender equality by:

- INCREASING THE DECISION MAKING CAPABILITIES OF WOMEN
- CHALLENGING GENDER STEREOTYPES AND ROLES
- CREATING RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE COMMUNITY

In areas where there is higher levels of equality, there is less domestic violence.
(Patty Kinnersly, 2019)

This resource has been developed as part of a primary prevention activity which aims to reduce the prevalence of domestic and family violence. Primary prevention is about changing attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices to prevent an undesirable consequence. (Our Watch Respectful Relationships Evaluation Toolkit)



FACTS:

- ➔ 1 woman is killed every 9 days and 1 man is killed every 29 days by a partner.
- ➔ 1 in 6 women have experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or previous partner since the age of 15.
- ➔ 1 in 16 men have experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or previous partner since the age of 15.
- ➔ Aboriginal adults are 32 times as likely to be hospitalised for family violence as non- Indigenous adults.
- ➔ People with a disability were 1.8 times as likely to have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from a partner in the previous year, compared with people without a disability
- ➔ People living in remote and very remote Australia are more than 24 times as likely to be hospitalised for domestic violence compared to those living in major cities.
(Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019)

IMPROVING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This toolkit features a range of checklists and activities that improve the community engagement process. The tools found in this section are not reliant on one another and can each be used separately. This allows council to improve their community engagement process in different ways, dependant on their needs. Information is provided before each tool to help identify whether it will benefit the relevant council.

SECTION B CAN BE USED BY:

-  Councils who have completed the audit found in Section A.
-  Councils who have not completed the audit but are interested in improving their engagement practices.

Throughout this resource, the phrase 'varying abilities and backgrounds' will appear. This is a prompt to consider the needs of a broad selection of the community.

PEOPLE OF VARYING ABILITIES AND BACKGROUNDS MAY INCLUDE:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Culturally and linguistically diverse people
- Older people
- People of different socio economic status
- People with disabilities
- Rural and regional communities
- Youth

SUGGESTION:

ESTABLISH AN 'ENGAGEMENT REGISTER' THAT ALLOWS WOMEN AND MEN OF VARYING ABILITIES AND BACKGROUNDS TO REGISTER THEIR INTEREST TO PARTICIPATE IN MUNICIPAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESSES. THIS ALLOWS COUNCIL TO INFORM ALL REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS OF FUTURE ENGAGEMENT PROCESSES.

MAKING MEETINGS INCLUSIVE

A study conducted by the American Political Science Review showed that women participated in discussions less than their equal share when they were a minority. (2012) Having women present is not enough, steps must be taken to ensure they are contributing to the decision making process.

In situations where a diverse group of people are present the loudest voice is often the only voice heard. The resource can be used to increase the participation of diverse groups of people in meetings.

It can be used by any officer who is facilitating a meeting and should be used as an ongoing improvement tool.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

1. Read through the inclusive actions that are located in the column on the left side of the table. Select one or two actions that align with the culture of the relevant council to trial. Do not trial every action within one single meeting.
2. Place a tick in the middle column when an action has been trialled.
3. The column on the right hand side of the table is used to evaluate the impact of the inclusive action at the meeting. This should be used to remind officers which actions worked well and which did not. When evaluating the effectiveness of the action consider whether there was:
 - Equal participation from men and women**
 - Beneficial discussions between members**
 - A diverse range of input**

In an ideal situation, all actions within this table would eventually be trialled and the **actions that had positive results would become a permanent fixture within meetings.**

MAKING MEETINGS INCLUSIVE LIST

INCLUSIVE ACTIONS	YES	EVALUATION
Agenda		
List agenda items as questions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative
Send out agendas at least a week before meeting.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative
Encourage members to prepare responses to the agenda. <i>Why? Assists members who may struggle to clearly articulate their thoughts when they are a minority.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative
Chair		
Regularly ask participants whether they agree with the comments or would like to add something. <i>Why? Some members may feel uncomfortable or struggle to interrupt conversations.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative
If appropriate, after a meeting send an email that encourages members to contribute any opinions or feedback that were not discussed in the meeting. <i>Why? Allows people to participate in a written capacity instead of verbal.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative
Participants		
Notify participants that it is ok not to attend meeting if the content is not relevant to them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative
Operation		
Assign different participants to record minutes for each agenda items. <i>Why? Requires all members to focus on listening and contributing at different points of the meeting.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative
Ensure enough time is allocated for each agenda item.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative
Have all participants spread out equally to ensure all members can be seen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative
Implement a round robin approach to allow everyone the opportunity to voice their opinion.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative

Present information at a meeting and then allow time for all members to consider the content. Discuss opinions at meeting.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative
Culture		
Create a code of conduct for the meeting with the members. Eg. Challenge the idea, not the person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative
If someone interrupts a participant speaking, encourage others to call them out.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative
Strive for unanimous decision making. <i>Why? Research shows that women participate more when there is unanimous decision making.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> Positive <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Negative

TIP: A GREAT WAY TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION LEVELS OF HARDER TO REACH GROUPS IS TO ORGANISE ACTIVITIES IN LOCATIONS THAT PARTICIPANTS FREQUENT THROUGH THEIR DAILY ACTIVITIES. THIS MAY BE AT A CAFE OR RECREATIONAL VENUE AND MAY HELP THEM TO FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE PROVIDING THEIR INPUT. WHEN DEVELOPING ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER HOW TO PROMOTE THE VOICES OF DIVERSE COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

TERMS OF REFERENCE CHECKLIST

A Terms of Reference (TOR) document defines all aspects of a project, committee or any similar collection of people who have agreed to work together to accomplish a shared goal. The document normally includes the purpose, objectives, membership, responsibilities and scope of the group. (World Bank, 2011)

The checklist can be used in two ways:

▶ When **developing** a Terms of Reference. Read through the checklist and attempt to include as many of the actions as possible. Complete the checklist to identify how many actions were included.

▶ As an **assessment** tool for an existing Terms of References. Complete the checklist and identify how many of the actions were present. If an equity element is included in the TOR document place a tick within 'yes', if it is not included place a tick within 'no'.



TERMS OF REFERENCE CHECKLIST

EQUITY ELEMENT	YES	NO
Membership		
Membership involves the inclusion of community members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The membership strives to achieve a gender balance of 40-40-20. A gender balance means that there is 40% representation from males and 40% from females. The remaining 20% can be occupied by either gender. <i>Why? Targets and quotas rapidly increase the representation of women. Without them it may take a very long time to achieve equality.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The membership seeks a diverse representation of participants. Such as people with disabilities or people of cultural backgrounds.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Selection		
Members are selected through an Expression of Interest process. <i>Why? This is a fair process that allows new participants to apply.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Expression of Interest is advertised through multiple mediums of communication.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The membership must be readvertised if the group continues past the original term. <i>Why? Changes in membership may have occurred that no longer support diversity.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Specialist Advice		
Consultants that provide specialist advice are made aware of councils aim to improve gender equality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Responsibilities		
Members have the opportunity to determine the schedule of meetings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Where relevant, schedule meetings in advance. <i>Why? This allows participants to organise their own schedules to ensure they can participate in other meetings. For example they may need to organise work commitments.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agendas are distributed at least one week prior.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Refreshments are provided during meal periods.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff responsible for documenting minutes are rotated.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The time length of meetings are adhered to.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participation and decision making may occur via telecommunications.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is the responsibility of the chair to allow members the opportunity to voice their opinion.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Operation		
Quorum aims to achieve a gender balance. <i>Why? Ensures that a gender balance is present when decision making occurs.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In the event that a quorum is not present, a vote will occur via email.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Code of conduct		
The Code of Conduct does not condone bullying, discrimination, sexism or sexual harassment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Membership will be terminated if the Code of Conduct is breached.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assisting participation		
Council has a range of support mechanisms in operation to assist members to participate. Such as assisting with the costs of transport or childcare.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CASE STUDY:

A local Council had 18 advisory committees established to engage with the community on a myriad of topics. Of the 18 committees, only 9 achieved a gender balance. A gender balance is considered to have occurred when there is at least 40% representation from females and 40% representation from males. The remaining 20% can be represented by any gender identity.

In total there was 131 members on the advisory committees. Of the 64 organisational/association representatives, 47 were male and 17 were female. The organisation/association representatives were normally held by positions of authority such as a president or manager. These types of positions are more likely to be held by a male than a female. This process was acting as a barrier to female participation in advisory committees and had largely left their voice unaccounted for. In comparison, of the 67 community members, 34 were male and 33 were female. This shows that women and girls are interested in participating in advisory committees.

To rectify this, council has modified the Terms of Reference to strive to achieve a gender balance when selecting membership. The Terms of Reference should also specify that membership should include positions for community members. To assist these changes, council will suggest that each organisation/association provide two representatives, of different gender identities when accepting applications.

PLANNING FOR ENGAGEMENT

TIP: WHEN PLANNING WHICH ENGAGEMENT METHODS TO USE, HAVE A DISCUSSION WITH SOME KEY INDIVIDUALS OF PARTICULAR GROUPS TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE METHOD IS APPROPRIATE. THIS MAY BE HELPFUL WHEN ENGAGING WITH DIVERSE GROUPS OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE PREVIOUSLY NOT BEEN INVOLVED WITHIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECISION MAKING. FOR EXAMPLE ABORIGINAL WOMEN MAY PREFER TO ENGAGE IN METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT SUCH AS STORYTELLING. (NATIONAL RURAL WOMEN'S COALITION, 2019)

Community engagement is an extensive process with numerous opportunities to perpetuate gender inequality. This is the 1st of 3 checklists that aim to improve gender equity throughout the community engagement process.

The actions found within the checklist are considerations that have been identified as ways that may increase participation from diverse groups. This is not an exhaustive list and should be used only as a guide in conjunction with existing community engagement policies and templates.

The checklist can be used in two ways:

▣▣▣➡ **During** the planning stages of a community engagement process. Read through the checklist and attempt to perform as many of the actions as possible. Identify the amount of actions that were performed and those that were not.

▣▣▣➡ As an assessment tool **after** the engagement process has occurred. Complete the checklist and identify how many of the actions were completed. Select actions that could be used for the next community engagement process to improve participation levels.

If an equity action has been completed tick 'yes', if it has not been completed then tick 'no'. If the action is not applicable for this process then tick 'NA'.



PLANNING FOR ENGAGEMENT CHECKLIST

EQUITY ACTIONS	YES	NO	NA
Process			
<p>Incorporate the views of both males and females in the design phase.</p> <p><i>Why? The unique experiences of men and women may identify issues previously not yet considered.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Ensure that community engagement processes do not occur at the same time as significant local activities or religious festivals. For example this might include school holidays or harvest if the area is part of a farming community.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Identify whether there are community events that council could conduct engagement activities at.</p> <p><i>Why? Events have the potential to attract a varied group of people who may be hard to engage with.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Identify whether there are other engagement processes that could be conducted together.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Allocate a budget to support the community engagement process.</p> <p><i>Why? An insufficient budget can negatively impact the engagement process.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Identify whether there are any cultural protocols that need to be conducted.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Operation			
<p>Conduct engagement methods on different days.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Conduct engagement methods at different times.</p> <p><i>Why? Assists people with different schedules to participate.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Advertise the engagement process using multiple mediums of communication.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Interpretation facilities are available for engagement methods.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Consider different strategies to engage with females and males from organisations within the community.</p> <p><i>Why? Males are more likely to hold positions of authority in organisations than females. Therefore engaging with females may require specific strategies.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Provide staff with gender based training.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People			
<p>Complete a stakeholder analysis that considers people of varying abilities and backgrounds.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Identify which stakeholders may be difficult to reach and develop strategies to engage with them.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Identify and contact potential champions from diverse community groups that may want to get involved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identify how this project, policy or procedure may impact men and women differently by applying a gender lens. www.whg.org.au has an excellent gender lens that can be used. <i>Why? Assists in identifying areas where gender inequalities may be present between males and females.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identify how this project, policy or procedure may impact people of varying abilities and backgrounds.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Location			
Ensure the location can be accessed by people with disabilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure the locations facilities can be accessed by people with disabilities. Eg toilets.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identify whether the location can be accessed by public transport.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identify whether there is a clear line of sight between the facility and parking. <i>Why? Helps to make people feel safe when walking to their car later in the evening or when they are alone.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Check that there are baby change facilities at the facility for all genders to use.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

INTERESTING:



AN OLDER PERSON'S REFERENCE GROUP HAD AN EQUAL AMOUNT OF MALE AND FEMALE PARTICIPANTS IN THEIR FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION. IN THE SECOND YEAR OF OPERATION, MEMBERS OF THE GROUP LEFT AND COUNCIL DID NOT READVERTISE FOR NEW MEMBERS. THIS RESULTED IN A GENDER IMBALANCE WITH MALES BEING UNDERREPRESENTED. THIS DEMONSTRATES THAT A GENDER BALANCE CAN DISAPPEAR QUICKLY UNLESS COUNCIL HAS SPECIFIC MECHANISMS IN PLACE TO MONITOR THE PARTICIPATION LEVELS.

CONDUCTING ENGAGEMENT

It is important that the practices used throughout the community engagement process assist all participants to contribute to their full capacity. People from diverse groups can benefit when council shows a commitment to removing barriers. This is the 2nd of 3 checklists that aim to improve gender equity throughout the community engagement process.

The actions found within the checklist are considerations that have been identified as ways that can increase participation from diverse groups. This is not an exhaustive list and should be used only as a guide.

THE CHECKLIST CAN BE USED IN TWO WAYS:

-  **Before** conducting any community engagement methods. Read through the checklist and attempt to implement as many of the actions as possible. Identify the amount of actions that were performed and those that were not.
-  As an assessment tool **after** the engagement process has occurred. Complete the checklist and identify how many of the actions were completed. Select actions that could be used for the next community engagement process to improve participation levels.

If an equity action has been completed tick '**yes**', if it has not been completed then tick '**no**'. If the action is not applicable for this process then tick '**NA**'.

CASE STUDY:

THE ISSUE OF SAFETY AT THE WALKING TRACK AROUND THE HORSHAM RACECOURSE WAS DISCUSSED AT AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING WITH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES. AT THE TIME THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE WAS MADE UP OF A NUMBER OF USER GROUPS AND ALL PRESENT WERE MALE. AN AUDIT USING THE CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN GUIDELINES WAS UNDERTAKEN BY TWO WOMEN, INCLUDING A COUNCIL OFFICER, ON A DARK NIGHT. A SUBSEQUENT ASSESSMENT WAS UNDERTAKE BY A FEMALE MEMBER OF VICTORIA POLICE.

THESE ASSESSMENTS IDENTIFIED A NUMBER OF AREAS WHERE SAFETY WAS A CONCERN AND ALSO SUGGESTED WAYS TO IMPROVE THE SAFETY OF THE SPACE. THESE INCLUDED AMENDING LIGHTING, REMOVING LOW SHRUBS THAT COULD BE POTENTIAL ENTRAPMENT POINTS AND ESTABLISHING AN OFF LEASH DOG PARK TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE USING THE SPACE.

..CASE STUDY CONTINUED:

THOSE UNDERTAKING THE AUDIT AGREED THAT THEY WOULD NOT USE THE WALKING TRACK AT NIGHT ON THEIR OWN. FREQUENTLY THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN WITHIN HORSHAM - 87.1% OF MALES AND 62.1% OF FEMALES FEELING SAFE WALKING AT NIGHT.

UNDERTAKING IMPROVEMENTS, AS A RESULT OF CONSIDERING THE DIFFERENT PERCEPTION OF SAFETY OF MEN AND WOMEN AND APPLYING A GENDER LENS WILL HOPEFULLY LEAD TO A SPACE THAT IS MORE ACCESSIBLE TO WOMEN IN PARTICULAR AND ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS - AND THEREFORE PROVIDES A MORE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO USE THE PUBLIC SPACE. (WOMEN'S HEALTH GRAMPIANS, 2019)

CONDUCTING ENGAGEMENT CHECKLIST

EQUITY ACTIONS	YES	NO	NA
Increasing Participation			
Consider the most appropriate engagement method for both males and females.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure multiple engagement methods are used for the engagement process. <i>Eg. Survey, Focus Group & Committee.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inform participants that they can move around during the engagement method. <i>Why? Participants with disabilities may struggle to stay in the same position for long periods of time. When people are comfortable they can better contribute.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure staff members of both genders are present at the engagement activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilise TXT messaging services when advertising engagement methods. <i>Why? This is an easy method to notify harder to reach groups of activities happening in the community.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide any engagement materials in Easy English.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intersectionality			
Ask questions that discuss intersectional experiences. <i>Why? Allows council to understand how a project, plan, procedure etc may negatively affect people with overlapping experiences and characteristics.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Food			
Provide food that caters for a selection of religious and dietary requirements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collecting Data			
Use data collection instruments that record the gender of participants.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Use data collection instruments that record other key demographic information of participants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Decision making			
Contact a gender based organisation for their input.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide background information to the community before the engagement process commences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inform participants about decisions that have already been made.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inform participants about what decisions they can influence. <i>Why? The opportunity to influence decisions and create change can alter the level of participation.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide participants with information about the next stage of the process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inform participants about how changes would affect different genders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide participants with information on how their input shaped the decision making process. <i>Why? This can help participants to relate their input to a tangible outcome.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Location			
Organise engagement methods at locations people incidentally attend. Eg shopping centres, libraries, post offices. <i>Why? Busy people may not have the time to engage outside of their normal schedule.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organise engagement methods in locations that are familiar to stakeholders. Eg. A neighbourhood house may be frequented by people with disabilities. <i>Why? Allows people to engage in a location they feel comfortable instead of a formal local government building.</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Specialist Advice			
Brief consultants of councils' commitment to improve gender equality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encourage consultants to challenge gender stereotypes in work they are performing for council.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

TIP: WHEN ADVERTISING ENGAGEMENT PROCESSES, TRY TARGETING ENGAGEMENT MATERIAL TO GROUPS OF THE COMMUNITY. THIS MAY INVOLVE SPECIFICALLY STATING WHO THE ORGANISATION WOULD LIKE TO SEE REPRESENTATION FROM. THIS SIGNALS TO THOSE PARTICULAR GROUPS THAT THEIR INPUT IS VALUED AND ACCEPTED WITHIN THE ORGANISATION. (ENGAGE VICTORIA)

REFLECTING ON ENGAGEMENT

As community engagement is a multi-faceted process, applying a gender lens can increase equality in a variety of different ways. The following checklist identifies actions to perform in the reflection stage. This stage in the process can identify areas for improvement as well as provide direct insight into the equitable operation of community engagement.

This is the final of 3 checklists that aim to improve gender equity throughout the community engagement process.

The actions found within the checklist are considerations that have been identified as ways that can increase participation from diverse groups. This is not an exhaustive list and should be used only as a guide.

THE CHECKLIST CAN BE USED IN TWO WAYS:

▶ As a reflection tool **after** the engagement process has occurred. Complete the checklist and identify how many of the actions were completed. Select actions to implement for the next community engagement process to improve participation levels.

If an equity action has been completed tick 'yes', if it has not been completed then tick 'no'. If the action is not applicable for this process then tick 'NA'.

REMEMBER:

A GENDER BALANCE OCCURS WHEN THE REPRESENTATION IS
**40% FEMALES, 40% MALES AND
 20% ANY GENDER.**

REFLECTING ON ENGAGEMENT CHECKLIST

EQUITY ACTIONS	YES	NO	NA
Diverse Engagement			
<p>Assess whether a gender balance of 40-40-20 had been achieved.</p> <p><i>Why? Important for council officers to have an understanding of 'who' they have engaged with. A gender imbalance can easily occur and efforts should be taken to rectify this.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identify whether those engaged reflect a representative population of the community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider whether council engaged with a group whose voice is often not heard.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Operation			
<p>Gender- disaggregated data was used to inform the decision making process.</p> <p><i>Why? Helps council to identify any different trends or needs between males and females.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Allow participants to provide feedback on the type of engagement method used.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Barriers			
Consider whether people of different genders experienced any barriers to participation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reflection			
<p>Share engagement learnings between council staff.</p> <p><i>Why? The organisation benefits from understanding what works and what does not work when engaging with people from diverse groups.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider whether there were any disrespectful behaviours displayed throughout engagement methods and whether the correct process was used to deal with it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Ensure imagery used throughout the process challenges gender stereotypes.</p> <p><i>Why? Images that do not challenge stereotypes may instead perpetuate them. When stereotypes are not challenged the same people continue to engage.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PARTICIPANTS EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

This evaluation tool can provide direct insight into themes that often stop or limit community members from participating in community engagement.

This questionnaire can be provided to any community members who have participated in an engagement process. It can be used for **one-off engagement** methods such as focus groups or for **ongoing methods** such as advisory committees.

Dependant on the results of the survey, the relevant officer may need to identify actions to improve the operation of the engagement method.

It is important to include Councils privacy statement in this survey. This will ensure participants feel comfortable disclosing personal information about themselves.

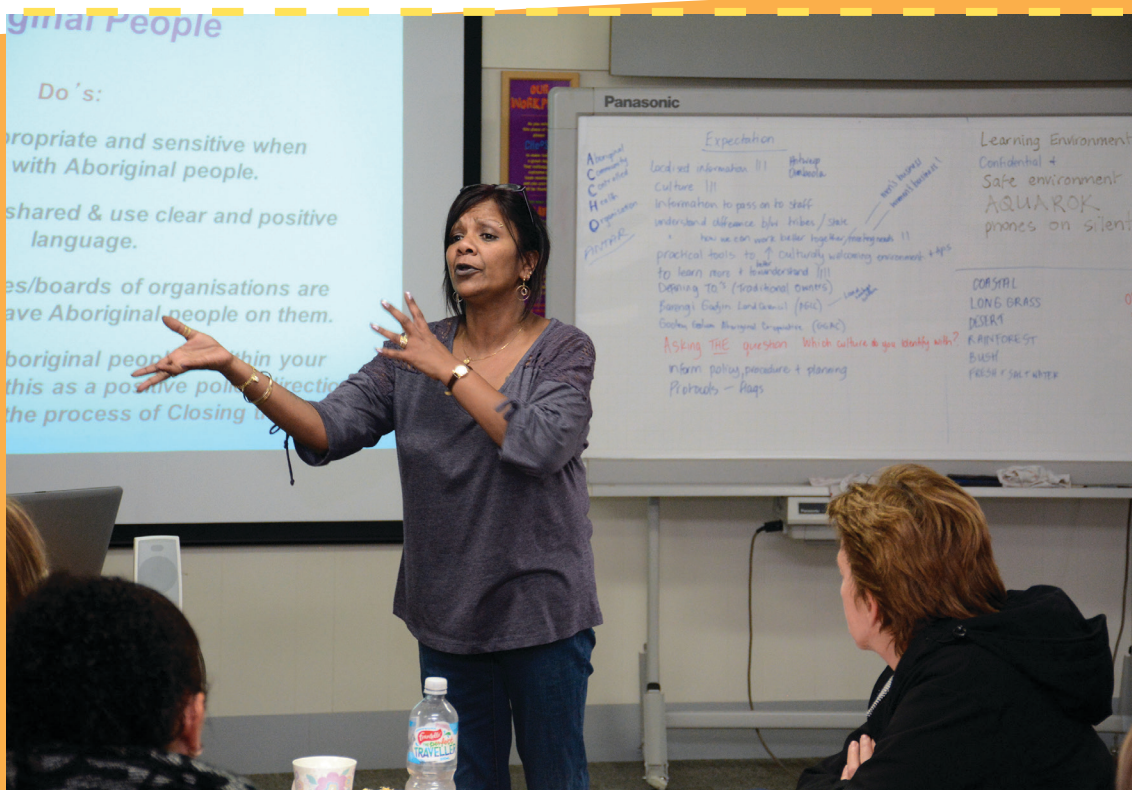


Photo Credit: Peter Miller

PARTICIPANT'S EVALUATION FORM

For Community Engagement Methods

Engagement Process: *[council staff to identify]*

Method of Engagement: *[council staff to identify]*

GENDER	<input type="checkbox"/> Male
	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender Diverse

AGE	<input type="checkbox"/> 5-14 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 years	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
	<input type="checkbox"/> 15-24 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 75-84 years	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 85-94 years	

Council is committed to ensuring that any decisions made are based on the needs of its diverse community. To do this we need to know more about you.

ARE YOU:	<input type="checkbox"/> A person with a disability
	<input type="checkbox"/> A person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
	<input type="checkbox"/> A recent immigrant or refugee
	<input type="checkbox"/> A person with a culturally and linguistically background

QUESTIONS	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE
Personal Evaluation			
I was engaged during the session	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had the opportunity to meaningfully participate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt comfortable to contribute my opinion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel fatigued from community engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understood my decision making role	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Location			
The facility was safe and accessible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The facility met my needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participants			
All participants acted honestly and treated everyone with respect	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There was equal input from males and females	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council			
Council attempts to engage with underrepresented members of the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council values the opinions of males and females equally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council has supports in place that encourage a diverse selection of people to participate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council ensures that women and girls are involved when decisions are being made	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The facilitator/chair has the skills to ensure all members have the opportunity to voice their opinion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engagement			
This method of engagement was appropriate for this issue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would participate again	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Any additional comments:

REFERENCES

- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2019). Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019- in brief, Canberra. Retrieved from https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/b180312b-27de-4cd9-b43e-16109e52f3d4/aihw-fdv4-FDSV-in-Australia-2019_in-brief.pdf.aspx?inline=true.
- Brigham Young University (2012). Women speak less when they're outnumbered. Science Daily. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/09/120918121257.htm>.
- City of Whittlesea. (2017). Gender Equity in Design Guidelines. Retrieved from https://www.mav.asn.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/7306/Whittlesea-City-Council-Gender-Equity-in-Design-Guidelines.pdf
- Craig, J & Sherif, C. (1986). The Effectiveness of men and women in problem solving groups as a function of gender composition. Sex Roles, pp.453-66.
- Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (2018). Intersectionality at Our Watch. Retrieved from <https://www.dvrcv.org.au/knowledge-centre/our-blog/intersectionality-our-watch>.
- Dubin, H. (2019). How to counteract 3 types of bias and run inclusive meetings. Worklife. Retrieved from <https://www.atlassian.com/blog/teamwork/how-to-run-inclusive-meetings>.
- Dunn, M. (2019). CORE Wimmera Community of Practice, Horsham. 8 August, 2019.
- Engage Victoria. (2019). European Institute for Gender Equality (2019). Sex-disaggregated data. Retrieved from <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/methods-tools/sex-disaggregated-data>.
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities. (2004). Increasing women's participation in municipal decision-making processes: strategies for more inclusive Canadian communities. Ontario, Canada.
- IAP2 Australasia. (2014). Certificate in Engagement, Engagement Essentials, Australia.
- IAP 2 Australasia. (2019). Leotta, G. 23 April.
- Johnson, R & Schulman, G. (1989). Gender-role composition and role entrapment in decision making groups. Gender and Society, pp. 355-72.
- Karpowitz, C, Mendelberg, T & Shaker, L. (2012). Gender inequality in deliberative participation. American Political Science Review, 1-15. Retrieved from <https://www.bu.edu/wgs/files/2014/12/Karpowitz-et-al.-2012.pdf>.
- Kinnersly, P. (2019). Public Health Prevention Conference, Melbourne, 13 June, 2019.
- Local Government Act 1989 (Vic) s.3D (Austl.).
- Moses, M & Quaizon, R (2010). Best Practice Guide for leadership programs for immigrant and refugee women, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, Melbourne (MCWH), Retrieved from

REFERENCES

http://www.mcwh.com.au/downloads/MCWH_PACE_BestPracticeGuide_.pdf.

Moses, M & Quaizon, R. (2010). Participate, Advocate, Communicate, Engage: a leadership project for immigrant and refugee women, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, Melbourne (MCWH), Retrieved from http://www.mcwh.com.au/downloads/PACE/PACE_%20Project_Full_%20Report_Final.pdf.

National Rural Women's Coalition, First Nation Women's Engagement Strategy, Retrieved from https://www.nrwc.com.au/images/workshops/First-Nation-Womens-Engagement-Strategy_NRWC_FINAL-FINAL.pdf.

Our Watch, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and Vic Health (2015). Change the Story: a shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia. Melbourne, Australia. Retrieved from <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/getmedia/0aa0109b-6b03-43f2-85fe-a9f5ec92ae4e/Change-the-story-framework-prevent-violence-women-children-AA-new.pdf.aspx>.

Our Watch, Overview: Our Watch Respectful Relationships Education Toolkit. Retrieved from <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/getmedia/2eedc071-01f9-40b1-8efd-75a33c61aba8/RRE-toolkit-Overview-AA.pdf.aspx>.

Queensland Government Office for Women. (2018). Gender Analysis Toolkit. Retrieved from <https://www.csyw.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/women/gender-analysis-toolkit/gender-analysis-toolkit.pdf>.

[gov.au/resources/dcsyw/women/gender-analysis-toolkit/gender-analysis-toolkit.pdf](https://www.csyw.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/women/gender-analysis-toolkit/gender-analysis-toolkit.pdf).

Victorian Auditor-General. (2017). Public Participation and Community Engagement: Local Government Sector, Victorian Auditor-General's Report. Retrieved from https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/file_uploads/VAGO_PP-Local-Gov_qQN5QyHk.pdf.

Victorian Auditor-General's Office. (2015). Public Participation in Government Decision-making: Better practice guide. Retrieved from <https://www.audit.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/20150130-Public-Participation-BPG.pdf>.

Women with Disabilities. (2019) Oldfield, J Bridget Jolley, B & Mattiazo, N. 7 May.

World Bank. (2011). Writing terms of reference for an evaluation: a how to guide. Washington, DC. Retrieved from https://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTEVACAPDEV/Resources/ecd_writing_TORs.pdf.

Yarra Ranges Council. (2018). Creating a Place for Women in sport. Retrieved from <http://www.knox.vic.gov.au/Files/Leisure/SelfAssessment.pdf>.



Community Engagement Data Report

Gender Equity in Community Engagement Project

Notes

Community Engagement Data

This report has been prepared by the Gender Equity Officer for Horsham Rural City Council. This report has been made possible by each department contributing their recent data on engagement methods and advisory committees.

Gender Equity in Community Engagement builds on the Act@Work program that is already implemented at Horsham Rural City Council, West Wimmera Shire Council, Hindmarsh Shire Council and Yarriambiack Shire Council. This project arises from the *Free from Violence* Local Government Grants Program.

The project aims to increase participation by women and girls of varying backgrounds and abilities, in community engagement. To create equitable community engagement methods, it is necessary to determine what the current engagement levels by women and girls depict at Horsham Rural City Council. The outcome of this data will guide the future objectives for this project.

This report will determine what types of engagement methods are currently being used by Horsham Rural City Council and identify whether data is being recorded in a gendered manner. If adequate data has been recorded at each local government association the report will depict the level of representation by females and males in advisory committees and various engagement methods.

Summary

This project aims to ensure community engagement methods are equitable in a bid to increase participation by women and girls. Increasing participation will assist in achieving gender equality. Community engagement should aim to consult an equal balance of genders, of varying backgrounds and abilities. This would ensure that decisions made are representative of the diverse community that make up Horsham Rural City.

The intent of this report was to identify the current participation levels of community engagement at Horsham Rural City Council. The ideal level of engagement between males and females was 50-50 or 40-40-20 when applicable. It is apparent from the amount of engagement performed by HRCC that it is important to the organisation that decisions made are representative of the community. When all data was combined a relatively equal balance was achieved between males and females, this is very positive. Overall females engaged slightly more. It is more important to achieve a gender balance within each method of community engagement to ensure that the outcomes of the consultation benefit all genders.

The generic methods of community engagement are being used such as surveys, advisory committees and project groups. Engagement methods used within the project department used some alternative methods of engagement such as Facebook Q&A's, Bus Trips, Community BBQ's and Listening Posts. There is an opportunity for HRCC to introduce new methods of engagement into their portfolio.

Advisory committees and project groups account for a large proportion of the community engagement that occurs at HRCC. Females do not achieve a 40% representation within advisory committees. The data also showed that accepting organisational representatives as members was a barrier for women to participate. In comparison project groups achieved participation levels of 57% for females. Methods will be identified to mitigate barriers to participation within the Terms of Reference.

Engagement that involved participation from community organisations repeatedly resulted in females being underrepresented. Changes can be implemented to encourage female participation from community organisations. Engagement regarding sporting groups continuously saw low participation from females. Engagement that involved low levels of commitment, generally saw high levels of participation from females. Low commitment engagement involved surveys, Facebook, newsletters and the website.

The Council Facebook page had a high following from female community members. However males and females both engage with the Facebook page at very positive rates.

Males were underrepresented when engagement occurred via technology or when the topic related to the 'arts'. Changes will be suggested to encourage participation from these underrepresented groups.

Collecting community engagement data has demonstrated that currently the demographics of participants are not being recorded. Numerous assumptions were made about the gender of participants to draw conclusions for this report. Although a Community Engagement procedure exists, it appears very few staff follow it. If they did, there would be ample opportunities to consolidate engagement procedures, thus producing better results for the community and the organisation.

Table of Contents

Title Page.....	1
Notes	2
Summary	3
Introduction.....	6
Advisory Committees.....	7
Steering Committee	10
Surveys	10
Written Submissions	12
Facebook.....	12
Information Session	14
Website	14
Budget.....	15
Projects	18
Horsham Town Hall	31
Conclusion.....	32
References	36

Introduction

Gender inequality is the driver for violence against women. Change the Story is a shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia. Promoting women's independence & decision making has been identified as an action within this framework to achieve gender equality. (OurWatch 2015, p.5) There is not a universally defined definition of community engagement, however the following definition by Alison Bradford from the University of Wollongong seems most appropriate for this project. "Community engagement refers to the processes by which public authorities provide opportunities for the community to participate in and influence government decision making." (Bradford 2016, p. iv) As council regularly interacts with the community they have a large opportunity to create an equitable platform for women to participate in decision making. (The Local Government Listen, Learn and Lead Gender Equity Program Guide, Fact Sheet 5)

'Gender Equity in Community Engagement' is a primary prevention strategy that aims to modify community engagement methods to advance gender equity for local government. The *Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)* states that the 'role of a Council includes acting as a representative government by taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision making.' (Local Government Act 1989, p.20) Councils make numerous decisions of varying degrees that have the ability to impact the community. Community engagement provides the community the opportunity to contribute to the decision making process. This increases the likelihood that decisions made are based on informed and representative views. (Victorian Auditor-General's Report, p.1) If local government is not engaging with a diverse representation of their community, then they are not adequately fulfilling their role.

Reviewing data will identify the current condition of women and girls participation within community engagement. These levels of engagement will be important to measure future changes. From this data each Council will have an overall understanding of which community engagement methods have seen higher participation from each gender. These methods will be analysed to identify successful elements that increase participation and identify barriers that limit participation. In a following report, recommendations will be provided that aim to minimise and remove barriers to participation for underrepresented populations.

As of 2016 the population of Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) is estimated to be 19,642. There are 10,067 females and 9,576 males. (ABS 2016) Females represent more than 50% of the population. To aim for an equal gender representation of 50-50 when conducting community engagement is representative of the population demographics. Participating in community engagement is a voluntary method and therefore may not appeal to demographics of the community. The 40-40-20 target ensures that both females and males must have a minimum participation of 40% each. The remaining 20% can involve either gender and allows for flexibility. This target was implemented by the Australian Government. (Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Report 2012-2013, p.6) Throughout this report 50-50 will be the ideal target but as this is not always achievable 40-40-20 will be applied.

Communities elect councillors to represent their interests at the local government level. Within Horsham Rural City Council 5 males and 2 females have been elected. These 7 councillors are the face of Council and often find themselves engaging with the community. This membership of councillors does not achieve a gender balance of 60-40. If the community does not see women as councillors and decision makers, then women within the community cannot envision themselves participating in community engagement.

As the sample of data was often small, not recorded accurately or not recorded at all, the views expressed are not representative of the community. Instead, the following data should only be used as insight into community engagement at Horsham Rural City Council.

Advisory Committees

Figure 1 shows the gender balance of HRCC Advisory Committees. Overall females are underrepresented on advisory committees. A gender balance was not achieved. The Terms of Reference states that Council employees are ex-officio in nature and do not have voting powers, therefore their gender has not been included for this dataset.

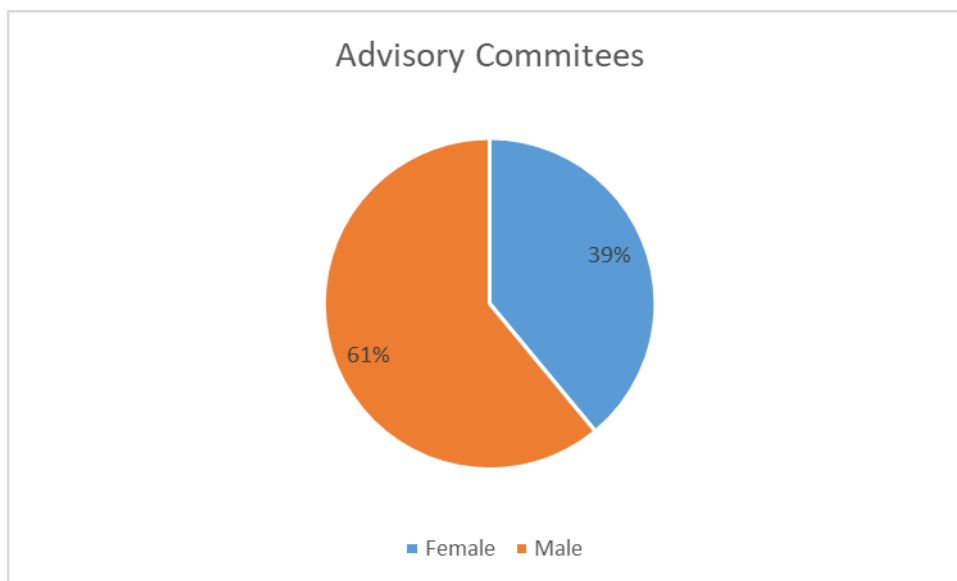


Figure 1: Overall gender balance of members on HRCC Advisory Committees

Figure 2 shows the gender balance of the 18 advisory committees. A gender balance of 50-50 is achieved on 2 committees. These are the Aboriginal and Tidy Towns Advisory Committees. A gender balance of 40-40-20 is achieved on 8 advisory committees. These are the Aboriginal, Bicycle, Domestic Animal Management, Haven Recreation, Tidy Towns, Rates Strategy, Sunnyside and Tourism Advisory Committee. Females achieve a 40% representation on 9 committees. There is no female representation on the Horsham Aerodrome Advisory Committee. There are 3 committees that have only one female representative. On 2 of these 3 committees, that female is a councillor. Without these inclusions there would be no female representation altogether. Males achieve a 40% representation on 15 of the

committees. The 3 committees that males do not achieve 40% representation on are the Domestic Animal Management, Horsham Regional Art Gallery and Public Art Advisory Committee. There is one committee where there is one male representative who is a community member.

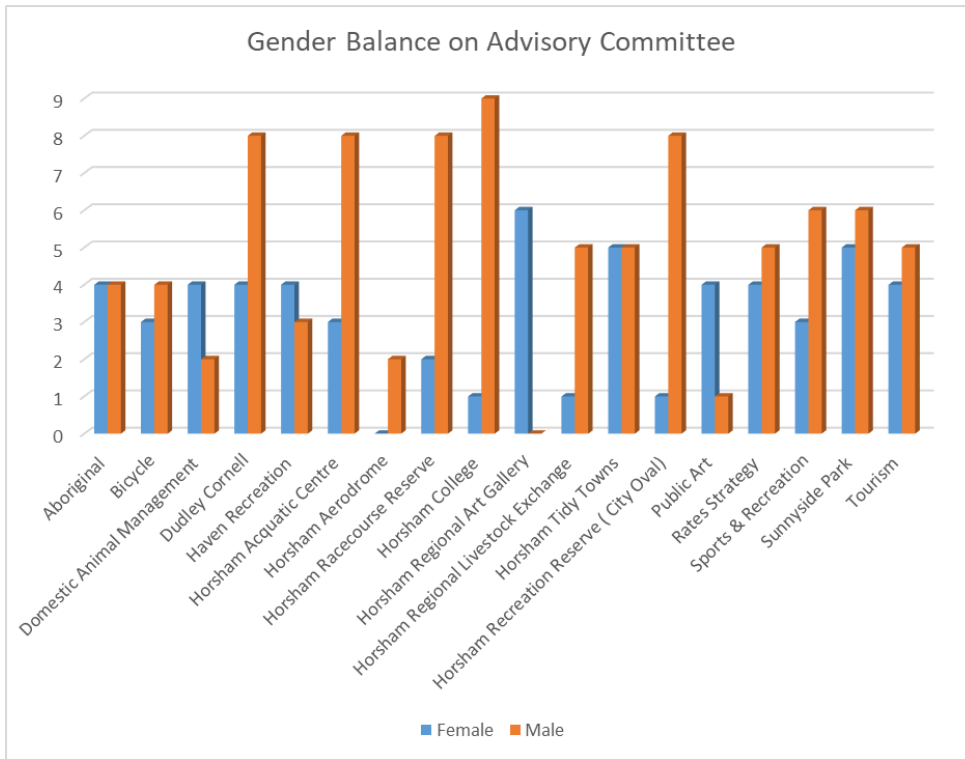


Figure 2: Comparison of the genders of members on HRCC Advisory Committees

The Terms of Reference specifies that advisory committees should be made up of community members and organisation/ association representatives. In ten of the eighteen advisory groups, the membership was mostly held by organisation or association representatives. For example these positions would be held by local sporting groups or businesses. This membership balance is demonstrated in Figure 3. To obtain accurate data, the gender of the Councillor was removed from the following data.

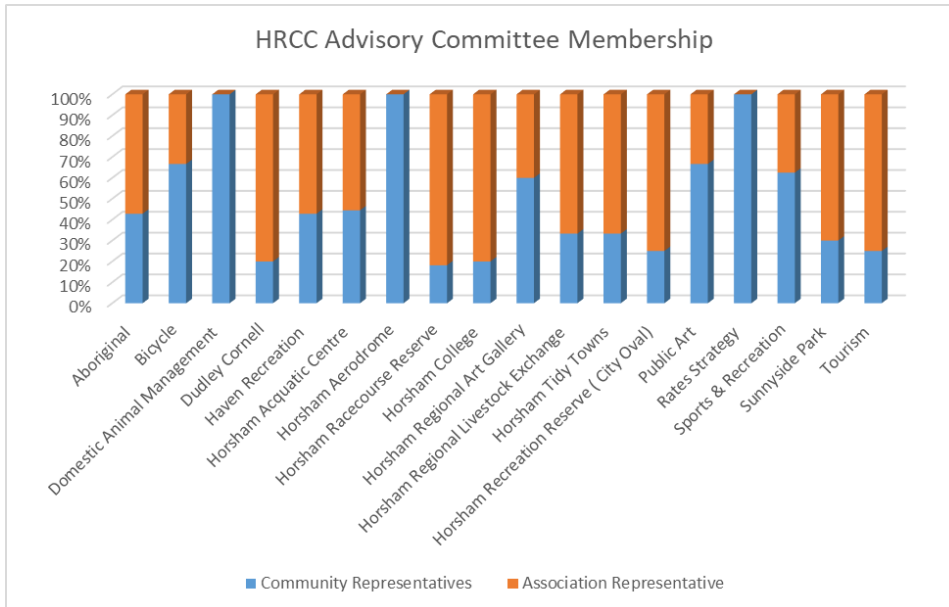


Figure 3: Percentage of community representatives and association representatives on HRCC Advisory Committees

It is important for these organisations to be represented on Advisory Committee’s as they are directly involved in the area of interest and generally add a lot of benefit to the committee. The organisation representatives are typically members that hold a position of leadership or authority. These roles are more often than not held by males. There are 64 association members on advisory committees at HRCC.

Figure 4 demonstrates the gender composition of community and association representatives. Of the 64 association representatives, 47 were male and 17 were female. This does not achieve a gender balance. The representation for males is more than double that for females. In comparison, of 67 community members, 34 were male and 33 were female. This is an ideal gender balance that achieves the 50-50, given there are an odd number of representatives.

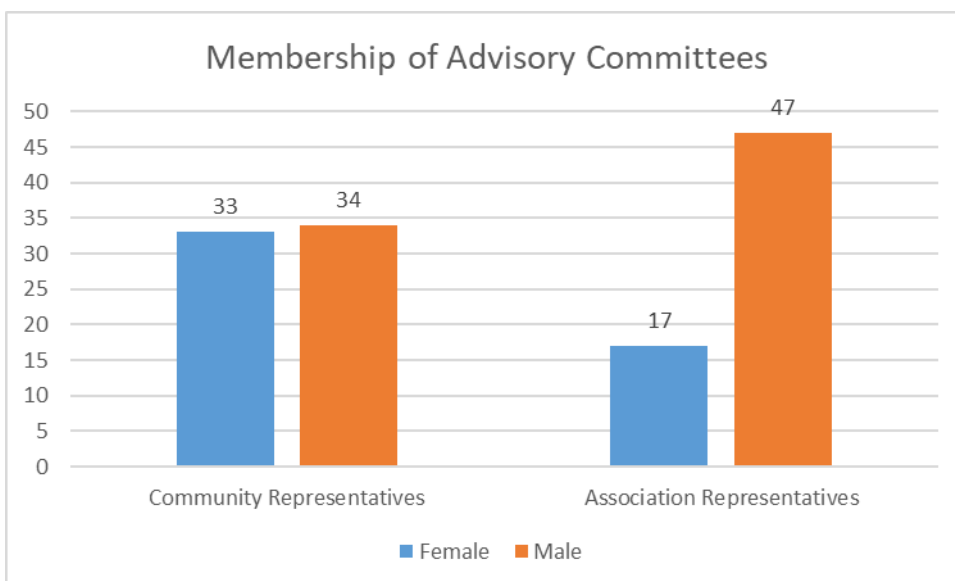


Figure 4: Gender balance of Community Representatives and Association Representatives on HRCC Advisory Committees.

Steering Committee

This committee achieved an ideal gender balance. 5 of the 10 positions were held by industry representatives and the other five were community representatives. Figure 5 shows this committee achieves a gender balance.

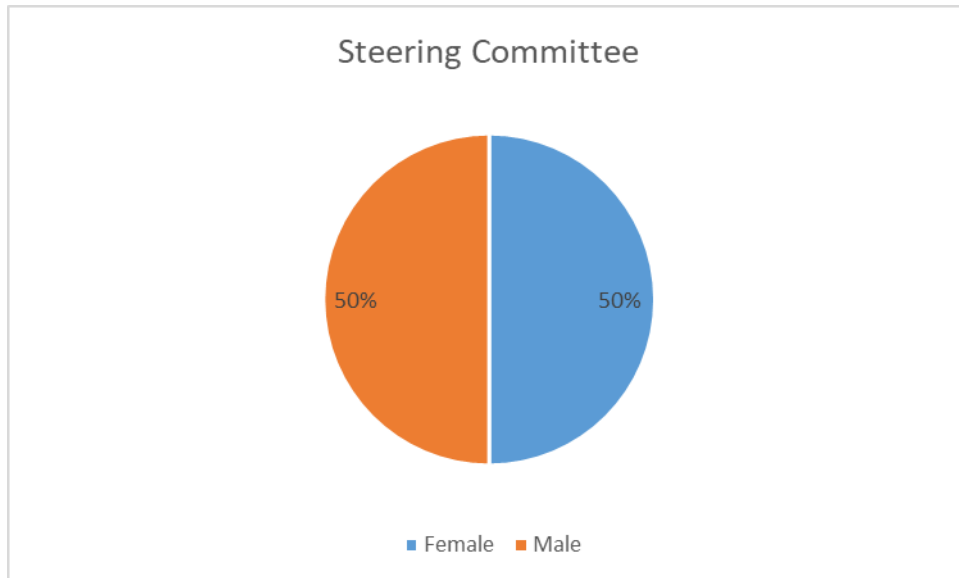


Figure 5: Gender balance of the participants on the Waste Strategy Steering Committee

Surveys

In the last two years, HRCC have conducted sixteen surveys via digital means. Of these 16, only 3 had required participants to record their gender. Other identification methods such as age, demographic, culture, disability were also very limited.

Overall 254 females and 187 males participated in the 3 surveys. As shown in Figure 6, this does not achieve a gender balance of 50-50. It does achieve a gender balance of 40-40-20.

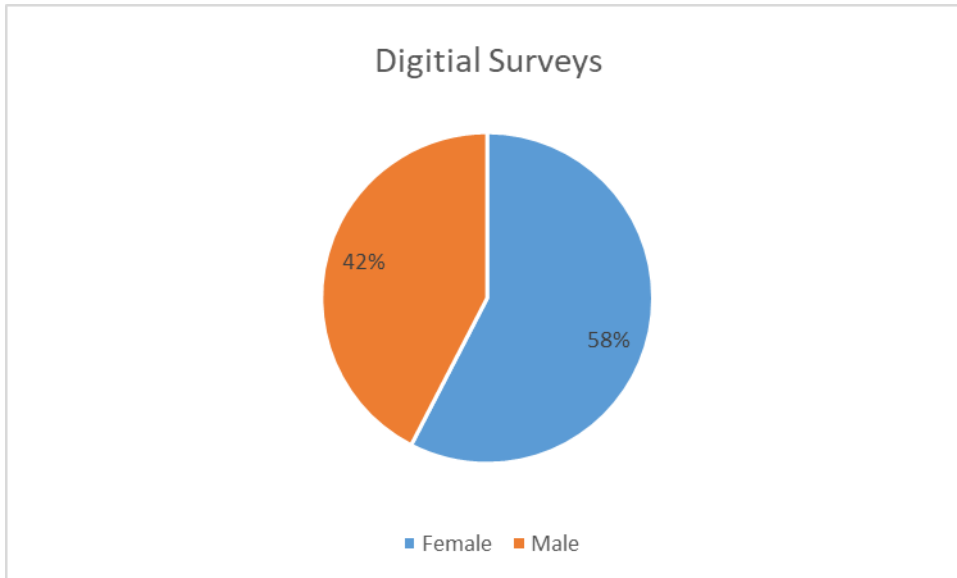


Figure 6: Overall gender balance of participants who completed digital surveys

Figure 7 shows the gender composition of the 3 surveys that were completed. The 'Rates Strategy Review' achieved a gender balance of 40-40-20. The 'Public Safety Rail Corridor' achieved a 40-40-20. 'How Healthy and Happy is your community' did not achieve a gender balance of 40-40-20. Males were very underrepresented via this method of engagement. This data shows that both males and females use surveys, however the topic of the survey can produce different levels of participation.

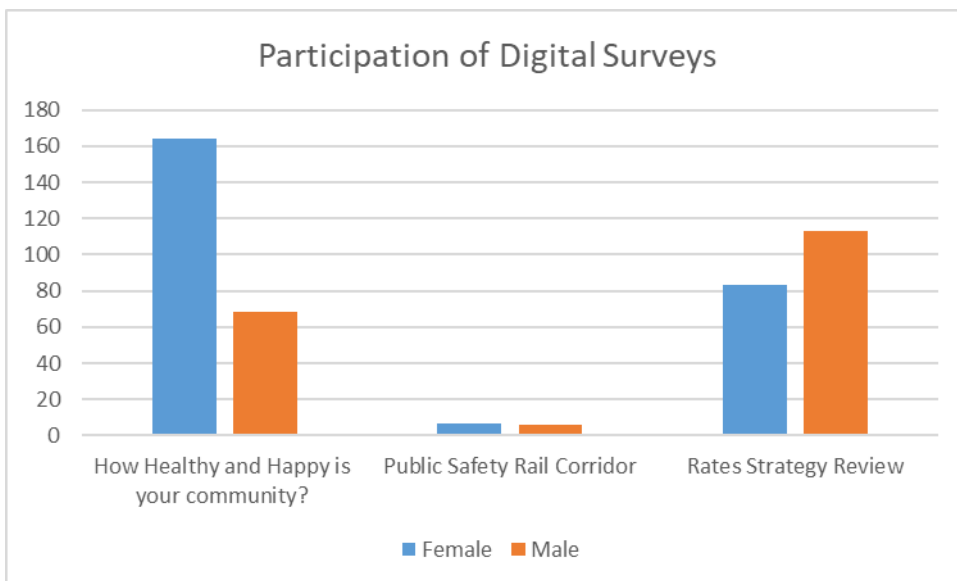


Figure 7: Comparison of the genders who completed digital surveys

1313 community members completed the other 13 surveys that did not record the participant's gender. These results have been used to make decisions for the community. As certain characteristics are missing from the data it is hard to determine whether the results are representative of the diverse community.

Written Submissions

6 questions were posed to the community in regards to the Rates Strategy. 35 written submissions were received in response. The gender of 30 participants was able to be identified. Figure 8 shows that this form of engagement did not achieve a gender balance. Females were underrepresented.

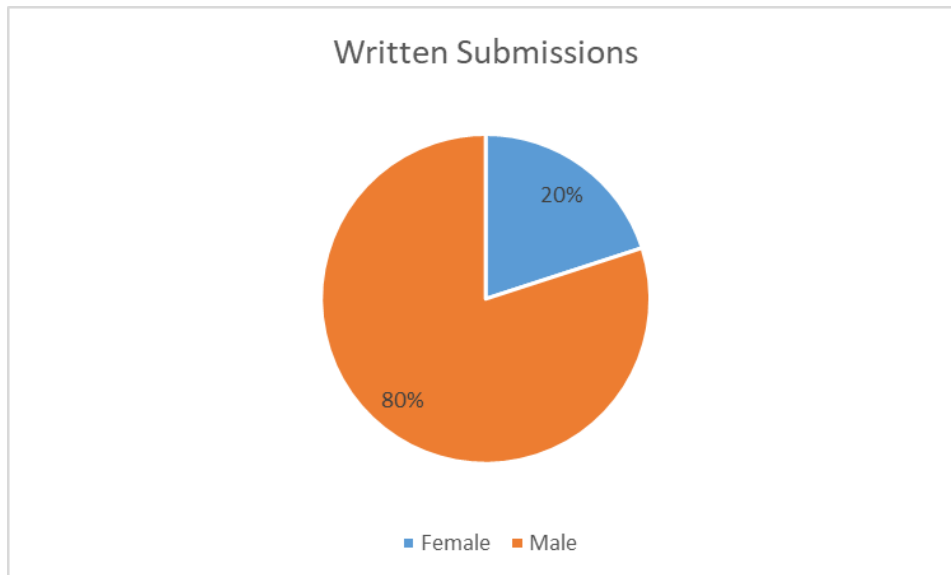


Figure 8: Gender balance of the participants who completed written submissions

Previously the rates strategy created implications for a particular industry. This industry is heavily saturated by males. However there is no reason why women should not be giving their opinions on this topic.

Facebook

HRCC has a large amount of Facebook followers and uses the platform to actively engage with the community. The following data occurred over the last six months. Currently there are 3,162 followers. It can be seen in Figure 9 that there has been a continual increase in the amount of followers since September 2018.

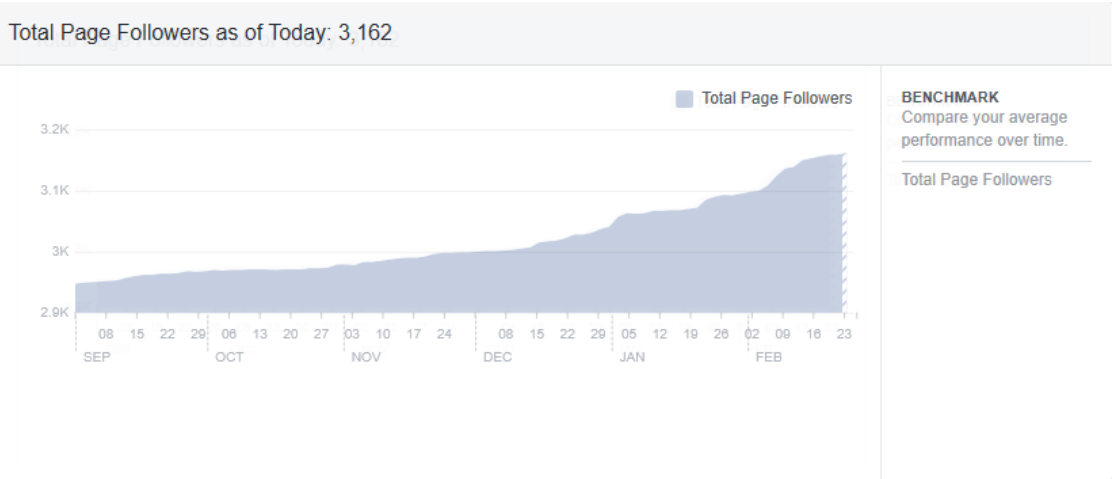


Figure 9: Total followers of HRCC Facebook

Of the 3,162 followers, 71% are females and 28% are males. Respectively 2,213 and 949. This does not achieve a gender balance. Males are underrepresented as shown in Figure 10.

Aggregated demographic data about the people who like your Page based on the age and gender information they provide in their user profiles. This number is an estimate.

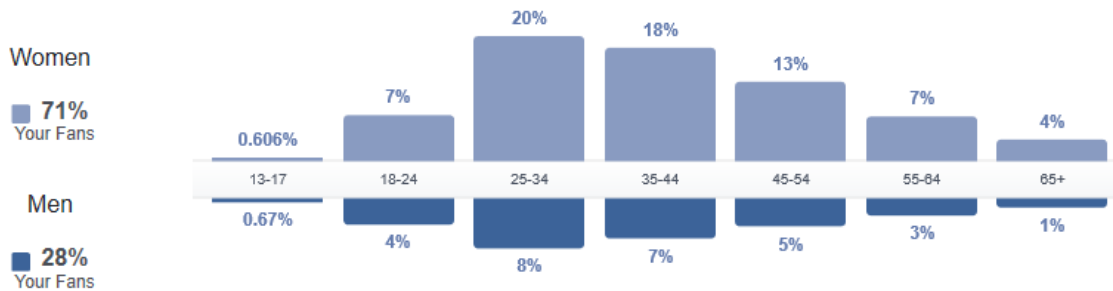


Figure 10: Gender balance of HRCC Facebook followers

Although there are 1,262 more females than men, the engagement levels are balanced. In this instance 'engagement' involves liking, sharing and commenting on the content of HRCC. Although there are drastically less male followers than females, they are engaging with the content on HRCC's Facebook page just as often. This may suggest that there are perceived barriers stopping women from voicing their opinion online. This trend is different from the other councils Facebook data where females both follow and engage with council more than males.

The number of People Talking About the Page by user age and gender. This number is an estimate.

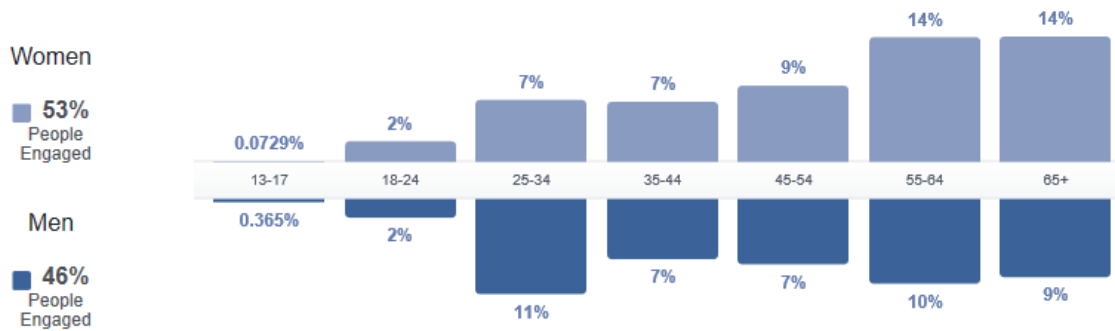


Figure 11: Gender balance of HRCC followers who are engaging with the Facebook account

Information Session

An information session was held to update HRCC volunteers on the new legislative requirements. It is unknown how many people attended the meeting as the attendance sheets from the Horsham Town Hall cannot be shared with Horsham Rural City Council due to privacy.

One question that was posed to the group was- ‘How would you like to be rewarded for your efforts?’ When this question was asked there was lots of talking amongst the group and attempts to ask questions to the presenter. A couple of people were raising hands or half standing to get the attention of the presenter. To ensure that all voices were heard the presenter handed out sticky notes to all participants and asked them to put down how they wanted to be rewarded. This allowed all members to voice their opinion on the topic.

Website

Figure 12 data demonstrates the gender of the users who use the Horsham Rural City Council website. This method achieves a gender balance of 40-40-20. In Figure 13 the highest age demographic that uses the website the most (for both genders) are 25-34 year olds.

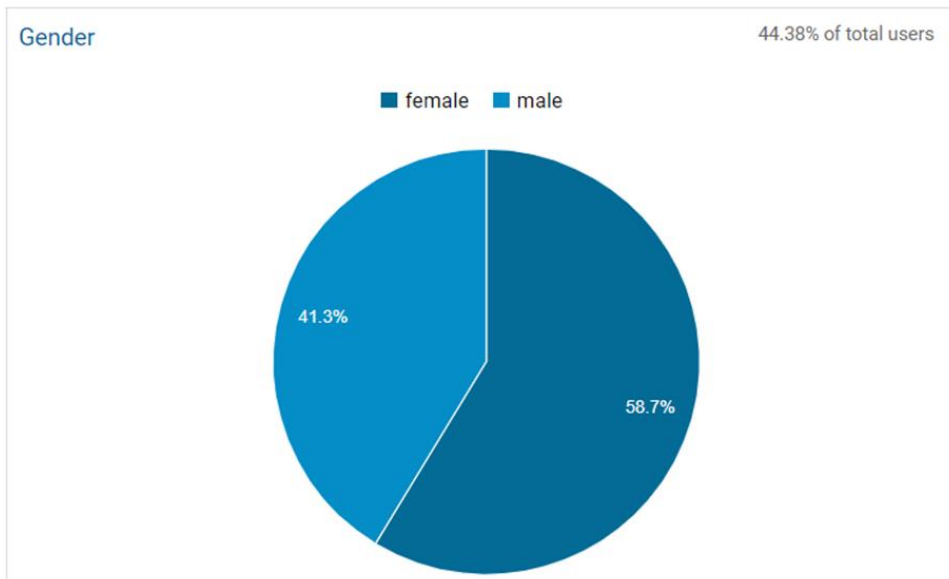


Figure 12: Gender of HRCC website users

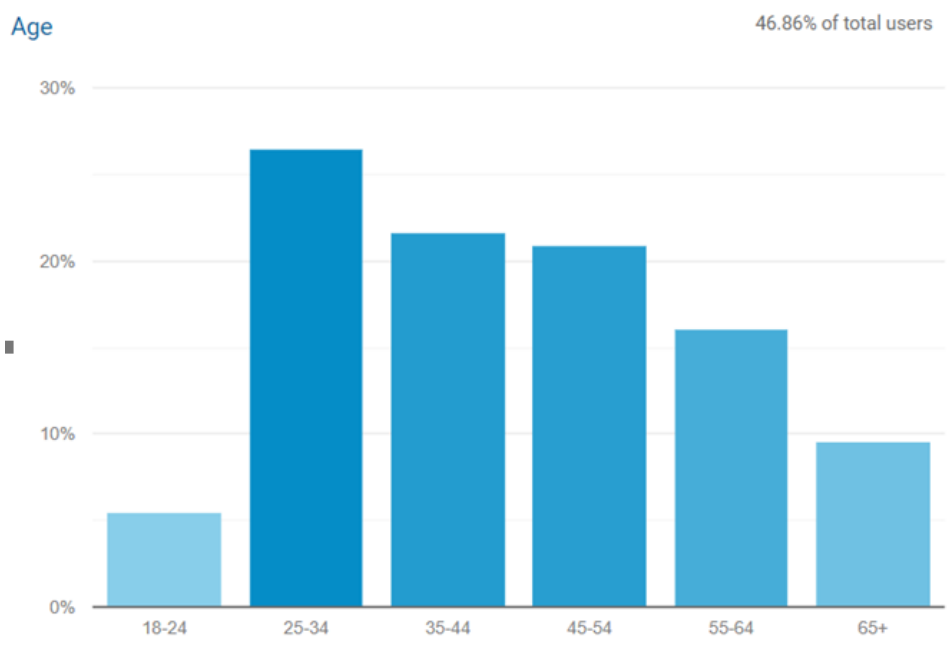


Figure 13: Age demographic of HRCC website users

Budget

5 different methods were used to obtain the communities opinions on the budget for last financial year. Figure 14 shows that when all the data was combined a 40-40-20 gender balance was achieved. Females engaged slightly more than males. In 2 methods, females did not engage at all. However 1 method of engagement saw large participation rates from females. This particular community engagement demonstrates the importance of communicating via different methods.

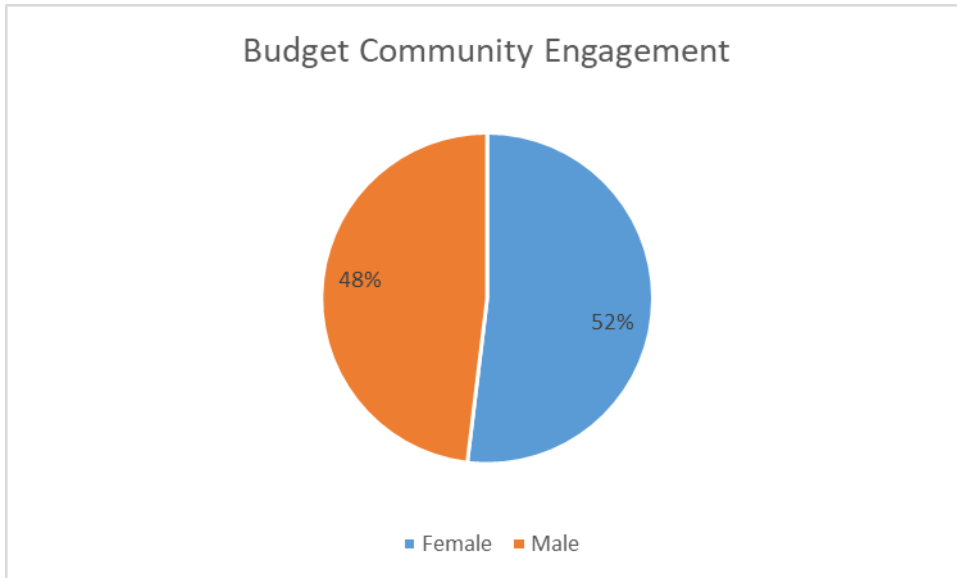


Figure 14: Gender balance of participants for community engagement on the budget

Formal Submission

4 submissions were received. 1 female and 2 males submitted a submission. The gender of 1 participant is unknown.

Facebook Q&A

HRCC used Facebook to hold a video Q&A session. The community could comment on the live video and then the Councillors would directly respond. This was a paid post that targeted specific demographics of the public, based on their interest base. It is unknown which demographics were targeted. This method of community engagement did not achieve a gender balance. Males were underrepresented.

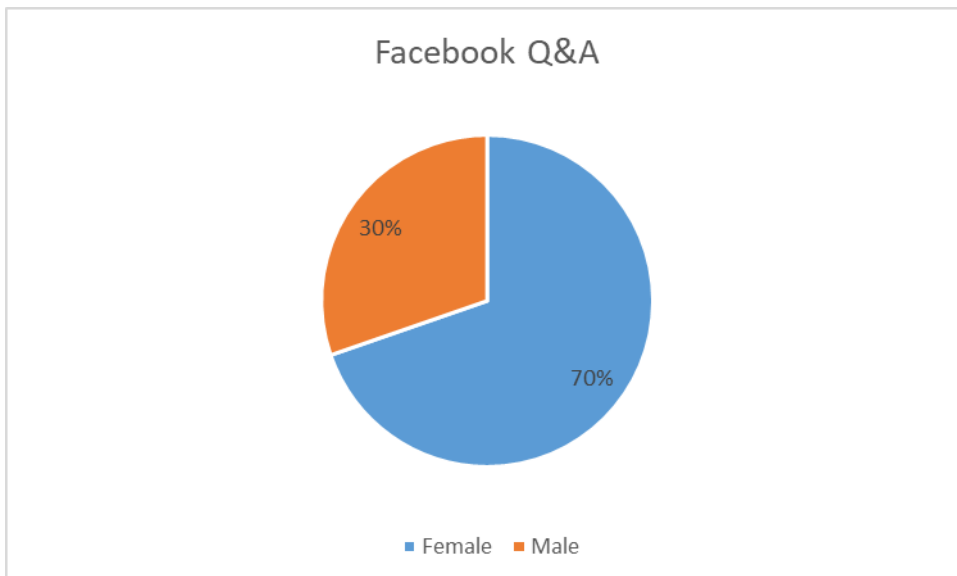


Figure 15: Gender balance of those that participated in the Facebook Q&A

Drop-In session

One male attended the drop-in session.

Website Form

5 males communicated via this community engagement method. 0 females participated as demonstrated in Figure 16.

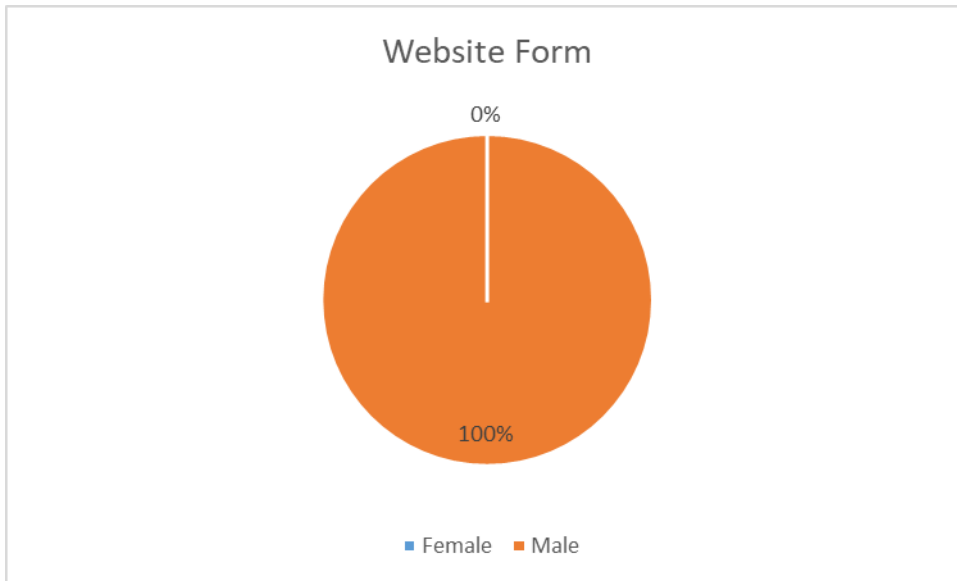


Figure 16: Gender balance of participants who communicated their opinion via the website form

Listening Post

25 people communicate their opinions via the listening post. The gender of 10 participants was identified. A gender balance was not achieved via this engagement method as shown in Figure 17. Females were underrepresented.

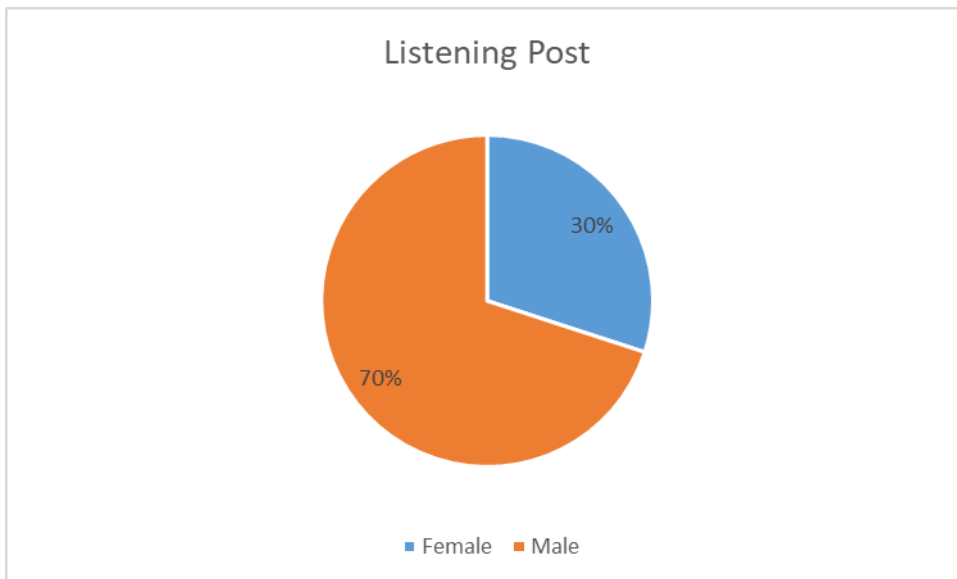


Figure 17: Gender balance of participants who contributed their opinion at the Budget Consultation Listening Post

Projects

Indoor Sports Stadium

HRCC used four different engagement methods to gauge the communities' opinion on the preferred location for an indoor sports stadium. Using multiple engagement methods assist in increasing the overall levels of participation. Overall this was one of the largest engagement pieces HRCC has ever performed with 446 responses. The results are shown in Figure 18.

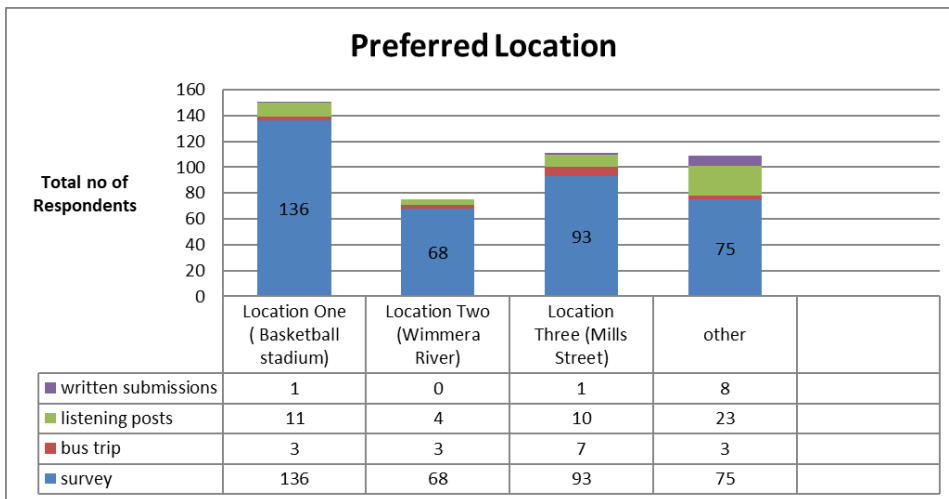


Figure 18: Overview of Community Engagement conducted for the Indoor Sports Stadium

Figure 19 combines all recorded data. For this project a gender balance was not achieved. In each community engagement method women were underrepresented.

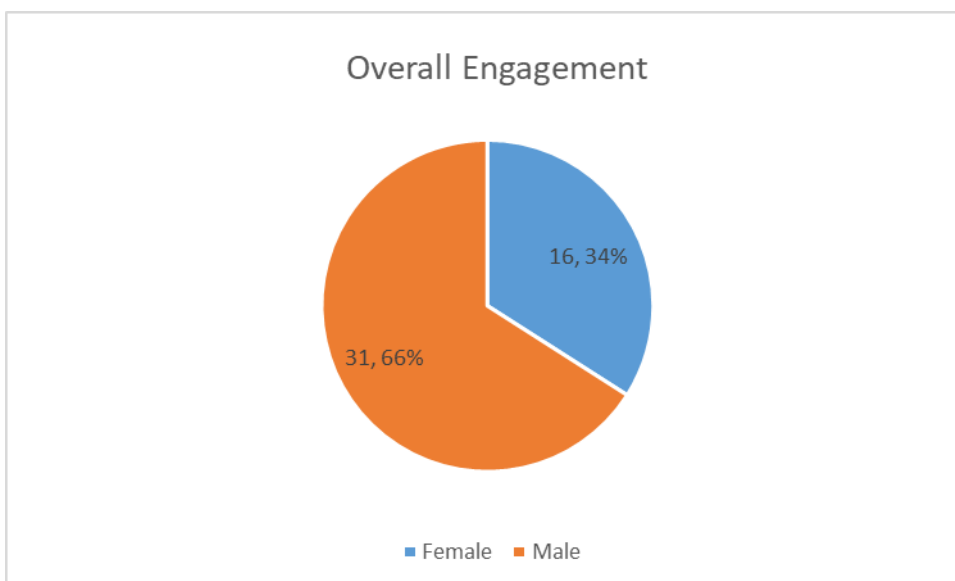


Figure 19: Overall gender balance of community engagement conducted for the Indoor Sports Stadium

A Project Control Group was formed to lead the project. It consisted of fifteen members and achieved a gender balance of 40-40-20, with and without the inclusion of HRCC staff members. This is shown in Figure 20.

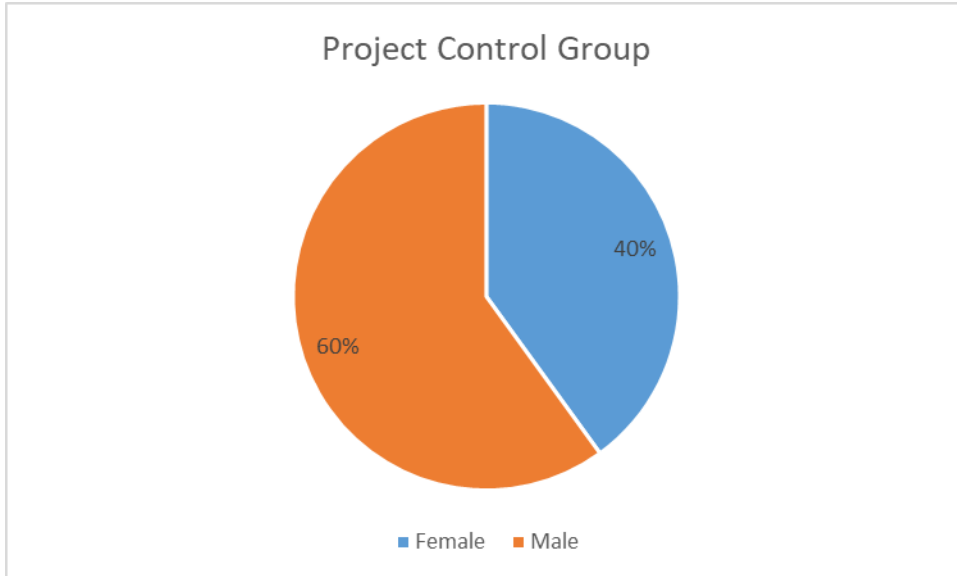


Figure 20: Gender balance of members of the Project Control Group for Indoor Sports Stadium

Bus Trip

16 people attended the bus trip that visited all potential stadium locations. 12 members of the group were males and 4 were females. A gender balance was not achieved in this method as shown in Figure 21. This group was made up of representatives from relevant sporting organisations and the PCG.

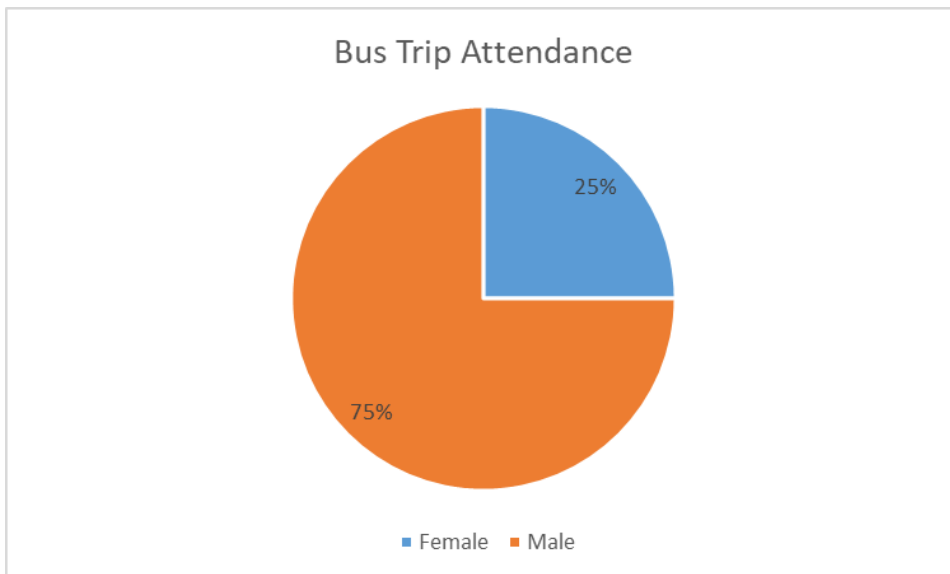


Figure 21: Gender balance of participants on a Bus Trip for Indoor Sports Stadium

Survey

Majority of the participants voiced their opinion through a survey. There was a survey for community members which recorded the participant's gender and age. This data was unable to be obtained.

Written Submissions

16 participants completed a written submission. This is conflicting to the information contained in Figure 18, where only 10 people completed the submission. 6 females and 10 males completed the submission. This does not achieve a gender balance with females underrepresented as shown in Figure 22.

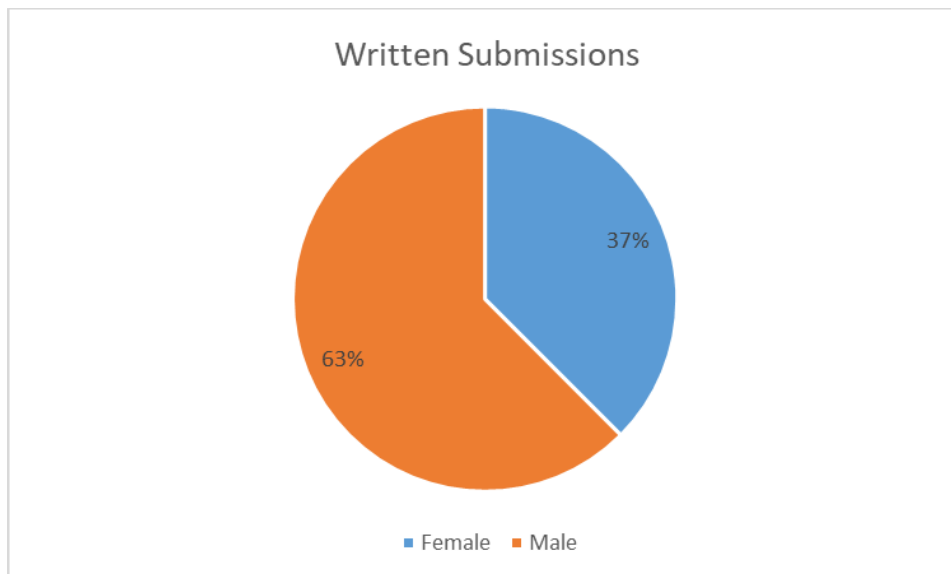


Figure 22: Gender balance of the participants who completed written submissions for the Indoor Sports Stadium

Listening Post

Six locations were identified for the listening post that encouraged community members to voice their opinion. Selecting multiple locations increased the chances of a diverse representation of people participating. The Listening Post occurred on a Tuesday and spent two hours at each location.

It appears that the gender of participants was not recorded for this method of community engagement.

Stakeholder Analysis

It appears that a substantial amount of stakeholders were contacted for this project to ensure all community groups had an opportunity to voice their opinion.

Older Person Reference Group

The original reference group was formed in 2018. This group was active for nine months. The Terms of Reference specified that there could be a maximum of 12 members with the group reaching maximum capacity. In Figure 23 it can be seen that this group achieved an ideal gender balance of 50-50.

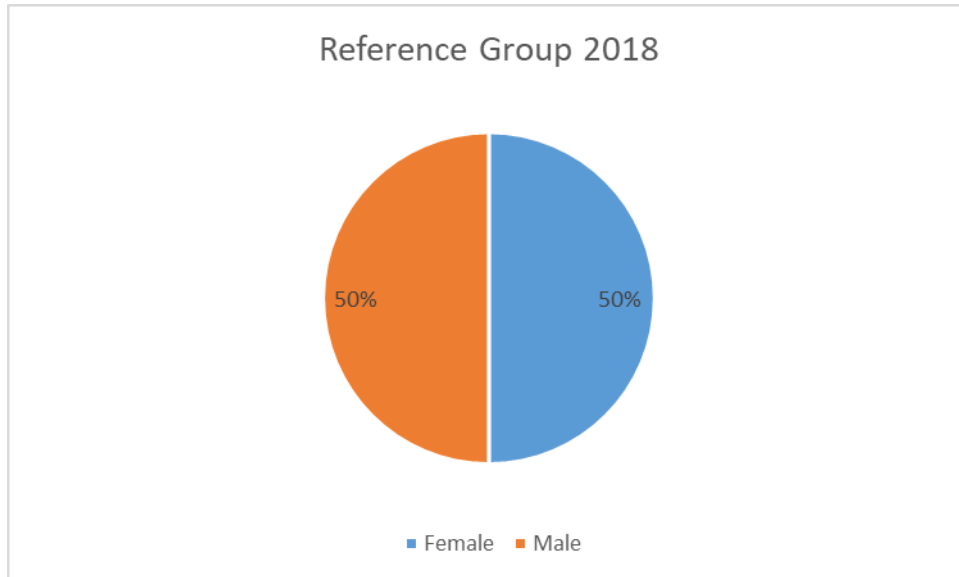


Figure 23: Gender balance of members on the Older Persons Reference Group

A new reference group has been formed for a term of three years from 2019-2021. The Terms of Reference specified that there could be a maximum of 10 members. This is a smaller group with six members. HRCC did not go through the recruitment process again for the new reference group. This group has not achieved a gender balance as seen in Figure 24. Males are underrepresented within this group. It is possible that the length of the position has affected the participants.

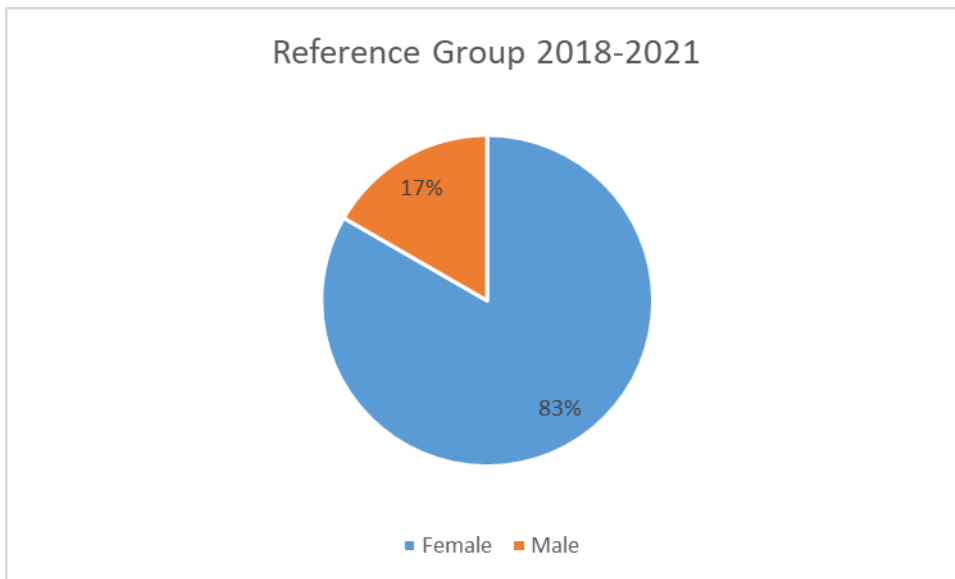


Figure 24: Gender balance of members on the Older Person Reference Group for 2018-2021.

Laharum Football and Netball Change rooms

Project Control Group

The project control group had 2 females and 4 males. The group had 4 Council staff and 2 community representatives. The 2 community members on the committee were both males. The 2 females were employees of HRCC. The Terms of Reference included staff employees as members of the group. A gender balance was not achieved for this group as shown in Figure 25.

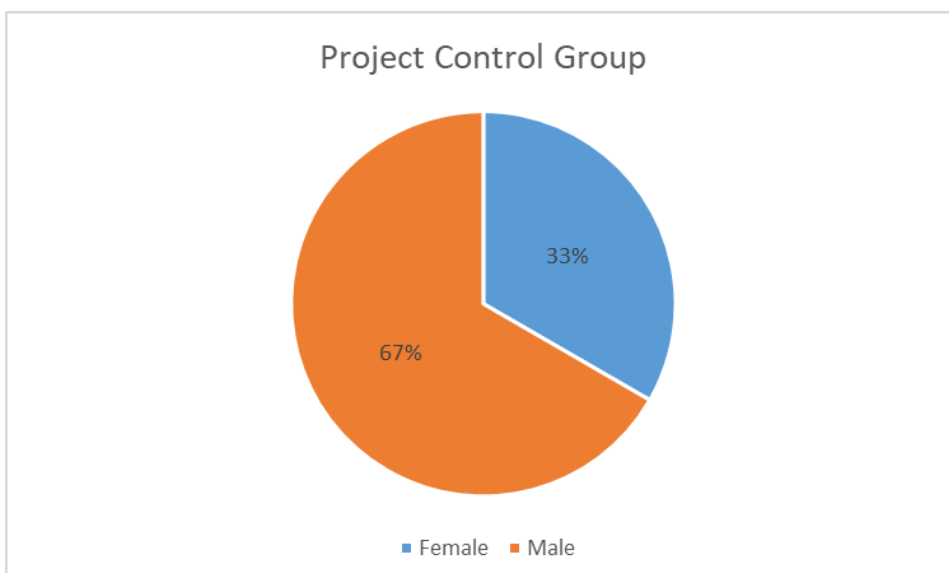


Figure 25: Gender balance of participants on the Project Control Group for Laharum Football & Netball Change rooms

Kalkee Tennis and Netball Courts

A Project Group was formed to guide this project. It featured 2 representatives from HRCC and 2 representatives from Kalkee Tennis and Netball Club. A gender balance of 50-50 was achieved for this group as shown in Figure 26. The 2 females on the group were Council employees, the 2 community representatives were males.

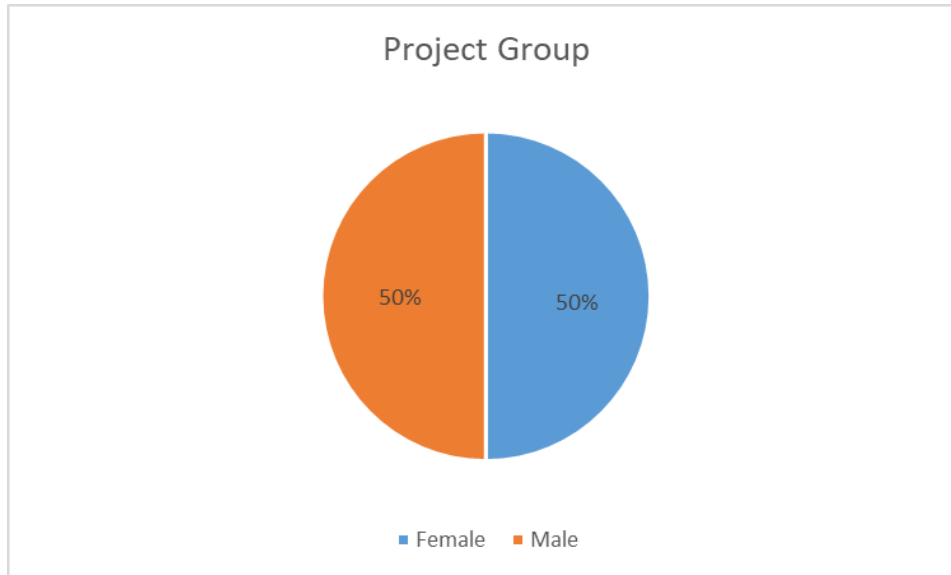


Figure 26: Gender balance of participants on the Project Group for the Kalkee Tennis and Netball Courts

CBD Revitalisation

An Action group was formed for the CBD Revitalisation Project. The Terms of Reference stated that the group will consist of around 10 members, it did not stipulate where those members must be from. This group achieves a gender balance of 40-40-20 as shown in Figure 27.

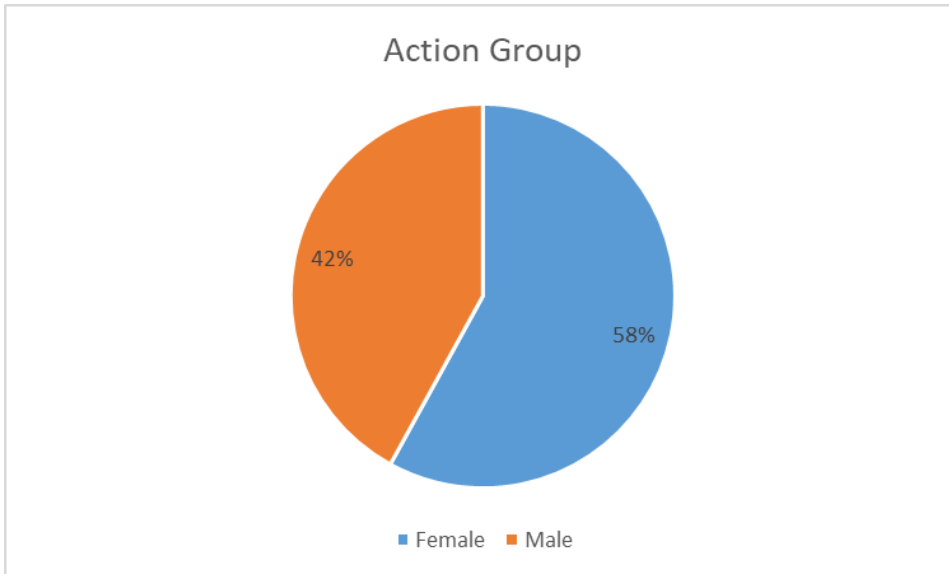


Figure 27: Gender balance of Action Group for CBD Revitalisation

The Hamilton Street Public toilets were being altered as a component of the CBD Revitalisation. Community Engagement occurred through a Facebook post that involved a survey. The survey allowed participants to select their preferred location and then provide comments. 53 people participated. This method did not achieve a gender balance as shown in Figure 28. Males were underrepresented. It appears this method and topic appealed to females.

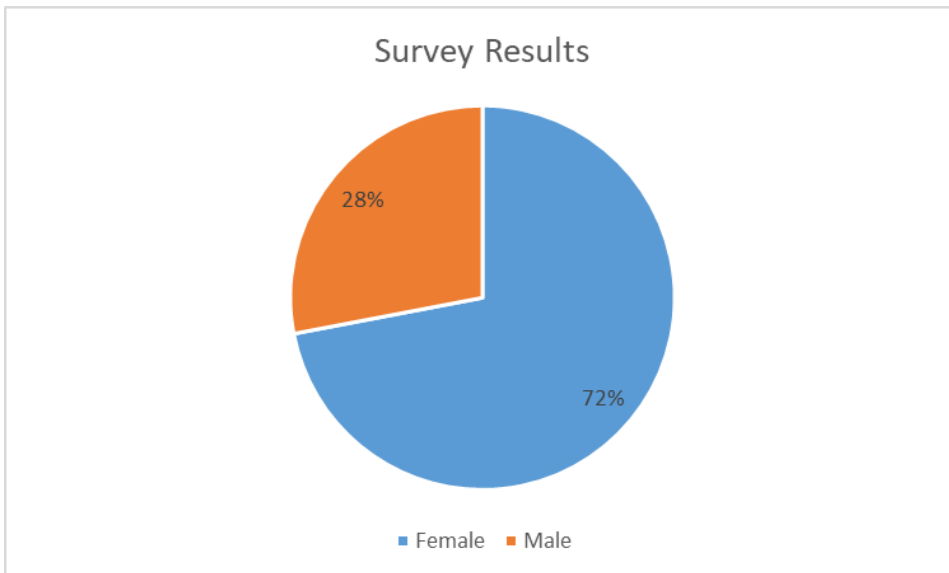


Figure 28: Gender balance of Online Survey for Hamilton Street Toilets

Charisma Park

A community BBQ was held to determine what issues and suggestions the community had for developing Charisma Park. 33 people attended the BBQ to chat to the Mayor about how they think Charisma Park should be established. This form of community engagement achieved a gender balance of 40-40-20 as shown in Figure 29. 16 males attended and 17 females attended. This method appealed to both genders.

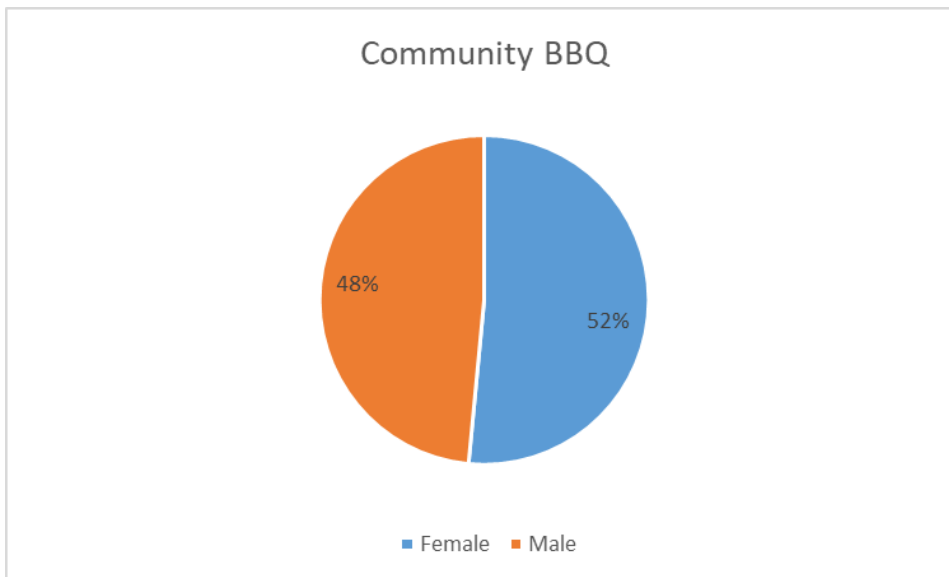


Figure 29: Gender balance of participants at Community BBQ

Coughlin Park Community Centre

Project Group

This project control group consisted of 7 members. Of the 2 females, 1 of them was the HRCC Project Manager. The Terms of Reference were not able to be located therefore the composition of the group could not be determined. A gender balance was not achieved for this group. Females were underrepresented as shown in Figure 30.

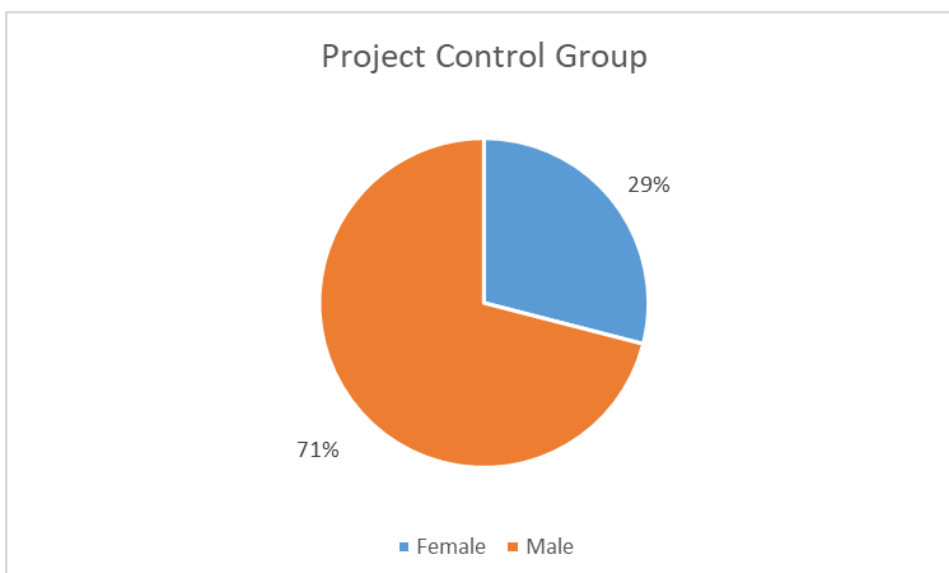


Figure 30: Gender balance of the Project Control Group for the Coughlin Park Community Centre

Natimuk Showgrounds Lighting Upgrade

This project was led by the Natimuk Football Netball Club. The Board of Management was the community group that HRCC engaged to ensure the project was executed correctly. In Figure 31 it can be seen that the Board of Management does achieves a gender balance of 40-40-20. There are 8 females and 11 males on the board.

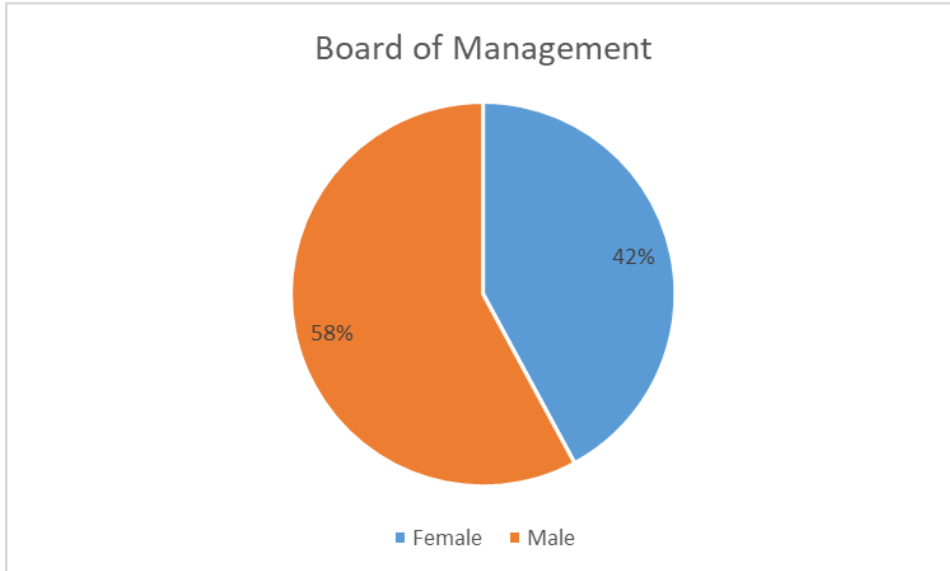


Figure 31: Gender balance of participants on the Board of Management for Horsham United Football Netball Club

Jubilee Hall

Council contacted 15 community organisations to discuss the potential shared use of the Jubilee Hall. Of these 15 community organisations, 7 expressed an interest in participating. Consultations were held with these groups. A gender balance was not achieved for this consultation as shown in Figure 32. Males are underrepresented in this consultation.

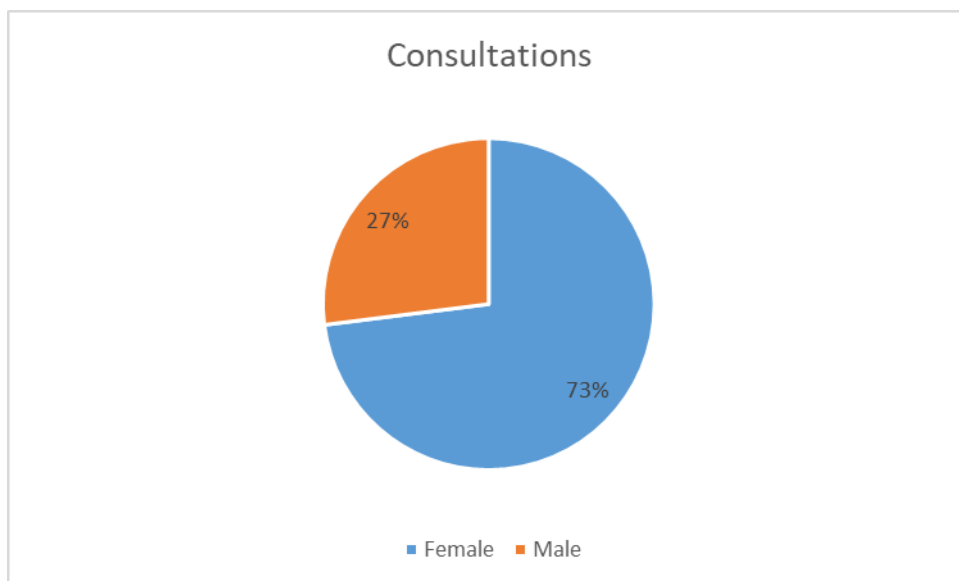


Figure 32: Gender balance of participants contacted for the Jubilee Hall Consultations

Kalkee Road Children’s Hub

The Kalkee Road Children’s Hub project was completed in 2018. Community engagement for this project had been occurring for numerous years. Some of the data included has occurred over the past couple of years. However it has been included as it this was a large project and had considerable community implications. Figure 3 combines all data for this project. It shows that a gender balance was not achieved for this community engagement.

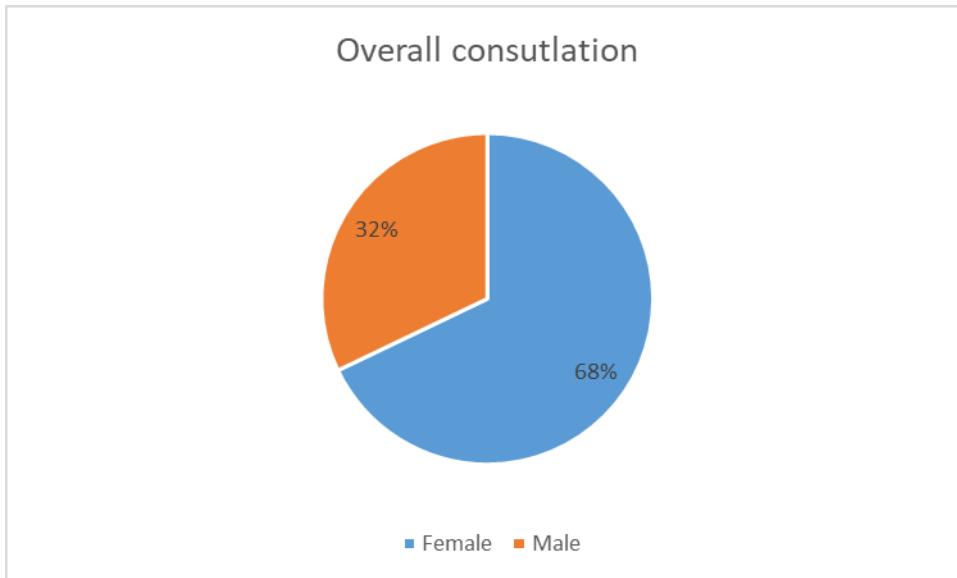


Figure 33: Overall gender balance for the Kalkee Road Children's Hub Community Engagement

Early Years Planning Committee

The membership of this committee has varied. As of 2017 there was 20 members on the committee. This Committee did not achieve a gender balance as shown in Figure 34. Men were under represented.

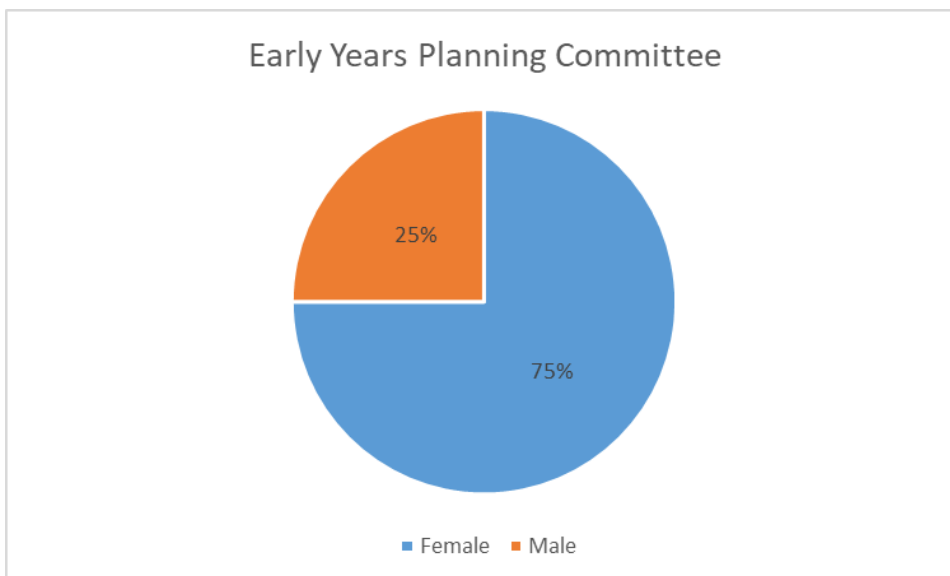


Figure 34: Gender balance of Early Years Planning Committee

Community Consultations

Consultation occurred with Grade 1 & 2 students from Horsham Primary School. Informal discussions occurred with parents of students at school pick-up time. A member of Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative and Barengji Gadjin Land Council were also consulted to provide their insights to the project.

Written Submissions

4 written submissions were received. 2 males and 2 females provided their insights.

Internal Working Group

An Internal Working Group was formed for those were involved in the project in some way. These members were all HRCC employees. The group does achieve a gender balance as seen in Figure 35.

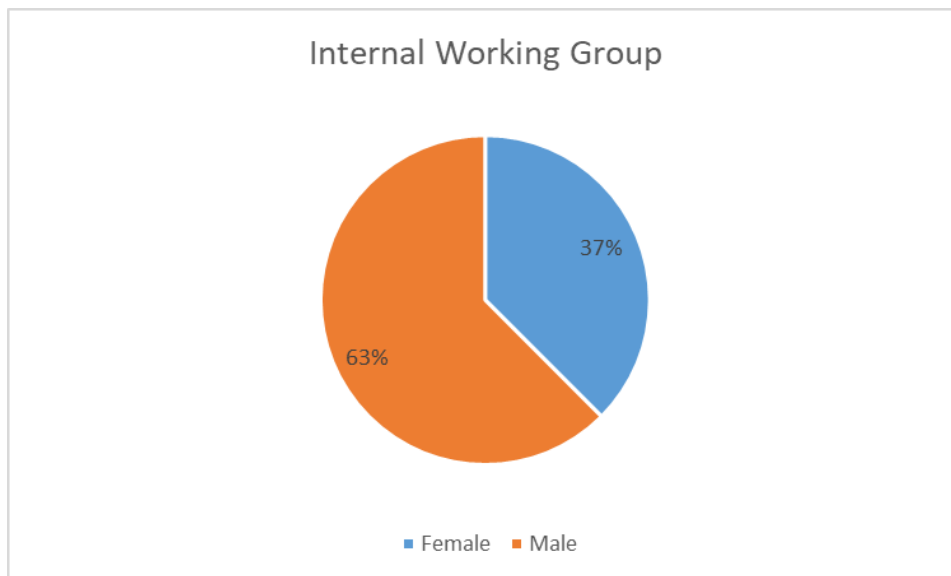


Figure 35: Gender balance of Kalkee Road Children's and Community Hub Internal Working Group

Kalkee Road Children's & Community Hub Parent Reference Group

A parent reference group was formed to ensure parents involved in the kindergarten services were updated on the KRCH. The Terms of Reference could not be found and therefore the membership could not be identified. A gender balance was not achieved for this group as shown in Figure 36. Males were underrepresented .

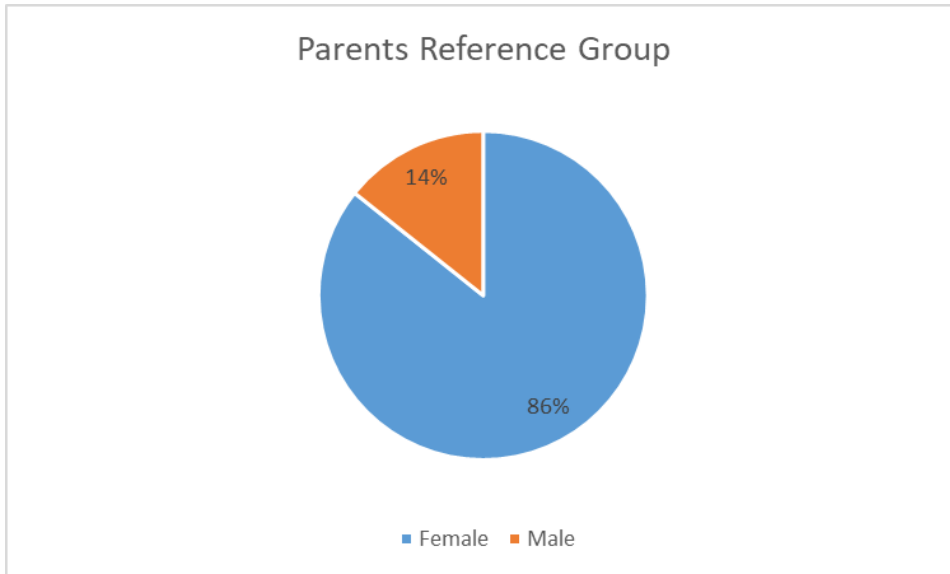


Figure 36: Gender balance of Parents Reference Group for KRCH

Community Drop- In sessions

Two different times were organised for the drop-in session. One was an evening session from 5-6:30pm and the other was an afternoon session form 2-3:15pm. The attendance list for one of the sessions was able to be obtained. The gender balance of the session is shown in Figure 37. It did not achieve a gender balance of 40-40-20. 8 females attended and 5 males attended.

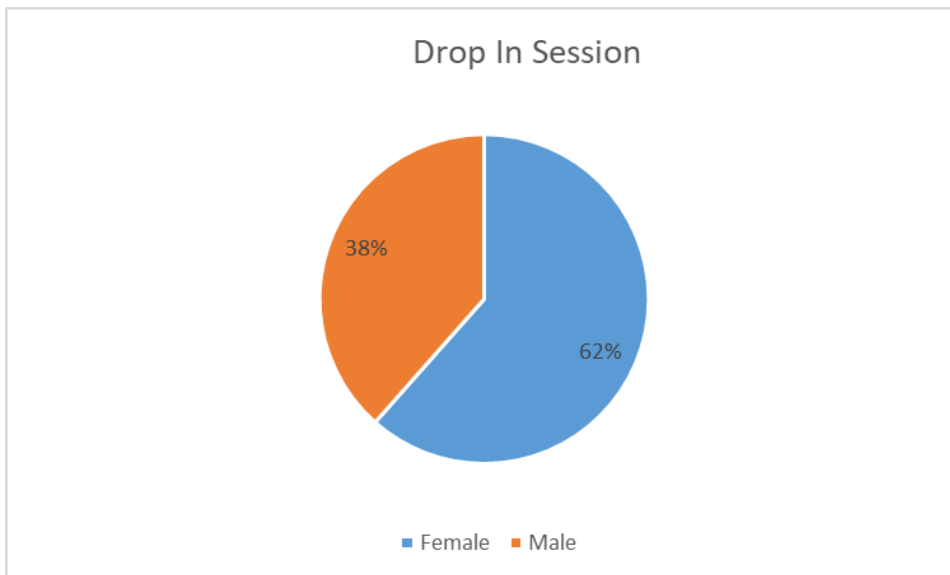


Figure 37: Gender balance of the drop-In Session for KRCH

Brainstorm

Data does not show who completed these brainstorms.

Newsletters

The newsletters were written in Easy English. There were 107 subscribers that received regular information and updates. It can be seen in Figure 38 that 68% of

subscribers were female and 32% were males. This membership does not achieve a gender balance.

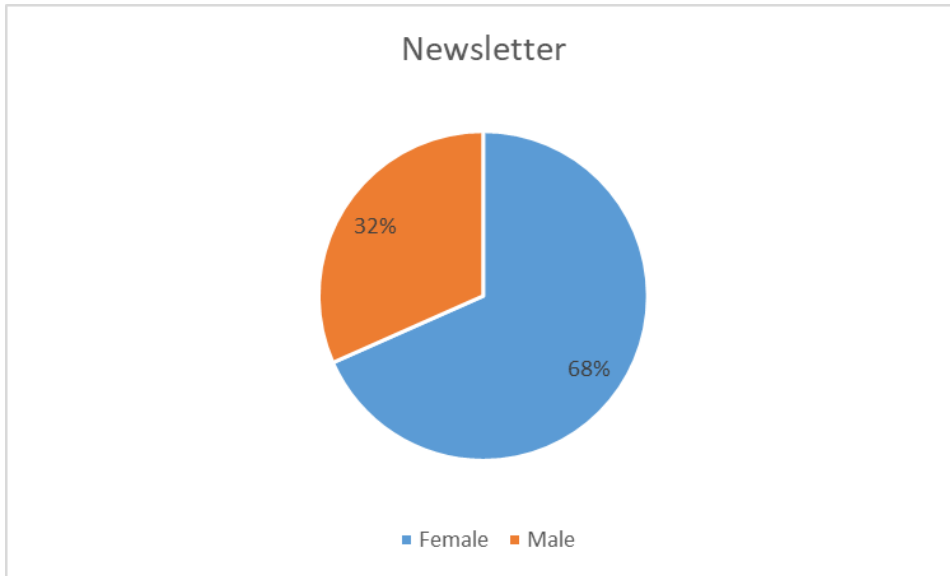


Figure 38: Gender balance of Newsletter Subscribers

Project Groups

Figure 39 compares the 10 projects that incorporated a reference/ project control group as a component of their project. A gender balance of 50-50 occurred in 3 groups. A gender balance of 40-40-20 occurred in 5 groups. In the groups that did not achieve a gender balance, males were underrepresented 3 times and females were underrepresented 2 times.

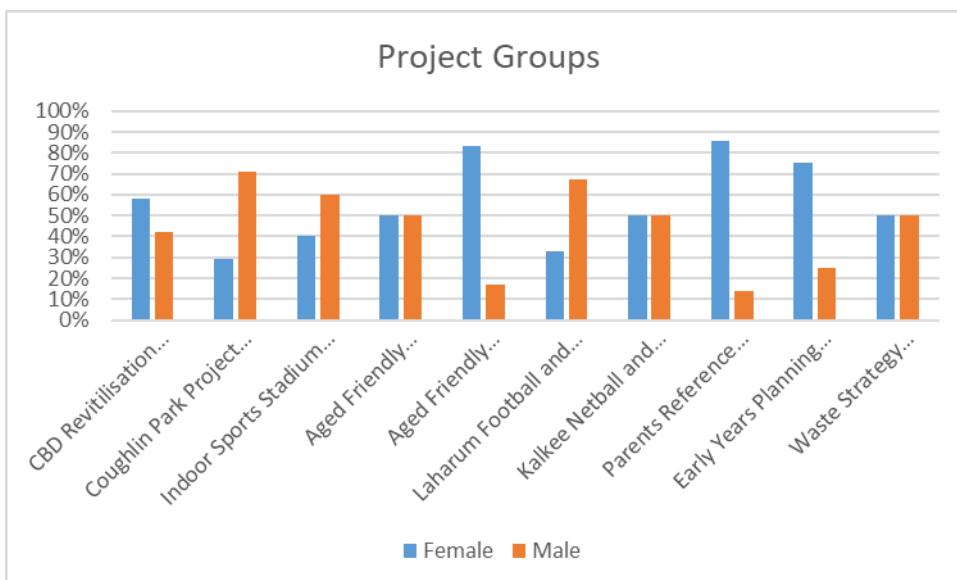


Figure 39: Gender balance of HRCC Projects Group

Figure 40 combines all the members of HRCC project groups. Overall they achieve a gender balance of 40-40-20.

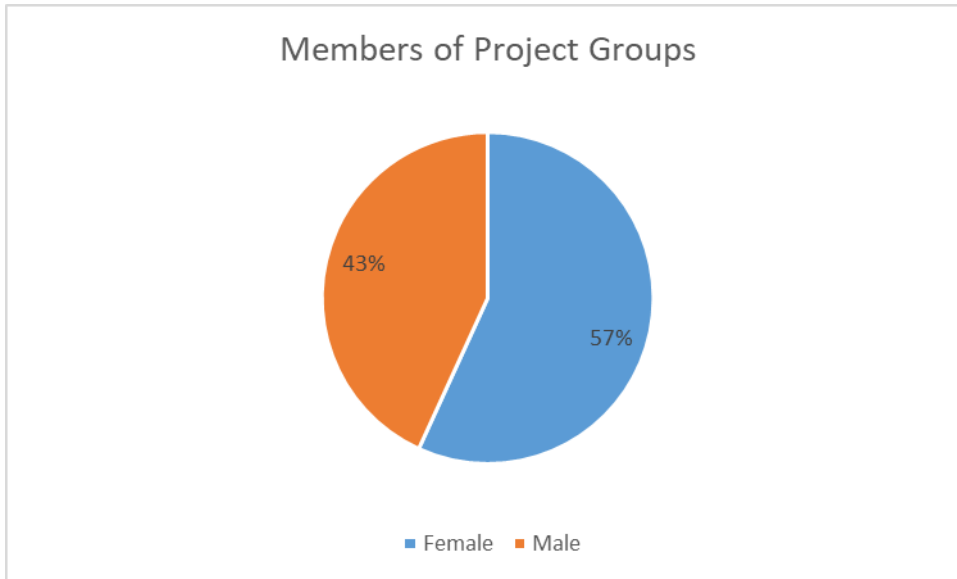


Figure 40: Gender balance of the members of project groups at Horsham Rural City Council

Horsham Town Hall

Facebook

Fans on Facebook are the people who have 'liked' the Horsham Town Hall (HTH) page. Figure 41 shows that 80% of these fans are female and 19% are males. A gender balance was not achieved in this instance.



Figure 41: Gender Balance of Facebook Fans for Horsham Town Hall

Drop in Visits

Any operations at the HTH affect the surrounding businesses. To inform and update all stakeholders, employees at the HTH visit the businesses and have direct conversations with them. Any opinions or actions are then addressed.

Conclusion

Overall the community engagement conducted by Horsham Rural City Council had a near equal representation of gender as shown below in Figure 42. This is positive. Females participated in community engaged slightly more than males. This incorporates data from Facebook, email subscriptions and the website page which are all in the format of 'inform'. However as this project is attempting to improve the outcomes for females and males in the community, it is necessary to achieve a gender balance on each individual community engagement.

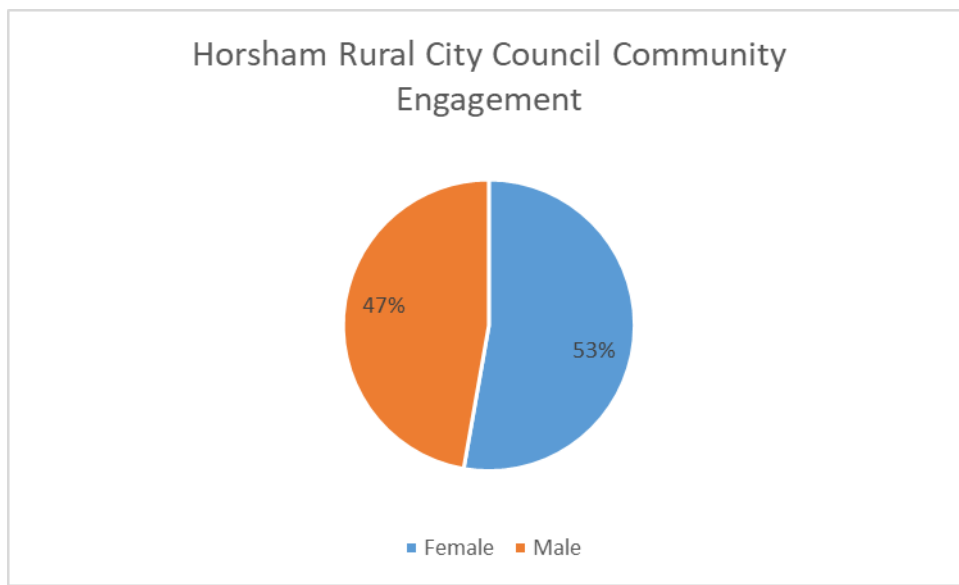


Figure 42: Overview of community engagement conducted at Horsham Rural City Council

There is a tendency for Horsham Rural City Council to form some type of committee whenever they are required to conduct community engagement. This report identified 18 advisory committees, 1 Steering Committee, 1 Committee, 4 Project Control Groups, 1 Action Group, 3 Reference Groups and 1 Internal Working Group. These groups had to have been active in the last 12 months or they were not included for this report. The Terms of Reference for the majority of these groups stated that if the maximum numbers of members was not achieved, then all applicants would be accepted. If not enough applications are being received then all applicants are accepted. If committees or groups are automatically accepting applicants, further effort needs to be taken to obtain a diverse selection of applicants. The Terms of Reference need to be amended to give Council the power to increase diversity within groups and make these groups as beneficial as possible. Given the amount of community engagement being conducted in this manner, the community may be tiring. The use of community engagement methods that do not require an ongoing commitment need to be better utilised. In the event that these groups are receiving more applications than positions, staff need to be aware of unconscious bias that may be occurring and altering their preferences.

Advisory Committees and Project Control Groups are similar in the element of 'how' the engagement occurs. These are both formal methods that occur in a group format with participants voicing their opinion in front of other members. The data suggests that women prefer to participate in project control groups over advisory committees. The different characteristics between these characteristics such as timeframe, level of commitment and the objective of the group may be altering participation rates.

Engagement data for advisory committees showed that overall females are underrepresented. Of the 18 committees, an equal gender balance of 50-50 occurred 2 times and a balance of 40-40-20 occurred only 7 times. The average representation on an advisory committee is 3 females and 5 males. Females were underrepresented on 12 advisory committees. Males were underrepresented on 4 advisory committees. The next time that a review occurs for these committees a strong emphasis needs to be taken to ensure a gender balance.

In comparison, engagement data for project control groups showed that overall males are underrepresented. Of the 10 groups, an equal gender balance of 50-50 occurred 3 times. A gender balance of 40-40-20 occurred in 5 groups. The average representation on a project control group is 5 females and 4 males. Males are underrepresented on 4 groups. Females were underrepresented on 3 groups.

Two of the projects completed in the last year were for sporting clubs and both consisted of project control groups. Within each of these groups the representatives from the club were all male. There are female members within these clubs. The way Horsham Rural City Council engages with these community groups requires written procedures to encourage female participation.

Surveys are also used fairly often within this organisation. These seem to mostly occur in the form of a digital survey. The main issue with these surveys is that the demographics of participants are not being adequately recorded. This means that no comparisons can occur between different data groups. This will be incorporated into the Community Engagement Policy if not already present. Careful consideration must be taken when selecting demographics for a survey. The demographics should provide insight and analysis into the particular issues being surveyed.

Of the very limited data available, females participated in the surveys more than males. The titles of the two main surveys were very different to one another. One of the survey titles- 'How healthy and happy is your community?' was an open ended question with an emotion provoking title. This received more responses from females. The other survey 'Rates Strategy Review' was a formal title that directly tells the user what the survey will contain. This survey received more responses from males. Generating responses to digital surveys resembles a marketing challenge. Text needs to be carefully considered to influence underrepresented community members to participate. The advertising material for the surveys can largely affect the uptake by each gender producing uneven results. Selecting different advertising material for different demographics may assist in producing equal results.

A survey for the CBD Revitalisation was completed by females more than males. This survey occurred via Facebook. The data within this report has shown that females feel comfortable to engage via the use of technology. Surveys are generally sent out to a department database. A large section of this database would be community organisations. As demonstrated within this report, the organisational contact for a community organisation is normally the president, whom is more likely to be a male. When distributing these surveys, staff need to consider alternate methods that may increase participation by females. Within project work, alternative forms of community engagement are being utilised to encourage participation from the community.

Newsletter subscriptions had a high representation rate from females. This suggests that females are highly interested in engaging with their communities.

This report highlighted the benefits of using multiple forms of community engagement to ensure levels of engagement are equal for both males and females. The consultation for the budget utilised a mixture of formal and informal methods, different times and methods involving technology and some not. It showed that certain methods may illicit no response from females, however one particular method may produce strong response from females. Overall females and males engaged equally. (40-40-20)

However the Indoor Sports Stadium consultation, which used multiple forms of community engagement resulted in females becoming further unrepresented with every consultation that occurred. This was the same for males within the Kalkee Road Children's Hub Consultation. In these instances actions need to occur that remove the barriers for the underrepresented group and implement changes to make the processes more equitable.

In comparison, the consultation that occurred for Jubilee Hall did not produce equal results for males and females, with males being underrepresented. The consultation was investigating the viability of Jubilee Hall as a shared community, arts and cultural HUB. The consultation only occurred amongst community organisations and did not involve an opportunity for general community members to participate. The community groups that were consulted were Art Is Festival, Oasis Wimmera, Noah's Ark, Makers Gallery, HRCC and the Horsham Regional Art Gallery. Throughout this report a continual theme has presented. Whenever community engagement is focus on 'the arts', males are always underrepresented. Statistics from the ABS support this pattern of interest. Males attend cultural venues and events less than females. This includes art museums, museums, galleries, theatre, musicals etc. (ABS 2009-2010)

However, this does not mean that there are no males interested in 'the arts'. It means that Council has to ensure they actively attempt to engage males in discussions around this topic. Identifying hard to reach populations early in the engagement process will ensure specific strategies are created to engage them.

The two Older Person Reference Group's (OPRG) produced very different gender balances. The original group had a term of only nine months and achieved a 50-50 gender balance. The current OPRG has a term of 3 years and does not achieve a gender balance. Males are no longer equally represented. There are barriers that now limit males from participating. When establishing the OPRG 2018-2022 no attempt was made to recruit new members. In this instance, best practice would be to actively recruit for male members to increase the likelihood of achieving a gender balance.

It is important to consider the level of engagement that occurred from this community barbeque. It is an informal method of community engagement within a council that tends to utilise formal methods. It removed physical barriers of location and access and put the consultation directly amongst the people who would be most affected by any changes to the area. There was also a small incentive to attend, a free sausage. The community members that provided their views consisted of the community that are often disengaged and hard to reach. This method produced equal levels of engagement for both men and women.

Many organisations now use Facebook to interact with their communities. Facebook allows councils to quickly communicate with a large proportion of their community. For local governments this is generally through the method of 'informing'. When a community member provides their opinion on a topic this comment is often unrecorded and does not receive a response. If this same comment occurred at the council offices it would be recorded and provided with a response. In this instance the opinions that occurred on Facebook were seen as a legitimate form of community engagement. A large amount of participants provided their opinions, predominately by females. Had these views been discredited simply for occurring via a digital means, these opinions may never have been considered by council. This type of practice needs to be occurring within the Facebook account. This behavior will uphold accountability to its community.

Engagement that occurs on the HRCC website is 'informative.' These users come to the website to source particular information. Statistics for the website show that both males and females use this method at similar rates. This reinforces how important it is to have a website that has up to date information on it.

This report has highlighted that a gender balance has not yet been achieved within community engagement at Horsham Rural City Council. The aim will always be 50-50 representation for both genders. In the instances that 50-50 is not applicable, 40-40-20 is satisfactory. This ratio is flexible for an area such as community engagement which is susceptible to variables. As females are currently the largest underrepresented demographic this report has only focused on the differences that occur between males and females. Horsham Rural City Council understands that women can be further underrepresented within community engagement due to intersectional factors. In the following Engagement Methods Report actions will be identified that reduce barriers and increase participation by underrepresented parties. It is likely that these methods will all assist in encouraging a diverse range of community members to participate.

References

- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, *Census of Population and Housing 2011 and 2016*, Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id , retrieved 29 March 2019, <https://profile.id.com.au/wimmera-region/population?WebID=110>.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2009-2010, *Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues and Events Australia*, 2009-10 ,retrieved 1st April 2019, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4172.0~2014~Main%20Features~Attendance%20and%20Participation~19>.
- Bradford, A 2016, *Community engagement and local government*, Masters by Research thesis, School of Management, Operations and Marketing, University of Wollongong, retrieved 17 March 2019, <http://ro.uow.edu.au/theses/4881>.
- Department of Environment, Land 2017, Water and Planning, *The Local Government Listen, Learn and Lead Gender Equity Program Guide*, The State of Victoria department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, retrieved 3rd April 2019.
- Greaves, A, Auditor-General 2017, *Public Participation and Community Engagement: Local Government Sector*, Victorian Auditor-General's Report, retrieved 3rd April 2019 <https://www.audit.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/20170510-PP-Local-Gov.pdf>.
- Local Government Act 1989 (Vic) s.3A (Austl).
- OurWatch 2015, *Change the Story: A Shared Framework for the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women and their children in Australia*, OurWatch, retrieved 29 March 2019, <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/getmedia/0aa0109b-6b03-43f2-85fe-a9f5ec92ae4e/Change-the-story-framework-prevent-violence-women-children-AA-new.pdf.aspx>.

Actions to strengthen gender equity in community engagement

Gender Equity in Community Engagement 2019



Notes

Community Engagement

This report has been prepared by the Gender Equity Officer for Hindmarsh Shire, Horsham Rural City, Yarriambiack Shire and West Wimmera Shire Council. This report has been made possible with input from Women's Health Grampians in particular Melissa Morris and the Equality Advocates, Women with Disabilities, International Association of Public Participation, Engage Victoria and the Youth Affairs Council Victoria.

Gender Equity in Community Engagement builds on the Act@Work program that is already being implemented at Hindmarsh Shire, Horsham Rural City, West Wimmera Shire and Yarriambiack Shire Council. This project arises from the *Free from Violence* Local Government Grants program.

The project aims to increase participation by women and girls of varying backgrounds and abilities, in community engagement. This report will identify actions that each council can undertake to strengthen gender equity in community engagement.

Summary

The research found within this report demonstrated that it is a collection of actions which will enable women to participate in community engagement. Each council is on their own community engagement journey. There are different levels of engagement from women, which determines the area of focus. Diverse women from the community appear to be largely unrepresented within council engagement activities. Therefore this report also provides suggestions for women with disabilities, Aboriginal women, women from rural and regional locations and girls who are youth.

Women are engaging in their communities in a myriad of different roles. To successfully engage with a diverse range of community member's council needs to make their engagement processes appealing to women. Women need to feel they want to engage with council as their input can create positive outcomes for the community. (IAP2 2019) Research conducted by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities discovered that when women had positive experiences with council they were more inclined to participate again. (Municipal Consultation Process Project 2004, p.11) Positive experiences for Canadian women involved environments that were respectful, accessible and fair.

Recreating these environments within council is an essential component of increasing representation from women of varying abilities and backgrounds. Having input from a diverse range of organisations has been integral in identifying the main barriers that women often experience when engaging with councils and the actions they suggest councils should be trialling to improve participation levels. When selecting engagement methods there needs to be mechanisms in place that minimise negative behaviours from people in the community. Behaviours that are not respectful and inclusive may deter women of varying abilities and backgrounds from participating. (Equality Advocates 2019)

Within any topic of engagement, each process must incorporate multiple strategies to engage with a diverse range of the community. This may involve utilising multiple methods of engagement, experimenting with less traditional methods of engagement and taking care to incorporate changes that increase the capacity of underrepresented voices to be heard. (Gregory 2007) There is no way to engage that will ensure women of varying abilities and backgrounds will participate. What works for one council, may not work for another. Regardless of the outcome, any steps council is taking to better incorporate the views of diverse communities will form the larger picture. In other words, attempting to engage with a diverse range of voices is better than not. (Equality Advocates 2019) As local government, engaging with council is often a formal process. This can be intimidating for those in the community who have not previously engaged. Utilising methods of engagement that have not always been used in councils such as online methods and low commitment methods can alter participation.

Mentioned in different capacities throughout this report is the need for council to develop relationships and build connections with women of varying abilities and backgrounds. For

those groups who have limited engagement with council needs to show vulnerability. This might involve engaging with diverse groups in locations familiar to them or by celebrating their strengths. (Women with Disabilities 2019) The engagement needs to be a two way process otherwise some may feel that council only engage when they need something. Once this relationship has been established then these women will be more likely to engage. Research showed that women are engaging in their communities through various roles and the connection they have with these groups is integral to their participation. Developing relationships is very important for women with disabilities and intersectional experiences.

It is important for council to apply a gender lens and carefully considering the topic of community engagement. There are some topics that have previously been consider as masculine or feminine. (Municipal Consultation Process Project 2004, p. 38) Dependant on this distinction, alters who is consulted for their input. Identifying who is unlikely to engage with this topic is important as specific strategies need to be developed that encourage the unrepresented voices. As all community members are impacted by decision making, it is good practice to reframe the issue from a diverse range of perspectives.

Each community is made up of diverse women of varying backgrounds and abilities. To engage with these groups council needs to always be demonstrating that they are an inclusive organisation. When advertising for participants it is important to target engagement material to diverse women and men in the community. (Victoria State Government 2019) This may involve specifically stating who the organisation would like to see representation from such as culturally and linguistically diverse women and men with disabilities. Any imagery used to advertise engagement sessions or during the session should show diverse community members participating in everyday life. Ensuring that diverse community members can see themselves represented within council, in a non-stereotypical manner is very important. (Equality Advocates 2019) Discussions that occurred with the Equality Advocates from Women's Health Grampians emphasized the importance to employ diverse people to work for the council. Have these people present at engagement sessions to encourage participation from a diverse range of community members. They will be more likely to engage when they see themselves represented.

Engagement is a two way process that can benefit when council is vulnerable. Approaching existing networks such as local groups, associations, organisations to engage through these established methods can be beneficial. (Women with Disabilities 2019) Members of these networks may feel more comfortable to contribute their opinion as they are already familiar with the other members and the location. This method is also convenient as women are able to contribute to the decision making process within having to adjust or add extra activities to their normal schedule.

Given the complexity of community engagement it is important to effectively plan for engagement to ensure that a ranger of diverse voices have the opportunity to contribute to the decision making process. As more barriers are removed, the different needs of women of varying abilities and backgrounds will adequately be accounted for.

Contents

Actions to strengthen gender equity in community engagement.....	1
Notes.....	1
Summary.....	3
Introduction.....	6
Suggestions to increase participation from women and girls.....	8
Suggestions from the Equality Advocates.....	12
Suggestions from the International Association of Public Participation.....	15
Suggestions from Engage Victoria.....	17
Suggestions for increasing participation of women with disabilities.....	18
Suggestions for increasing participation of youth.....	22
Suggestions for increasing participation of Cultural and Linguistically Diverse Women.....	25
Suggestions for increasing participation of Aboriginal Women.....	27
Conclusion.....	29
References.....	31

Introduction

Throughout Victoria women are represented within all the different roles of council. This report identifies actions that council can undertake to increase the participation of women of varying abilities and backgrounds within community engagement. This element of council has the opportunity to affect the decision making process. Including women of varying abilities and backgrounds in this process can create better outcomes for our communities. As women are the best people to make decisions about their lives, they should have the opportunity to incorporate their views into formal decision making. (Miranda 2005, p.2)

Research in Victoria showed that currently most council consultations 'attract only a small section of the community that is often not representative of the broader constituency'. (Brackertz and Meredyth 2008, p. 3). Prior to this report, an analysis of the engagement levels at Hindmarsh Shire, Horsham Rural City, Yarriambiack Shire and West Wimmera Shire Council was conducted. Throughout this report they will be known as the Wimmera Southern Mallee councils. Please note that Northern Grampians Shire Council was not a partner for this project. These analyses show that within each community engagement process women can often be underrepresented. Generally the data showed that women preferred to engage in methods that required low levels of commitment and were accessible online.

The councils in the Wimmera Southern Mallee have not been recording key demographic information to determine whether the people participating represent a broad range of the community. In some instances this data is not possible to collect. To therefore improve equality amongst diverse community members this report places a large focus on increasing the participation levels of women of various backgrounds and abilities. This includes women with disabilities, women from regional locations, culturally and linguistically diverse women, youth and underrepresented men.

There is limited research of proven methods that have successfully increased participation by women and girls of varying abilities and backgrounds. To develop this knowledge, conversations were held with a selection of organisations who were able to share examples of barriers that may limit women participating. They also identifies strategies to remove the barrier and thus improve participation. The majority of actions identified within this report do not have proven success rates, however they are actions that could improve gender equity and should be implemented to attempt to improve the municipal decision making process.

Each local council is made up of between 5-12 councillors. In rural and regional locations the amount of councillors is smaller. As there are less councillors, it could mean that the diversity amongst those councillors is less than the diversity of larger councils. In regards to the diversity of gender amongst councillors at HRCC, HSC, WWSC and YSC, women account for 32% of the regions councillors. In comparison, women represent roughly 50% of the population within the Wimmera Southern Mallee. Rural councils have a need to conduct community in an equitable manner so that councillors are hearing from a diverse range of voices. These diverse people may have different needs which should be represented within

community outcomes. When councillors are only hearing from the one demographic, outcomes may be created that negatively impact diverse community members.

Councils need to ensure that decisions made are 'of and by' the people and not 'to and for'. (Graffunder 2019) Although community engagement is an obligatory local government process, it appears to be a burdensome process for many council staff, observed through conversations held when analysing engagement levels. This is simply an observation and not a general. This burden may have developed by staff conducting community engagement without adequate training or by staffing issues that are often experienced in regional locations. Nonetheless, each council needs to work to the aim that they can be engaging with all demographics. (City of Durham 2018) If an engagement activity does not successfully reach a particular demographic, then continually alter the method and until there is representation from all groups of the community. This is essential when creating a transparent government environment.

Although there were considerable differences between the types of barriers that affect women of varying abilities and backgrounds, a reoccurring theme was women feeling that their opinion wasn't valued or wanted within councils. This may be based on a breakdown of relationships between council and parts of the community. Another issue for the Wimmera Southern Mallee councils have limited knowledge of the work council has done improve the decision making process. These councils have numerous mechanisms in place that aim to generate participation from diverse community members. In reality these people are more often than not still missing from the conversation. Creating awareness of these mechanisms would be beneficial to increase participation. It would also demonstrate to the community the value council places on diversity and the lengths they are going to obtain this input.

Data collected at Wimmera Southern Mallee councils indicated that there was low participation rates for men when the topic of engagement occurred around family care and the arts. This is based on research which indicates men or boys may be fearful of being ridiculed for demonstrating an interest in traditionally 'feminine' topics. (Blazina 2009) Although this report does identify one actions to increase participation from males, actions that improve equity for women, may also improve equity for other underrepresented groups. Research could not be found that to had improved participation from men.

Suggestions to increase participation from women and girls

These recommendations demonstrate that it is a collection of actions which will enable women to participate in community engagement. As stated prior the effectiveness of some actions in improving gender equity is currently unknown. When implementing actions, council need to monitor and evaluate the effects of these actions, to decide whether any change has occurred.

Aim for unanimous

Women of varying abilities and backgrounds can often be minorities on committees and groups etc. Some of these decision making bodies make decisions based on the majority vote. A study in 2012 by Brigham Young University was conducted that looked at the impacts of majority and unanimous decision making on women. Conversations occurred between members before decisions were made.

In the study that looked at majority decision making women participated in discussions 75 percent less than males. In the unanimous study this inequality disappeared, women were participating at the same rate as men. (Brigham Young University 2012) The level of decision making had affected the outcome.

Engagement methods such as advisory committees that use a quorum (majority vote) to make decisions may potentially be experiencing this amongst their groups.

Advisory Committees

At HRCC there were 18 advisory committees that were made up of 64 organisation representatives and 67 community representatives. Of the 64 organisation representatives, 47 were male and 17 were female. The representation for males is more than double that for females. In comparison, of the 67 community members, 34 were male and 33 were female, equal representation.

When an organisation provides a representation for an advisory committee, this person generally holds a position of authority within the organisation. According to the Grampians Gender Indicators report which was last published in 2018, females currently occupy 30% of the key organisational positions such as management, general managers and executives. (ABS 2018) The two most prevalent positions held by members were manager and president. Therefore to be a member of advisory committees, women need to hold these positions. These positions are generally held by males and therefore is stopping women from participating in advisory committees.

To reduce the barriers to participation for women, the Terms of Reference need to be altered to ensure a gender balance of 40-40-20 is achieved. To reduce this barrier council could ask for 2 representatives from organisations and associations, of different gender identities.

Women's Register

The Victorian and Tasmanian Government have established a Women's Board Register that allows women to register their interest in being appointed to boards and committees. They have developed a database that provides information about educational and professional qualifications, employment and unpaid work experience as well as other areas of interest and expertise. There is also the opportunity to indicate what type of board participants would be interested in sitting on. When the government is looking for new board members they contact everyone on the register. This concept could also be adopted by local councils looking to improve diversity.

Multi Strategic Approach

It is important to use a variety of engagement activities for the one consultation. People have different capabilities and limitations which may alter how comfortable they feel participating in certain methods of engagement. Providing multiple methods reduces this barrier. (Gregory 2007)

No assumptions

Women may be left out of discussions on traditionally 'masculine' issues because of the assumptions of others. Council should be very careful not to define what women are interested in, nor should they assume that the needs and interests of women have been represented by other demographics. This is also relevant for males who may be excluded from traditionally 'feminine' topics. (Municipal Consultation Process Project 2004, p. 38) All community members, regardless of their gender can be impacted by any changes to the communities they reside in.

Provide practical support

There are numerous elements that may make attending the engagement sessions difficult for women. These may be transport, the location of parking to the venue, childcare, not speaking English or not being able to easily access the building. This might seem like a trivial suggestion, however it is also important to provide food. Food can be considered a low cost incentive for participants to attend. The food may also act as a comfort mechanism when participants are arriving or throughout the consultation. This is a low cost mechanism to implement. (Municipal Consultation Process Project 2004, p.40)

The budget for community engagement needs to incorporate the demands of these supports. If the budget is small then these supports will not be realistic. When an engagement method occurs over meal times, consider providing the members with food so that they do not have to find extra time to cook and eat before or after the consultation. Women without their license or young women may require assistance with transport, especially if the consultation

occurs during the evening. The use of community buses might be an alternative in some locations. An area where people can wait for those participating in engagement would also be a positive addition to the council facilities. This might involve a couch to sit on and a television to watch for example. These people would have to be of a certain age to ensure they are safe within council facilities.

Lack of skills

Women may be under the assumption that they do not have required skills to contribute effectively to the community engagement process. (Municipal Consultation Process Project 2004, p. 38) The Tasmanian Women's Register is demonstrating to women that they have skills that are transferable to roles within council.

Currently there are campaigns that educate women in the community about the skills required to be a councillor to increase the amount of women nominating for positions. For women who have not engaged with council before or have a different cultural background they may be unfamiliar with the vocabulary that is associated with Victorian Councils. Information can easily be provided to participants to reduce any anxiety or uncertainty that maybe surrounding the process of community engagement. There are similar programs being organised by Women with Disabilities. Education on local government processes is key to improving the self-esteem of women and in turn assisting them to feel comfortable engaging.

Provide Feedback

As members of the community who complete considerable amounts of paid and unpaid work, women carefully select how they will spend their remaining free time. Women are participating in their communities, however they are not spending their time participating in community engagement. They are volunteering their time and making decisions for a selection of organisations that create direct benefit for the community. Perhaps women have simply given up investing their time into local government as they do not see a value in this process. (Municipal Consultation Process Project 2004, p.10)

When contribution does occur local government needs to provide feedback to the community members that have had their input. Feedback should include what decisions were made based on the input provided and an understanding of what will happen next. This can help participants understand how they are influencing the decision making process and can identify how their involvement is benefiting the community. (Municipal Consultation Process Project 2004, p.10) The amount of benefit produced is a factor that will entice women to engage with council again.

Changing the norm

The Municipal Consultations Processes Project identified that Canadian women felt an increased anxiety or felt unsafe because of "lack of self-esteem, discrimination, men who put

women down, sexism, fear of speaking in public, women who are too critical of each other and a culture that remains too patriarchal.” (Municipal Consultation Process Project 2004, p.32) Women can feel uncomfortable engaging in situations with other members of the community. Women that are new to the area may find it difficult to fit in and make connections with other women. They know that other women will judge them, especially in groups. For example they may be judged for their appearance, the way their children behave and the way their children are dressed. To mitigate this women suggested that meetings should be chaired by women and minority men half of the time. There was also a preference towards less formal methods of holding meetings such as all members sitting in a circle, instead of a head table. (Municipal Consultation Process Project 2004, p.31)

Strengthen relationships with women’s organisations

Actively reach out and ask for the assistance of Women’s organisations when coordinating community consultations. The role of Women’s organisations is different to the role of a local government. They are seen as a trusted source of support for members of the community. There is a large opportunity for these organisations to provide input into the establishment and execution of community engagement activities. They are well equipped at identifying barriers that women may be experiencing or suggesting ways that equity could be improved. (Municipal Consultation Process Project 2004, p.40)

Clear parameters

Communicate to the community early on what level of decision making input they will have and specify what council is asking for the communities’ opinion on. This assists in creating transparency between the community and council. It also reduces the likelihood of the community being unsatisfied with the decisions made if they understood the engagement process. (Victorian Auditor-General’s Office 2015, p.9) Creating a positive experience can help improve trust between the community and council which will impact participation levels.

Suggestions from the Equality Advocates

Equality Advocates are women from a range of backgrounds and experiences interested in educating others about the layers of discrimination women can face. The equality advocates are employed by Women's Health Grampians to work towards advancing 'equality for all'. (Women's Health Grampians 2018)

Discussions occurred with three Equality Advocates to discuss intersectional barriers that may be experienced by those who engage with council, as well as to discuss actions that can be taken to increase the likelihood of diverse community members engaging.

Relationships

As mentioned throughout this report, council needs to be continually developing relationships with the community, in particular with diverse community groups. An example given throughout the discussions was the Wimmera Pride Project. Evidently this is an action that requires continual effort from council to demonstrate a commitment to these diverse groups. The majority of suggestions that the Equality Advocates provided was associated with building the link between council and the community.

Utilise diverse council staff

The Equality Advocates were very aware of diverse staff members employed at the partnering councils. However it was noted that these staff members needed to be seen by the community, regardless of their role within council. Diverse staff members should be present at Council events. The event does not need to relate to their diversity. This demonstrates that council values their diverse staff and that the community has an understanding that there is a range of input within their organisation.

Diverse community members will be more likely to engage with council if they can see themselves represented with council. One Equality Advocate noted that it is better to see one diverse staff members than none.

Diversity in council roles

The Equality Advocates noted that Yarriambiack Shire Council had a positive staffing model that assists the community to feel connected to council. They felt that Yarriambiack had allocated council staff for different needs. For example there are staff to connect with youth, older people and maternal. These staff were accountable for any requests they received and if they could not assist would always notify the correct staff member. This is interesting as Yarriambiack had positive levels of engagement within the community. It was also noted that Yarriambiack is a small council, whose staff were locals. This may increase the responsibility staff feel to the community.

Representation on committees

The Equality Advocates shared positive experiences of engaging on committees or groups where there was representation from council. The community groups felt they had a direct report to council through this role and were also able to develop a relationship with council officers. When council is conducting a community engagement process and requests community input, these officers have direct relationships with specific community groups that they can utilise. This process helps to develop trust between the two parties. When council is not connecting with diverse groups in the community, they may be further isolating the harder to reach groups.

The Equality Advocates noted that at some councils, engagement was a two way process and at some it is a one way process that occurs when council needs input from the community.

What makes people want to engage is the people that council are employing. It is important that council is always investing in their staff and training them within cultural diversity, intersectionality and accessibility training. When staff have the relevant information and education they have a better likelihood of adequately considering the needs of diverse community groups.

Be present

The Equality Advocates suggested that it would be a good idea for council to engage at events occurring within the community. Events are attended by a wide selection of the community and can be the perfect opportunity to engage with community members that may be harder to reach. The environment that events generally occur within are unlike the environment that council operates within. These opportunities may improve participation levels within diverse groups.

When attempting to engage with new groups in the community the suggestion was to engage via face to face methods and to go out and approach different community groups. This type of interaction begins relationships in a positive manner and demonstrates that council is interested in building the relationship. There are benefits of engaging in person instead of via email.

Once council has developed relationships with community groups they can utilise key contacts within the groups to engage with other community members. These contacts are often well respected in their community groups and have good relationships that have been developed over time. These community members are not engaging directly with council which is helpful until they feel comfortable to engage directly.

Diversity

All council platforms and publications should show images of diverse people performing everyday actions. The example provided was that Aboriginal people should be photographed at work or interacting at a meeting. Sometimes good intentioned imagery of diverse community members can further perpetuate stereotypes.

Often in local government there are documents and forms that need to be completed to receive services or interact with council. It is important that these reflect the diversity of the community. People need to see themselves on the forms. Providing an explanation of why council is requesting this personal information and ensuring that it is recorded in a confidential manner will hopefully demonstrate that council is interested in considering the needs of their diverse communities. Some diverse groups in the community have previously been discriminated by some government organisations and are very ready to be included.

Suggestions from the International Association of Public Participation

Grace Leotta, a trainer from the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) discussed methods that may increase female participation within local government community engagement. Grace is an experienced community engagement, training and organisational development specialist, with strong commitment to genuine community and stakeholder involvement and dialogue. (IAP2 2016)

The main barrier that Grace identified was that women in today's society are very busy simultaneously performing high levels of paid and unpaid work. Taking time to participate in community engagement may not be a priority for everyone. To engage with a larger selection of the community council needs to identify how to engage with busy women are and what the best method to achieve this would be. The following considerations have been recommended by the IAP2.

Utilise the women already engaging

As often seen within the Wimmera Southern Mallee engagement data, women of older age demographics engaged with council at higher percentages. Women who are older, may be parents and grandparents. These older women are already engaging and can be instrumental in reaching their daughters, daughter in laws and granddaughters. These family members often value the input of this figure in their lives and may be easily influenced to attend engagement activities with the assistance of this family member.

Dependent on the situation, these women may also be a support system for their families in difficult times. For example, they may financially support their children or they may be the primary caregiver of their grandchildren. Given the role they often inhabit within families, they are able to offer insight into other issues and their input should not be discredited. Broaden the content of the consultations to gain more information from these heavily engaged demographics.

Facebook Groups

The councils in the Wimmera Southern Mallee are using Facebook to inform and interact with stakeholders. There are many different elements to Facebook that may appeal to different types of women, such as Facebook groups. If someone has followed a group they normally have an interest in the content of this group. Therefore when council engages through a Facebook group they will be conducting a targeted engagement activity which may assist with interaction rates. If applicable to your council, try starting conversations within this group or advertise future engagement activities.

Facebook groups may be an easy method for busy members of the community to quickly communicate their opinion. It also targets those community members who do not follow the

council Facebook page. Metro South Health conducted research and identified that recent mothers wanted to be engaged online after hours. (Digital Community Engagement in Australia Report 2019, Page 21) This has proved successful for the organisation.

Advertise within Trusted Sources

Print media and radio are still very influential and respected methods of communication within the Wimmera Southern Mallee. These methods should continue to be utilised.

Ensure that any engagement activities are being advertised at trusted businesses within the community. This includes locations such as schools, chemists and sporting clubs. It is even better if the business has an association to the topic of the engagement activity. For example an activity that focuses on transport a positive location to advertise may be Vic Roads and RACV. People who are interested in improving the outcome of these decisions may frequent venues/offices.

Detail what will be discussed

Clarify what will be asked of participants during the engagement process. The more precise the description is the better. Some women may feel uncomfortable when being asked questions in person or questions on the spot, without adequate time to consider the content. Providing background information about the topic also helps participants to develop a better understanding of the issues. Women may not participate in community engagement if they think they could embarrass themselves in front of people they may know, especially in rural locations. Providing in depth information may help to reduce this barrier. In reality if one community member has a particular opinion about an issue then there is a high likelihood another community member also feels the same.

Networks

Approach existing networks such as local groups, associations, organisations and see whether could can organise an engagement activity for their members. Dependent on the type of network, pay particular consideration to the length or intensity of the activity.

Members of these networks may feel more comfortable to contribute their opinion as they are already familiar with the other members and the location. This method is also convenient as women are able to contribute to the decision making process within having to adjust or add extra activities to their normal schedule.

Suggestions from Engage Victoria

Target advertising material

If council is specifically wanting participation from a diverse group of community members they may need to target 'hard to reach' groups. This can be done through the use of words as demonstrated in an advertisement by the Victorian State Government. "The Victorian Government is committed to ensuring that government boards and committees reflect the composition of the Victorian community. This includes appropriate representation of women, regional Victorians, Aboriginal people, young Victorians, Victoria's culturally diverse community, the LGBTI community and Victorian's with a disability." (Victoria State Government 2019) This wording clearly demonstrates who the Victorian Government would like to see participation from and makes these groups of people feel welcome.

The language in material can also deter people from participating in engagement activities. An advertisement that requires the input of mums for an engagement activity on parenting will instantly exclude men from participating. Therefore it is important to use inclusive language when informing the community of any activities occurring.

When attempting to gain participation from women it is important to include imagery that challenges gender stereotypes. An alternate strategy to increase participation in community engagement is to use imagery that focuses on potential life style changes. (Australian Human Rights Commission 2013, p.46) For example if the engagement activity is about using water spaces, then imagery may depict ideal water spaces to illicit a response from the community to provide feedback.

Suggestions for increasing participation of women with disabilities

Women with Disabilities staff members Jane Oldfield, Bridget Jolley and Nadia Mattiazo all took the opportunity to suggest numerous actions that may increase the participation of women with disabilities in municipal community engagement. Nadia is the Program Manager: Community Inclusion & Women's Empowerment and Jane and Bridget are the Women's Engagement & Empowerment Officers. They offer a wealth of knowledge into an area that is currently unaccounted for within the councils of the Wimmera Southern Mallee.

There is a strong need to improve the decision making capabilities of women with disabilities as they experience a variety of inequalities at a higher rate than other members of the community. For example women with disabilities experience violence more than women without disabilities and men with disabilities, the injustices that occur against them are less likely to be reported than others and it is highly likely they will live in poverty. (Women with Disabilities Australia 2004)

The action that stood out within these conversations is the large benefit that developing with women with disabilities can have for council and the community. Currently 18.6% of females in Australia have a disability. (ABS 2016) Yet currently councils are unaware of whether these voices are being heard. Changes need to occur within the recording of demographics when engaging with the community.

Build the connection

To get women with disabilities involved in decision making it is essential that an underlying relationship has been developed with council. Establishing a relationship can take considerable time and is something that requires continually effort and patience on behalf of council. When this link has been established, these women feel valued and understand that their input is important and is leading to change that will benefit their lives.

To develop the relationship it was suggested that council engage in locations that are familiar to women with disabilities. Council offices can be an overwhelming and unfamiliar location. A Neighbourhood House is a great example of locations that women with disabilities may be found. Neighbourhood Houses are an accessible location that often has programs and activities to meet a diverse range of needs. Engaging in a location that women incidentally attend removes any physical or transportation barriers that may stop them from participating. Once women with disabilities feel comfortable engaging in familiar locations, they may be ready to engage in council environments.

Disability Advisory Committee

Although this method does not specifically focus on improving gender equity this action does assist in developing the relationship between council and people with disabilities. When the

members of the committee have been recruited these members can connect council to other women with disabilities and organisations that may be of benefit. This action also demonstrates to people with disabilities that council wants their input on a myriad of topics and begins to build the trust that this organisation is attempting make positive change on their behalf. Women with Disabilities, the organisation reports that establishing a Disability Advisory Committee has been very successful in councils throughout Victoria.

Service Providers

This action should only be utilised in the initial phase when attempting to establish connections with women with disabilities. It is not a preference. Service providers are in regular contact with clients which makes them a suitable conduit of information to women with disabilities. The relationship has already been established between the pair and is seen as a trusted source. The service providers can inform the women of engagement activities council is conducting and see whether they would be interested in participating. As mentioned this method is only to locate the women with disabilities in our community, it is not to become a continual tactic. One of the large barriers council does face in engaging with women with disabilities is that they do not actually know who or where these women are.

Communicate Correctly

There are numerous steps that should be taken to ensure a person with disabilities is respected. Introduce yourself when beginning the consultation and address the person by name, just as you would anyone else. When communicating with the person speak normally. Do not raise your voice or speak slowly. Dependent on the type of disability, attempt to speak to them at the same eye level. If a carer is present when conducting engagement, always address the person with the disability, not the carer.

Support events

Identify events that are occurring within the community that women with disabilities may be participating in or attending. Council may wish to support these events in an in kind or financial manner. These events evidently bring people with disabilities together and allow council the opportunity to educate community members about the operation of local government and they role they can play. Council may also be interested in establishing events that educate women about the operation of council and how they can participate. For example the *Enabling Women Leadership Program* empowers and upskills women with disabilities. This program ‘builds on, and expands the knowledge, skills, tools, and networks of women with disabilities, so that they are confident to take on advocacy and leadership roles within their communities.’ (Women with Disabilities 2018) Upon completion of this program, these women are equipped to participate in local government decision making and may be actively looking for ways to engage with local government and illicit change.

Assist with Transportation

Women with disabilities in rural locations may experience isolation and physical barriers to attending consultations. If these women do not drive or are not able to access public transport facilities then council may look to support participants by reimbursing the cost of transportation to attend the engagement activity. The use of a community bus or taxi coupons can also mitigate this issue.

Celebrate strengths

Frame consultations by focusing on experiences instead of opinions. For example, 'Come share your experience on using the local pool'. A barrier for women with disabilities is often that they believe they do not have any input of value. An engagement is framed in this method celebrates the strength and knowledge of real life experiences. There can be no wrong or right answer in an experience and they can provide is very unique as not everyone may experience the same issue or strength with the local pool.

Different tools

Women with Disabilities has provided some tips that can easily improve the accessibility of engagement activities. Council should utilise the benefits of TXT to confirm attendance or provide feedback to. This removes any barriers of verbal communication and ensures all responses are succinct. Often the promotional material may list a mobile number but the social expectation is that it would be only used to receive calls. By stating 'TXT this number to confirm your attendance', members feel comfortable to use this tool.

Provide the material for the consultation in multiple formats. For example provide the content on a screen, in a physical format on the table and offer the material before the engagement activity has occurred so that community members can become familiar with the content. This will ensure a variety of different needs are met and no one is excluded from providing input.

Consider the amount of questions being asked and determine which ones are essential. Select the questions that can be answered with a direct answer and do not confuse participants by asking multiple things in the one sentence. Ensure that these questions are written in Easy English.

Conduct engagement in facilities that meet accessibility requirements. Many people natural assume the facilities they have selected are able to be accessed by people with disabilities, when in reality they can only access components of the building. Some different questions to consider are: 'Is the lighting sufficient to support low visibility participants?', 'Is the sound of the presentation suitable for participants with low hearing?', 'Are the toilets disability accessible?', 'Can participants enter the building without assistance?'

When council conducts engagement activities there are unspoken social expectations that all participants experience. When conducting activities to anyone it is important to let them that they can participate in the manner that makes them feel most comfortable. Encourage all members to take toilet breaks whenever they like. Participants can participate by sitting on the ground, walking around or standing, which ever method is most comfortable. A barrier for some people with disabilities is that they physically cannot still for long periods of time and therefore choose not to engage. By breaking down some very simple social norms the engagement process becomes better for the participants.

Suggestions for increasing participation of youth

Rhiannon Jennings, Rural Development Coordinator of Southern Mallee from Youth Affairs Council Victoria (YACVic) discussed a selection of methods to increase participation from youth. The following suggestions do not relate to only female youth, as there is limited research on the differences between genders. 'Youth' are people aged between 12-25 years old. Rhiannon has considerable skills within the youth and community services sector.

The age group 12-18 do not have the right to vote in elections. Municipal community engagement activities provide youth with the opportunity to be involved in decision making for their community. These methods support the participation of all youth in community engagement. Becoming accustomed to the local government process from a young age may increase the interest in adulthood.

Involve them

Council staff who are engaging with youth may not have any experience or skills required to work within this area. It is important when creating and establishing an engagement activities that youth are involved in all stages of programming. They need to feel valued and that engagement with council is not tokenistic. If decisions are made by adults for youth, then they are less likely to participate. Assumptions should not be made about young people and about methods in which they would like to participate.

If the content of the engagement activity does not resonate or mean something to young people then it will be more difficult to get their support for the content of the engagement activity.

Recently YACVic established a session to educate youth on sexual health issues. They consulted youth on the title of the session and decided on 'Sexy & Safe'. This title did not appeal to the adults creating the session, however the program has appealed to youth and seen very positive levels of participation.

A majority of youth are not able to drive and need to be engaged in locations that are already located at. Schools are a good location to engage youth between the ages of 12-18. Instead of contacting the principal directly, try identify a back door entry such as a Wellbeing Co-ordinator or other relevant staff member. Communicate to this staff member the benefits of what is trying to be achieved from the consultation. This may helpful in ensuring the topic of engagement resonates with the curriculum. For example this engagement activity will increase the students' knowledge on safe sexual activity may be relevant for students in health based classes.

Social Media

Youth are particularly active on social media during school hours, when they can easily access the internet. In a rural or regional location youth may not have access to the internet, which would present as a barrier. To target the youth that are active on Facebook, 'boosting' can be used. 'Boosting' a post means paying a fee to increase the amount of people that will view your content. (Hootsuite 2018) When scrolling their feed they would be presented with a post detailing the community engagement that council wants input on.

Youth are using social media every single day to connect with the world. There is a large opportunity to connect on different platforms and determine the opinions of this demographic in a method that is familiar to them. Currently Instagram and Snapchats are used by youth.

Try think like youth

As there are a wide selection of youth ages, it is important to consider different strategies for different age groups. What will work for 12-14 year olds may not work for 22-25 year olds and may stop them from participating.

Youth experience different barriers than adults. When executing an engagement activity try to envision some of the barriers that youth may experience for this engagement and identify how this could be combated. In regional locations there are many students who are reliant on the bus timetable that will not be able to attend anything that occurs after school. Students in rural locations may not have access to internet and therefore exclude them from online activities. Consider how youth can be engaged in groups with their friends which will enhance the levels of participation.

In rural and regional locations, a high percentage of students have to utilise the bus services to attend school. This generally means that any engagement activities that occur outside of school hours, will not be attended by this large cohort of youth. At the other time, youth who are not at school may be employed and will not be able to attend any activities that occur during school hours.

Identify which sports and activities are prevalent within the community. Do not schedule engagement activities at the same time as these. Youth will not miss their recreational activity to engage with council. This is when it is very important to think like youth and determine what a priority is for different cohorts.

De identify data

Often in rural and regional locations, everyone knows everyone. Youth are skeptical to give their opinion and be judged by other adult community members. To increase the likelihood that people participate in the decision making process, ensure that it is not compulsory for

participants to record their contact details and they can provide their input in an anonymous manner.

Be creative

Use methods of engagement that youth will want to participate in. Try to make the engagement activity fun or incorporate a point of difference. An online survey isn't very likely to be a popular engagement method for youth. Try to integrate into the activity, mediums that young people value, such as online platforms and videos to keep the participants interested in the content. Activities in which people have to 'do something' such as draw or look at images help to create interest in the engagement. (Better Together, p.16)

Suggestions for increasing participation of Cultural and Linguistically Diverse Women

Identifying and removing barriers is essential to engaging with culturally and linguistically diverse women. The following suggestions are found within resources from the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health. (MCWH). MCWH is a community-based organisation led by and for women from migrant and refugee backgrounds. (MCWH, 2019)

Focus on the women

Frame the consultation as a need that can positively benefit their lives. For example focuses on the contributions that CALD women can provide to the broader community. (MCWH 2010, p.13) Engaging in familiar locations can assist women to feel comfortable contributing to the decision making process. Eventually when they are familiar with the engagement process they may be inclined to engage in council locations. When council chooses to engage in locations familiar to their stakeholders they are demonstrating a commitment to engaging with a diverse community selection. (MCWH 2010, p.15)

If an opportunity to conduct an engagement activity arises with a group of CALD women, consider who they are. There are many different characteristics that culturally and linguistically diverse inhabit. These different characteristics such as English proficiency, length of time in Australia, age etc will all impact the type of engagement that women are interested in having with council. If council gets this level wrong then the opportunity to re-engage will be limited. (MCWH 2010, p.24)

Labelling projects

Name engagement activities in a manner that focuses on knowledge and skills that women already have, instead of what they do not have. For example if the title was 'Domestic Violence Consultation' a less confronting title may be 'Home Safety'. Some multicultural women do not believe they have adequate skills to participate in municipal community engagement. Therefore be cautious not to use words that focus on 'leadership', as this may deter participation. (MCWH 2010, p.14)

Target the family

Family is a core focus for multicultural women. Frame the consultation in a manner that encourages participation from the entire family. Organising the activity as a family event removes any childcare barriers. This type of consultation allows women to participate whilst still performing family duties. It removes any feelings of guilt that may be experienced when not performing actions that are for the family. Women are more likely to respond to campaigns that are relevant and supportive of their lifestyles. By encouraging all family

members to participate, council has obtained diverse input from selection of ages and genders and potentially backgrounds.

Councils should attempt to utilise any preexisting relationships that have been developed with culturally and linguistically diverse children/youth. This relationship can be used to communicate information regarding engagement opportunities to the women. This can help women to feel that participating would be 'culturally allowed' as the action would be a parental benefit. (MCWH 2010, p.14)

Dietary Requirements

If you are aware of who is attending your consultations it can be important to check whether the participants have any dietary requirements. For example strict Muslims do not eat dairy products on Wednesdays and Fridays. (MCWH 2010, p.23)

Building Capacity

The Municipal Centre for Women's Health organised a series of training for CALD women living in their community. Modules on Community Awareness were held over a period of two weeks and included topics such as the Australian Political System, Voting and Democracy and Women in Local Government. (MCWH 2010, p.19) These presentations were rated highly by the participants. One of the barriers to participation for CALD women is that they may not understand how Australian local government operates and what role members of the community can play.

These training programs educate the women about the processes and encourage them to participate in local government decision making. Some women may never have participated in a committee or completed a survey, therefore these processes may be completely foreign. This is addressing an underlying barrier that is stopping culturally and linguistically diverse women from participating.

Suggestions for increasing participation of Aboriginal Women

The National Rural Women's Coalition developed a First Nation Women's Engagement Strategy which is responsible for the majority of the following suggestions. The information found within the strategy are based on interactions with the Kamilaroi, Gamilaraay and Gomeri Country and therefore may not be representative or relevant for the First Nation women of Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk.

If council is serious about engaging with women from First Nations then they will need to take substantial steps out of their comfort zone to demonstrate to these women the importance of engaging with them. Traditional methods of community engagement will need to be modified to allow Aboriginal work to contribute to their best ability. Performing these actions will assist in forming more permanent relationships.

Appreciate the culture

All engagement activities should recognise and value the diversity of any Aboriginal women that are present. This will guide the tone of the activity. Aboriginal women transfer cultural knowledge between different generations by attending events with other family members. Acknowledge the commitment to continue building a respectful relationship between Aboriginal women and other Australians, in particular local government associations.

Any engagement activities should also respect and acknowledge the history of Aboriginal women.

Comfortable methods of engagement

The National Rural Women's Coalition found that the Gomilaroi women preferred to communicate their opinions through traditional means such as storytelling, dancing and singing. Performing engagement activities via this method relaxed participants and opened the communication channels between participants. (National Rural Women's Coalition, p.2)

The methods in which Aboriginal women are engaging may be very complex, do not try to control or alter the way these women are communicating with one another as it will have negative impacts for both parties.

Be clear

Any engagement activities should have a clear purpose to encourage participation from Aboriginal women. It is important to provide relevant background or additional information to participants to stimulate interest and facilitate discussions. This may assist in reducing any ambiguous questions or concerns of the topic. This information should be easy to understand

and free from acronyms and over complicated local government phrases. (National Rural Women's Coalition p.6)

Cultural Norms

There are cultural protocols that may be performed at different stages of engagement activities. Have conversations with the key contacts to discuss who will be attending and what local cultural protocols need to occur. This may involve conducting a Welcome to Country, Acknowledgement of Country and Elders and managing the appropriate cultural hierarchy that will be present. (National Rural Women's Coalition, p.4) If council does plan on using engagement methods that are of a traditional manner, it is important to enlist the services of a facilitator that is specialised within Aboriginal culture.

There is a cultural hierarchy that needs to be adhered to. This may determine the schedule in which Aboriginal women attend the activity. Council should also ensure any Elder women are well respected and their needs are accounted for. (National Rural Women's Coalition ,p.5) Confirm how these Elder women would like to be addressed.

Try to incorporate the use of storytelling, music, art, photographs and maps when communicating information regarding the engagement activity.

Opportunity to evaluate

When Aboriginal women have participated in an engagement activity is important that they have the opportunity to evaluate the activity. This will allow the process to become better for future activities as well as demonstrate to the Aboriginal women that council is committed to receiving feedback. (National Rural Women's Coalition, p.6)

Appropriate Time

Notify the Aboriginal community of the engagement activity at the earliest time possible. Representatives need to be involved from the beginning to create a partnership and ensure the Aboriginal community does not feel engagement is tokenistic or that decisions have already been made. Some methods of engagement may require longer time periods to adequately allow Aboriginal participants to effectively contribute to the decision making process. Some Aboriginal methods of engagement may take longer to orchestrate than traditional local government methods. (National Rural Women's Coalition, p.7) Consultations that are performed quickly will fail.

Conclusion

Community engagement is an important tool for all women of varying abilities and backgrounds. Better informed decision making helps to create better outcomes. Our communities within the Wimmera Southern Mallee are made up of diverse women who play a core role in decision making. As women know their position best, they should have the opportunity to represent their particular interests and needs.

Every time a council assess their community engagement processes and identify how they can improve participation from women of varying abilities and backgrounds, they are making progress towards gender equity. There will come a time when participation from diverse community members is ingrained in council community engagement processes. For councils wanting to take action to engage with a diverse selection of the community there are a variety of actions that can be undertaken. There are practical examples from the government that have proven results and then there are smaller suggestions that can improve the environment of community engagement. The level of changes are dependent on the council and the way they currently conduct community engagement.

All interactions council has with the community should show diversity. When the community can see themselves in council content they may be more inclined to engage with council. Women with Disabilities and the Equality Advocates emphasize that the key to increasing participation from women of intersectionality was developing a positive relationship. Some women may have experienced levels of discrimination throughout their entire life. Because of these experiences they may be hesitant whether they will be valued and that their input will be actioned. These actions involve a large commitment from council and in some instances may involve a culture shift to enable these outcomes.

Discussions with the International Association of Public Participation focused on identifying how to successfully engage with busy women. In today's society women have many paid and unpaid roles to perform in the community. Participating in community engagement needs to be an activity worthwhile of their time. In particular it needs to be directly related to producing a benefit, as research has shown that women are participating in other elements of their community when they can positively affect the outcome. (IAP2 2019) The research conducted in Canada by the Municipal Consultation Process Project in 2004 is still very relevant to the work occurring in Australia. The report provides many best practice actions that can alter the participation levels. In many instances the suggestions are minimal and easy to implement. As a collection these actions can change the entire engagement process for women.

The research for engaging with Aboriginal women was very limited. One report from the National Rural Women's Coalition provided considerable guidance when conducting engagement. When engaging with groups whom have traditionally been left out of the decision making process, council needs to be open to trialling methods of engagement that have not previously been used within local government. This may include engaging outdoors or through methods of engagement such as storytelling. These methods will assist in unearthing the needs of the women and what steps need to occur to meet the outcomes. It is important that any feedback provided regarding the engagement is actioned to increase the likelihood of reengagement. The Multicultural Centre for Women's Health have developed some very useful resources to guide engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse women. In many instances, it is about having an awareness of the elements of engagement that may need to be altered to be culturally appropriate and respectful for women.

Within any topic of engagement, each process must incorporate multiple strategies to engage with a diverse range of the community. This may involve utilising a selection of engagement methods, experimenting with less traditional methods of engagement and taking care to incorporate changes that increase the capacity of underrepresented voices to be heard. (Gregory 2007) What works for one council, may not work for another. Regardless of the outcome, any steps council is taking to better incorporate the views of diverse communities will contribute to the larger picture. In other words, attempting to engage with a diverse range of voices is better than not.

References

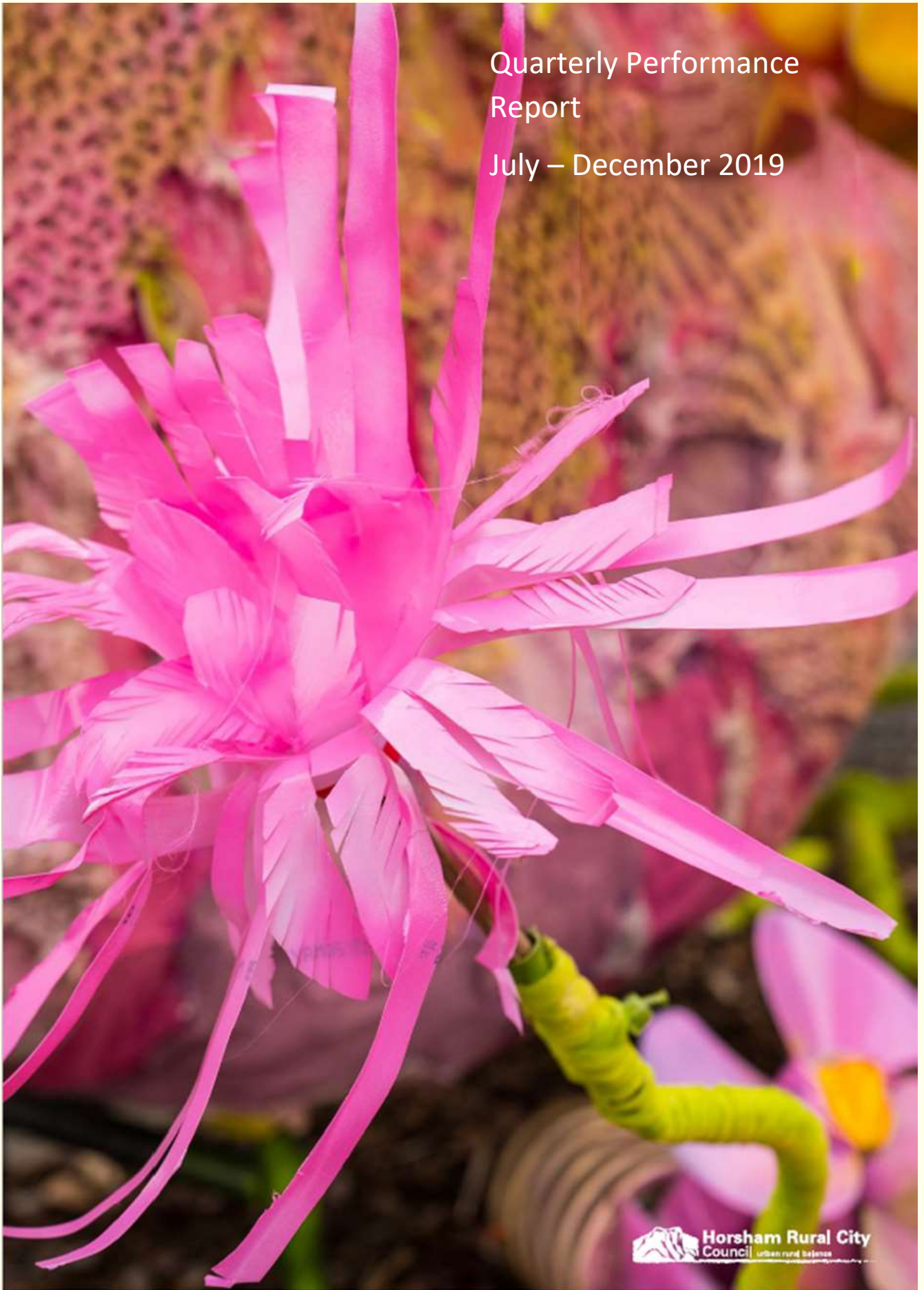
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). (2016). *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2015*. Retrieved from <https://www.and.org.au/pages/disability-statistics.html>.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). (2018). *Slow growth at the top, but big challenges remain for gender equality*. Retrieved from [http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4125.0~Sep%202018~Media%20Release~Slow%20growth%20at%20the%20top,%20but%20equality%20challenges%20remain%20%20\(Media%20Release\)~11](http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4125.0~Sep%202018~Media%20Release~Slow%20growth%20at%20the%20top,%20but%20equality%20challenges%20remain%20%20(Media%20Release)~11) .
- Engage Victoria. (2019).
- Australian Human Rights Commission. (2013). *Women in male-dominated industries*, Australian Government. Retrieved from https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/WIMDI_Toolkit_2013.pdf.
- ArneTech. (2019). *Digital Community Engagement in Australia Report 2019*. Retrieved from https://www.iap2.org.au/Tenant/C0000004/00000001/files/News/1905_Arnetech_DigitalCommunityEngagementReport2019.pdf.
- Blazina, C & Kierski, W. (2009). The male fear of the feminine and its effects on counselling and psychotherapy, *The Journal of Mens Studies*, pp. 155-172.
- Brackertz, N & Meredyth, D. (2008). *Social Inclusion of the Hard to Reach*, Swinburne Institute for Social Research, Australia. Retrieved from <https://healthissuescentre.org.au/images/uploads/resources/Social-inclusion-of-the-hard-to-reach.pdf>.
- Brigham Young University. (2012). *Women speak less when they're outnumbered*, Science Daily, 18 September. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/09/120918121257.htm>.
- City of Durham. (2018). *Equitable Community Engagement Blueprint*, Department of Neighborhood Improvement Services Community Engagement Team. Retrieved from https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/durhamnis/pages/592/attachments/original/1543332399/Draft_Equitable_Engagement_Blueprint_%2818%29_11.06.pdf?1543332399.
- Graffunder, C. (2019). 13 June, Public Health Prevention Conference, Melbourne.
- Gregory, J. (2007). *A framework of consumer engagement in Australian health policy*, Health Issues, vol. 91, pp.22-27.
- Hootsuite. (2018). The Facebook boost post button: how to use it and get results, retrieved. Retrieved from <https://blog.hootsuite.com/how-does-facebook-boost-posts-work/>.
- International Association for Public Participation. (2016). *Introducing Grace Leotta*. Retrieved from <https://www.iap2.org.au/ccms.r?Pageid=6000&TenID=IAP2&DispMode=goto%7C10155>.
- Jennings, R. (2019). 8 May, Youth Affairs Council Victoria.
- Leotta, G. (2019). 23 April, International Association of Public Participation.

- Mergel, I. (2012). *Social Media in the Public Sector: A Guide to Participation, Collaboration and Transparency in the Networked World*. New York, Wiley.
- Miranda, R. (2005). *Impact of women's participation and leadership on outcomes*, United Nations. Retrieved from https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/eql-men/docs/EP.7_rev.pdf.
- Moses, M & Quaizon, R. (2010). *Best Practice Guide for leadership programs for immigrant and refugee women*, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (MCWH), Melbourne. Retrieved from http://www.mcwh.com.au/downloads/MCWH_PACE_BestPracticeGuide_.pdf.
- Moses, M & Quaizon, R. (2010). *Participate, Advocate, Communicate, Engage: a leadership project for immigrant and refugee women*, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, Melbourne (MCWH). Retrieved from http://www.mcwh.com.au/downloads/PACE/PACE_%20Project_Full_%20Report_Final.pdf.
- Multicultural Centre for Women's Health. (2019). *About Us*. Retrieved from <https://www.mcwh.com.au/about-mcwh/>.
- Municipal Consultation Processes Project. (2004). *Increasing women's participation in municipal decision making*, Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Retrieved from <https://fcm.ca/sites/default/files/documents/resources/tool/increasing-womens-participation-in-municipal-decision-making-strategies-for-more-inclusive-canadian-communities-wilg.pdf>.
- National Rural Women's Coalition. *First Nation Women's Engagement Strategy*. Retrieved from https://www.nrwc.com.au/images/workshops/First-Nation-Womens-Engagement-Strategy_NRWC_FINAL-FINAL.pdf.
- Oldfield, J Bridget Jolley, B & Mattiazzo, N. (2019). *Women with Disabilities*.
- Salthouse, S & Frohmader, C. (2004). *Double the odds- Domestic Violence and Women with Disabilities*. Retrieved from <http://wwda.org.au/issues/viol/viol2001/odds/>.
- Tasmanian Government. *Join the Women's Register*, Department of Premier and Cabinet. Retrieved from http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/csr/programs-and-services/women_on_boards_and_committees/about_the_register.
- Victorian Auditor-General's Office. (2015). *Public Participation in Government Decision-making: Better practice guide*. Retrieved from <https://www.audit.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/20150130-Public-Participation-BPG.pdf>.
- Women with Disabilities. (2018). *Enabling Women Leadership Program*. Retrieved from <https://www.wdv.org.au/our-work/our-work-with-women/enabling-women-leadership-program/>
- Women's Health Grampians. (2018). *Equality Advocate- CoRE: Equality for All Position Description*. Retrieved from <https://whg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Equality-Avocate-PD-Equality-for-All-.pdf>.

- Youth Affairs Council of South Australia. *Better Together*, Government of South Australia. Retrieved from https://officeforyouth.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/39680/Final-Better-Together-Youth-Engagement-Guide-V3-2016-02-09.pdf.

Quarterly Performance
Report

July – December 2019



Contents

Section 1	3
Chief Executive Officer's Overview	
Section 2 Council Plan	4
Goal 1 Overview	4
Performance against the Council Plan 2019-2022 Initiatives Performance Indicators	
Goal 2 Overview	10
Performance against the Council Plan 2019-2022 Initiatives Performance Indicators	
Goal 3 Overview	14
Performance against the Council Plan 2019-2022 Initiatives Performance Indicators	
Goal 4 Overview	18
Performance against the Council Plan 2019-2022 Initiatives Performance Indicators	
Goal 5 Overview	22
Performance against the Council Plan 2019-2022 Initiatives Performance Indicators	
Section 3	26
Performance against Customer Service Targets	
Section 4	27
Business Improvement	
Section 5	28
Capital Works Report	
Section 6	30
Audit and Risk Committee	
Section 7	31
Financial Report	

Section 1

Chief Executive Officer's Overview

I am pleased to present the Quarterly Performance Report for the first half of the year 1 July – 31 December 2019.

This is the first Quarterly Performance Report produced by Council and is essentially bringing together and aligning a number of reports that have been provided individually to Council in the past. Reports will now be provided quarterly and presented in a more readable format for the community more generally.

The exact content of this report will evolve over the initial 12 months, but will, I hope provide a good overview and insight in to Council's operations for the period.

For this first half of the 2019-2020 financial year the following key highlights are provided:

- Council plan actions for the 6 months to 31 December 2019:
 - 34 items completed
 - 85 items underway
 - 5 items not yet started
- Quarterly financial statements to 31 December 2019:
 - Expenditure to budget is 7.1% under budget (3.7% in Service Delivery)
 - Capital works expenditure is at 85% of year-to-date budget
 - Strong cash position \$29 million
 - Staff numbers and turnover are within budgeted levels
 - Spending on operational initiatives is on budget
 - 41 Initiative projects, 18 have yet to incur any expenditure year-to-date
- Update on major capital projects
 - Livestock Exchange roof – is progressing well – see page 29
 - Outdoor pool refurbishments – were completed in December and the pool is again fully operational – see page 28
- Roads program:
 - The focus of Council's roads program remains renewal of both urban and rural roads, with priorities based on periodic condition inspections, which consider factors such as roughness, breaking up of pavement and in urban areas condition of kerbing.
 - Some upgrade works are also underway, including the construction of Peppertree Lane in Horsham, and widening of parts of the Drung Jung Road and the Wail Kalkee Road, thanks to grant funding from the State Government's Fixing Country Roads program.



Further details about all major initiatives and Council Plan four year priorities can be found in the section Performance against the Council Plan 2019-2022.

Sunil Bhalla
 Chief Executive Officer
 Horsham Rural City Council

Section 2

Goal 1 – Community and Cultural Development

Develop Horsham and the municipality as a diverse, inclusive and vibrant community

We support our diverse community by developing an environment that aims to cater to the shifting needs of our residents. We support innovation and encourage artistic and cultural expressions to develop our municipality as a great place to live.



Horsham Youth Councillors take the helm



Twenty young people from the Horsham area were inducted as members of the city's first Youth Council during the first half of 2019-20. Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) Mayor Mark Radford was on hand to congratulate those selected on their success.

He said the Youth Council would be given the opportunity to develop initiatives and events and also help shape the future direction of HRCC's policies.

Rotary drives home family violence message

Rotary Clubs from Maryborough and Horsham have teamed up to deliver an important family violence message to Wimmera people.

Large banners displaying the words "sayNo2familyviolence" were erected at the entrances to Horsham from Natimuk Road.

The campaign's origins belong in Maryborough where a local Rotary Club has promoted awareness and conversation about family violence since 2014.

The concept of bringing the campaign to Horsham started August 2017 when the Rotary Club of Maryborough presented their achievements to Rotary Club of Horsham East. Since then, both the Rotary Clubs of Horsham and Horsham East have worked together to roll out the "sayNo2familyviolence" campaign in the Wimmera.

Horsham and Maryborough are cities with some of the highest family violence rates in Victoria.



Council Plan Performance Progress

1.1 Contribute to building a vibrant, diverse and resilient community			
Pursue ongoing funding for a neighbourhood renewal program in Horsham North		100%	Project in recess until further reactivation.
Pursue funding for implementation of the Horsham North Urban Design Framework and Railway Corridor Master Plan		50%	Project in recess until further reactivation.
Facilitate ongoing development of community facilities at Cameron Oval, Laharum		100%	The Laharum and Haven Precinct plans have been finalised. Council submitted an application to RDV for works at the Laharum Hall but this was unsuccessful. Council is working with the Laharum Sports Inc regarding funding for Stage 2 works at the Cameron Oval.
Facilitate ongoing development of community facilities at Haven Recreational Reserve		30%	Open Space Strategy Adopted by Council. Meeting held with Haven Tennis Club & Haven Community representatives regarding a plan to address funding for lighting.
Complete construction of the Kalkee Road Children's and Community Hub and commence operations		100%	Construction completed.
Implement Volunteer Management Framework		75%	An extension of the implementation program until 30 June 2020 has been approved by the Executive Management Team. This will provide a proper opportunity for the program worker to overcome resistance to the program and to ensure that the arrangements are properly embedded and made sustainable before the worker's appointment ends.
Develop and implement an Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan		100%	The Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan has been endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. On 21 May 2019 the Plan was formally launched with actions now being implemented.
Review future use of all kindergartens and Maternal & Child Health, post the Horsham North Children's Hub		70%	The Early Years Plan has been completed. This has included a review of these assets. Robin Street Kindergarten/Maternal and Child Health Centre is now being used as a Neighbourhood House. Bennett MCH Centre and Roberts Avenue Kindergarten are considered now surplus council assets.
Develop a master plan for Dudley Cornell Reserve following the construction of the Children's Hub		95%	The Dudley Cornell Landscape Plan is now in place. Consideration required of how precinct plans, including DCLP, are prioritized as part of broader CAD Activation & C2R planning.
Support our local communities in developing community plans and strategies		60%	Awaiting guidance from State Government (new Local Govt Act) in relation to how Community Planning will inform future Council Plans.
Implement recommendations from Innovate (Indigenous) Reconciliation Action Plan		75%	Actions have commenced.

1.2 Develop a safe, active and healthy community, encouraging participation			
Develop and progressively implement a plan for the redevelopment of the Horsham City Oval precinct	●	25%	Will commence as part of City To River City Oval/Sawyer Park sub -precinct planning project
Encourage redevelopment of community facilities at the Horsham Showgrounds	●	85%	Social Infrastructure Plan draft has been received and will be discussed with stakeholders and the community. Development will be in line with City to River Master Plan recommendations
Complete a detailed feasibility study for a multipurpose/indoor sports and community facility	●	100%	The draft feasibility study has been completed.
Implement outcomes from the multipurpose/indoor sports and community facility feasibility study	●	0%	This is now to be considered as part of the Indoor/Outdoor Regional Sports Facility Feasibility Study.
Development of the Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017	●	100%	The existing Plan is still current. Preliminary meetings have been held with DHHS regarding the review and development of the next Health and Wellbeing Plan.
Support family violence prevention programs & initiatives	●	95%	Act@Work program actions are near full implementation.
Development of Positive Ageing initiatives	●	100%	The project was successfully completed and has now become part of Council business through the action plan implementation.
Review of Youth services in consultation with other agencies and develop a strategy	●	100%	The Youth Strategy was completed in October 2018. The implementation plan has been written with first stage being the employment of a Youth Planning and Engagement Officer.
Activate the Wimmera River Precinct for the community and visitors (including lights and greater presentation)	●	75%	City to River strategic planning has identified opportunities for the River precinct. Transition from strategic planning to operational status of the project is underway following a Council decision on 16 December 2019. Further consultation with user groups is planned for early 2020. The Pedal Boats project, funded through Victorian Governments Pick My Project program, is currently finalising operational aspects of the activation.
Plan and progressively construct shared cycling and walking track paths along the Wimmera River -- from Riverside Bridge to Horsham Weir - both sides, including improvements to lighting and other facilities	●	75%	Preliminary research and reconnaissance undertaken of priority bike tracks in line with Open Space Strategy recommendations.
Improve presentation, lighting and walking track condition around the racecourse	●	100%	Works completed.
Encourage the development of a riverside café	●	75%	Following a Council decision on 16 December 2019 to proceed with the City to River project, the development of a cafe site can begin. Project scope will be developed in early 2020.
Support planning for review of use of the Riverside Recreation Hub precinct as part of the Wimmera River strategy	●	0%	There will be a further report to Council in January 2020 regarding this action.
Determine Councils future role in Aged Care as a consequence of Commonwealth Government Aged Care reforms currently being undertaken	●	75%	There will be a further report to Council in January 2020 regarding this action.
Support behaviours that reinforce respect and equality for women and address rising levels of family violence	●	90%	Gender Equity Officer appointed to complete outstanding Act@Work actions.
Support behaviours that reinforce respect and equality for all members of the community and address rising levels of violence generally	●	85%	Communities of Respect and Equality Membership, Community of Practice.


1.3 Contribute to cultural activities that enhance our community			
Complete Business Plan to determine the viability and funding options for an artist in residence facility on the Wimmera River.	●	60%	Further investigation required. Reconnection with the Developer required to get current status on project intent and commitment.
Work with the Wesley Committee of Management to review arrangements associated with the Wesley PAC	●	100%	Council decision made regarding future ownership subject to compliance works being carried out.
Develop a public art action plan	●	90%	Status Report on existing Public Art action plan to be presented to the Executive Management Team and Public Art Advisory Committee. Plan for implementation of one new project before the end of the financial year.
Continue to develop the Horsham Cinema in the main cinema with improved seating, screen and sound in conjunction with the cinema operator	●	95%	New lease in place which includes further improvements to the main cinema.
Work with the Horsham Historical Society to plan for and scope a new Heritage Centre.	●	100%	Feasibility Study complete - with recommendation for a Regional Discovery Centre and Business Case.
Support the Arapiles Historical Society with the Natimuk Museum development	●	70%	Old Garage site opened to public as part of the 2019 Natimuk Frinj. The Arapiles Historical Society Committee continues to seek sponsorship and develop their suite of policies to place them in a more competitive position to access grants.
Form a stronger relation with Wimmera Machinery Field Days committee and their major and significant event in the municipality.	●	60%	Discussions have taken place with Wimmera Machinery Field Days organisation to develop a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) for Council support of the Field days official dinner, mowing / watering of site and a Council presence (stand) during the event. Included in these discussions have been the necessary permits and development of a timeline for applications.
Review service levels for rural hall operational costs, safety and amenity upgrades	●	20%	HRCC Policy Development of Community Facilities - Agreements & Charges presented to Council briefing session in Dec
1.4 Develop the municipality as a desirable place to live, work and enjoy for people of all			
Work with other Councils and relevant agencies to prepare rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme	●	100%	Transition commenced in October 2017. Completed in December 2018.
CBD Revitalisation Project – 2016-2025 Stage 1 - improved urban design	●	10%	Approval to undertake schematic design.
CBD Revitalisation Project – 2016-2025 Stage 2 - Town Square	●	50%	Considering pocket parks as part of City to River project.
Work with Victrack to improve underpasses between Horsham North and wider Horsham	●	100%	Works on initial project largely complete. Further scoping required for future works.
Review the Domestic Animal Management Plan	●	100%	Completed was adopted by Council Dec 2019.

Goal 1 Initiatives


No initiatives

Performance Indicators


*Active library members

	FY 2017-2018 11.83%	FY 2018-2019 11.06%	July 2019-Dec 2019 7.79%
---	------------------------	------------------------	-----------------------------


Library collection usage

	FY 2017-2018 2.4	FY 2018-2019 2.14	July 2019-Dec 2019 1.92
---	---------------------	----------------------	----------------------------


Standard of library collection

	FY 2017-2018 46.14%	FY 2018-2019 43.11%	July 2019-Dec 2019 44.45%
---	------------------------	------------------------	------------------------------


Cost of library service

	FY 2017-2018 \$5.75	FY 2018-2019 \$5.70	July 2019-Dec 2019 \$7.24
---	------------------------	------------------------	------------------------------


*Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once a year

	FY 2017-2018 89.63%	FY 2018-2019 90.16%	July 2019-Dec 2019 79.94%
--	------------------------	------------------------	------------------------------


Participation in first MCH home visit

	FY 2017-2018 100%	FY 2018-2019 98.76%	July 2019-Dec 2019 101.61%
---	----------------------	------------------------	-------------------------------


Infant enrolments in the MCH service

	FY 2017-2018 101.25%	FY 2018-2019 100.41%	July 2019-Dec 2019 100%
---	-------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------


Cost of the MCH service

	FY 2017-2018 \$70.48	FY 2018-2019 \$60.62	July 2019-Dec 2019 \$58.34
---	-------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------


*Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once a year

	FY 2017-2018 86.54%	FY 2018-2019 94.12%	July 2019-Dec 2019 82.05%
---	------------------------	------------------------	------------------------------


*Percentage of Critical and Major Non-Compliance Outcome Notifications

	FY 2017-2018 0%	FY 2018-2019 93.75%	July 2019-Dec 2019 66.67%
---	--------------------	------------------------	------------------------------

Time taken to action food complaints

	FY 2017-2018 4.67 days	FY 2018-2019 3 days	July 2019-Dec 2019 3.5 days
---	---------------------------	------------------------	--------------------------------


Food safety assessments

	FY 2017-2018 112.50%	FY 2018-2019 99.41%	July 2019-Dec 2019 89.14%
---	-------------------------	------------------------	------------------------------


Cost of food safety service

	FY 2017-2018 \$666.84	FY 2018-2019 \$650.59	July 2019-Dec 2019 \$621.82
---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------------


***Utilisation of Aquatic Facilities**

	FY 2017-2018 8.20%	FY 2018-2019 8.77%	July 2019-Dec 2019 8.31%
---	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------------


Cost of aquatic facilities per visit

	FY 2017-2018 \$3.10	FY 2018-2019 \$4.31	July 2019-Dec 2019 \$3.92
---	------------------------	------------------------	------------------------------


***Animal Management Prosecutions**

	FY 2017-2018 0	FY 2018-2019 1	July 2019-Dec 2019 0
---	-------------------	-------------------	-------------------------


Time taken to action animal management requests

	FY 2017-2018 1.01 days	FY 2018-2019 1 day	July 2019-Dec 2019 1 day
---	---------------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------------

Animals reclaimed

	FY 2017-2018 45.31%	FY 2018-2019 62.91%	July 2019-Dec 2019 41.25%
---	------------------------	------------------------	------------------------------

Cost of animal management service

	FY 2017-2018 \$72.43	FY 2018-2019 \$117.15	July 2019-Dec 2019 \$61.96
---	-------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------

*LGPRF Audited Indicators (Local Government Performance Reporting Framework)

Goal 2 – Sustaining the Economy

Lead in sustainable growth and economic development

As our community grows, so our region grows. We welcome new development and we aim to support enterprise, small and large whilst advocating for the community to shop locally. We will continue to promote and develop sustainable projects.



City to River moves to next stage



Horsham Rural City Council has made alterations to its Draft City to River Masterplan following a review of feedback gathered during the public consultation period.

The Draft Masterplan was developed as a series of conceptual ideas and possibilities for the future of Horsham's sports facilities, city centre and riverfront.

Some 740 official submissions were received during the feedback period from 4 July to August 30 which included discussions with key user groups.

Council to develop Social Infrastructure Plan












Horsham Rural City Council is seeking the public's help to develop its first Social Infrastructure Plan. The plan will determine priorities for the planning, provision and development of social infrastructure over the next 20 years.

Social infrastructure includes libraries, community halls, arts and cultural facilities, parks and sportsgrounds, aquatic centres, and public toilets.



Input into the plan will be sought from the general public and from providers of social infrastructure via an online survey. Director Community Wellbeing Kevin O'Brien said, the purpose of providing social infrastructure is to improve standards of living and the quality of life of residents, by delivering services, facilitating the creation of diverse social networks, and responding to specific social challenges such as social isolation of seniors and the health and wellbeing of children.

2.1 Cultivate opportunities for the municipality to prosper and pursue possibilities for new			
Progress implementation of the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Precinct Plan and encourage opportunities for the establishment of associated industries including the mining sector	●	50%	Power installation has been undertaken and water and stormwater and road contracts have been awarded. Works to begin on water and roads shortly. Negotiations with a number of (3) credible enquiries for land purchases have begun. Process is underway to contract for a Real Estate agency to handle land sales.
Work with the economic and community sectors to maximise opportunities arising from the national broadband rollout, including training and awareness of on-line retail business opportunities	●	80%	Official launch of the Enhanced broadband network took place 21 November 2019 with local businesses already operating on this network. Ongoing discussions with service providers including NBN. NBN will transition to a new focus away from residential and increase communication with business. Localised Wimmera continuing to grow (now 80 Horsham profiles) with a renewed marketing push planned for first quarter 2020. Social media training has been delivered through both Wimmera Business Centre and Grampians Tourism.
Develop an Economic Development strategy	●	100%	Economic Development Strategy was adopted by Council on 19 February 2018.
Support development opportunities facilitated by the Wartook Valley strategy	●	30%	Draft amendment documents that seek to implement the Wartook Strategy are currently being prepared in consultation with DELWP. When completed (subject to capacity and competing strategic priorities) a decision will be sought from Council to proceed with the formal Planning Scheme Amendment process.
Facilitate further development of the Aerodrome Industrial Estate	●	15%	Council endorsed approval to develop the Horsham 2019 Masterplan and Development Strategy, following three user/Councillor workshops in 2019 and referred the project to the budget for 2020/21.
Develop partnerships with industry groups and government		60%	Working with Regional Development Victoria, DELWP, Parks Victoria (Grampians Landscapes Management Plan development), Grampians Tourism, Visit Victoria, Victorian Tourism Industry Council, Business Horsham, Wimmera Development Association, DEDJTR (now Dept Jobs, Precincts and Regions).
Support investigations into the community service station at Natimuk	●	100%	The planning permit for the service station in Natimuk was withdrawn, given the number of objections. Support offered to the applicant.

2.2 Support initiatives for improved transport services in and around the municipality			
Support a Western Highway by-pass of Horsham		100%	Council working on Urban Transport plan for Horsham to address truck traffic issues on all highways including Western Highway.
Explore, with reference to current planning activities being undertaken, opportunities for improved timetabling and passenger rail and bus services to Horsham from outside and within the region (including Horsham to Halls Gap, Melbourne and Adelaide)		80%	Ongoing advocacy through the federal election and recent meetings with State Ministers and elected members. CEOs to meet shortly with Department of Transport bureaucrats to progress the discussion.
Investigate the impacts of the relocation of the rail line out of the town area		0%	Not yet started.
Review Municipal Parking strategy		100%	Municipal Parking Strategy endorsed by Council in December 2017.
Conduct a review of the roads service to encompass levels of service, construction and maintenance methods (including cost efficiency)		1%	A review team formed for: development of scenario model for various levels of service for rural road infrastructure; and development of optimum construction and maintenance methods.
Horsham Integrated Transport Strategy completed, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 – Strategic road network, including regional highways, railway and Horsham Bypass • Stage 2 – Horsham urban area • Stage 3 – Rural areas of municipality 		45%	Workshops commenced to develop draft plan.
Develop a plan for a further vehicle bridge across the Wimmera River and determine the timing when this should be constructed.		5%	This is being considered as part of Horsham Urban Transport Plan.
Support the development of the Grampians Way (ring road) - 'Stage 1 Mt Zero Access Road, Stage 2 Establish Picnic sites/viewing areas and signage, Stage 3 Seal remaining North West alignment (Winfield Rd north of Plantation Rd)		60%	Working with a development proposal to identify scope for infrastructure required.
Provide input to VicRoads on the redevelopment of the Western Highway/Hamilton Road/Golf Course Road intersection		50%	A draft design has been prepared by Regional Roads Victoria. Input from HRCC has included ensuring consideration of bike paths.
Continue to monitor and review car parking requirements in and around the CBD		5%	Brief prepared for parking consultant.
Investigate suitable locations for motorhome parking in Horsham		5%	Brief prepared for parking consultant.

2.3 Increase visitors to the municipality			
Investigate opportunities for the development of the Green Lake/Dock Lake recreational precinct	●	55%	Green Lake (Taylors Lake) Management issues identified. Meeting with GWMWater around negotiating management responsibilities scheduled in early 2020.
Pursue opportunities for improvements at the Police Paddock Reserve/Horsham North including walking and bike tracks in the vicinity	●	50%	Plans subject to precinct planning to be undertaken as part of the City to River Project.
Support the development of the Grampians Peak Trail	●	70%	Ongoing PCG involvement for Grampians Peaks Trail, involvement in ParksVic Grampians Landscapes Management Plan development as part of the Strategic Reference Group, Ongoing close liaison with Grampians Tourism.
Explore opportunities from the 2017-18 Australian and International Motor Cross Events	●	100%	Event held. Visitor Information Centre support with accommodation information for teams and attendees. Horsham Town Hall and Business Development advised local businesses of potential increased patronage. Event debriefs were undertaken with council and emergency services.
Investigate marketing and funding through the RMIT for the Zero to Nhill	●	0%	This project is no longer a priority and resources to progress are not available
Investigate opportunities and plan for possible bike trails, Green Lake to Horsham, Horsham to Natimuk, Wartook	●	55%	Cycling Trails Masterplan completed. Priority projects identified and funding to be established.

2.4 Promote Horsham as a regional city			
Support the WDA initiative to promote a Grains Centre of Excellence	●	30%	Wimmera Development Association (WDA) Executive Director appointed. WDA currently reviewing priorities with stakeholders.

Goal 2 Initiatives

Initiative	Progress
Economic Development - Small Business Assistance Program	Report will be going to Council on 27 January 2020 to endorse the program.
Parking and Traffic Management - Parking Plan	Parking Plan Brief developed to be endorsed by Council on 27 January 2020.

Performance Indicators

Nil

Goal 3 – Asset Management



Meet community and service needs through provision and maintenance of infrastructure

We strive to ensure infrastructure is in place to support our growing community as well as upgrading and maintaining our infrastructure to attract more visitors to our municipality.

Solar savings on the way for Town Hall

Significant energy savings are on the way for Horsham Town Hall after a 70-kilowatt solar energy system was installed on its roof last month.

It is one of six public buildings in the municipality set for either LED lighting upgrades or solar installations as part of Sustainability Victoria's Local Government Energy Saver Program.



In the next few weeks, a 28-kilowatt solar system and 12kW LED lighting system will be installed at the Mibus Centre Library complex. Horsham Aquatic Centre will have a 100-kilowatt array installed on its roof.

Dadswells Bridge Hall, Mitre Hall and Taylors Lake Hall will also benefit from the initiative, which is jointly funded by Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) and Sustainability Victoria.

The buildings were chosen following an audit of council facilities with high-energy use.

Sustainability Victoria Manager for Regions, Communities & Local Government Luke Wilkinson said the Local Government Energy Saver upgrades would benefit both Council and local residents.

"Sustainability Victoria has had great support from Horsham Rural City Council as part of our Local Government Energy Saver Program, which assists councils to reduce costs and lower greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency upgrades, while improving facilities for local communities."

"To date, we've worked collaboratively with 22 regional councils across Victoria to support energy-saving upgrades on a total of 172 community buildings from libraries to swimming pools."

3.1 Determine infrastructure needs and expectations through consultation with developers				
	Develop improved pedestrian access (bridges) across the Wimmera River in Horsham, in partnership with land developers	●	50%	On hold pending completion of Transport Plan.
	Undertake a review of Council infrastructure asset holdings to ensure they meet future community needs and longer term implications of ownership	●	30%	Infrastructure Services asset team will continue on development of financial model for sustainably managing assets within the LGA. Practical and realistic asset life will be considered in long term financial modelling. This analysis will provide direction towards whether our focus should be more on renewal or we still can invest on capital upgrades or new assets.
	Purchase additional land for hangar space at Aerodrome including access-way development	●	0%	On hold pending development of Master Plan and Development Strategy.
	Development of an Aerodrome Master Plan and implementation of planning overlays to protect the future development space of the Aerodrome	●	25%	Council endorsed approval to develop a Master Plan and Development Strategy, and referred to the 2020/21 budget.
	Develop a prioritised plan for upgrade of community recreation facilities	●	75%	Development of a Recreation and Open Space Planning Project Pipeline currently being developed, informed by recommendations from Open Space Strategy, Sports Facility Demand Study & yet to be adopted Social Infrastructure plan.
	Implement a cyclic renewal program for all public convenience facilities in the Horsham central business district and across the municipality	●	10%	On hold pending outcomes of City to River and Open Space Strategy.
	Undertake master planning and major refurbishment of the Aquatic Centre	●	100%	Wet deck works including new pool shell and concourse completed.
	Develop improved park and street tree policy as an 'urban forest plan'	●	20%	Discussions and information sharing about development of Urban Forest Plan with HRCC Operations Team. Initial brief and tender to be reviewed.
	Identify and develop new off street parking areas on CBD fringe	●	10%	Parking plan brief prepared to review restrictions and infrastructure in 2020.
	Develop a master plan of streetscape themes and service levels for existing streets and new developments	●	5%	Tree data for the Central Business District has been completed to understand the canopy structure which will then feed into the Urban Forest Plan.
	Investigate better footpaths for Natimuk	●	10%	Some upgrade works completed.

3.2 Ensure projected financial and physical programs that reflect infrastructure needs				
	Implementation of the Civic Centre Redevelopment Plan	●	10%	Tenders over budget exploring alternatives to address customer service issues and to keep costs within budget.
	Confirm and undertake design and planning for the relocation of the municipal depot including potential co-location of Tech Services planning and	●	60%	Major focus at present on assessing contamination of existing depot site.
	Review and update Road Management	●	100%	Completed June 2017.


3.3 Maintain asset management systems that will assist planning asset maintenance and			
	Develop a maintenance and replacement schedule for all groups of assets managed by Council, including heritage listed buildings	60%	Transport infrastructure asset maintenance is being trialled using functionality of REFLECT software. Inspections will be carried out in planned fashion followed by defect remediation.
	Develop and implement asset management plans for all nominated asset groups to assist with long term financial and asset management planning and legislative requirements - involve the community in the process	75%	Condition audit for entire asset stock completed. This will guide the development of Asset Management Plans early in the new year.
	Develop and implement a fair and transparent pricing policy for all of Council's community facilities	80%	HRCC Policy Development of Community Facilities - Agreements & Charges presented to Council briefing session in Dec. Once adopted by Council, this will form the basis of an equitable pricing policy for Council owned community assets
3.4 Deliver works to develop and maintain Council's physical assets for long term			
	Develop infrastructure that encourages greater participation and use of alternate transport options to the city (eg, walking, cycling and public transport)	30%	This is a major focus of the Urban Transport Plan which is well advanced.
	Master plan preparation for the Livestock Exchange including potential items such as: roofing to cover yards, electronic ramps to replace manual ramps, compost turner and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), solar panels and water capture.	100%	Master Plan adopted. Now implementing actions - Roofing is the #1 priority.
	Develop and review the Sports and Recreation Strategy	95%	Open Space Strategy adopted by Council in Dec 2019. Sports and Recreation Strategy to be superseded by the Open Space Strategy. Development of a Priority Pipeline of Recreation and Open Space Facilities will be developed. The role of the current Sports and Recreation Advisory Committee may need review to include Broader Open Space considerations.
	Develop additional off leash areas for dogs	85%	Council resolved to undertake a 28 day survey in Feb 2020, to ascertain attitudes towards dogs off leash in the Botanical Gardens. Survey development and engagement approach current underway.
	Develop improved entrances to all towns (street signage and landscapes)	25%	Branding strategy to be developed to inform entrance scope.
	Investigate and plan Wesley PAC refurbishment and Jubilee Hall upgrade	80%	Jubilee Hall works completed, Wesley refurbishment to be carried out by the committee, Project Control Group established.
	Investigate other options for the Wimmera Sports Stadium	80%	Council proposed further work/exploration be undertaken regarding site location for a Multi Sports Stadium.

Goal 3 Initiatives


Initiative	Progress
Commercial Activities - Gas Pipeline To WIFT Investigation	Seeking to work collaboratively with Regional Development Victoria to pursue this.
Strategic Asset Management - Asset Management System Rollout	Asset Management System is in place and is being used. Asset data from each asset is being uploaded to the system, with some asset classes fully implemented.
Strategic Asset Management - Disaster Asset Evidence Photography	Now planned for first half of 2020.
Strategic Asset Management - Rural Road Network Plan	Consultant about to be appointed. Invitation for community members for PCG has been out for responses. Consultation aimed to start in March 2020

Performance Indicators


*Satisfaction with sealed local roads

	FY 2017-2018 44	FY 2018-2019 45	July 2019-Dec 2019 Annual figure only
--	--------------------	--------------------	--


Sealed local road requests

	FY 2017-2018 12.22	FY 2018-2019 10.72	July 2019-Dec 2019 14.55
---	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------------


Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards

	FY 2017-2018 99.30%	FY 2018-2019 99.21%	July 2019-Dec 2019 99.14%
---	------------------------	------------------------	------------------------------

Cost of sealed local road reconstruction

	FY 2017-2018 \$50.11	FY 2018-2019 \$30.86	July 2019-Dec 2019 \$127.51
---	-------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

Cost of sealed local road resealing

	FY 2017-2018 \$4.67	FY 2018-2019 \$5.71	July 2019-Dec 2019 \$5,45
---	------------------------	------------------------	------------------------------

*LGPRF Audited Indicators (Local Government Performance Reporting Framework)

Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence



Excel in communication, consultation, governance, leadership and responsible use of resources

Our goal is to excel in what we deliver and how we deliver it, both within Council and to our community. Our staff are our greatest asset so their wellbeing is key to learning and high performance.

Regional Councils Collaboration Project (RCTP)










The Victorian Government has provided \$5 million of funding in the 2018-19 State Budget for a group of 6 councils, Horsham, Hindmarsh, Buloke, Yariambiack, Loddon & West Wimmera to implement a common Enterprise Resource Program to deliver the services of Finance, Payroll and Rates to all 6 councils.

Outcomes of the projects are expected to deliver:

- Improved financial sustainability by achieving economies of scale through regional service delivery or collaborative procurement
- Promote more efficient and improved service delivery through collaboration and innovation
- Realise benefits for rural communities through reductions in service delivery costs or increases and improvements to service delivery
- Gain efficiencies through regional service delivery

Planning for this significant project is underway and is expected to commence early in the 2020/21 financial year.



4.1 Continuously improve communication and engagement with the community through			
	Review the rates strategy and implement		100% Rating Strategy and Rating Policy have been adopted following extensive community consultation process.
	Feedback to Community on engagement clearly explaining "why" Council delivers the services that it does		80% The "why" of Council services is explained in the Service Overview document - this information will be simplified to provide a public message.
	Prepare for a more deliberative approach to community engagement following the adoption of the major revisions to the Local Government Act including seeking community ideas for prosperity.		50% The 2019-20 Budget contained an initiative of \$20k for Community Engagement tools. The Oursay package of products has been purchased which will provide a range of new engagement tools that will facilitate more enhanced community engagement.
	Review our communications methods with a view to increasing electronic engagement with our customers and the community		80% Council has considered a draft communications policy and plan. The plan seeks to define the forms and methods for communication both internally and externally to Council. Whilst the document has not been adopted by Council it is currently being utilised to guide communications activities. A range of activities have been implemented including use of Community Map, Electronic on-line forms for all engagement, use of social media and the establishment of an electronic newsletter.
4.2 Manage risk to the organisation			
	Review programs for savings/cancellation of services		30% Business efficiency activities will commence early in 2020 and will focus on selected service areas to identify cost savings and improvements in processes.
	Implement a robust financial and performance management system		100% Financial and Performance Reporting Framework was updated in May 2019 and report formats to Council were reviewed. A comprehensive quarterly performance report will be introduced in Jan 2020 that will further enhance the provision of performance information to Council and the community.
	Respond to emerging risks through the strategic risk register and internal audit		100% Strategic risk register reviewed quarterly and presented to the Risk Management Committee for update and then to the Audit Committee. This regular process ensures an opportunity for changing/developing/emerging risks to be considered and revised/added/deleted, etc.
4.3 Be an employer of choice			
	Investigate opportunities for participating in employee exchange programs		100% The recent staff restructure and many associated changes has meant to some extent exchanges and sharing are occurring as a matter of course, with people moving into new departments and working with different people/managers/supervisors. This, coupled with office accommodation changes, has meant that an additional layer of organised change is no longer appropriate and will not be for the foreseeable future.
	Pursue implementation of Council's Workforce Strategy and identify opportunities for indigenous/migrant employment		100% The trainee position at the Town Hall/Art Gallery is still being considered, owing to the need to prioritise other staff changes at that facility. The traineeship in the Records Unit that had ended was re-activated and a further indigenous appointment was made. It is anticipated that the current budget for indigenous employment opportunities (including incentive payments and other support/assistance available) will be fully expended, therefore the scope to do more in this area is not foreseeable and the objective has been met.


4.4 Achieve high standards of organisational performance			
Widen the implementation of the Merit Customer Service request tracking system across the organisation	●	100%	Whilst this has already been completed it is still subject to review and improvement, particularly in relation to how data is reported back to Council, staff and the community and to improve the customer experience processes for the community.
Develop an ICT Strategy for Council including GIS capabilities	●	25%	The \$5m provided to Council and the other five collaborating Councils will require the development of an ICT roadmap and strategy for the collective future of the six Councils in the grouping. Part of that should also see the same developed for each of the Councils individually.
Develop a Management Strategy for Council's record and data management systems	●	25%	The money has been set aside in the budget for a replacement system and may be included as part of the shared services in the rural Councils transformation program project.
Embrace new technology in order to achieve greater efficiencies and outcomes across the organisation	●	50%	New and updated technologies continue to be implemented throughout Council. Recently implemented technology has allowed for: Improved network connectivity and reliability, remote access for mobility and flexible work hours/environment, easier use of meeting spaces visual and audio.
Maintain sister city relationships as a means of facilitating business, educational and cultural networks and exchanges	●	60%	Contact is being maintained with Sister Cities, Chinese visit for Oct 19 did not take place, no further update at this point in time.
Review the Name and Address Register (NAR) database to create single name and address database	●	100%	Data remediation and training completed in March 2019. All necessary data has been cleansed. This needs to be checked on a monthly basis, and is in staff objectives for each year.
Renew HRCC external website	●	100%	A review is underway of the new website to identify what further improvements may be made.
Manage the implementation of the major revision to the Local Government Act	●	20%	New Local Government Act is expected to be enacted early in 2020 where the timetable for implementation will become better known and understood.
Review need for more HR resources	●	100%	A staff member has now been appointed to this role and systems and processes are now being reviewed.
Work with surrounding Shires to identify opportunities for shared services	●	75%	Council currently participating in the Rural Council Transformation Program (\$5m of funding received) in a group of six Councils to develop a common Finance & Payrol and IT operating model to enable more sharing of services.
Support training and programs relating to family violence and gender equality	●	100%	Act@Work Program completed with action plan being implemented. New staff being provided training opportunities through Women's Health Grampians and also information provided through induction.
Support cultural awareness training and programs	●	100%	Majority of staff have completed cultural awareness training, new staff trained as part of induction.

Goal 4 Initiatives


Initiative	Progress
Governance - Community Engagement Tools	The "OurSay" on-line engagement tools have been purchased and will be put in to use for all future engagements as appropriate.
Governance - Horsham Municipality Community Plan	Community planning has been rescheduled to occur with a major revision to the Council Plan for the next term of Council commencing in early 2020/21.
Governance - Replacement Electronic Document Records Management System (EDRMS)	The replacement project for the records system has been on hold pending the finalisation of the business case for the RCCC project for IT systems to assist in shared services.
Management and Admin - Towards a paperless HRCC	New photocopiers and printers have been purchased that greatly enhances our capacity to understand our paper usage and will assist in progressing this initiative.

Performance Indicators


*Community satisfaction with Council decisions

	FY 2017-2018 49	FY 2018-2019 49	July 2019-Dec 2019 Annual figure only
---	--------------------	--------------------	--


Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public

	FY 2017-2018 10.95%	FY 2018-2019 12.50%	July 2019-Dec 2019 16.00%
---	------------------------	------------------------	------------------------------


Community satisfaction with community consultation and engagement

	FY 2017-2018 53	FY 2018-2019 54	July 2019-Dec 2019 Annual figure only
---	--------------------	--------------------	--

Councillor attendance at Council meetings

	FY 2017-2018 87.58%	FY 2018-2019 96.19%	July 2019-Dec 2019 85.71%
---	------------------------	------------------------	------------------------------

Cost of governance per Councillor

	FY 2017-2018 \$36,317.94	FY 2018-2019 \$36,965.42	July 2019-Dec 2019 \$35,958.85
---	-----------------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------------------

*LGPRF Audited Indicators (Local Government Performance Reporting Framework)

Goal 5 – Natural and Built Environments

Lead in environmental best practice, create a municipality for the future, and plan for the impacts of climate change

Encourage and increase awareness of environmental responsibilities within Council and the community, whilst planning for a growing municipality, and implement practices that minimise our environmental footprint and contribute to a sustainable future.



Recycling won't go to landfill

Horsham Rural City Council is reassuring residents that recyclable materials placed in their yellow recycling bins will not go to landfill and will continue to be processed as normal.

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has ordered the SKM Material Recycling Facilities in Coolaroo and Geelong to stop accepting recycling materials following several fires at the sites.

Council's recycling collection contract, with Wheelie Waste, results in materials being sent for processing through Visy recycling, which is not impacted by this EPA decision.

Chief Executive Officer Sunil Bhalla said recycling services would not be affected by the closure of the SKM facilities and residents should put out their recycling bins as normal.

"Our community works hard to minimise waste and it's important that they continue to be conscientious and recycle," Mr Bhalla said.









Meanwhile residents are being urged to dispose of their electronic waste (e-waste) responsibly. A new state-wide ban means e-waste will not be accepted in any bins or landfills across Victoria.

E-waste is any item with a plug, battery or cord that is no longer working or wanted and covers a whole range of items, from old phones, computers and household appliances to power tools and toys.

E-waste is accepted free of charge at all HRCC transfer stations.



5.1 Promote sustainability by encouraging sound environmental practice			
Investigate opportunities for the use of Renewable energy for Council facilities including implementing a Biomass Boiler system at the Aquatic Centre and Solar Panels where feasible on Council buildings and facilities	●	30%	Tender is out for solar panels to several Council buildings at present.
Review Council's Environment Sustainability Strategy and lead the community in environmentally sustainable practices to improve management of our natural environment	●	70%	Consultant engaged for the Sustainability Strategy. The LGES program has been implemented, and has successfully progressed through Stages 1 and 2, and is currently in Stage 3.
Develop a Climate Change Response Strategy for Council operations	●	5%	This will be part of the Sustainability Strategy. Scope of strategy developed, work to commence in August 2019.
Support the Natimuk Community Energy Project	●	50%	Natimuk Community Energy has been successful in receiving a \$339,000 grant from the State Government's New Energy Jobs Fund. The grant will assist the project to finalise the necessary approvals, connection studies, develop detailed design and operational plans and develop a governance and financial model and market prospectus to attract investment for the construction phase.
Establish a sustainability reserve for the ongoing funding of sustainability related projects.	●	5%	Funding planned to be used for some solar panel installations. Currently out to tender.
Develop a Waste Management Strategy	●	75%	Focus of waste strategy is on introduction of a green waste service by July 2020. Funding for waste to energy project investigation is in 2019-20 budget.
Explore GWM recycled water use within the community	●	10%	Government funding received for detailed investigation of reusing Horsham reclaimed sewerage water. Consultants work to commence shortly.
Optimise use of water basins - capturing storm water	●	0%	Not started.
Investigate and support renewable energy opportunities throughout the municipalities	●	50%	Ongoing discussions with Electric vehicle charging stations. Active participation and support in a Wimmera Development Association coordinated regional micro grid study proposal.
Investigate options for shade at sporting facilities, recreational facilities and public spaces across the municipality.	●	90%	To be addressed through the development of the Urban Forest Plan and the development of Recreational Precinct Plans.


5.2 Plan for rural and urban land use to create a sustainable municipality for the future			
Complete the Horsham South Structure Plan		30%	Mesh Planning were engaged by Council in February 2019 to prepare the Horsham South Issues and Opportunities paper, due for completion in December 2019. This background report will direct the final Structure Plan, of which will be partly funded by the Victorian Planning Authority.
Complete the Rural Land Use Strategy		30%	A project charter has been drafted with the preparation and appointment of a consultant likely to commence in 2019/20 subject to competing strategic priorities.
Complete the Public Open Space Strategy		100%	Open Space Strategy adopted by Council in Dec 2019 with some amendments.
Complete the Wimmera River Corridor Strategy		100%	Wimmera River Corridor Strategy completed and used to help inform the draft Open Space Strategy and City to River Background Report.
Review and further develop planning controls for heritage items through the completion of heritage studies		66%	No progress to date. Review of existing controls and key matters required for planning scheme amendment identified.
Encourage the upgrade of heritage facades on shop fronts along key retail strips and investigate possible contributions from Councils commercial property reserve		30%	City to River project planning complete and next stages to proceed following Council resolution 16 December 2019. Horsham Heritage study identified as a strategic project priority requiring funding.
Amend the Planning Scheme to implement the recommendations from flood investigations		10%	Waiting on final data from CMA before commencing amendment process.
Implement selected recommendations from the Wimmera River Project Report		0%	Not started.

Goal 5 Initiatives

Initiative	Progress
Sustainability - Street Lighting - Lighting Regions Stage 2	Awaiting coordination of timing with other Councils in the Lighting the Regions partnership.
Sustainability - Waste Gasification Plant Investigation	On hold pending release of the Government's Circular Economy Policy.
Waste Management Services - Dooen Landfill Master Plan	Operational plan has been completed in preparation for Master Plan. Request for Quotes about to be sought.

Performance Indicators

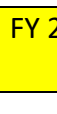
*Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT

	FY 2017-2018 0%	FY 2018-2019 50%	July 2019-Dec 2019 0 %
---	--------------------	---------------------	---------------------------

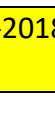
Time taken to decide planning applications

	FY 2017-2018 39	FY 2018-2019 55	July 2019-Dec 2019 45
---	--------------------	--------------------	--------------------------

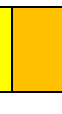
Planning applications decided within required time frames

	FY 2017-2018 86.96%	FY 2018-2019 76.72%	July 2019-Dec 2019 89.19%
---	------------------------	------------------------	------------------------------

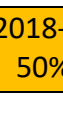
Cost of statutory planning process

	FY 2017-2018 \$3,221	FY 2018-2019 \$2,770	July 2019-Dec 2019 \$2,141
---	-------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

*Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill

	FY 2017-2018 22.75%	FY 2018-2019 22.13%	July 2019-Dec 2019 20.66 %
---	------------------------	------------------------	-------------------------------


Kerbside bin collection requests

	FY 2017-2018 63.56	FY 2018-2019 77.27	July 2019-Dec 2019 41.50
---	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------------

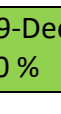
Kerbside collection bins missed

	FY 2017-2018 1.03	FY 2018-2019 1.39	July 2019-Dec 2019 1.59
--	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------------

Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service

	FY 2017-2018 \$117.81	FY 2018-2019 \$115.54	July 2019-Dec 2019 \$116.25
---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------------

Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service

	FY 2017-2018 \$43.61	FY 2018-2019 \$61.67	July 2019-Dec 2019 \$54.05
---	-------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

*LGPRF Indicators (Local Government Performance Reporting Framework)

Section 3

Performance against Customer Service Targets

Council is in the process of updating its Customer Service Charter and through that will be identifying some key commitments/performance measures for each of our services. Once this process has been completed some targets will be set and performance will be measured against these targets and reported each quarter to the community.

In the meantime the following is a summary of the numbers of requests received through our Customer Request System – Merit, and the service areas to which they relate (sorted from highest to lowest):

Service	Qtr1	% of Total	Qtr 2	% of Total	6 Mths	% of Total
Animals	400	28%	392	27%	792	28%
Bin Services	203	14%	178	12%	381	13%
Parking	155	11%	127	9%	282	10%
Business or Events	102	7%	112	8%	214	8%
Roads	105	7%	72	5%	177	6%
Trees	61	4%	76	5%	137	5%
Parks & Reserves	29	2%	73	5%	102	4%
Local Laws	61	4%	34	2%	95	3%
Fire Control & Safety	14	1%	80	6%	94	3%
Miscellaneous	24	2%	50	3%	74	3%
Footpaths	39	3%	34	2%	73	3%
Drainage	44	3%	24	2%	68	2%
Signs	29	2%	28	2%	57	2%
Environmental Health	23	2%	33	2%	56	2%
Public Amenities	28	2%	19	1%	47	2%
Planning	16	1%	20	1%	36	1%
Nature Strips	16	1%	19	1%	35	1%
Graffiti & Vandalism	17	1%	12	1%	29	1%
Other	41	3%	59	4%	100	4%
Grand Total	1,407	100%	1,442	100%	2,849	100%

The number of Customer Requests responded to within the specified time period:

"In-Time?"	Qtr1	% of Total	Qtr2	% of Total	6 Mths	% of Total
No	297	21%	389	27%	686	24%
Yes	1,110	79%	1,053	73%	2,163	76%
Grand Total	1,407	100%	1,442	100%	2,849	100%

Complaints received:

Complaints	Qtr1	% of Total	Qtr2	% of Total	6 Mths	% of Total
Finalised	13	100%	24	96%	37	97%
Open	0	0%	1	4%	1	3%
Grand Total	13	100%	25	100%	38	100%

Section 4

Business Improvement

Council has implemented the following efficiency improvements across the organisation over the last six months:

Supply contracts – procurement

A revised approach to procurement is being implemented to tender for the supply of some regularly occurring services in order to bundle up a significant value of expenditure and to achieve more competitive pricing than would be achieved through multiple individual supply arrangements. The specifications for these tenders are under development and the tenders should start being issued early in 2020.

Fuel contract

Council has ceased the storage of bulk fuels at its depot site and has undertaken a tender process for the ongoing supply of fuel for all its vehicles. This supply contract has achieved competitive pricing and is expected to deliver Council some significant savings on its ongoing fuel bills in the order of \$35,000 per annum.

Photocopiers

All photocopiers and printers were replaced in late December with a new range of printers and copiers that are more cost effective and energy efficient. They also provide the latest data analytics tool for monitoring and reporting on paper usage across all of council. Swipe card technology has been utilised to ensure that only essential print jobs are initiated and that any erroneous printing can be eliminated. The new printers/copiers are expected to deliver savings to Council in the range of \$15,000 to \$20,000 annually and substantially reduce paper usage as well.

Solar Panel Installations

Solar panels have been installed on a number of Council facilities; a 28-kilowatt solar system and 12kW LED lighting system at the Mibus Centre (Library), a 100-kilowatt array at the Aquatic Centre and a 70-kilowatt system at the Horsham Town Hall. This will reduce Council's CO2 emissions and generate around \$50,000 to \$80,000 savings in electricity costs annually.

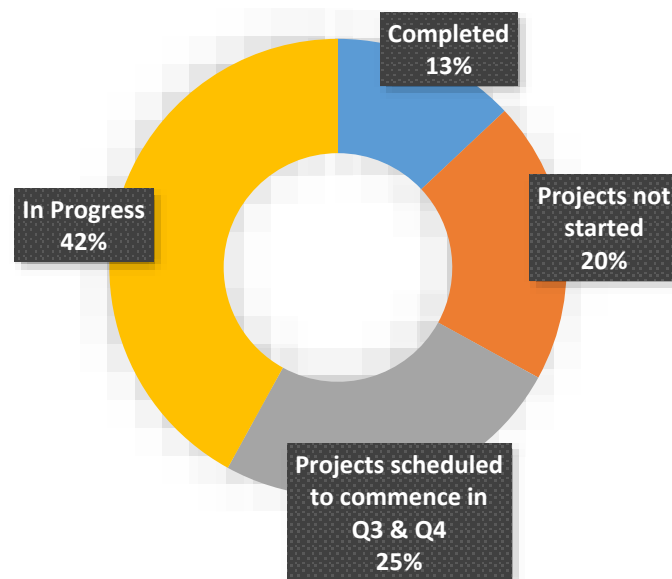
Rural Councils Transformation Program.

This is a collaborative project between the six councils of Horsham, Hindmarsh, Buloke, Yarriambiack, Loddon and West Wimmera to implement a common Finance, Payroll & Rates system across all six Councils. Savings are expected to be realised through efficiency improvements in Corporate Services operations and in the future through the possibility of sharing of services. The state government has provided \$5 million for this project to be implemented over a three-year period. System implementation is not likely to take place until 2021-2022.

Section 5

Major Capital Works Projects

There are 149 capital projects and programs to be delivered over the financial year with a budget of \$20.36 million. There are also carried forward works on \$6.24 million that were uncompleted from 2018-19. The 2019-20 works are funded from, \$4.37 million external grants, R2R \$1.14 million, \$0.17 million from general contributions and donations, with the balance of \$15.82 million from Council cash (\$5.98 million from operations, \$0.45 million from asset sales, \$1.34 million from internal loans and \$6.90 million from reserves). There are no external borrowings planned for this year.



Highlights during the first half year of the 2019-2020 Capital Works Program include:

Aquatic Centre Outdoor Pool Refurbishment

The upgrade and refurbishment of the outdoor pool at the Horsham Aquatic Centre was one of the major capital works projects completed in the second half of 2019. This \$1.5M project delivered significant improvements to this key community asset, including:

- Removal of the hobs around the pool – to provide a flat wet deck for easier access to the pool
- A ramp for all abilities access to the pool
- Modified depths of the pool – maximum depth is now two metres (previously 3m)
- The shallow end is now 1.1m to meet competitive swimming standards (previously 0.9m deep)
- Improved filtration for water quality benefits
- Reduced loss of water from the pool through installation of a liner and new pipework, to improve the efficiency of the pool's operation, notably the solar heating



Horsham Regional Livestock Exchange Roof



Horsham Regional Livestock Exchange (HRLE) is Victoria’s fourth largest sheep/lamb market, with sales in excess of 500,000 animals per year.

The \$3.69 million roofing project will ensure that the HRLE remains a modern and competitive facility, generating \$70 million of stock sales annually. Work on this project commenced in September 2019, and is due for completion in December 2020.

Roads Program

Horsham Rural City Council is responsible for over 3,000 kilometres of roads, for which we have an ongoing asset management plan. Some of the works recently completed include:



- Dimboola – Minyip Rd, \$330,000
- Noradjuha – Tooan East Rd, \$220,000
- Peppertree Lane, Horsham, \$600,000
- Darlot St Drainage, Horsham, \$300,000
- Wavell St, Horsham, \$150,000
- Gardenia St, Horsham, \$120,000
- Jackson St, Horsham \$175,000
- Longerenong Rd, Dooen \$545,000
- Laurel St, Horsham \$12,000

Gravel Resheeting

- Aerodrome Rd
- Domaschenz Rd
- Fulhams No 1 Rd
- Mackies Rd
- Rodda Rd
- Tom Smiths Rd
- McIntyres Rd
- Old Minyip Rd

Shoulder Resheeting

- Creek Rd
- Rifle Butts Rd
- Wail – Kalkee Rd

Dudley Cornell Female-Friendly Changerooms & Public Toilets

The popular Horsham North reserve is one of the Wimmera’s busiest sporting facilities. This \$300,000 project to provide female-friendly changerooms and modern public toilets was partly funded by a \$100,000 grant from Sport & Recreation Victoria.



Section 6

Audit and Risk Committee

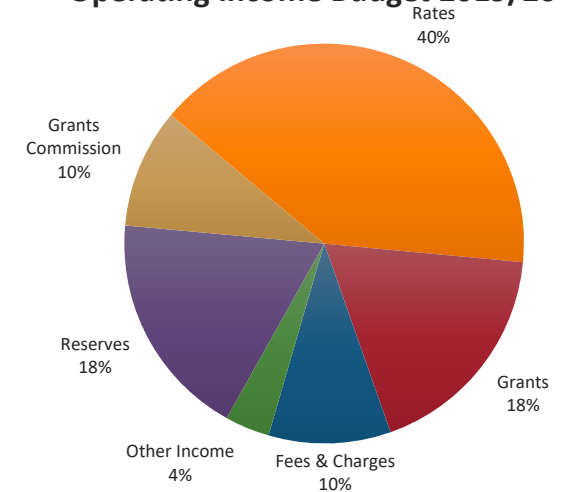
Future quarterly reports will include Audit Committee minutes. The last minutes and annual report from the Audit Committee were reported to Council in December 2019.

Executive Summary

Overall Cash Budget Summary - \$'000

Business Activity	Actuals	Adopted	Forecast	Forecast	Actual	YTD	Variance	Variance	Note
	18/19	Budget	19/20	YTD	YTD	19/20			
Income									
Service Delivery	-19,623	-13,563	-13,971	-8,194	-8,977	783	9.6%	1	
General Revenue	-30,996	-32,176	-32,176	-26,542	-26,301	-241	-0.9%		
Capital	-9,833	-14,378	-15,702	-661	-976	315	47.6%		
Initiatives	-424	-712	-962	-163	-185	23	13.8%		
Reserves	-297	-770	-945	-	-	-	0.0%		
Income Total	-61,173	-61,598	-63,757	-35,560	-36,440	880	2.5%		
Expenditure									
Service Delivery	37,076	37,748	39,195	18,067	17,391	675	3.7%	1	
Capital	17,002	21,985	27,302	9,077	7,734	1,342	14.8%	2	
Initiatives	717	1,274	2,129	813	819	-6	-0.7%		
Financing	423	523	523	-	0	-0	0.0%		
Oncosts	813	-	-	77	85	-8	-10.6%		
Reserves	35	68	68	-	-	-	0.0%		
Expenditure Total	56,066	61,597	69,217	28,033	26,029	2,004	7.1%		
Grand Total	-5,107	-1	5,460	-7,527	-10,411	2,884	38.3%		

Operating Income Budget 2019/20

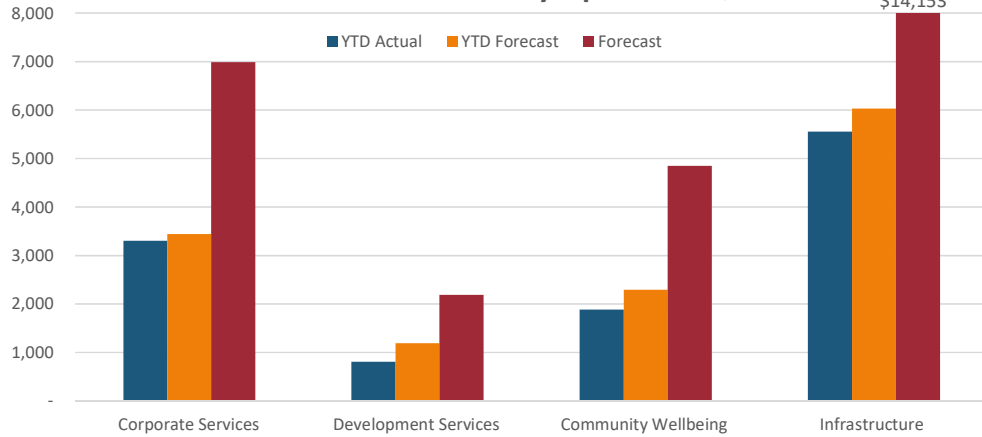


Comments:

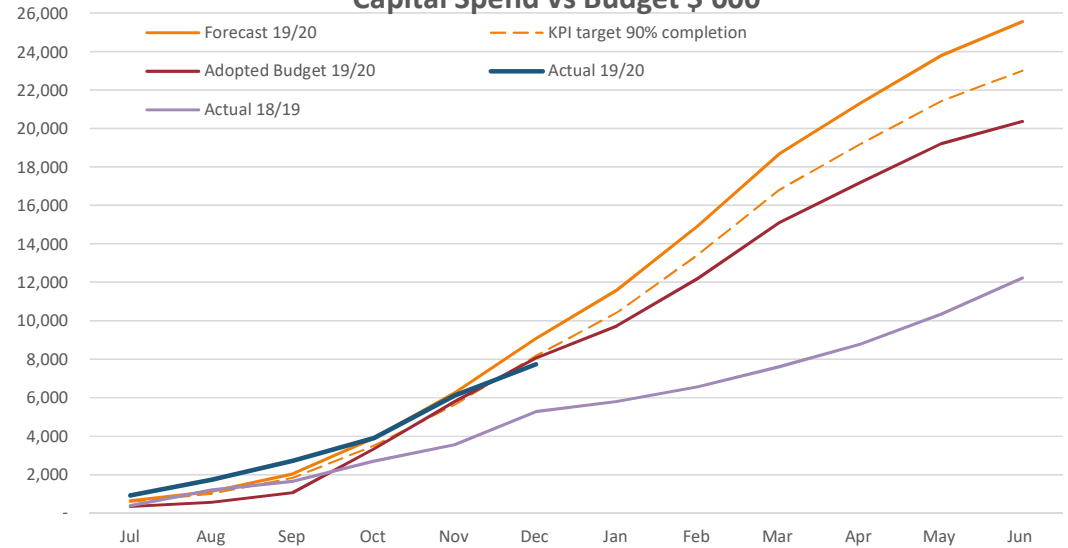
- Service Delivery (NETT) variance of \$1.46 million;
 Income variance of \$783k, of which \$218k Performing Arts, \$120k Dooen Landfill fees, \$120k VicRoads provisional works & \$63k parking income.
 Expenditure variance of \$879k, Corporate Services \$129k, Community Wellbeing \$127k Development Services \$244k & Infrastructure Services \$176k
- Capital Expenditure - expenditure is behind of forecast by \$1.34 million, which is made up of \$600k timing of the major plant program & \$600k across the road program.

Financial Snapshot

Net Service Delivery Operations \$'000



Capital Spend vs Budget \$'000



FINANCE & PERFORMANCE OBSERVATIONS:

Service Delivery Operations

This chart above displays the NET (*Expenditure less Revenue*) balance of operations for each directorate. Key variances include \$415k Community Wellbeing, \$386k Development Services, \$171k Corporate Services & \$477k Infrastructure Services. (see page 4 for further breakdown).

Capital Spend

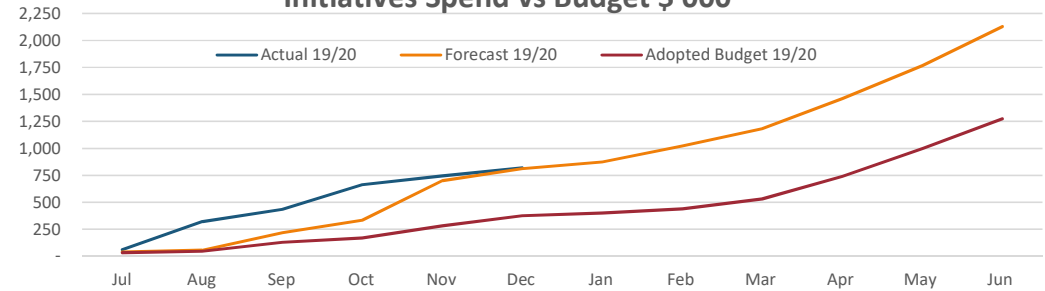
Expenditure is behind of forecast by \$1.34 million, which is made up of \$600k major plant & \$600k across the road program.

Initiatives Spend

Initiatives are tracking in line with forecast.

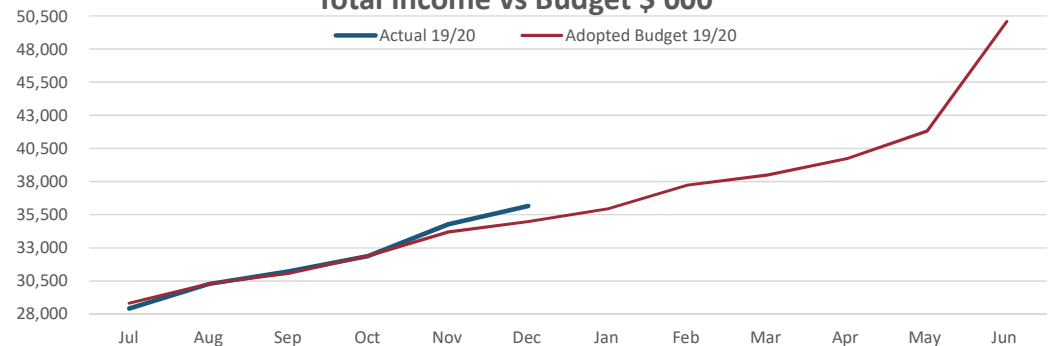
The Forecast includes carried forward works

Initiatives Spend vs Budget \$'000



The Forecast includes carried forward works

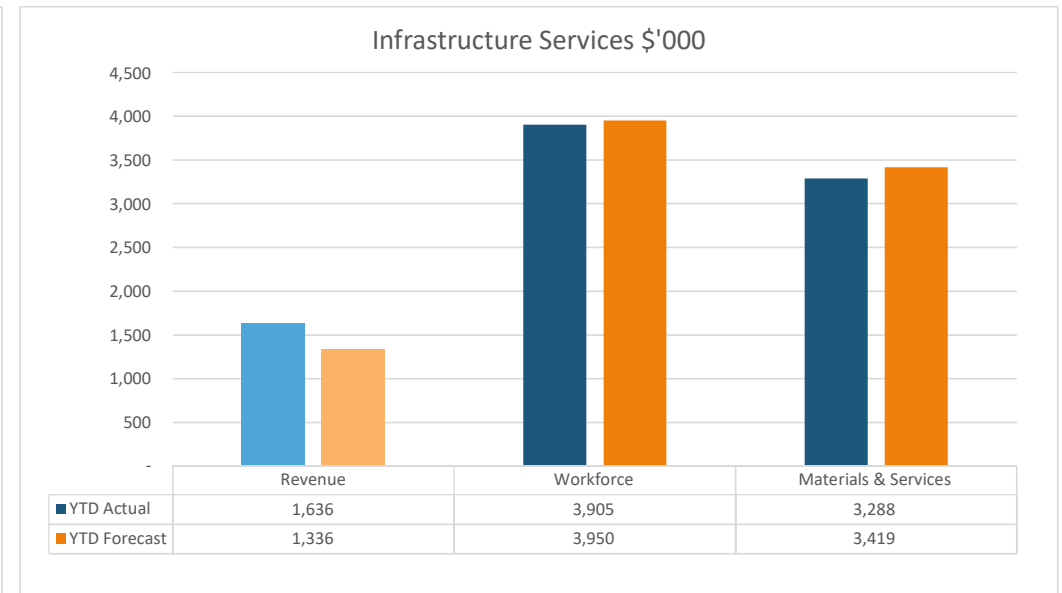
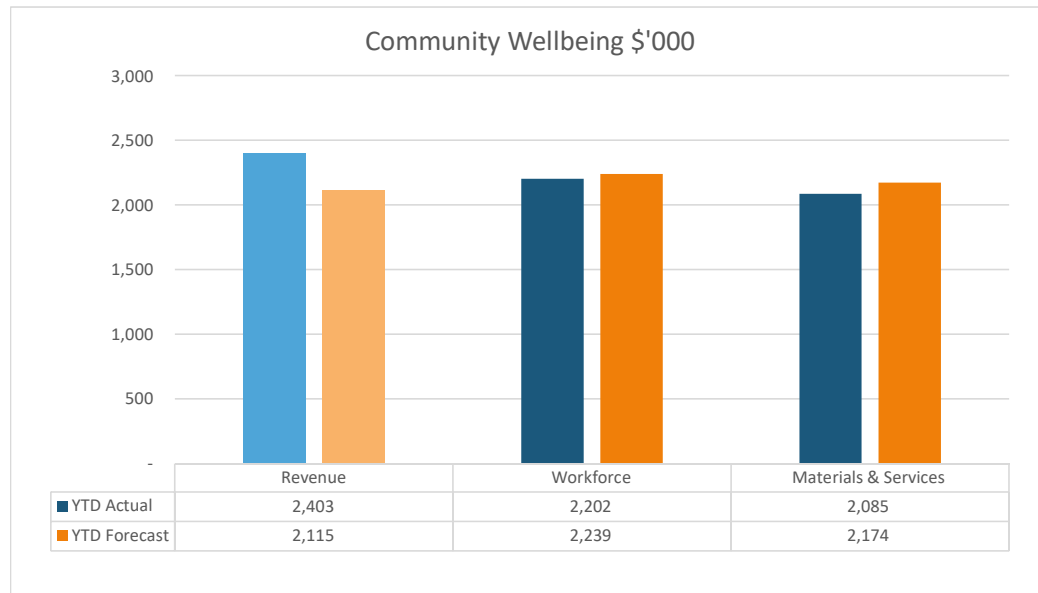
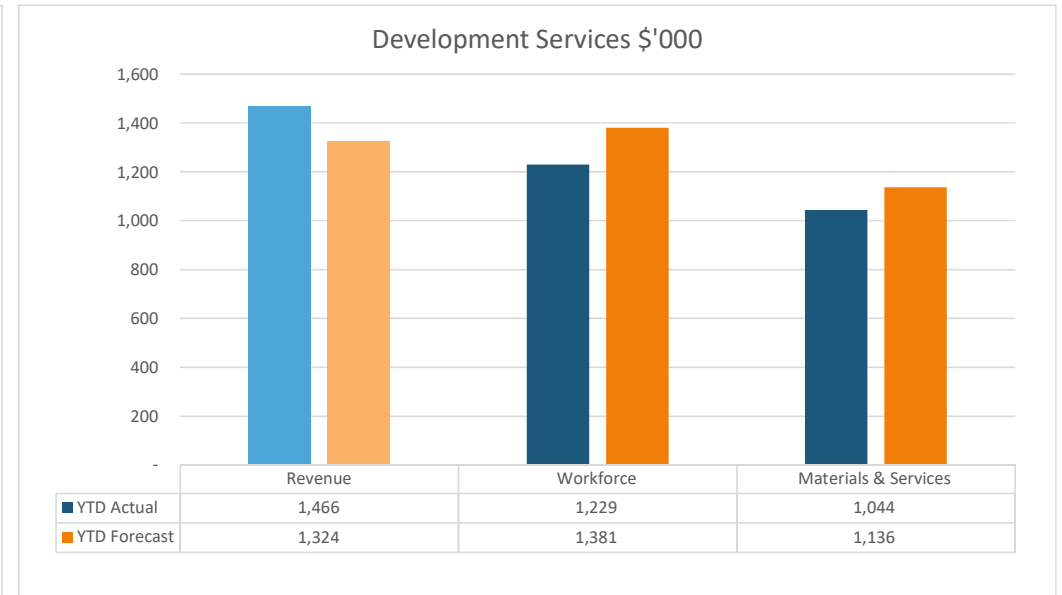
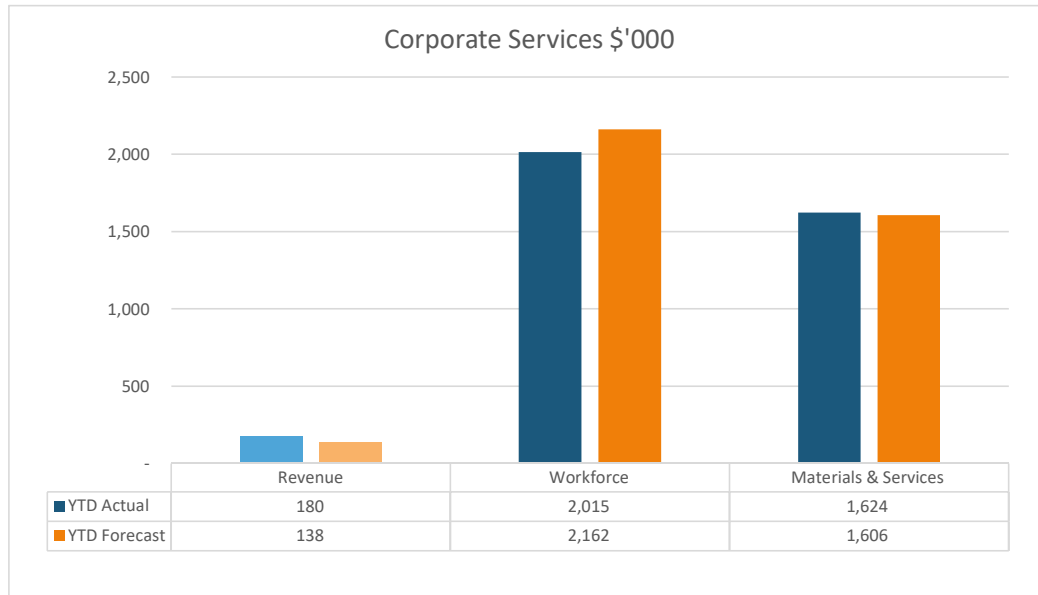
Total Income vs Budget \$'000



Finance & Performance Report - 31 December 2019

Service Delivery Operational Snapshot by Directorate

APPENDIX 9.5A



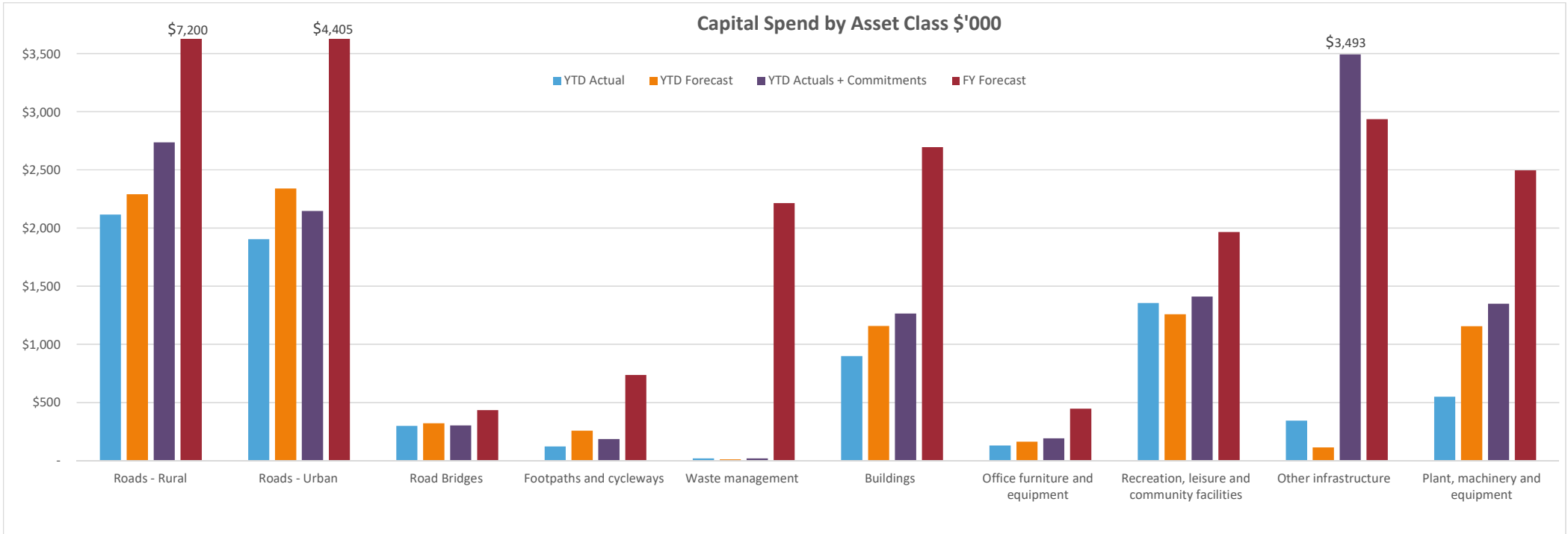
Finance & Performance Report - 31 December 2019

APPENDIX 9.5A

Service Delivery Operations (NET) \$'000

Key variances: \$'000	Adopted Budget	Full Year Forecast	YTD Forecast	YTD Actual	YTD Variance	Variance %	Commitments	Comments
Corporate Services	7,143	7,313	3,629	3,458	171	4.7%	200	
Management & Admin	1,669	1,769	924	857	66	7.2% ●	82	
Accounting Services	831	831	414	368	46	11.2% ●	61	
General Revenue	711	711	409	409	-0	-0.1% ●	-	
Revenue Services	401	401	180	181	-1	-0.6% ●	-	
People & Culture	736	736	367	330	37	10.1% ●	9	
Information Technology	811	881	396	375	20	5.2% ●	32	
Community Relations and Advocacy	433	433	183	189	-7	-3.8% ●	2	
Governance	1,551	1,551	757	748	9	1.2% ●	14	
Community Wellbeing	4,282	4,850	2,298	1,884	415	18.0%	295	
Management & Admin	407	407	204	223	-20	-9.7% ●	-	
Community Development	640	841	421	381	40	9.6% ●	33	
Performing Arts	503	541	338	291	46	13.7% ●	25	
Visual Arts	451	580	174	208	-34	-19.7% ●	11	
Aquatic Recreation	792	792	360	329	30	8.4% ●	192	Commitment is a component of the contract with the YMCA
Youth and Early Years	605	739	369	202	167	45.3% ●	12	\$68k Enhanced Home Visiting, \$64k Youth Services & \$39k Maternal Child Health
Home Support	286	319	128	46	82	64.1% ●	15	\$48k Home Care Services, \$17k Meals on Wheels
Emergency Management	13	45	-82	-99	17	-21.3% ●	6	
Library	586	586	387	302	85	21.9% ●	2	
Development Services	2,159	2,189	1,193	807	386	32.3%	126	
Management & Admin	590	590	303	254	49	16.3% ●	-	
Economic Development	262	262	185	185	-0	-0.1% ●	-	
Business Development and Tourism	642	642	330	284	46	13.9% ●	4	
Commercial Activities	-139	-139	-2	-72	70	-3905.4% ●	36	\$42k unbudgeted expenditure on the Aerodrome Masterplan, \$26k expenditure timing at HRLC
Strategic Planning Services	184	184	22	18	4	17.2% ●	22	
Community Safety	100	100	48	66	-18	-37.2% ●	2	
Animal Management	-10	-10	113	103	10	8.8% ●	0	
Parking & Traffic Management	-132	-132	-90	-213	122	-136.0% ●	0	Increase in parking income & reduction in cost of wages
Environmental Health	141	141	23	4	19	81.3% ●	1	Administration of the Environmental Health program
Statutory Planning & Building Regulations	522	552	261	177	84	32.2% ●	60	\$47k Building Regulation & \$37k Statutory Planning
Infrastructure	10,602	10,872	2,752	2,275	477	17.3%	294	
Operations Management	126	126	66	100	-35	-53.0% ●	22	Depot operations
Mgt and Admin Infrastructure Services	681	791	329	401	-72	-22.0% ●	12	
Engineering Services	1,414	1,464	727	622	104	14.3% ●	23	Timing of the project management program & reduction in salaries
Infrastructure - Urban	1,566	1,566	735	680	55	7.5% ●	13	
Infrastructure - Rural	1,842	1,842	861	769	92	10.7% ●	3	\$95k Roads & Bridges Maintenance
Parks & Gardens	2,462	2,462	1,223	1,093	129	10.6% ●	55	\$71k Minor Reserves, \$39k Botanic Gardens
Streetscape & Public Conveniences	1,220	1,220	591	580	12	2.0% ●	81	
Sports & Recreation	582	628	319	368	-49	-15.2% ●	32	
Natural Resource Management	84	148	-6	-58	52	-845.6% ●	4	\$43k Roadside Weed Program
Strategic Asset Management	643	643	309	278	31	10.0% ●	-	
Sustainability	234	234	109	61	48	44.3% ●	-	\$45k grant for LGESTP Stream 3
Waste Management Services	-254	-254	-2,517	-2,622	104	-4.1% ●	48	\$59k Landfill operations, \$27k transfer station & \$19k kerb side collection

Capital

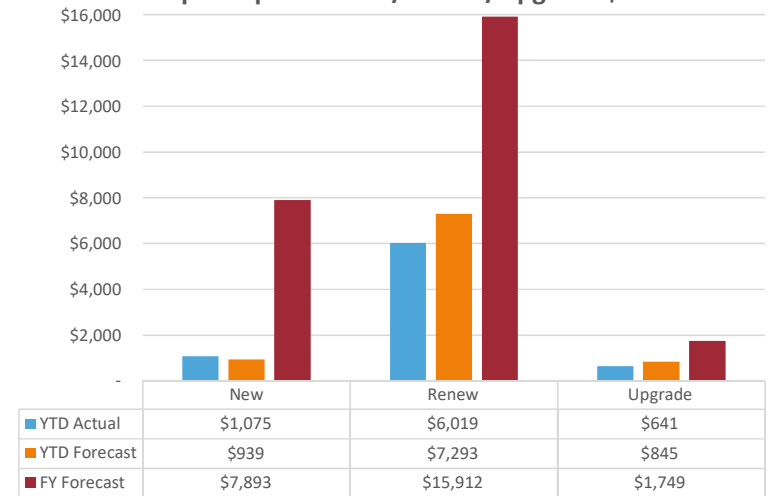


Comments:

The adopted budget for capital expenditure excluding reserve allocations is \$20.357 million. The Forecast includes Carried Forward works of \$6.235 million, adjustments for recent grant funded works & changes to the program.

- Other Infrastructure includes \$3 million full year forecast for the HRLE roofing & \$585k full year forecast for the River Precinct Activation
- Plant Renewal is \$606k behind forecast, commitments are on the system for \$799k.
- Roads - Urban is \$432k behind forecast.

Capital Spend - New/Renew/Upgrade \$'000



Initiatives

Initiatives Expenditure by Directorate - \$'000

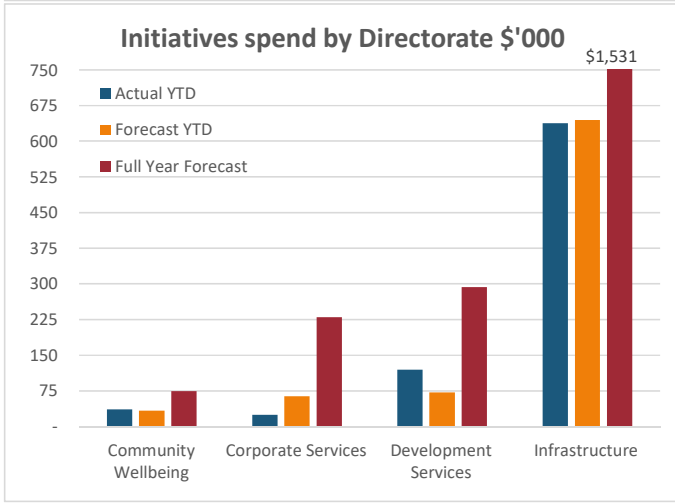
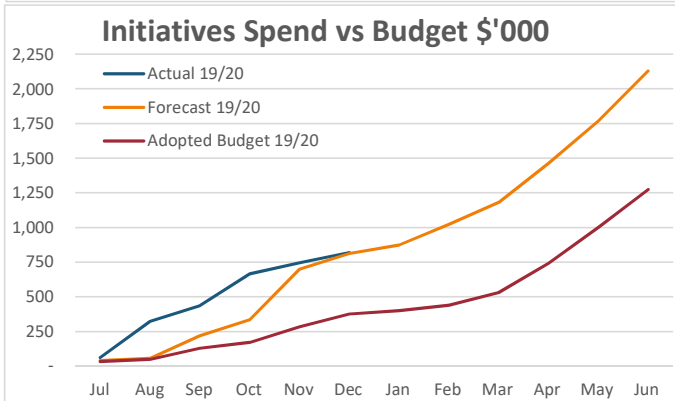
	WO Description	Adopted Budget	Forecast	Forecast YTD	Actual YTD	YTD Variance	Commit -ments
Community Wellbeing	ESM Inspections Town Hall 17/18 Year	-	-	-	3	-3	6
	Social Infrastructure Framework	-	60	30	30	-	30
	Early Years Plan Review	-	15	3	3	-0	-
Corporate Services	Civic Centre Refurbishment Detailed Design	-	-	-	2	-2	13
	IT / Records Trainee	-	8	8	5	3	-
	Mobile Device Management	8	8	8	-	8	-
	Towards a paperless HRCC	4	4	-	-	-	-
	Horsham Municipality Community Plan	40	40	40	-	40	-
	Community Engagement Tools	20	20	8	18	-10	-
	Replacement Electronic Document Management System	150	150	-	-	-	-
Development Services	Horsham South Structure Plan	-	158	-	99	-99	-
	Heritage Advisor Part Time Consultancy	-	5	-	-	-	-
	ESM Compliance Works	-	-	-	1	-1	-
	Animal Health Management Plan	-	-	-	-	-	4
	Livestock Exchange Detailed Design Roofing Selling Area	-	-	-	15	-15	-
	Parking Plan	40	40	40	4	36	-
	Small Business Assistance Program	10	10	3	-	3	-
	Gas Pipeline To WIFT Investigation	60	60	24	-	24	-
	Strategy for Open Space Contributions funding for Booking Syst	-	20	5	-	5	-
	Infrastructure	Hazardous Tree Removal	-	-	-	2	-2
Implemenation/Training Inspections Assets Software		-	12	12	12	-	1
Rehabilitate Dooen Landfill Johns Cell 1 Putrescible2		-	-	-	3	-3	-
Asbestos Auditing Additional 17/18		-	40	-	1	-1	-
Showgrounds Realignment Shed Buildings River Roundabout		-	-	-	8	-8	-
Building Assets Inspections 17/18, 18/19		-	-	-	54	-54	-
Sport and Recreation Strategy Review		-	30	10	-	10	-
Dudley Cornell Park Reserve Precinct Planning		-	20	5	-	5	-
E-Waste Management		-	-	-	4	-4	-
Rehabilitate Dooen Landfill Ladlows Hardwaste 2B West cover		-	-	-	3	-3	37
Sustainability Strategy Review		-	40	-	6	-6	-
CBD Shop Front Enhancement and Shade Incentive		-	53	-	-	-	-
Dooen Landfill Master Plan		50	50	50	-	50	-
Street Lighting - Lighting Regions Stage 2		450	450	-	-	-	-
Waste Gasification Plant Investigation		100	100	30	-	30	-
Rural Road Network Plan		50	50	-	-	-	-
Disaster Asset Evidence Photography		88	88	50	-	50	-
Asset Management System Rollout		100	100	80	58	22	6
Sports Outdoors Project Management Internal	64	64	28	75	-46	-	
Sports Outdoors Project Design and Scoping	40	40	15	12	3	18	
Urban Forest Plan	-	30	-	-	-	-	
Sunnyside Sporting Club 2 Synthetic bowling greens	-	364	364	402	-38	0	
Grand Total		1,274	2,129	813	819	-6	115

Comments:

YTD budget variance by Directorate

- Community Wellbeing -\$ 3k
- Corporate Services \$ 39k
- Development Services -\$ 48k
- Infrastructure Services \$ 6k

\$667k of carried forward initiatives and \$178k of recent grant funded initiatives have been recognised as a component of the Forecast.



Contract Variations, New Contracts & Exemptions from Procurement - October to December Quarter

Contract Variations [Accepted Under Instrument Of Delegation] - (GST exclusive)

Item No	Contract No	Date Approved	Delegated Officer	Contract Description	Contractor	Description of Variation	(\$) Variation
1	16/025B	22/10/2019	K O'Brien	Provision of Cleaning Services PAC, Art Gallery, Wesley	Woody's	Additional cleans	\$755
2	18/004	12/11/2019	M Aldaghtan	Reconstruction of Dollar Avenue	Midbrook	Kalimna Ave reshaping	\$1,935
3	18/004	18/12/2019	J Martin	Reconstruction of Dollar Avenue	Midbrook	Lower Water and Gas Services	\$560
4	19/020	18/12/2019	J Martin	Reconstruction of Peppertree Lane V7	Midbrook	Lower and relocate Telstra Services	\$2,330

New Contracts Signed off by the Chief Executive Officer or a Director or Council - (GST exclusive)

Item No	Contract No	Date Approved	Required Signatories	Contract Description	Contractor	Contract Value
1	20/005	13/10/2019	Acting CEO	Provision of Real Estate Services	Harcourt's and Horsham Real Estate	
2	20/008	28/10/2019	Council	Rural Roads Reconstruction Wail Road	Willmore Contractors	\$598,937
3	20/009	28/10/2019	Council	Urban Roads Reconstructions Albert Street, Johnson Street and part of Federation	Mintern	\$860,185
4	20/004	7/11/2019	CEO	Supply, Service and Maintenance of Printers	Kyocera Document Solutions Australia Pty Ltd	\$84,117
5	20/007	25/11/2019	Council	WIFT Water Supply Stage One	CHS Group Australia	\$331,500
6	20/010	25/11/2019	Council	One new Grader	RDO Equipment	\$313,636
7	20/011	20/11/2019	CEO	One new Patrol Truck	The Truck Specialists	\$135,687
8	20/012	16/12/2019	Council	Drung Jung Road Reconstruction	Glover Earthmoving	\$521,377

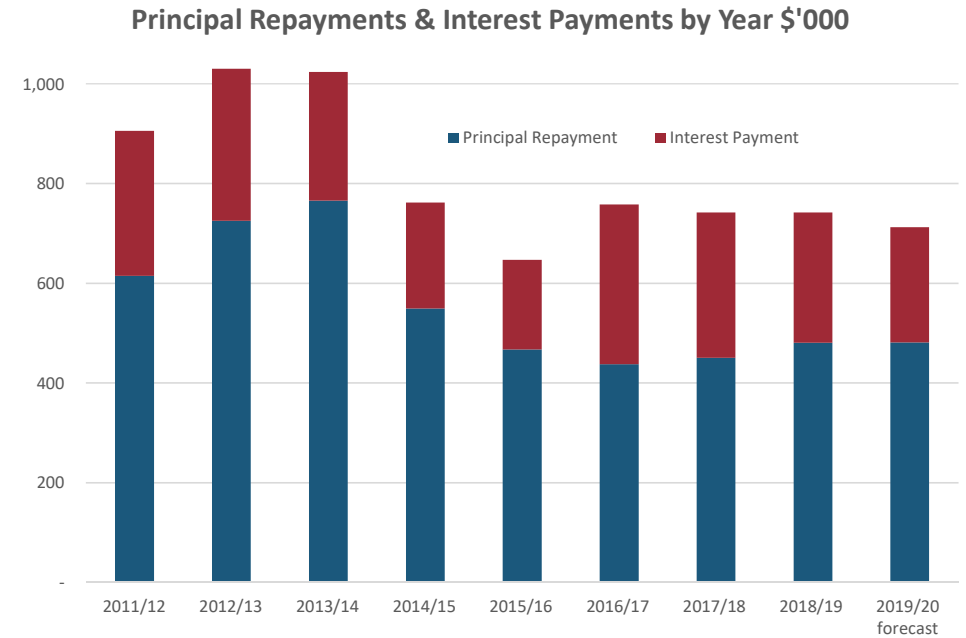
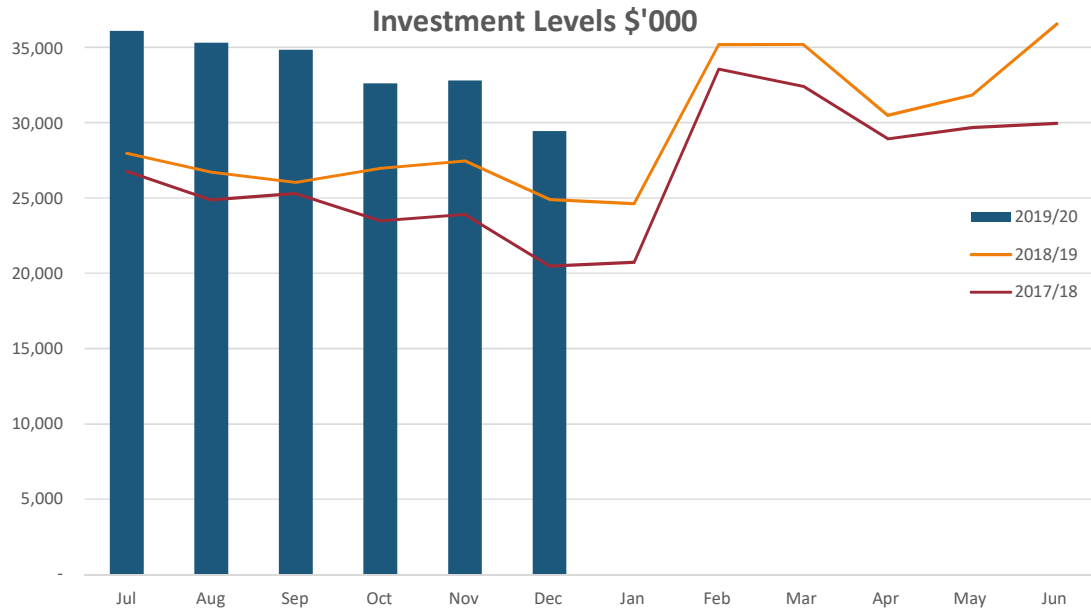
Exemptions from Procurement Policy - (GST exclusive)

Item No	Purchase Order No	Date Approved	Requisitioning Officer	Reason	Exemption Description	Supplier	Expense
1	212055	31/10/2019	C J Gerlach	Town Hall CCTV - PO210749 already complete	Used quote for similar project	Total Lock Pty Ltd T/as Wynns Locksmiths	\$25,521
2	211992	30/10/2019	K A Bell	POZI Server upgrade	Sole source of supply	Pozi Pty Ltd	\$19,800
3	211840	17/10/2019	J W Hammond	Provision of professional consultancy services for	Urgent & insufficient time	J Bartle-Smith	\$11,210
4	211683	14/10/2019	S N Brown	Member Contribution to Grampians Tourism Board 2019	Sole source of supply	Grampians Tourism Board Inc	\$45,974
5	211614	8/10/2019	A Van	Waste audit	Sole source of supply	Grampians Central West Waste & Resource Recovery Group	\$16,225
6	212521	27/11/2019	M A Plain	Annual fee TenderSearch - e procure portal	Sole source of supply	TenderSearch	\$6,600
7	212524	22/11/2019	M A Plain	Software to operate e procure, advertise tenders,	Sole source of supply	TenderSearch	\$6,600
8	212162	8/11/2019	L K De Wit	Temporary project engineer-Ian Mitchell July-October	Sole source of supply	Ct Management Group Pty Ltd	\$27,469
9	212787	9/12/2019	C J Gerlach	Supply and install CCTV at Depot	Used quote for similar project	Total Lock Pty Ltd T/as Wynns Locksmiths	\$22,822

Finance & Performance Report - 31 December 2019

Investments & Loans

APPENDIX 9.5A



Interest Rate

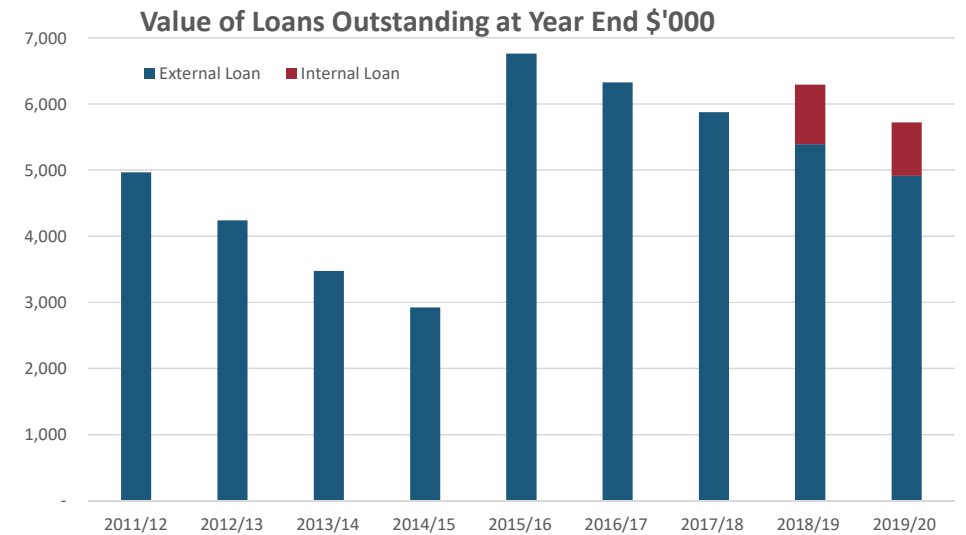
Corporate Investment Account	0.80%	
9 Term Deposits	1.44% - 2.68%	Ranging 98 Days to 322 Days
Last investment	1.67%	301 Days 09/12/2019 to 05/10/2020

Breakout of Loans Outstanding

Purpose	Interest Rate	Original Principal	Outstanding at 30 Jun 20	Start Date	Year End Date	No. of Years	
Aquatic Centre	6.44%	2,195,000	220,389	16 Jun 06	01 Jun 22	15	P & I
City Oval Lighting	7.88%	250,000	-	29 Jun 10	01 Jun 20	10	P & I
Unfunded Defined Superannuation	7.57%	500,000	68,190	20 Jun 11	01 Jun 21	10	P & I
Drainage Works	7.57%	200,000	27,276	20 Jun 11	01 Jun 21	10	P & I
Aerodrome Runway	7.57%	300,000	40,914	20 Jun 11	01 Jun 21	10	P & I
Drainage Works	5.73%	500,000	123,991	20 Jun 12	01 Jun 22	10	P & I
Wimmera Intermodal Freight Hub	5.73%	500,000	123,991	20 Jun 12	01 Jun 22	10	P & I
Anzac Pedestrian Bridge	3.97%	500,000	500,000	23 Jun 16	01 Jun 26	10	I
Horsham North Children's Hub	3.97%	100,000	100,000	23 Jun 16	01 Jun 26	10	I
City Oval Clubroom Purchase	3.97%	230,000	230,000	23 Jun 16	01 Jun 26	10	I
Horsham Town Hall Refurbishment	3.97%	3,475,000	3,475,000	23 Jun 16	01 Jun 26	10	I
*Horsham North Community & Childrens Hub		900,000	810,000	23 Jun 18	01 Jun 28	10	P

* Funded from internal cash reserves held with an internal 10 year repayment plan back to the reserve.

No new loan borrowings have been included in the 19/20 budget.



Help Us To Help You

By providing accurate and complete information

Treating our staff and others with courtesy and respect

Advise us if your details change

Tell us if you need assistance

Work with us to reach a resolution



Contacting Us

Online: www.hrcc.vic.gov.au/contact-us

Telephone: 03 5382 9777
8:30am – 5pm Monday to Friday

TTY: 133677 ask for 03 5382 9777

In person:
18 Roberts Avenue Horsham
(8:30am – 5pm Monday to Friday)

62 Main Street Natimuk
(Thursday morning)

In writing:
council@hrcc.vic.gov.au
or
PO Box 511 Horsham Vic 3402

Horsham Rural City Council

Customer Commitment Charter





Our Commitment

Horsham Rural City Council is committed to providing the highest possible level of service to our community and our customers.

We provide an extensive and varied range of services to the community. We value our customers and are committed to providing a high standard of service, and consistency in service delivery.

Our organisational values are our guide to how we will achieve exceptional customer service.



Flexibility

We are adaptable to changing circumstances



Accountability

We are responsible for our behaviour and actions



Integrity

We are ethical, transparent and honest in our conduct



Respect

We value diversity and appreciate others

Our Response

Online

Our website will provide comprehensive, accurate, relevant and timely online information. We will provide important information via social media and respond to enquiries made via social media within 2 business days.

Phone

We will answer calls promptly and try to resolve enquiries immediately. We will return phone calls within 2 business days.

Written/Email

We will respond within 10 business days. If a full reply is not possible you will be notified of a timeframe for response and the contact person.

Complaints

We will acknowledge a complainant within 3 business days. We will inform them of the name and department of the staff member handling their enquiry, and advise of a timeframe for progressing and/or completing the enquiry where relevant. Refer to our Complaints Handling Policy for more information.

Service Commitments

It is important for us to set expectations about the time our processes and services may take. We have collated the standard timeframes for the commonly used services we provide, from emptying bins, to cleaning streets, to completing permits and applications. Refer to our Customer Service Standards Procedure for a detailed list of our service timeframes available from our website.

Complaints

If you are not satisfied with the standard of service provided, you should direct your initial enquiry to Customer Service who will attempt to resolve your concerns as a matter of priority. More information on complaint resolution is available on our website or by contacting our Governance Department on 03 5382 9777.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us as it highlights any areas that need to be considered for improvement and supports our continuous improvement processes. Refer to the back of the charter for contact methods.

Privacy

The responsible handling of personal information is a key aspect of good governance, and we are strongly committed to protecting an individual's right to privacy. Your personal information will be handled in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles as set out in the Privacy & Data Protection Act 2014 and Council's Privacy Policy and Privacy Statement available on our website.

1. PURPOSE

To achieve and apply a common set of principles and behaviours across the organisation when dealing with internal and external customers for the guidance of all staff.

2. INTRODUCTION

At Horsham Rural City Council, we are committed to providing professional and quality services. In conjunction with our Customer Service Charter, these Customer Services Standards provide a commitment to our customers and staff, regarding a level of service we need to consistently deliver. A key part of this is to regularly communicate and review these standards as well as our performance against them.

3. SCOPE

All Council staff, irrespective of where they work within the organisation, are expected to take accountability and ownership of communications and interactions with internal and external customers to deliver a positive customer service experience.

4. ACTIONS

4.1 Staff behaviour and attitude

All staff are entitled to be treated with courtesy, respect and consideration. We will endeavour to share information with others and deliver what we say we will. We will cooperate across departments, treating each other with respect and courtesy and will act in a professional manner. All communication needs to be in line with our Council values:

F	Flexibility	We are adaptable to changing circumstances
A	Accountability	We are responsible for our behaviour and actions
I	Integrity	We are ethical, transparent and honest in our conduct
R	Respect	We value diversity and appreciate others

It is crucial that internal relationships and partnerships are strong and working well in order to provide a high standard of customer service. Due to the diversity and complexity of many of our services, several areas can be involved in delivering an outcome to a single customer request.

- Be polite and courteous when making a request for information or services. Be aware that staff have their own commitments to timelines
- Merit should be used for all service requests. Please ensure that all notes are clear for the receiving Officer
- If you are the Receiving Officer for a Merit request, please action the Merit request as soon as practicable. When closing the request, ensure that clear notes are added with what action was taken. If no action could be taken, please ensure that notes are clear as to why no action was taken. When appropriate, advise the customer of the outcome
- If you require assistance with using Merit, please see the Customer Service Supervisor for assistance/training

- Clarify if a request is urgent and the time required for a response to enable completion of a task
- A request for information or services from other departments is not an interruption but recognition that help is required to enable staff to complete their work. Be helpful in assisting other departments to deliver outcomes. It reflects well on all Council services when we work together
- Staff should be aware that they represent the organisation as a whole and therefore be prepared to assist with any enquiry as far as practicable
- Every request is your business
- Staff are asked to adopt a “can do” attitude making every endeavour to assist customers especially when dealing with multiple departments to achieve a final result.

4.2 Telephone communications with Internal and External Customers

All Council staff are expected to take accountability and ownership of calls and deliver a positive customer service experience. All staff should:

- Endeavour to answer phone calls within 4 rings
- Ensure there is someone in each service area to cover phones at all times
- Greet customers with: *Horsham Rural City Council “this is “your name”*.
- Be courteous and helpful
- Speak how you like to be spoken to, and treat others as you like to be treated
- Focus your listening skills on the customer
- Treat customers with fairness and honesty
- Politely ascertain the customer’s needs to ensure they are speaking to the right person
- Offer the translations or interpreting service on request - Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS 131 450)
- Call back the customer within 2 business days of receiving a message
- If unable to respond with an answer or action to customer’s enquiry within 2 business days, update the customer of the process, and the expected response time
- Set up a voicemail message on your office phone and mobile phone
- Mitel must be updated when you are unavailable – in meetings, gone for the day etc. Clear summary is to be provided as to when you will return and if enquiry should be redirected to anyone else eg *In meeting until 3pm or On annual leave until 05/05 – redirect all enquiries to John Doe.*

Transferring calls

- If transferring, advise the customer the name of the person and the service area to which they are being transferred.
- If the staff member you need to transfer the call to is unavailable, return to the customer and offer to take a message or advise the customer that they can leave a message on the staff member’s message service.

Misdirected calls

- Take ownership of the call and limit the number of phone call transfers. If a misdirected caller tells you they have already been transferred a number of times, then ‘case manage’ the caller:
 - Explain you will help them personally
 - Take their details and give them your details
 - Endeavour to call them back

- Pass on the details to correct staff member/service area and confirm they will call the customer
- Update the customer (let them know the staff member from the correct service area will be in contact with them shortly)
- Provide polite feedback to the appropriate team if they've sent you a misdirected phone call as to ensure that calls are directed to the correct area in future.

After hours calls

Council's After Hours Service manages after hours calls in accordance with supplied procedures

4.3 Correspondence – Email and Letters (External)

- Only correspondence received via council@hrcc.vic.gov.au will trigger an auto generated acknowledgement response
- The staff member responsible for actioning the request is to respond with an answer or action within 10 business days. If further time is required before the issue can be resolved the customer is to be kept informed on the process and the expected response time
- Correspondence received directly by staff must be registered in Councils Records Management System
- Use Council letterhead for all outgoing letters and use electronic delivery of letters where possible
- Include the Business Classification System (BCS) reference numbers on outgoing letters (available from the intranet)
- Follow the Hosham Rual City Council Writing Style Guidelines
- Avoid using all capital letters as this can be offensive
- Write clearly, professionally, and respectfully
- Include signature and contact details
- Proof read your writing thoroughly before sending
- If information has been requested from a staff member but the request needs to be forwarded to another staff member, ensure the original person requesting the information is kept advised.

4.4 Face to Face (External)

- Greet face-to-face customers with *'Hello, how can I help you?'* and a smile
- Wear your Council name tag to identify yourself
- Endeavour to have someone in each service area available for assistance at all times
- Give the customer your full attention (verbal and body language)
- Visually/verbally acknowledge waiting customers
- Make eye contact (be mindful of cultural differences) and focus your listening skills on the customer
- Be mindful of the customer's personal space
- Treat customers with fairness and honesty
- Don't make assumptions about customers based on their culture or appearance
- Always be courteous and helpful
- Speak how you like to be spoken to, answer how you like to be answered, treat others as you like to be treated
- Put yourself in the customer's shoes and listen to what they have to say
- Politely ascertain the customer's needs to ensure they are speaking to the right person
- Offer the Interpreting Service if needed
- Always make sure that you are clear about the responding time frame to the customer

- Reassure the customer of confidentiality and privacy
- If an enquiry is of a more sensitive nature, offer the customer the option to discuss the matter in a more private setting eg meeting room

4.5 Dealing with Difficult Customers

- Ensure your safety is a priority
- If you feel unsafe, withdraw from the unsafe area
- Remain calm and in control
- Focus on the main issue
- Verbal or physical abuse is not acceptable. Advise the customer that you will not tolerate abuse
- Advise customer you will help when they are courteous
- Be careful of your use of language – use “I” and not “you” language
- Seek assistance from a Director, Manager, Coordinator or other staff members

4.6 Staff On leave

If you are on leave or unavailable for more than a day, arrange to:

- Change your status on Mitel and include any relevant information eg when you will return and who to redirect any enquiry to. If applicable, divert your phone to another staff member within the service area or update your message service
 - Notify the customer service team of your absence
 - Activate Out of Office on your email. Clearly state when you will return and where the enquiry can be redirected to if applicable.

4.7 Privacy Information Considerations

Council employees are responsible and accountable for ensuring the security and confidentiality of records containing personal information (e.g. name, address, phone number, etc). Unless required by law, personal information must not be released without written consent from the individual the information relates to, or their legal representative.

When collecting private information for a project or submission only request information required for the satisfactory completion of that task.

Every person has a legal right of access to Council records unless they meet certain criteria that exempt them from public review (i.e. records such as those of a personal, financial, confidential or legal nature). Council records must not be accessed or disclosed, directly or indirectly, except in the course of normal duties or with express authority from Council’s Information Privacy / Freedom of Information Officer. Council has a detailed Information Privacy Policy and Privacy Statement available on the website that should be referred to.

4.8 Cultural Considerations

Some culturally diverse groups may not be comfortable with eye contact or people of the opposite gender interacting with each other. It is important to be respectful of the cultural and religious needs of customers.

4.9 Access and Ability Considerations

All staff should be aware of the diverse abilities of customers. A disability may be visible or invisible, temporary or permanent, and cover a range of physical, sensory, cognitive, psychiatric and neurological disabilities and chronic illness.

4.10 Service Level Standards

Council is committed to delivering the best possible service that can be practically achieved. It is important that we set expectations about the time our processes and services may take. Attached as Appendix A is a list of the standard timeframes for the commonly used services we provide.

5. COMMUNICATION

This procedure will be communicated via staff meetings, intranet and staff induction training. Continuous training will occur.

6. RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Owner: Customer Service Team Leader

7. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Document	Location
HRCC Complaint Handling Policy	Intranet , HRCC website
HRCC Customer Service Charter	Intranet , HRCC website
HRCC Organisational Writing Style guidelines	Intranet
HRCC Staff Code of Conduct	Intranet
HRCC Information Privacy Policy	Intranet
HRCC Inwards correspondence procedure	Intranet
HRCC Records Management Policy	Intranet

8. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version Number	Approval Date	Approval By	Amendment
01	1 st September 2014	EMG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replaces Customer Service Staff Standards and Procedures
02	21 January 2020	EMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replaces Staff Standards and Procedures for Managing Customers

Service Commitments

Animal Management

- We will audit every registered domestic animal business annually to ensure compliance with relevant codes of practice
- We will initiate investigation into complaints of dog attacks against people or animals within 2 to 24 hours of a report being received

Art Gallery

- We will allocate a staff person to take responsibility for customer requests and enquiries and advise the customer who their contact person is
- The Gallery Director will review and action outstanding matters monthly

Building Management

- We will commence investigation for urgent maintenance requests for Council buildings within 1 working day of a request, or on the same day if time permits
- We will commence investigation for non-urgent maintenance requests for council buildings within 5 working days of a request
- We will remove, obliterate or conceal graffiti within 24 hours from Council owned property, or from when consent is received from the property owner or occupier

Building Services

- We will endeavour to process your building permit application within 30 days
- We will provide building information certificates within 5 working days of an application being received
- We will undertake mandatory inspections of your building works by appointment made within 24 hours
- We will streamline your application through our online permit system
- We will provide copies of building plans and permits within 7 working days of an application being received. Copies may not be available for properties over 40 years old
- We will process applications for reports and requests to building regulations within 15 statutory days of an application being received

- We will commence investigations into complaints/concerns relating to dangerous buildings and unfenced pools or spas within 2 working days of a complaint being received.
- We will assess and initiate appropriate action for complaints/concerns relating to building works/matters within 10 working days

Recreational Services

- We will endeavour to respond to community enquiries and feedback within 2 weeks
- We will be available to meet with users and clubs to discuss future planning and funding opportunities
- We will keep user groups informed via a bi-monthly e-newsletter of upcoming events, training opportunities, grants, compliance and guidelines

Construction Supervision

- We will inspect and repair hazardous footpaths within 30 days of a report of a fall or injury being received
- We will inspect and provide advice on new vehicle crossing enquiries within 5 working days
- Maintenance issues will be inspected within 2 days

Drainage and Cleansing

- We will remove roadside rubbish and litter or issue a compliance notice within 5 working days of a request being received. We will remove dead animals from Council roads and paths within 1 working day of a report being received
- We will investigate blocked Council owned drains and pits within 5 working days of a report being received
- We will inspect and make safe missing or damaged pit lids within 24 hours of a report being received

Environmental Health

- We will commence investigation of public health nuisance concerns that don't pose an immediate health risk within 48 hours of notification
- We will ensure that registrations under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act and Food Act are assessed within 10 working days following receipt of relevant documentation, payment of fees and satisfactory inspection

- We will assess and issue Septic Tank permits within the 42 day statutory timeframe

Fire Prevention

- We will assess permits to burn within 10 working days of a request being received
- We will undertake property inspections for fire hazard requests during the fire danger period within 5 working days of notification
- We will undertake property inspections for long grass requests during non-fire danger period within 10 working days of notification

Governance

- Council minutes will be made available 5 working days after a Council meeting
- We will make sure the Council Agenda is available on our website by 5pm on Thursday prior to Council meetings
- We will meet deadlines with requests for information and inform you if this is not possible and the reason why
- We will implement, monitor and review our policies and procedures within the required timelines

Home and Community Care

- We will advise you if you are eligible for Community Care Services within 3 working days and if eligible a service assessment will be arranged with you
- If we do not provide the Community Care Services you require, you will be referred to other service providers who do provide that service within 5 working days
- If we are informed your circumstances have changed, we will contact you to discuss your Community Care Services within 5 working days
- In exceptional circumstances, Community Care meals and/or personal care services determined by service delivery as urgent will commence within 1 to 3 working days
- For Community Care Services assessed as non urgent, we will contact you within 7 working days to discuss your service commencement

Maternal and Child Health

- We will contact you within 5 working days of Council being notified that your baby has been discharged to make a time for a Maternal and Child Health nurse to visit you in your home
- All first time parents will be invited to attend a new parent group before their child reaches 3 months of age
- We will provide bimonthly immunisation sessions to enable all babies to access immunisations in accordance with the Victorian immunisation schedule

Park Services

- We will investigate and make safe general parks maintenance (non-urgent) requests within 10 working days
- We will attend to emergency playground requests within 24 hours of a report being received
- Land owners eligible for Shared Cost Fencing will receive confirmation of the amount Council will contribute within 10 working days

Performances & Events – Horsham Town Hall

- We will issue hire agreements within 5 days of receiving all confirmed information.
- Details of performance settlements will be sent through 5 working days after the event.

Planning

- We will endeavour to make a decision on your planning application within the 60 day statutory timeframe
- We will make your application available online to allow for progress tracking
- We will be available for pre-application meetings by appointment
- We will inform you and engage with the community on statutory and strategic planning for the municipality
- We will request further information on planning applications when required within the 28 day statutory timeframe

Rates

- We will process copies of rates notices within 2 working days of a request being made
- We will process standard Land Information Certificates within 5 working days of an application being received
- We will process urgent Land Information Certificates within 1 working day of an application being received
- We will process requests for owner information for fencing purposes within 3 working days

Residential Waste Services Kerbside Bins

- We will replace missing or unrepairable bins within 7 working days of request being received
- We will provide bins to new residential properties within 7 working days of occupation when notified by the resident or occupier
- We will collect missed bin collections due to driver error within 1 working day of report being received

Transport Infrastructure Maintenance (Roads, footpath, kerb and channel, drainage, bridge, causeways, cycleway and signage)

- Any urgent service requests will be attended and made safe within 24 hours after notification is received
- Damaged or missing drainage pit lids, grates in pedestrian area or in traffic lane will be rectified within 24 hours
- All other non-emergency service requests will be inspected within 1-2 weeks depending on risk level. Customers will be notified once the inspection is completed
- All sealed roads maintenance issues including potholes, debris on road, excessive deformation of pavements will be rectified between two weeks to eight weeks depending on location of the issue and the risk level.
- All unsealed gravelled roads will be routinely graded at 12 months to 24 months interval depending on its function and utilization. All service requests which couldn't be covered with scheduled maintenance program will be rectified within two months to 24 months depending on the risk level
- An email notification of completion of service request will be sent after completion of transport infrastructure maintenance related requests

- All the above transport infrastructure related service standards are extracts of council's Road Management Plan. For specific details and accurate response time, please follow the road management plan available at <https://www.hrcc.vic.gov.au/Residents/Roads-and-Transport/Road-Management-Plan>

Stormwater Management

- We will provide standard legal points of discharge information within 5 working days of an application being received

Subdivisions

- We will refer subdivision applications for certification to external referral authorities within 7 days of lodgement
- We will certify compliant applications within the 49 statutory days

Traffic and Parking Management

- We will allow 21 days for residents and property owners to submit a response when consulting with the community on changes to parking restrictions.
- We will allow 21 days for residents and property owners to submit a response when consulting with the community on proposed Local Traffic Management Schemes.

Trees and Horticulture

- We will attend to emergency tree requests on Council land within 24 hours of a report being received.
- We will investigate routine tree maintenance requests on Council Land within 10 working days of a request being received



Grampians Tourism Visitor Servicing Review Report

August 2018



Prepared by: John O'Neill, Principal & Strategy Lead,
+61 419 4751 798; john.oneill@komosion.com.

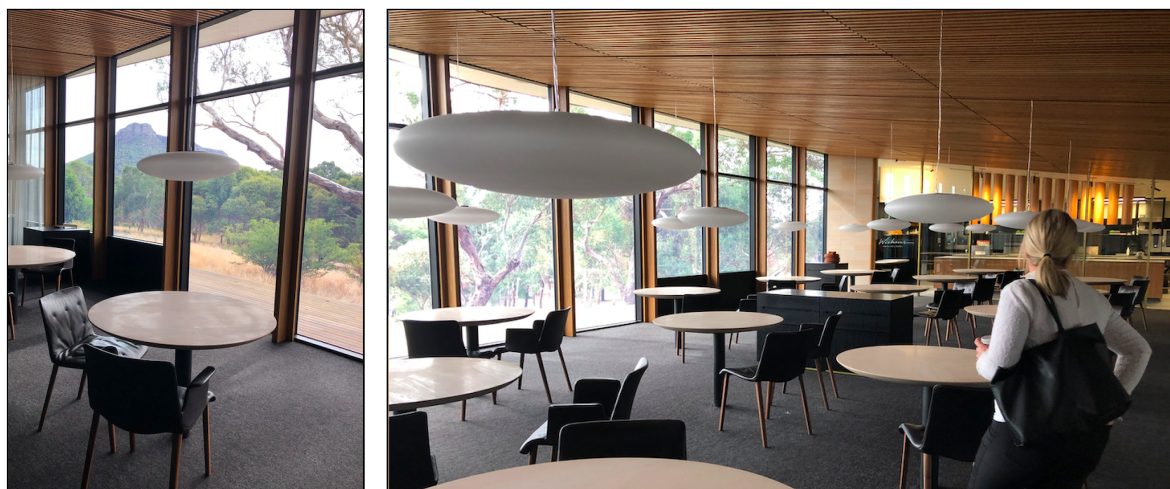


TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Executive Overview	3
1.2 Background: The Work of this Review	7
2. Strategic Context	9
Ararat Rural City Council region	10
North Grampians Shire Council region	12
Horsham Rural City Council region	13
Southern Grampians Shire region	15
3. Visitor needs	18
4. Industry and Stakeholder Feedback	22
Succeed-Fail Scenarios	23
5. Operating Model Considerations & Recommendations	25
Engaging our Visitors via an Omnichannel Strategy	26
6. Benchmarking	28
Example of Modern Experiential Retail – Mood Board & Concept	30
Steps to be considered in restructuring a VIC network	32
Location Considerations	33
Conclusion	34

8. APPENDICIES	36
8.1 Horsham VIC Running Costs	36
8.2 South Grampians VIC Running costs	39
8.3 Ararat & Grampians Visitor Information Centre Running Costs	41
8.4 North Grampians Visitor Information Centre Running Costs	42
Visitor Information Centres in Grampians Tracking Results	43
Detailed Breakdown of Targeted Visitor Audiences previously created for Southern Grampians Shire Council	44
8. Research & References	45
8.1 Stakeholder Workshops & Participants	45
8.2 Key take-outs from Northern Grampians Council Workshop	47
8.3 Key take-outs from Southern Grampians Industry Workshop and Council Briefing	49
8.4 Key take-outs from Workshop with Southern Grampians and Horsham councils	51
8.5 Key Takeouts from 2nd Industry Workshop at Halls Gap	52
9. Key Stakeholder Interviews	55
9.1 Michael Bailey, Northern Grampians CEO, Key take-outs	55
9.2 Tim Harrison, CEO, Ararat Rural City	56
9.3 Horsham Rural City Council stakeholders	58
9.4. Michael Tudball, Southern Grampians CEO	59
10. Review of Reports/Plans/Strategies	61



1. EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

The Grampians Tourism region has taken significant steps toward achieving an economy of scale to grow its visitor economy.

All four chief executives of the local governments which lie within the boundaries of Grampians Tourism (GT) have taken up directorships of its board with a view to maximising strategic alignment of marketing activities.

Like many local governments, all are now considering the cost and fragmented role of visitor servicing and asking whether there is a better model than each council independently running Visitor Information Centres.

This follows a Statewide Review of Visitor Servicing undertaken in 2018 and overseen by a Steering Committee comprising representatives of Visit Victoria, the Tourism Events and Visitor Economy Branch in the then Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, regional tourism boards and local government representatives.

That review found that Grampians local government partners were not alone in their concerns. “There has been anxiety about the role of Visitor Information Centres - how much money they cost to run and how many visitors they actually service ...Some regions have worked out that the fragmentation of resources is leaving everyone behind.”

The Statewide Review concluded there was a clear need to pool visitor servicing resources and run them to an “Omnichannel Strategy” - a multichannel approach to sales that seeks to provide customers with a seamless shopping experience, whether they're shopping online from a desktop or mobile device, by telephone, or in a brick-and-mortar store.

“Most retailers now think about blended channels (omnichannel) for communication and sales - digital and physical engagement with customers,” the Review found. “Successful retailers also understand how their customers think about their product and services and intercept and nurture them in a consistent and coherent way. This includes information and sales offers at multiple stages of their journeys via digital channels and face-to-face engagement.”

In relation to in-destination physical services, the report recommended: “We need to evolve the design of Visitor Information Centres to become contemporary Hubs of Inspiration for visitors, local businesses and the community.

“We need to create inviting, inspiring environments with cross-sell opportunities to increase spend, extend a stay and/or encourage return and positive referral for what our region has to offer.”

In March 2019, Grampians Tourism commissioned this Review into the Future of Visitor Servicing within the Grampians Tourism region, asking that it consider:

- the growing ease of access to online information and booking services and advances in technology;
- the role and relevance of Visitor Information Centres in the context of the broader tourism industry and engagement to increase visitor length of stay, spend and activities; and
- the Visitor Services operating model with a view to improving cost efficiencies, exploring partnership and co-location opportunities.

This report is the culmination of that work. Following extensive industry and local government stakeholder consultations, a number of conclusions have been reached:

1. The roles of marketing to potential visitors and in-destination visitor services are part of a continuum of activity but are, in the main, managed separately and therefore disjointed, inconsistent and at times overlap;
2. The resources, systems, processes and expertise to join the two up, in the way a modern retailer would, do not currently reside in any one entity.
3. Some Visitor Information Centres (in evolved forms) should be part of a regional marketing and visitor servicing network – but they are currently not networked or fully fit for that purpose. (See Section 6. Benchmarking for a description of how VICs could evolve into Centres of Inspiration, not just information).
4. A Regional Omnichannel Strategy aligned to an agreed Vision and Mission – and which identifies required systems, processes, expertise and assets - should be commissioned. It would require a common brand and common digital channel for the region, and a collaborative/consolidated approach.
5. Further research may also be required to more comprehensively understand the journeys of primary segments of the targeted visitor audience, recognising the diversity of the region’s tourism offerings means one size does not fit all.
6. Assuming an Omnichannel Strategy is to be implemented, it needs to be executed to an agreed Governance and Business Model and be adequately resourced. This could be by way of what’s described as the Collective Impact model whereby an organisation is established and/or resourced to play a co-ordination role of committed resources from participants

7. An enabling organisation would need to in-source expertise in Service Design, Customer Relationship Management practice and software and various other digital tools and systems for a period of time to build capability and culture.
8. Based on the experience of others, various test-and-learn initiatives should be undertaken on the journey to implementing a full Omnichannel Strategy.
9. This includes formalising experiments with mobile visitor servicing, a more focused and co-ordinated effort on creating/consolidating and serving entertaining content as well as “utility” content. Such content should feature local stories, experiences and activities and be made available via digital and physical channels.

(This should be done to a clear plan which also identifies Content by type - eg audio-visual, images, infographics, text etc - and Channel - eg, Printed brochures, website, in-VIC screens, social platforms etc.)

A number of existing VICs could be converted into Hubs of Inspiration. This could occur over time and could potentially include the centres at Dunkeld, Halls Gap, Horsham, Ararat and Hamilton.

10. Ways of maintaining, reinvigorating and reinventing the Volunteer networks should be trialed.

There was an understandable desire from a number of participants to be told which VICs to close or move, but the risk of that at this stage is to “shoot before we take aim”.

The VICs are one part of a disjointed system and closing them or opening them in new forms alone won't solve the problem. (Nonetheless, there are some future options set out in this report.)

The Commonwealth and State governments' \$30.2 million investment in the Grampians Peak Trail and various council arts and culture precinct initiatives make this an opportune time to move to a best-practice visitor servicing model.

The return on investment will come not only from a more focused and efficient use of regional resources but also from better showcasing more of what the region has to offer to more people, more often. It will be easier to encourage repeat visitation with more visitors feeling remembered, known and understood, building the region's reputation for having a “customer focus”. This will help grow the economy, create new jobs and attract new residents in the years ahead.

As a result, we recommend a Regional Omnichannel Strategy be commissioned, incorporating a business case for transitional funding, with a view to mobilising in either the second half of FY2020 or in FY2021.

Local Government stakeholders should consider how to best use Visitor Servicing resources and this will likely mean finding ways to reinvest some of the funds currently dedicated to Visitor Information Centres into digital channels. Some existing centres should be repurposed and/or repositioned to be well located centres of inspiration, not just information, as per the following table:

Existing VIC	Future Potential	Future Location
Ararat	Centre of Inspiration	Arts Precinct
Halls Gap*	Centre of Inspiration	In-situ redevelopment. Review Service Design with Brambuk
Horsham	Centre of Inspiration	Arts Precinct
Hamilton	Centre of Inspiration	Arts Precinct
Dunkeld	Centre of Inspiration	In-situ redevelopment

This approach would complement the Victorian Government's Regional Tourism Review and focus as described in its Discussion Paper released in July 2019. The Discussion paper said through early engagement and analysis, the Review team had identified five key themes that are important for success:

1. Strengthening our tourism offering – building the capacity, capability and attractions of different regions across Victoria to ensure they keep pace with visitor needs and expectations.
2. Making the most of our marketing spending – better coordinating investment and priority setting in regional marketing to ensure partners are supported to work together towards common goals.
3. Supporting industry – better facilitating regional tourism investment and supporting industry to create excellent tourism products.
4. Enhancing Regional Tourism Boards – making sure all Regional Tourism Boards have the right governance, scale, cross-sector buy-in and remit to drive tourism for the regions.
5. Better coordinating effort – delivering a more coordinated approach to regional tourism planning and strategy to reduce duplication and maximise our efforts.

Submissions can be made to the Review until 30 August 2019 after which time the Government will provide a public response to consultations and submissions.

1.2 Background: The Work of this Review

The major work of this review was broken down into two key phases

Discovery comprising Desktop Research, VIC Site Visits, Stakeholder Workshops and Stakeholder Interviews; and

Synthesis and Visitor Experience Design including presentation of draft findings to key stakeholders followed by the delivery of this report.

Specific tasks included:

- review the Grampians Tourism 2016-2020 Strategy Plan created by Grampians Tourism and related documents / recommendations for future direction;
- review the current VIC operating model/budget;
- assess the current/future direction of visitor servicing relating to similar Councils and retail outlets/relevant businesses and how these may support/validate any new locations/design thinking; and
- identify any gaps in knowledge and agree any additional research/data analysis to be done.

Additional questions that key stakeholders engaged early in the process said they wished to see addressed included:

- Do we have traditional Visitor Information Centres (VICs)?
- If so, what does a traditional VIC versus a new model VIC look like?
- What is the regional picture? How many VICS do we need in the long term? How do we decide where they should be located?

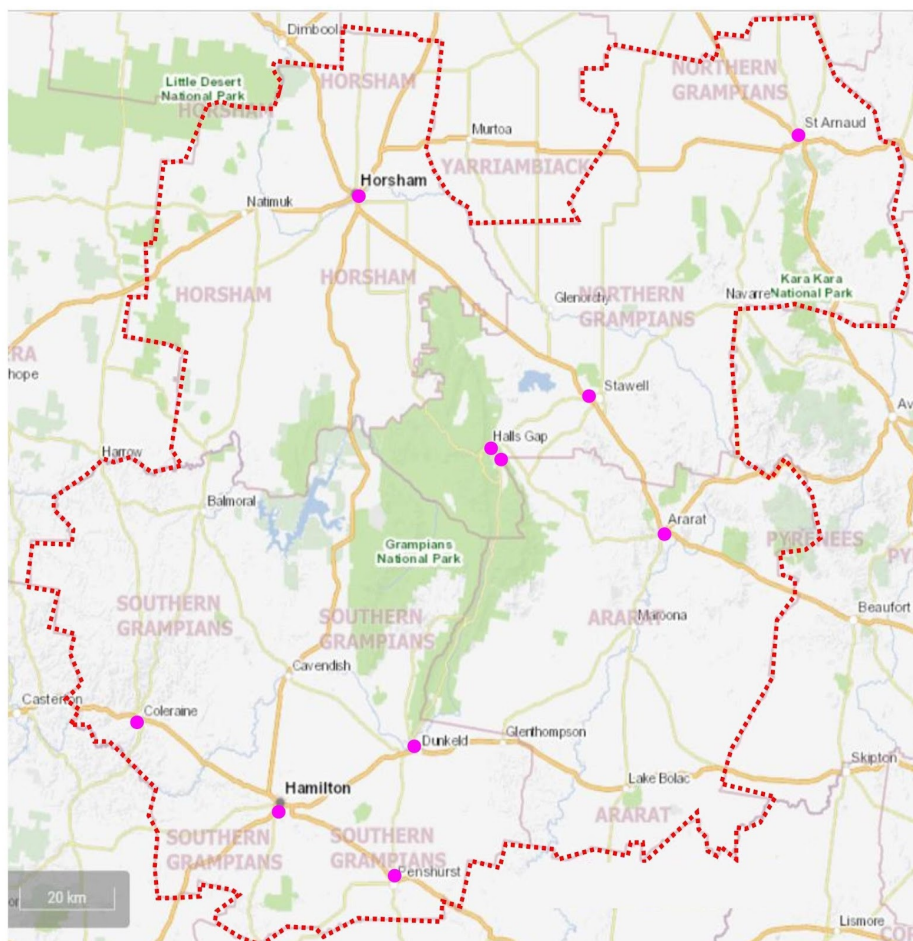
2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Grampians Tourism (GT) was established in 2009 and is the peak industry body for tourism in the Grampians region.

It encompasses and is directly supported by Visit Victoria, 150 industry partners, Ararat Rural City, Horsham Rural City, Northern Grampians Shire, Southern Grampians Shire.

The dots on the map below indicate the location of Visitor Information Centres within the GT region comprising accredited centres in Ararat, Halls Gap, Horsham, Hamilton and Dunkeld and non-accredited centres in Stawell, Coleraine, Peshurst and St Arnaud.

● Grampians Region: Visitor Information Services



(Please note that while there are two centres providing Visitor Information in Halls Gap, one is Brambuk the National Park & Cultural Centre which is not a VIC. It is a Grampians National Park information service. There is also a VIC at Lake Bollac which is not illustrated.)

The GT region is anchored by the iconic Grampians National Park which is the region's dominant visitor attractor. Further development of the Grampians Peaks Trail, now underway, will broaden its appeal and the need to provide an excellent in-destination visitor experience, including information services.

That development includes improving 60 kilometres of pre-existing tracks and construction of between 85 and 100 kilometres of new tracks.

The objective is to turn a long-distance hike into a collection of "world class signature experiences". The in-destination visitor experience is currently directly supported by:

1. An Accredited Visitor Information Centre at the main entry point to the trail in Halls Gap run by Grampians Tourism on an outsource basis on behalf of the Northern Grampians Shire Council. Approximately 81,000 people use the centre each year;
2. A nearby Park Information Service within Brambuk the National Park and Cultural Centre south of Halls Gap, run on behalf of Parks Victoria by Gariwerd Enterprises Pty Ltd. The Centre provides detailed information on walking, overnight walking, Aboriginal and European heritage in the park, camping (including bush camping), closures, 4WDing, rock climbing, flora, fauna, etc to approximately 110,000 -120,000 people each year according to Parks Victoria. These numbers include visitors seeking park information, and school groups and bus groups visiting the centre for cultural and park displays and interpretation experiences; and
3. An Accredited Visitor Information Centre at the southern end of the Trail in the village of Dunkeld operated by the Southern Grampians Shire Council. Approximately 21,000 people use this centre each year.

Despite the pull of the Grampians themselves, there is significant diversity beyond the Park in terms of tourism product and experiences.

Ararat Rural City Council region

To the east of the Grampians, Ararat Rural City Council has an economic development strategy which sees a significant role for tourism.

Ararat is a large regional centre, located 198 kilometres northwest of Melbourne with a population of around 11,600 (as assessed in 2016). While Ararat Rural City is located outside of the Grampians National Park, it describes itself as a 'Gateway to the Grampians'¹

¹ Ararat Visitor Economy Strategy 2018–2021

Other nearby “tranquil and inspiring natural attractions” include Mount Langi Ghiran State Park, Mount Cole State Forest, Mount Buangor State Park, Ararat Hills Regional Park, Lake Bolac and Greenhill Lake.

The Council’s Visitor Economy Strategy says its product strengths include: nature-based tourism; dark tourism (based on a former asylum complex); its proximity to the Grampians National Park; Strategic location; heritage; villages; wine and the Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre which tells the story of the Chinese miners and their arduous journey from Southern China to Australia.

In relation to the regional wine offering, Ararat and North Grampians councils and others supported the creation of a Grampians Pyrenees Wine Tourism and Culinary Masterplan 2017-2020 which highlighted the opportunity.

“As two of the 22 identified wine regions in Victoria, both the Grampians and Pyrenees punch above their weight in terms of recognition by ‘experts’ as wine regions,” the Masterplan’s authors noted “The Pyrenees has eight wineries out of twenty awarded five red stars by renowned critic James Halliday and The Grampians four out of eight.

“While the region is well blessed by awarded wineries and wine producers, the offer is not yet a populist one in tourism terms. Both regions operate off a low base of wine tourism visitation figures and recent National Visitor Survey figures suggest the regions are growing below industry norms.”

The Council’s Visitor Economy strategy is also alert to its weaknesses, saying that Ararat “lacks a tourism identity ... is not seen as a destination or a place to stop ... it’s a place to drive through” and “no retail [is] open on weekends”. (This relates to retail, as attractions are open.)

Council runs an accredited Ararat & Grampians Visitor Information Centre which is located within the town’s railway station which serves approximately 38,000 people per year. Ararat station is not particularly central and has little exposure.

An \$8 million redevelopment of an Ararat Arts Precinct encompassing the Ararat Town Hall and Ararat Gallery was completed last year. The precinct is a potential location for an evolved Visitor Information Centre as it has main highway frontage, is near an excellent café and the gallery has been upgraded recently. This could be an ideal location for an inspiring centre with clear branding showcasing what Ararat offers.

The Strategy also contemplates how to get more information to more people: “Visitor expectations cannot be met, and satisfaction not achieved by an individual product or service ...

“It is the sum total of all amenities and interactions within a community, be it the taxi driver, the local chemist, the farm stay owner, the local restaurant or cafe, bakery or petrol station attendant that determine whether a visitor is made to feel like a highly appreciated guest.

“Ultimately it is the local community that makes or breaks tourism and local government plays a pivotal role in either proactively optimising the visitor potential or yielding to competition from an ever-growing number of competitors.”

North Grampians Shire Council region

Northern Grampians Shire Council Industry Sector Plans describe tourism as of “growing in economic importance to the region”.

“With the Grampians National Park in the south and gold settler and natural environment features in the north, the Shire has a number of high profile and potential tourism product,” it says.

“Nature-based and outback experience tourism, events, cultural heritage and the emerging food and wine product are all opportunities for the region to sustain and capitalise on.”

Council plans to continue to develop a strong product and brand based on the region’s environmental assets including National Parks, wine and food tourism, heritage and history.

However, it notes that “visitor expectations in terms of choice and quality are also rising with a demand for high quality services, product and extended access to outlets and attractions.

“For rural communities this can be challenging in terms of costs, staffing, seasonality and capacity to meet changing consumer tastes and a wider spectrum of target markets. “

Via its outsource to Grampians Tourism, the Northern Grampians Shire Council maintains non-accredited VICs at Stawell and St Arnaud as well as the Accredited Centre at Halls Gap – the primary access point to the Grampians Peaks Trail.

The tourism sector strategy includes the following key activities:

- Consolidate marketing effort to ensure an effective, efficient and consistent message to core target markets including Melbourne;
- Consider and plan for the impacts of rate capping that may constrain Council's ability to contribute to industry development and to service existing and potential visitation numbers;
- Together with Grampians Tourism and other project partners, determine how best to reap the benefits from the \$30 million investment in the Grampians Peaks Trail. This could include a Trail Activation Strategy and specific data capture.
- Look at ways to drive revenues such as sponsorship opportunities; and
- Raise awareness of the importance of tourism in the region with local retailers and support improvements in marketing, service and product diversification by the retail sector to leverage greater benefit from the significant tourism market. "This is seen as a critical gap and opportunity."

Council is also implementing a Halls Gap Master Plan and Commercial Development Strategy to support the development of the township as a sustainable tourism destination for the region.

The Brambuk National Park and Cultural Centre, run on behalf of Parks Victoria, offers services that are complementary to the VIC, with the Centre providing much more detailed Park information.

It would be sensible to consider the information service relationship between the two centres and better co-ordinate the service design so there is clarity around what information is available at each centre and when people should be passed from one service to another.

This raises another opportunity to improve service design for the Halls Gap VIC itself which often is overrun in busy months. So-called "queue-less service technologies" can allow people to take a place in a virtual line and be advised by text message when to come to the counter.

Horsham Rural City Council region

Horsham Rural City Council's Economic Development Strategy 2017 – 2021 aims to "strengthen, enhance and further diversify the existing economic, tourism and industrial base in Horsham Rural City".

“Horsham will become a strong recognisable brand in key markets and be renowned for its liveability, quality service sector, strong community values, food and creative industry,” it says.

“Tourism product and events will develop to drive visitors to the region to explore nature-based assets and attend unique events and festivals.”

It aims to achieve this by:

- Developing a destination brand for Horsham and improving awareness of Horsham throughout Victoria and South Australia - *Promote Horsham as a destination to live, work, invest and visit*;
- Ensuring there is a coordinated and collaborative approach to marketing and branding;
- Creating marketing and promotional content for Horsham to attract visitors, residents, workers and businesses; and
- Investing in tourism product development and the provision of visitor services.

It also sees opportunities for:

- Tourism uses along the Wimmera River by facilitating private and public sector tourism development opportunities;
- promoting the development of food and beverage tourism leveraging from regional produce strengths; and
- Developing Horsham’s calendar of festivals and events.

It sees The Grampians as both a “challenge and opportunity”.

“The Grampians itself is a major tourism asset and nature-based destination in Victoria, however, there appears to be very little connection between Horsham and the Grampians in the eye of the visitor.

“One of the reasons for this is that the majority of visitors to the Grampians travel from Melbourne ... “

“An opportunity exists for Horsham to attract a greater proportion of visitors from South Australia. Horsham is located approximately 420 km from Adelaide and is considered the approximate midpoint between Melbourne and Adelaide.”

The council maintains an Accredited Visitor Information Centre in Horsham and is committed to ensuring the region is providing adequate visitor information services.

In 2016 Council completed the redevelopment of the Horsham Town Hall and Regional Art Gallery with the stated goal of attracting visitors and driving economic and cultural activity. The precinct is a potential location for an evolved Visitor Information Centre.

Southern Grampians Shire region

The Southern Grampians Shire is characterised by a number of key destinations that provide a range of different experiences and, hence, attract a variety of markets.

Hamilton is its largest town with a population of about 10,000 in south-western Victoria about 290 kilometres from Melbourne and connected to the Great Ocean Road via The Hamilton Highway.

The Southern Grampians Shire Council describes Hamilton as becoming a more sophisticated culture and heritage destination (with an agricultural community focus), providing appealing cultural events, galleries and museums, fine food and local produce, beautiful botanic gardens and quality shopping.

It has an Accredited Visitor Information Centre which services approximately 38,000 people per annum.

Council is undertaking a Scoping Study and looking at a lakeside location for a new regional art gallery in order to continue to attract operational funding and tourism within a landscape of rapidly upgrading gallery and museum facilities across the State. There is a potential location for an evolved Visitor Information Centre.

Dunkeld

Dunkeld has gone from strength to strength in the last decade taking ownership of its position as the southern gateway to the Grampians National Park, with some spectacular accommodation and high-quality food (from casual café to fine dining).

The Royal Mail Hotel development has attracted much higher yield visitors including via both international and domestic marketing.

Dunkeld's accredited Visitor Information Centre serves approximately 21,000 people per annum and could be reimaged as a Centre of Inspiration as part of a redevelopment of the existing facilities planned to coincide with the upgrade of the Grampians Peaks Trail. It is at the Southern end of the Trail and is expected to boom in popularity as an entry and exit point.

Cavendish

Cavendish has been developed as a rural village with some delightful low-key pastoral heritage and "red gum country" experiences for visitors, as well as visits to historic gardens along with the now popular Bunyip Hotel operated by Chef James Campbell who, for the best part of a decade, worked for MoVida's Frank Camorra.

During this time, he won two Good Food Guide hats as Head Chef MoVida Sydney and was recognised as one of MoVida group's rising stars.

Council sees it as a base for visits to some of the western-side attractions of Grampians National Park and says with the introduction of additional outdoor adventure activities and a few further supports, the town could be further developed as a short-break destination.

Coleraine

Coleraine, as the second largest town in the Shire, has a small selection of heritage and nature-based experiences, and quality food, which has created a day trip / short-break destination. It has a non-accredited Visitor Information Centre which serves about 7,500 visitors each year at the old train station site, although it is not well sign posted to main street. It could have an opportunity to co-locate with other facilities eg history centre or other.

Penshurst

Penshurst's profile has increased with the conferring of national Geopark status to the volcanic plains of south-west Victoria / southeast South Australia, called the Kanawinka Global Geopark.

More than 90 global geoparks have been declared across the world and recognised by UNESCO.

The Budj Bim Cultural Landscape, located in the traditional Country of the Gunditjmara Aboriginal people in south-eastern Australia, contain one of the world's most extensive and oldest aquaculture systems and is on UNESCO's World Heritage list.

Kanawinka Global Geopark covers 27,000 square kilometres from south-west Victoria to south-east South Australia. This is part of a plan to promote geological tourism, or "geotourism" showcases unique landscapes.

Penshurst has a Volcanoes Discovery Centre which is currently visited by some 1,800 people a year, with growth in the organised groups sector (seniors, schools, interest-specific recreation markets).

An inspiration centre either at Penshurst or Hamilton could build on these key themes of indigenous heritage and volcanic landscapes.

There has recently been a growth in B&Bs and self-contained accommodation, opening up a new overnight market.

A Destination Approach to Marketing

Given the region's diversity, the Southern Grampians Shire Strategic Plan recommends that a 'destination' approach be taken to the further development and marketing of each town.

“While there should continue to be overarching campaigns selling Southern Grampians Shire and the Grampians, there should also be opportunities to promote each town as a distinct entity with its own ‘personality’ (which may occur under the umbrella of a regional campaign),” it states.

This recognises that needs of Great Ocean Road and Grampians Tourism visitors vary, based on demography, reason for staying, available money for experience based tourism, etc.

“This ‘individualised’ approach is particularly important for product development where the needs of each town are quite different, and it provides an opportunity to work closely with each town’s community who are responsible for some of its key tourism products,” the Strategic Plan states.

Council is currently working on a Shire Strategic Plan which incorporates a community vision framework for 2041. This will form the basis of a small towns strategy that addresses the role of each settlement, its infrastructure needs and ultimately its personality in a branding sense.

Shared Services and Regional Co-operation

Local Government CEOs are discussing opportunities to share services across a range of areas and this review, itself, has its genesis at least in part from this in-principle approach.

Some VICs are simply in the wrong spots, as well as having dated information. Final decisions on locations should consider trend data on foot traffic for instance for all VICs.

Also, the way Regional Tourism Boards operate within one region can impact another and so the mindset of collaboration and co-operation needs to extend beyond any one region.

For instance, visitation to the Southern Grampians Shire is heavily impacted by Great Ocean Road Tourism region and the tourism numbers off Great Ocean Road are far more significant than the Grampians National Park.

3. VISITOR NEEDS

As can be seen from the Strategic Overview of the region, from both a marketing and visitor information perspective, one size will not fit all.

The good news is the Visitor economy is growing. In the year ending December 2018, the Grampians Tourism region received nearly 1.1 million domestic overnight visitors - up by 11.7% on the previous 12 months.

The region received 6.6% of visitors and 6.4% of nights in regional Victoria. Compared with the previous year, the region's share of visitors was up by 0.5% and the share of nights was up 0.8%.

In order to maximise its reach, the current marketing strategy targets what the Roy Morgan Research Company has designated the "Lifestyle Leaders" segment of the Australian population.

Lifestyle Leaders are described as professional, progressive and educated individuals who actively seek out information and like to discover and be the first to try new things.

The segment is made up of subtypes including, and relevant to the Grampians region, "Creative Opinion Leaders" and people "Inspired by Nature, Food & Wine Lifestyles" and "Enriched Wellbeing".

Visitors to the Grampians region were more likely to be in the Inspired by Nature segment (26%) than visitors to regional Victoria generally (19%).

The Lifestyle Leaders segment has a higher discretionary spend (average personal income of \$53K per annum and household income of \$107K) and tend to indulge more than the average Australian on travel.

According to Visit Victoria's Domestic Segmentation (2012)², the Lifestyle Leaders segment accounts for 32 per cent of domestic overnight leisure visitors to the Grampians region, similar to regional Victoria generally (33%).

The current GT marketing strategy is to lead with promotion of the Grampians and seek to cross sell other experiences.

While there is a solid rationale for the current approach, its limitations are quickly understood when you reverse the statistics: if Lifestyle Leaders account for circa 32 per cent of domestic overnight leisure visitors, who is talking to the other 68 per cent of visitors?

² Grampians Tourism Strategic Plan 2016-20

The current Grampians Tourism Strategic Plan intends to “place the consumer (their behaviours and preferences) at the centre of every decision.”

Yet, most tourism research across the State is rear-vision focused and tells us who did what in the past – there is little research focus on understanding visitor journeys or future trends.

That’s partly because it can be expensive, and the market is dynamic. This underscores the case for rethinking the way in which we are managing marketing and visitor services.

In our Stakeholder Research for this Review we asked a series of related questions which one Local Government CEO answered in a way which both highlighted the limits of our knowledge of visitor needs and gestured towards the opportunities of changing the current model. The questions and his answers were as follows:

Who are our targeted audience segments and where and when do they require visitor information and related services?

A key point from my perspective is we probably don't exactly know!

In saying that my sense is big nature is one segment, [others include] fine food, wine & 'rural' experience, cultural heritage enthusiasts, outdoor types for walking, hiking and cycling experience, events associated with food, wine and music.

What do we currently do against those requirements - are we providing services where and when they are required?

Probably not enough. We focus a fair bit on 'big nature' and a lot on the icon - The Grampians as the hook - then 'sell' the other experiences. Events are pretty well promoted.

I think we rely on [visitors] coming and then we put effort into the experience to hopefully get them back. It seems a lot come organically and then once it is known if they have a good experience they come back.

We do very little on cultural experience including indigenous, performing arts and culture. And I don't think we do much at all for the hiking, camping, walking and cycling.

I think the bigger question - once we have nailed the “what” is the “where”? Where are they coming from or where do we want them to come from and then target those areas - International, Melbourne, South Australia, etc

Are we providing services where and when they are required for a target audience?

I don't think so. The Visitor Information in my view is disparate and inconsistent. I think our online presence is growing but there is too much competition among us all.

Visitor Information Centres have a role but it needs to be re-defined, everyone needs to be clearer on their role. We need more data and digital presence both within VICs and [elsewhere] we need 'champions' or ambassadors also promoting.

What insights, expertise and resources do we currently have?

I think we have plenty, but they are disparate and uncoordinated. I think at Local Government level we lack the digital and marketing skills required.

I think GT has a good structure but is limited by funding and still lacks clarity of role/purpose from some key stakeholders. Imagine if local government just pooled 25% each of its current investment into Visitor Services/Tourism/Marketing/Events into a coordinated approach.

We also need to better partner with the State Government, in particular with Parks Victoria.

Do we understand emerging trends?

Not particularly. We seem to lack data from the current visitor. We can access high level trends from Regional, State and National data but need to be able to firstly collect the data and then use it.

Do we understand and engage with players in the share economy?

Not really. We should leverage more off the Trip Advisor, Airbnb, Uber experience and try to understand their markets, who are their customers and what are they looking for when coming to our region.

Are we clear on the full range of market-ready and unique product the region has and what supporting emotional and rational content (inspiration and information) is available or required?

Too many of us are running off on our own, including local government. We are too parochial and scared of diluting our own brands. We need to do some work on how we collaborate yet retain our points of difference and even better develop and explain the value proposition.

Have we thought about when and where targeted visitors need it and how they can access it?

A little. In local government we tend to rely on Visitor Information Centres and the Web. Our social media in the tourism/visitor economy lacks a lot. And we print far too much collateral.

Have we got a plan for collecting and refreshing local stories including by content type (images / audio visual / text) and communication channel? In other words, do we have a comprehensive Content Plan and Channel Plan?

Not comprehensive. In local government we probably are more responsive and reactive rather than having a truly coordinated and targeted plan.

Do we have the systems to get the right content to our target visitors at the right time?

I think we have access to them, but we have a fundamental problem of not really knowing our target audience.

What systems and processes, expertise and resources do we need to execute an Omnichannel Visitor Servicing Strategy? For example, have we set up Knowledge Management, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Marketing Automation and/or Customer Satisfaction and Referral systems?

The short answer is no. I think we also lack expertise/skills in this area ... this and an understanding of the target market. This and who is and/or who do we want to be our visitors? These are the biggest pieces of work we need to undertake ... we have the product; we just don't market very well and don't target it when we do.

4. INDUSTRY AND STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

In conducting this Review into Visitor Servicing, Komosion ran four Industry and Local Government Stakeholder workshops, more than a dozen in-person interviews two major online surveys. All Stakeholders were unanimous: we can't proceed with Visitor Servicing on a Business as Usual basis and succeed.

"The sector is operating in silos - operators, tourism marketing and visitor servicing are offering overlapping services leading to a crowded marketplace that is both confusing for visitors and wasteful of resources," said Stephen Pykett, the Manager of Economic Development for Horsham Rural City Council,

"Tourism marketing does not lead the visitor to visitor servicing to address both a call to action and value-add opportunities. A more wholistic relationship could be built with the visitor by creating a smooth transition from marketing to servicing."

There was an interest in new models and new ways of working, although almost all stakeholders believed personal, face-to-face engagement with visitors was vital.

At one extreme was the model operated in the town of Great Western where all services are managed by industry.

"There is no VIC in Great Western, explained Bruce Anchow of Great Western Enterprises. "We rely on everyone in Great Western to work together to send visitors around and cross-sell experiences. We don't have a lot of space, but we try to create different experiences.

"People come as they're interested in history, they come for the story and the cellar door experience. We're heavily promoting in the digital space and it's all about the town, not the individual assets."

North Grampians Shire Council CEO Michael Bailey said he believed the younger generation of tourists had an interest in the region as a "Lifestyle Getaway" but little interest in using a Visitor Information Centre or its printed materials.

"I'm thinking about the new generation of tourists – people in their 30s with young kids ... I won't walk into the VIC, but I'll spend a lot of money on the kids' entertainment or eating and drinking. The reliance and expectation on brochures for me has well and truly passed.

"Personally, I haven't relied on VIC for information when travelling through the States and Vietnam. I just book everything 2 days in advance and online."

However, another stakeholder said: “Not everybody uses digital formats - iPhones, iPads, computers and we have to think about what happens when the Wi-Fi drops out ...when there’s no phone service.”

Another stakeholder said: “We need to run traditional VICs in a more modern way. Not operate only within four walls, we need to expand services beyond. We need to create brand ambassadors to influence visitors in a better way - tap into local knowledge. How can we blend of what’s online and physical?”

The chief executive of Ararat Rural City Council, Dr Tim Harrison, felt it was important to target high value visitors and think about their needs.

He said projections from Parks Victoria was that the revamped Grampians Peak Trail would likely attract a new demographic for “Glamping” driven by women, aged 45 and above, with high disposable income who were prepared to spend \$800-\$1,000 a day.

He said whereas “Mum, Dads, kids and campervans” are current “bread and butter”, the “well-heeled middle classes out of Melbourne is the future.”

“The Grampians are the biggest draw card, they’re the icon and Ararat has an interesting take to offer - best views (Moyston and Pomomal) – and there’s a capacity to grow big ‘tree change’ communities being drawn to those areas,” Dr Harrison said.

He believed stakeholders “underestimate the web as a channel” and placed too much emphasis on “old economy collateral (printed publications) – it’s not cheap, difficult to update”.

Succeed-Fail Scenarios

A key device used in the Stakeholder Workshops was a “Succeed-Fail Scenario” where participants broke into groups and considered the role of Visitor Servicing in 2025 where the visitor economy was either thriving or in rapid decline.

Participants painted a series of vivid scenarios.

What would a world be like in which we failed for visitors, residents and businesses?

“The visitor experience is poor,” one participant imagined. “Marketing makes promises that are hard to achieve and the [negative] visitor experience, through social media and ‘word-of-mouth’ dominates the marketplace ... Visitor servicing is provided without the personal or local touch, probably via online and a remote call centre.

And what is a world in which we succeeded like?

“Marketing inspires visitors to want to experience the Grampians region and begins to build a relationship and leads visitors seamlessly to visitor servicing that continues the relationship before visitors commit to travelling to region, as well as while they are in region.

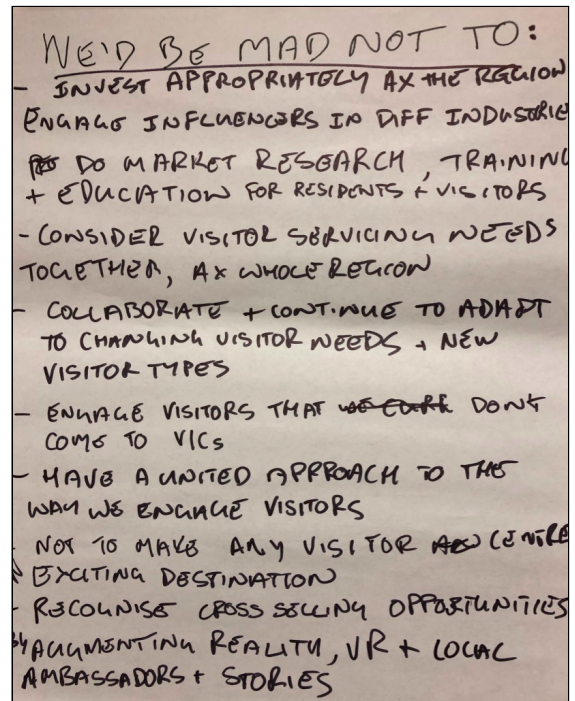
“Visitor servicing builds on the enthusiasm generated by marketing and enhances this with information about a range of relevant accommodation, activities and attractions that encourages the visitor to plan a longer stay in region

One of the participants felt it was important for this sort of visitor servicing information to be made available before people arrived in the destination, as well as once they were visiting.

“Trying to increase length of stay when visitors are already in region is far harder than getting them to plan to have a longer stay,” he suggested.

And, he felt, those responsible for visitor servicing should maintain a relationship after a visitor has left the region.

“This is to gather feedback (that is provided to marketing and product development as well as operators) and to encourage repeat visitation and build on aspirations to move to the region as long-term residents.”



5. OPERATING MODEL CONSIDERATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the stakeholder consultation process it became clear that a Vision and Mission for the role of Visitor Servicing could help stakeholders make decisions.

The role of a Vision would be to imagine a future state, a “Nirvana” where the economy is growing and visitors are coming back, referring their friends and some even moving into the region.

The Mission would explain how visitor services will help us reach that future state. Together the Vision and Mission will guide decision making and make clear the role of Visitor Servicing in the Visitor Journey.

It should also help us clarify the relationship between marketing and visitor servicing - and various other points of confusion.

We recommend that a Vision be adopted that ties to a Brand Platform for the region.

The platform should be able to support the diverse offerings across the GT region – as we have noted there are multiple destinations which have points of appeal to different audiences. One size cannot fit all.

In that regard, the existing Brand Platform is quite adaptable: “Find Space, Find Yourself”.

Visit Victoria last year launched Find your Happy Place as a platform for marketing regional Victoria.

A Steering Committee for this Review came up with the following statement: “As the Grampians region we will service the visitor seamlessly, to ensure the best possible experience.” Yes, but why?

Drawing on the Grampian region’s stunning natural beauty, boutique villages, paddock-to-plate produce, fine wine, artisan communities, silo trails, arts precincts, heritage, aboriginal culture and ancient geology and so on, could we promise people: A Space to find Your Happy Place?

Could our mission be to offer *a personalised service which matches our “Space” with an individual visitor’s “Happy Place”*?

With a clear Vision and Mission, we can start to see how and why we can join up our Marketing and Visitor Services and what we might need to do this effectively.

We can understand why we need to ask our Visitors to let us know and understand them better – and what might be in it for them to share information with us.

We are not thinking about the visitor as an anonymous transaction, we are looking to build a relationship of personal value based on meeting their emotional needs and wellbeing.

This is something one of the regional Stakeholders, Cameron McDonald, the owner of the Grampians Horse Riding Centre, had already realised about his business. “When I’m asked about what business are we in, I say it’s not tourism. It’s a recreation, training and mental health.”

Engaging our Visitors via an Omnichannel Strategy

The Statewide Visitor Servicing Strategy said that most retailers now think about blended channels (omni-channel) for communication and sales - digital and physical engagement with customers.

Successful retailers also understand how their customers think about their product and services and intercept and nurture them in a consistent and coherent way with information and sales offers at multiple stages of their journeys via digital and face-to-face engagement

What skills and culture do we need to maximise our reach and effectiveness when transforming visitor services to be more relevant in the modern economy?

- Do we have Business Process Engineers expert in self-service and automation technologies and Customer Relationship Management systems, Business and Data Analysts; Application Developers; User Experience Designers; Graphic Designers literate in Digital and Physical design?
- Do we have a culture that will support agile ways of working, e.g. multi-functional and cross organisational teaming, Lean Design, “Sprints” of work and Test-and-Learn projects, etc?
- Do we have a Planning Cycle driven by Strategy and Insights and KPIs that informs Continuous Improvement?

The answer to these questions asked in stakeholder interviews and surveys is “not in any one place” ... but there is an awareness as to how and why such expertise can be harnessed to help our region grow.

The CEO of Northern Grampians Shire Council Michael Bailey cited involvement he has had with the Richmond Football Club. “Richmond wanted to be the biggest membership club and went from 38,000 to 75,000 members. Instead of doing a blanket campaign we target marketed. It was all about profiling different groups and marketing to their needs.”

Dr Tim Harrison, CEO of Ararat Rural City Council, said: “Omnichannel is the way forward – at the moment, we’re very one dimensional We’re using a hammer where we should be using a crowbar. We do visitor information poorly and it is not very well integrated.”

So how could we combine resources to deliver a consistent, omnichannel visitor service?

The *Rethink! Reimagining Visitor Services Statewide Strategy* called out a model documented in Stanford University’s Social Innovation Review publication called Collective Impact.

It cited successful case studies where collaborative networks between not-for-Profits, government and the private sector were supported by what it described as a Backbone Organisation.

“Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organisation and staff with a very specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative,” the authors wrote.

“The expectation that collaboration can occur without a supporting infrastructure is one of the most frequent reasons why it fails.

“The Backbone Support Organisation requires a dedicated staff separate from the participating organisations who can plan, manage and support the initiative through ongoing facilitation, technology and communications support, data collection and reporting, and handling the myriad logistical and administrative details needed for the initiative to function smoothly.”

This could be a model for the Grampians Region. The region may also be able to access additional funding to enable this via the Victorian Government’s Rural Transformation Fund for local government.

6. BENCHMARKING

A 2018 Local Government Health Check Research report, commissioned by the Victoria Tourism Industry Council, found that while Visitor Information Services have experienced a decrease in support from councils overall, Visitor Information Centre received the highest financial assistance on average from councils.

Average spend on external tourism related organisations or committees

Population	Regional Tourism Assoc.	Local Tourism Assoc.	Visitor Information Centre	Regional Tourism Board	Chamber of Commerce	Business Tourism Assoc.
Group 1 - < 25,000	\$13,667	\$8,200	\$208,101	\$49,277	\$35,813	\$11,667
Group 2 - 25,001 - 50,000	\$77,333	\$82,143	\$258,607	\$143,834	\$12,500	\$20,000
Group 3 - 50,001 - 100,000	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$230,000	\$51,832	\$141,667	\$183,333
Group 4 - >100,001	\$18,600	\$916,667	\$323,950	\$253,343	\$119,375	\$5,000
Aggregate	\$28,467	\$163,667	\$243,973	\$111,259	\$71,412	\$68,333
Aggregate (excluding outlier)		\$36,850				\$11,250

According to information provided to this review, the existing Visitor Information Centres across the Grampians Tourism region cost around \$1 million per annum to run which is in line with the State average of circa \$250,000 per annum. The following table illustrates the level of spend on external organisations and committees cross-tabulated by council groupings based on population size:

Local Government	Net Visitor Information Centre Investment
Ararat Rural City Council	\$218,713
Southern Grampians Shire Council	\$347,804
Horsham Rural City Council	\$240,730
Northern Grampians Shire Council via Grampians Tourism	\$215,900
Total	\$1,023,147

The premise of this review is that an Omnichannel Strategy should be commissioned and the role and future of Visitor Information Centres be determined in the context of that strategy. A Visitor Information Centre Best Practice Checklist including the following criteria that could be used to assess VIC's as part of that Strategy:

1. Visitor Servicing not Visitor Information is the Focus
2. Location Reality is Faced (there is high level of “footfall”)
3. Offers a “Wow” Experience
4. Is a Custodian of Regional Stories
5. Includes a Tourism Industry Engagement Focus
6. Embraces Digital Visitor Servicing
7. Engages Residents, Retail + other Service Providers
8. Has an innovation mindset - Never Accepts the Status Quo
9. Has Strong Leadership + Management

The Statewide Strategy suggested some VICs could evolve to become Centres of Inspiration – a destination in themselves.

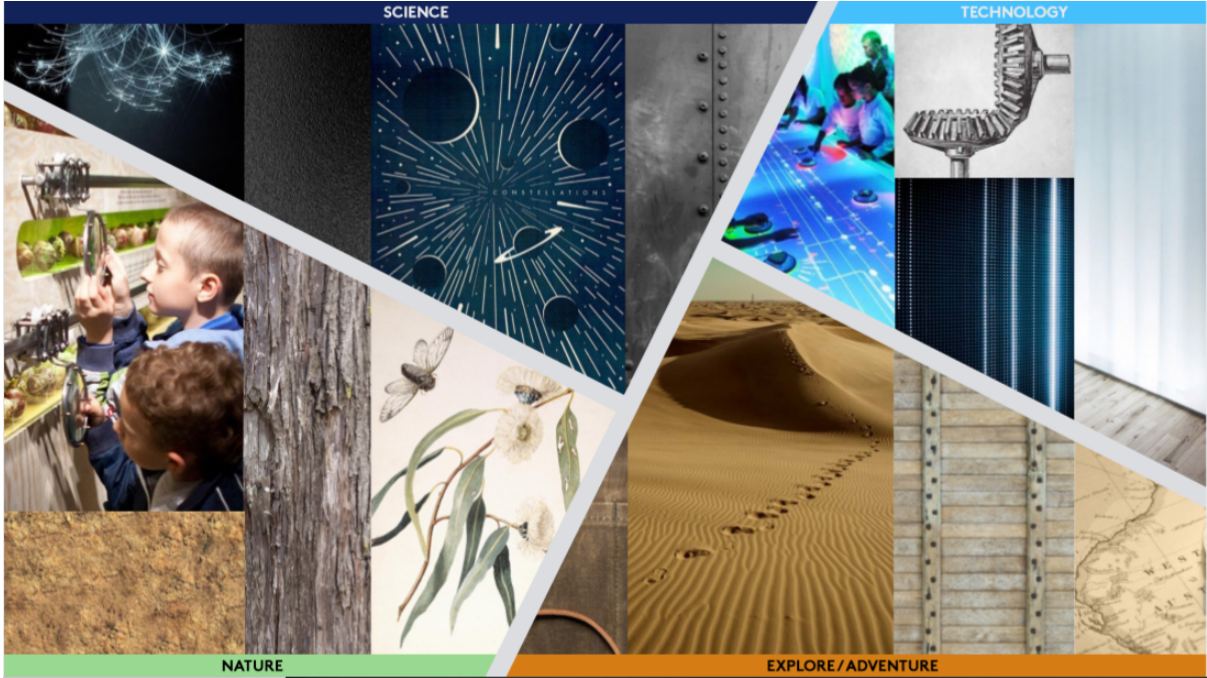
The following images illustrate an approach to modern experiential retail environments, in this instance by way of a Mood Board and Concept for Australian Geographic stores.

It is the work of Gary McCartney, a specialist with more than 20 years global experience in retail design, who supported the Statewide Review in assessing traditional VICs and reimagining them. He described the traditional VIC experience as: “Cluttered; Institutional; Redundant; and Pre-Internet”.

“We can transition the traditional Visitor Information Centre to a Local Knowledge Centre ... to Hub of Inspiration,” said McCartney,

“A place where we can bring visitors together with locals for a true local experience - stuff you can’t get on the internet.” (<https://www.mccartneydesign.com.au/>)

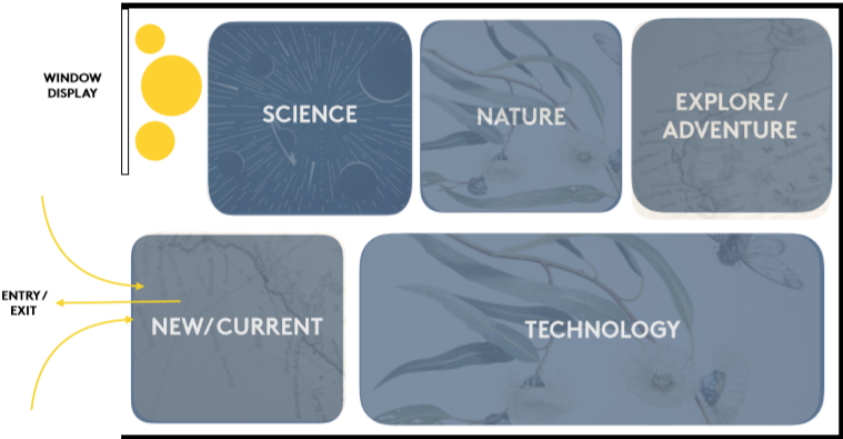
Example of Modern Experiential Retail – Mood Board & Concept



DISPLAY BY ZONE

Alternative layout
Technology links the other three categories with an overlay of rich visual and audio content.
We've added a **New and Current** zone at the front to highlight events related collections- this would change on **high rotation**.

AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHIC
D3.1 Concept



BRAIN FOOD LAYOUT

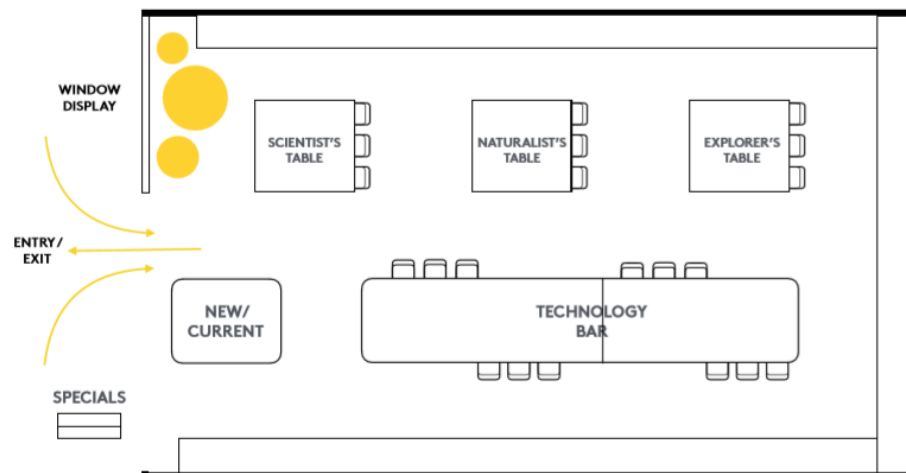
The layout becomes similar to a **cafe style restaurant** with large tables and a bar.

Each zone gets its specialist table for featured elements in that zone, supported by wall space.

The intention is that these are interactive and "play" spaces where customers can get hands on and experience the merchandise.

At one side is the tech heads' bar where technology brings everything together via customers' own portable devices.

LAI D OUT LIKE A CAFE/BAR



The Statewide Strategy recommended that in rethinking how we range our information in new Inspiration Hubs and online, we need to think like retailers working in a network. We need to create inviting, inspiring environments with cross-sell opportunities to increase spend, extend a stay and/or encourage return and positive referral for what our region has to offer.

The Great Ocean Road Tourism Region also has been considering the future of Visitor Services and the below table, adapted from work undertaken there, sets out a range of options that should be considered as part of a Grampians Omnichannel Strategy.

VISITOR SERVICING ASSETS	Model 1: VICs + Omnichannel	Model 2: Inspiration Hubs + Omnichannel	Model 3: Digital Channels & Mobile Services Only
Traditional Bricks & Mortar VICs	✓	✗	✗
Enhanced Inspiration Centres	✗	✓	✗
Digital touch screens	✓	✓	✓
Mobile VICs	✓	✓	✓
Roving Ambassadors	✓	✓	✓
Regional social media program	✓	✓	✓
Regional training program	✓	✓	✓
Regional merchandising	✓	✓	✗

Steps to be considered in restructuring a VIC network

There are a range of “lessons learned” offered by another Victorian region which restructured its Visitor Information Centre network which should be included in a Grampians Omnichannel Strategy.

1. Create a community awareness campaign around the merging of any centres (rather than the closing of one);
2. Create tourism partner/local business education opportunities to increase awareness of tourism attractions and points of interest for visitors (community pride);
3. Create a local ambassador program for the VFR market so local residents have more community pride for tourism and can champion visitor points of interest;
4. Have a long lead time and community awareness/consultation prior to closing any VIC (to increase understanding and alleviate concern). Increase the overlapping time between any VIC closure and the introduction of technology

solutions like smart terminals (increases understanding and awareness in the community);

5. Trial new VIC locations with a smaller footprint, based on curated experiences and not brochures. The new location should be in or near a high foot traffic area such as a dining precinct or visitor attraction – this may also be unaccredited, and hours would be in line with visitor peaks and troughs;
6. Offer an online store for local merchandise (quality items rather than generic souvenirs) to help offset costs;
7. Introduce Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR) or other new advances to create a point of difference and not be a generic VIC – offer a different yet complementary service to remaining VICs;
8. Seek a formal agreement with local government to create a combined centre/s with funding and staff/volunteers to assist or seek to have remaining VIC/s as the hub centre and create a smaller satellite centre for other regions.

Location Considerations

The following options could be considered as part of a Grampians Omnichannel Strategy incorporating the repurposing of key, well-located and high functioning VICs as the basis for new inspiration centres.

Centre	Reimagine	Relocation Option
Ararat	Inspiration	Arts Precinct
Halls Gap*	Inspiration	Review Service Design with Brambuk
Horsham	Inspiration	Arts Precinct
Hamilton	Inspiration	Arts Precinct
Dunkeld	Inspiration	In-situ redevelopment
Coleraine	TBD	
Penshurst	TBD	
St Arnaud	TBD	
Stawell	Close	Close

* Halls Gap – GT has a concept to incorporate a rock-climbing wall at front

Conclusion

Grampians Tourism and its four local government partners are thinking deeply about how to grow the visitor economy to the benefit of local communities and the local economy.

Each local government has recognised the importance of the Grampians as an iconic centre piece attraction for the region but also identified other diverse, unrelated drivers of visitation.

There is consensus that continued investment in the visitor economy will generate a return and a concern to optimise that investment to maximise the return.

The Visitor Servicing investment is currently largely based on a pre-internet model of engagement right across Victoria. To change this model, more rather than less investment will be required as new expertise, technologies and ways of working are required.

There will be necessary change to the way marketing and visitor services are managed and this needs to be planned and funded.

GT and its local government stakeholders should consider immediately insourcing the expertise and skills to create and implement an Omnichannel Strategy for the Grampians – a first step in building the capabilities of a backbone organisation. This could be done via GT or a separate entity with a dedicated local leader.

It will require significant short-term human resource investment. The idea of insourcing is an important one – it assumes full internal ownership even where external resources are drawn upon.

This could be actioned against the following steps put into a responsibility matrix in a table including indicative timing:

1. Agree to resource or create the “Backbone Organisation”;
2. Commission and Implement Omnichannel strategy;
3. Source funds to deliver inspiration centres via budget process, grants etc.
Repurpose the rest;
4. Training, marketing and support for “Backbone Organisation”
5. Establish new relationships and report outcomes for tourism stakeholders.

The Omnichannel Strategy for the Grampians will identify the best governance model, the required investment and an implementation pathway including various test and learn opportunities and new Inspiration Centres.

This may include research to understand key visitor journeys, any pain points and unmet wants and needs, including triggers for travelling / decision making / and the purchasing journey. The Strategy will need to include a plan to engage targeted visitors via their preferred channels with the right lead in times and engage them afterwards for feedback.

The Strategy should be built to a common Vision and Mission which would be finalised as a first task of its creation. This Review document should be a key input to the Strategy.

Therefore, we recommend a Regional Omnichannel Strategy now be created, incorporating a business case for transitional funding, with a view to implementation in either the second half of FY2020 or in FY2021.

8. APPENDICIES

8.1 Horsham VIC Running Costs

Building Maintenance	
Contractors	\$3,000
Sundry expenses	\$2,600
Plant Hire	\$200
Wages	\$750
Counter Souvenir Purchases	\$24,000
Ground Maintenance	
Materials Purchased	\$600
Other Sundry Materials	\$300
Plant Hire	\$500
Wages	\$3,200

Continued over page

Advertising other	\$10,000
Contract Cleaning	\$1,000
Course seminar & conference registration	\$1,200
Electricity	\$5,000
Gas Charges	\$1,000
Insurance	\$500
Maintenance Furniture & Equipment	\$1,500
Materials Purchased	0
Other Sundry expenses	\$2,000
Postage	\$1,200
Printing and Stationary	\$2,000
Salaries	\$193,687
Security	\$1,200
Staff Amenities	\$1,000
Subscriptions Membership	\$1,400
Telephone Charges	\$2,800
Travel & Accommodation	\$1,500
Water Charges	\$1,000

Volunteer (Other sundry expenses)	\$6,000
TOTAL	\$274,137
Revenue: User fees & charges – Booking service commission	- \$900
Counter souvenir sales	- \$32,000
Other Commission	- \$500
Total Revenue	- \$33,400
Grand Total	\$240,730

8.2 South Grampians VIC Running costs

Visitor Services Budget	
VIC Grounds Maintenance	\$3,000
Visitor Information Centre Building Maintenance	\$13,350
Penshurst Volcanoes Centre Building Maintenance	\$300
Dunkeld Information Centre Building Maintenance	\$5,300
Coleraine Information Centre Building Maintenance	\$1,170
Distribution of Brochures	\$3,000
Lease/Rental of Display Equipment	\$1,500
Tourism Ambassadors Program	\$2,720
Tourism Souvenir Sales and Purchases	\$7,000
Production of Tourism Maps	\$7,500
Tourism Printing/Publications	\$10,000
Specific Tourism Brochures	\$2,000
Visitor Services Operational Expenses	0
Visitor Services Operations*	\$304,964
Total	\$347,804

Visitor Experience Budget**	
Consumer Shows	\$2,500
Contribution to Regional Tourism Organisation	\$39,500
Development & Publication of Hamilton & South Grampians Visitors Guide	\$9,000
Grampians Gourmet Project	\$4,000
Grampians Marketing	\$10,000
Operator Education & Training	\$5,000
Pictorial Signage	\$6,500
Tourism Promotions and Advertising	\$27,000
Tourism Newsletter	\$1,500
Volcanic Interpretive Centre Agreement	\$4,000
Website Development - Visit Southern Grampians	\$12,000
Total Visitor Experience	\$121,000

*Visitor Services Operations Line: not just wages - costs of staff development etc included.

** Visitor experience lines for information but many of those lines are used more for economic development objectives not just the objectives of visitor yield and increased visitation.

- Volunteer numbers = 82
- Volunteer hours = 5,800

8.3 Ararat & Grampians Visitor Information Centre Running Costs

VIC Operations	\$ 35,650
VIC Volunteers Famil/Training	\$ 4,250
Display & Interpretation Area	\$ 4,000
Production of OVG	\$ 5,000
Production of Historic Guide	\$ 4,000
VIC Signage	\$ 2,500
Salaries	\$ 165,000
Mobile Phone	\$ 1,000
Merchandise	\$ 10,000
Accreditation	\$ 1,000
Office Running	\$ 3,000
Industry Functions	\$ 2,000
Brochure Distribution	\$ 1,500
Total	\$ 238,900
Income - Meeting Room Hire	- \$ 1,000
Merchandise	- \$ 19,187.00
Total	\$ 20,187.00
Net Total:	\$218,713

8.4 North Grampians Visitor Information Centre Running Costs

2019/20 budget for Halls Gap VIC, Stawell and St Arnaud

Income <i>Northern Grampians Shire Council for operating the three centres.</i>	\$319,000
Expenditure	
Payroll	\$170,000
Operational Costs	\$45,900
Total expenses	\$215,900
Net Profit	\$103,100

NB Stawell and St Arnaud are operated by volunteers (co-location arrangement) and is serviced by Halls Gap VIC coordinator who travels between the two one day a week. Recommended location/co-location of the Visitor Information Centres

Visitor Information Centres in Grampians Tracking Results

For the period January 2018 to December 2018

Location	Visitors # YE Dec 18
Ararat	37,750
Dunkeld	21,116
Halls Gap	80,795
Horsham	16,294
Hamilton	31,798
Total	155,955

Detailed Breakdown of Targeted Visitor Audiences previously created for Southern Grampians Shire Council

Target Markets	Purpose of Visit	Origin
a. Socially Aware (young couples, young families, older couples)	Holiday Touring (TFL)	Melbourne Regional Vic, South Australia
b. Visible Achiever (young couples, older couples)		
c. Traditional Family Life (older couples)		
d. Young Optimists (singles, couples, groups) - Dunkeld only	Holiday	Melbourne
e. International	Holiday	Europe, German, New Zealand, South Asia
f. Business	(conferences, events, corporate) Business	Melbourne, Regional Vic, Southeast of South Australia
g. Secondary Schools	(visitation related to recreational events, eg. sports championships)	Education Western district
h. International Tertiary Students	(visitation related to practical component of degree courses, eg. environmental science) Education & Holiday	Various, especially China
i. Visiting Friends & Relatives (VFR)	VFR	various
j. Group travel market (usually senior coach groups)	Holiday	Melbourne, Regional Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales
k. Cycling and walking markets (organised groups, families and friends' groups)	Holiday	Melbourne, Regional Victoria

8. RESEARCH & REFERENCES

8.1 Stakeholder Workshops & Participants

1. Northern Grampians Council Workshop - 29 April, Stawell

- Vaugh Williams, Director Corporate Services
- Tony Driscoll
- Kevin Erwin, Mayor
- Michael Bailey, CEO, Northern Grampians
- Naomi Goode, Executive Manager Communities
- Jason, Councillor for Halls Gap
- Karen, Councillor for Stawell
- Murray, Councillor for Stawell
- Rob Haswell, Councillor for Stawell
- Trenton Fithall, Executive Manager Operations (Acting Director of Structural Environment)
- Merilee Reed, Councillor for St Arnaud
- Mary Scully, Manager Governance

2. Southern Grampians Industry Workshop - 30 April, Hamilton

- Joe Dean, Runs an Airbnb
- Ama & Tom Cooke, Penshurst Progress Association
- Kylie Schumann, Royal Mail Hotel
- Eda Williamson, Grampians B&B and volunteer at Dunkeld VIC
- Hugh Koch, Southern Grampians City Council
- Lindsay Fush, Jack & Jude Cafe
- Harry Signh
- Garry Trainor, 2 x Caravan Parks & a Hotel
- Lyn Lewis, Hamilton Lakeside Motel
- Bridget Pern
- Kelly Millard, Gold Smith Motel
- Andrew Goodsell, Southern Grampians City Council
- Jody Stephens, Performer & Entertainer, Tara's Music School
- Denise Fenwick, Hamilton Eisteddfod committee
- Maree Robinson, Hamilton Eisteddfod committee & Sports scene
- Becky Morton, Hamilton Eisteddfod committee
- Joyce Gordon, Dunkeld Museum
- Kay Leyshon, Gerrard Murphy Furniture, Dunkeld
- Carolyn Alexander, Southern Grampians Cottage, Dunkeld

- Mary McArthur, Southern Grampians City Council

3. Industry Workshop - 1 May, Halls Gap

- Nicole Major, Best's Wines
- Bruce Anchow, Great Western Enterprises
- Jason Meehan, Grampians Tourism
- Monica Coleman, Grampians Tourism
- Justine Hide, Grampians Helicopters & Grampians Wine Tours
- Justine Kingan, Grampians Tourism
- Angela Murphy, Horsham Council
- Cameron McDonald, Grampians Horse Riding Centre
- Marc Sleeman, Grampians Tourism
- Andrea Cross, Horsham Ag Society / Business Horsham Exec
- Liz Dohlenburg, May Park Comfort Inn

4. Council Workshop - 2 May, Halls Gap

- Angela Murphy, Horsham Rural City Council
- Hugh Koch, Southern Grampians City Council
- Michael Tudball, Southern Grampians City Council
- Julie Cronin, Ararat City Council
- Prue Daley, Parks Victoria
- Stephen Pykett, Horsham Rural City Council
- Andrea Hogan, Horsham Rural City Council
- Jason Meehan, Grampians Tourism
- Judy Schneider, Southern Grampians City Council Visitor Servicing
- Mary McArthur, Southern Grampians City Council
- Andrew Goodsell, Southern Grampians City Council
- Simone Logan, Southern Grampians City Council
- Herman Jansen, Southern Grampians City Council
- Chris McClure, Horsham Rural City Council

5. Southern Grampians Council Briefing - 22 May, Hamilton

- Cr Mary-Ann Brown, Mayor
- Cr Chris Sharples
- Cr Colin Dunkley
- Cr Albert Calvano
- Cr Cathy Armstrong
- Cr Greg McAdam
- Cr Katrina Rainsford

- Mr Michael Tudball, Southern Grampians Shire Council
- Ms Evelyn Arnold Southern Grampians Shire Council
- Mr David Moloney, Southern Grampians Shire Council
- Mr Andrew Goodsell, Southern Grampians Shire Council

On Site Information Centre Visits - 29 April - 3 May

1. Stawell VIC
2. Horsham VIC
3. Hamilton VIC
4. Dunkeld VIC
5. Halls Gap VIC
6. Brambuk The National Park and Cultural Centre
7. Ararat VIC
8. St. Arnaud VIC

8.2 Key take-outs from Northern Grampians Council Workshop

- Some of the conversations are not informed by information. We need to understand who our audience is? What are their needs? How do we reach them?
- We have different offerings for different markets - each area has a uniqueness and different offering. Do we have the right visitor serving facilities?
- What does an ideal physical presence look like? What sort of materials should we be promoting in them and what should be physical and digital?
- How can community development and services be more integrated with tourism?
- Tourism is part of the whole economy and good tourism experiences also help bring friends and families together. It's not all about pure tourists.
- Wayfinding is a challenge, particularly for Stawell. Some VICs are working well through volunteers but Stawell is small and doesn't have volunteers.
- Every shire has so much to offer. Not sure the VIC direction is right at the moment. How do we get people to look at us and think "Hey, that's where we want to be ..."?
- The Grampians leads with tourist information in the rest of the shire is really wanting. Not everyone wants to go and walk in the mountains. How do you get dispersal?
- We should be looking at the whole area. We need to be careful not to be too parochial around boundaries.

- Visitor Servicing is also about small things – strict cleanliness, building maintenance, signage.
- Not everybody uses digital formats (iPhones, iPads, computers. We have to think about what happens when the Wi-Fi drops out ...when there's no phone service.
- Like the idea of tourism information in the toilets.

8.3 Key take-outs from Southern Grampians Industry Workshop and Council Briefing

- Innovation needs to be undertaken in the Visitor Servicing space.
- Local knowledge is a way to add value to people's visits - offering more than they can find out digitally and physically. We should be proud of local touch and personalisation.
- We need to ensure every visitor gets the full picture - not just what they can find online. Needs to be a strong combination of physical and digital.
- Nothing online told me what I can see but the VIC did. The VICs know what's happening locally.
- Personal contact is vital. People can go into a VIC and find out where they can see a Koala; or they want to know the best track to get a great photo of the sunset.
- Art gallery, Performing Arts need to be connected. We also don't connect the environmental experience with the tourism experience.
- The upfront personal approach is vital.
- VICs can be a community hub – some people go to find out info on their own community (new residents). It's about servicing as large an audience as possible. The VIC refers visitors to Dunkeld Museum which has a unique written and visual history.
- Interpretive signs around the town should have a QR to deliver more information if people were to hold their phones to it.
- Tend to get people arrive in Dunkeld that want to go to the Grampians but have not done any research so the VIC is a vital source of info for them.
- Having a VIC means local operators don't have to spend a lot of time explaining to people show them where anything is – cafes, mountains, tracks and how to get here or there.
- A lot of visitors are very "with it" in terms of digital technology but they still want to see a map.
- Research should be undertaken to inform us of who our visitors are and this understanding needs to feed into decision making.
- Our use of the digital space ie, Trip Advisor is very under done.
- A big chunk of the tourist community now travel using digital help. We need to bolster our presence on Trip Advisor, Lonely Planet etc. We need to be educating our local businesses about our services and attractions and how to use these digital sites.
- Perhaps an APP could be developed for mobile phone users that tracks their visitation etc.

- The thing we should do is survey the visitors and ask them what they liked and didn't like about the Grampians and their experiences while in the area. This gap is significant in terms of getting meaningful data from this review.
- Robust evidence is important in terms of making good decisions about future investments in infrastructure and also working out what services should be provided.

8.4 Key take-outs from Workshop with Southern Grampians and Horsham Councils

- How do we grow visitation, grow visitor economy? How do we grow visitor experience? Where should we be putting our money to get best value?
- What is council's our role in visitor services? Is there overlap with others? Are there gaps? Councils can't afford to duplicate. Need to look for efficiencies and partnerships across the region.
- The National Parks Centre gets 180,000 visitors and used to make \$300,000 profit from the shop. It was passed onto Brambuk in 2004. (When Parks Victoria counts numbers it is a door count that also includes people coming in for conferences and school groups.)
- Parks deliver economic benefits as well as a good and safe visitor experience. Connection with VICs and visitor services is very important.
- Why are we doing this? Because visitors bring economic value and potentially return. They also tell other people to come and/or move here.
- Need to take a holistic approach to visitor marketing and visitor servicing. Traditionally been segmented and we need to talk about relationships.
- We need to run traditional VICs in a more modern way. Not operate only within four walls need to expand services beyond.
- Need to create brand ambassadors to influence visitors in a better way - tap into local knowledge. How can we blend of what's online and physical?
- How do we make sure facilities and experiences match up with expectations – do we have the right value proposition?
- Hamilton VIC is a hub for managing three centres. How can we engage the community? Need to be digital and on-site. How do we be innovative?
- People are after Experiences and Stories. They want local product and local stories that they don't have time to read online.
- The visitor economy is much more than someone who's on holiday – for example, it is workers building the Wind Farms too.
- Visitors have different levels of spending – we might miss the mark if we do the same thing for everyone.
- The Hamilton VIC volunteering job now is a very different. Information requested is more wide ranging – eg family histories, gravesites. Not just: "What can I see?" Role has changed from sitting, serving the occasional customer to doing anything that needs to be done, including events.
- VICs are the window shop and first point of contact for people who are considering moving into the area, happens often. They are also used by locals and others in emergency situations for information,
- Would a tourism App that will cover enough of the questions above to satisfy all visitors?

- While we still have the 'grey nomads' travelling, (next 5 - 10yrs) I am of a very firm belief both methods are essential for a few more years.
- Should be a 7 day a week presence. No one likes a business that is closed.
- Set up a working group of passionate local people/business owners and task them with a 2-3 year project to try 'new' things. (Empowered with a budget.)

8.5 Key Takeouts from 2nd Industry Workshop at Halls Gap

- Great Western (GW) is a hidden gem, steeped in history, wine, wool and gold industry. Edge of Grampians so we have rolling foothills, no more than 30 minutes from the Grampians.
- Don't want to be a one-trick pony – visitors can go to winery. Diversification is important. Looking for more investors to open up more visitor experiences.
- There is no VIC in Great Western. We rely on everyone in GW to work together to send visitors around and cross-sell experiences. We don't have a lot of space, but we try to create different experiences. People come as they're interested in history, they come for the story and the cellar door experience.
- Heavily promoting in the digital space - all about the town not the individual assets.
- GW also has a presence in Halls Gap because this is where people are coming, and our purpose is to drive them to GW.
- People plan online then use the VIC hub to work out what to do when they get there.
- Horsham Council truly understands tourism. Has three full-time staff, one part-time tourism officer, 17 volunteers. Three famils a year with uniformed badged people. Onto the arts tourism, silo arts trail, Horsham town hall and the local paper saying come again.
- Dissatisfaction with GT outsource model and output. Map makes it look like the regions are different states and have to pay to be a member to play. GT shouldn't be a membership base.
- Grampians Horse Riding Centre has asked what business are we in? It's not tourism, it's a recreation training and mental health.
- Markets are changing so fast and we can't keep up - new markets include Access Weekenders, Meet-in-the-Middles.
- Biggest challenge is dispersal. Every region has its own heroes.
- VICS can play a greater role in connecting the Grampians region, we've been operating in silos. Parks could play a greater role in delivering visitor servicing information if we were better aligned. Have invited them to be a part of Halls Gap VIC

- Halls Gap VIC has turned into a hub. V-line brings people. Have a new Brewery in the building now and Seppelt Cellar Door has a presence.
- Grampians Helicopters and Grampians Wine Tours – land at olive farms, private properties, Royal Mail in Dunkeld and Silo Art Tours. 50-60% come through online booking, the rest are last minute pick-ups once someone gets to town or locals. Good portion of our passengers are locals (within 100-200km radius),
- Horsham Showgrounds is uncovering history. Activating river precinct.
- Need to get retailers to acknowledge they are the face of our communities if we want tourism to grow. There are a lot of silos, every retailer/person who comes into contact with the public – we don't educate people, they don't know what's in their own back yard. There's not enough famils. The VIC can be the hub for that education training.
- How can we package events (the day before and the day after), how can we get people out of Melbourne to come to the silo art trail, stay an extra day and go to the Irish festival and visit the pink lake on the way home?
- Visitor demographic is changing. We need to get into the virtual reality space and tease people with part of an experience. There's nothing we can't do it's just about how we can do it better!
- Halls Gap VIC sits at the very top of the tourism bell curve with 5,000 beds in the area yet is the least funded and resourced. Each of these shires has all the attractions but limited accommodation. Halls Gap has most of the accommodation but limited attractions, so here sits the symbiotic relationship.
- Halls Gap has a resident population of only 300 so it is very difficult to get staff for any business let alone volunteers. A majority of Halls Gap accommodation houses are leaseholders and there is large turnover of operators as they realize that after a year, income is not as good as the high lease payments.
- The Grampians itself is holding its own with most people having a knowledge of the National Park but the wider region is still a surprise to visitors that are travelling. The one consistent comment that I keep hearing is that they didn't realise that there is so much to see outside of the National Park ...”
- This has been even more emphasised by the influx of people turning up to do the Silo Art Trail and finding so much more to do around Horsham, Wartook, the northern end of Grampians National Park ... For example, the bike trails around Natimuk and Arapiles, the cafes, the Wimmera River, the tourist options around Dadswell Bridge and Laharum.
- The one major problem I see is the information coming from Halls Gap, we are constantly getting people who are staying in Halls Gap coming into Horsham for more information.
- If we retain hard copy maps, there should be one centrally produced map and a more cohesive story/access point to the entire experience and then broken

down to different interests. The Great Ocean Road is probably a reasonable example.

9. KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

9.1 Michael Bailey, Northern Grampians CEO, Key take-outs

- We don't provide visitor servicing – RTB does it on our behalf. The CEOs became the board. Don't remove any local democracy.
- Talking about a Lifestyle Getaway. We're also seeing a younger demographic servicing their customers better. Thinking about the new generation of tourists – people in their 30s with families / young kids – I won't walk into the VIC, but I'll spend a lot of money on the kids' entertainment or eating and drinking. Reliance and expectation on brochures for me has well and truly passed.
- Personally, haven't relied on VIC information when travelling through the States and Vietnam, book everything 2 days in advance online
- Wondering what's the visitor experience at a through-point (ie Stawell, Hamilton)? vs a destination (ie Halls Gap, Dunkeld)?
- State govt put lines on maps but don't factor in communal interest. Dunkeld has interest with halls gap because of the sacred properties
- Hamilton and Stawell very rarely have communal interests. Hamilton is based on wool industry and Stawell is crops.
- What's the role of venues and events? We invest a lot in events – Easter and Grape Escape this year was only 11 days apart. Investing \$200-300k
- This year secured naming rights for Stawell Gift to make it more localised
- People that come to Grape Escape are unlikely to come to the VIC
- Resident conversion: Creating opportunity to sample a lifestyle they may ultimately want to have. Looking at shipping container pop ups and what they could contain when dropped into events.
- Noosa Tourism – session at a convention: The first step they had to take was educate operators on what standards they should have. Then who they promote to and how they promote it
- Volunteers: 60-80 years old, retired, nothing else to do, passionate about the region but can't relate to me and my kids as they've lived a very different life and have a different mind set
- Have a Business Transformation Team – 4-5 staff. Done a lot of work with Richmond AFL club. Want to be biggest membership club, went from 38,000 – 75,000 members. Instead of doing blanket campaign we targeted marketing. All about profiling different groups and marketing to their needs.
- Casey Council broke down costs: Online engagement = 5c. Face-to-face = \$3-4 per engagement
- Want to see some direction around what we do with the VICs currently and the future and how that will impact operating models
- Spend \$400k on direct tourism not including events. \$200-300k over the last

- couple of events – higher investment in this sector rather than anywhere else
- We have cut down from 4 offices to 2, could probably lose another one?

9.2 Tim Harrison, CEO, Ararat Rural City

- Been 7 months in the role. ex Federation University. 7 council members; 11.5k population / 8.5k in Ararat town, rest are rural
- Providing and servicing our rail infrastructure network plus all normal services people require – rates, rubbish, social services. Arts, Health and Heritage
- Biggest visitation: Gun Sam; Art Gallery; Performing Arts Centre
- Visitor Information Centre: Costs a lot of money and find it hard to demonstrate ROI to the community. VICs – miles behind the times, sentimental attachment that tourism people have to VICs, could be hard to build an evidence-based case
- \$200k investment in the VIC. Volunteer network of 1-12 people – it's not free, they're not as reliable as paid staff, working beside casual paid they start asking why are they not being paid? Not a renewable resource, young people have expectations around volunteer experience and it's not standing in a VIC
- **Ararat potential:** Grampian biggest draw card, they're the icon. Ararat has an interesting take to offer - best views (Moyston and Pomomal) – capacity to grow, big tree change communities being drawn to those areas.
- Range of smaller communities of a few hundred people each Elmhurst, Moyston etc. Working with GT on promoting Pomomal being destination – a lot more available and free land, Halls Gap is constrained geographically.
- Tree change – it's so beautiful, take route 222 towards halls gap. Pomomal estate – winery. Glass blower. Great tourism products. Pomomal Estate only 30mins drive from Ararat train station. Artisan community - starting up community space
- Have Dark Tourism – Aradale and J ward – mental asylum but conflicts a bit with main product and market
- Ararat VIC Located at railway station. Costs \$500 a year to rent the space. Based there on the basis that a lot of people will come through – but really only busy rail is senior citizens week only, we're really car based
- Alternative Locations: Art Gallery open 7 days a week, trying to make less high-brow and more accessible. Good parking. got a café. much more viable location. Can leverage his staff there. Good volunteer network in the gallery, could merge to have a bigger VIC network that's well supported. Low footfall but VIC would enhance that. Pop up VIC at events. Library – not a good idea. Gun San – steep steps.
- Business Opening Hours a problem. Had visitors desperate to have something to eat on Australia Day and there's nothing open. 140 cars in 15

minutes

- Retail: Local tourism operators – want to sell product Pomonal Estate keen to have some form of pop up VIC. They have wine, beer, food
- **Digital:** We underestimate the web as a channel. Old economy collateral – not cheap, difficult to update. Vlogging. Blogging. Online video content. Digital publishing – could print out at VIC or upload to phone.
- **Spend:** Contribute to GT. Some more could be invested into destination market (that's where councils don't pull our weight – low penetration in Melbourne)
- **Volunteers:** Young have different expectations to younger. Younger prefer to do an internship and get something good on their CVs. Had conversations with Fed Uni TAFE. New Destination Visitation Opportunities. looking to establish a co-working environment.
- **Share Economy.** We spend our time lamenting the lack of a quest style apartment operator on town, but not much effort has gone into it. We can grow the stock. Could enhance visitation by linking up with Airbnb.
- Pomonal Cottages. Was trying to purchase land for council – land bank a couple of acres on the main road and couldn't get anything – indicates starting to get a bit of heat in the market. Prices are pretty good (for example: \$100k 2 acres street frontage).
- Visited Portland – post car economy, looked at awareness of the share economy, but people won't stay at a place if it's not an Airbnb
- **Other councils:** Most effective regional relationship is the tourism board. Common amount of interest. Variation with the CEOs re level of interest – Michael Bailey and Tim Harrison very involved. Michael Tudball very active. Horsham not so much. Healthy competitiveness between the locations.
- See Ararat as hub – commercial center. Pomonal - growing artisan and tree change community, olive groves, apple orchards, laid back casual higher yield space. Halls Gap – done very well over the years but it's the backpacker, climber, hiker lower yield customer
- **Trends:** Projections coming through Parks Vic around the Grampians Peak Trail is that typical demographic is single woman, 45, high disposable income, prepared to pay \$800-\$1000 a day – we've got the opportunity to develop Pomonal to be the base camp after your 2 days tramping
- Mum, Dads, kids and campervan are current bread and butter. Apart from Ararat as base for provision, I don't see them as a big part of our future.
- The well-heeled middle classes out of Melbourne that is the future. Wine & Food. Simon Clayfield <https://clayfieldwines.com/>
- Need to lift our game in the hatted restaurant space – Pomonal Estate offers food which is going to have to keep up with the high quality of wine. Paddock to plate will drive the experience in this area
- Big opportunity with Chinese tourism – canola oil. Many Chinese tourists a day visit Willaura as it has the best views of the Canola Fields. Need to invest

\$1m in the Chinese museum (upstairs restaurant, downstairs cultural centre)
 Chinese investors just bought 40-acre vineyard – once they have buy-in
 somewhere they want more

- Salt Lakes boardwalk experience enables visitors to get closer to the views. A Day trip from Melbourne is really feasible
- **Models:** Northern Grampians – already do things differently by outsourcing to the RTB. Tim (Ararat) prefers to invest directly with RTB to do marketing rather than get them to do things on our behalf
- **Challenges/Likes:** Accreditation – what do we get for it?
- Omni-channel is the way forward – at the moment, very one dimensional “using a hammer where we should be using a crowbar”
- We do visitor information poorly as not very well integrated. Need different content strategy (needs to be provided through the tourism board)
- Can never do too much market research – gut feeling on emerging segments: Mature women; Families; Mountain Bikers (high yield, low hassle, eat a lot, drink a lot, they get the train and cycle to the caravan park, attracted to the illicit); Youth Market - build culture around young people, extreme sports, festivals.

9.3 Horsham Rural City Council stakeholders

- Andrea Hogan, Visitor Information Centre's team leader; Angela Murphy, Director Development Services; Chris McClure, Coordinator Business and Tourism; and Stephen Pykett, Manager Economic Development.
- We deal with destination marketing and visitor servicing. There is a visitation journey from inspiration to action and we need to make sure the transition through planning and in region is seamless from their perspective.
- We need to look at the journey from visitor perspective. It's too late to talk to people in region. This way we can start building a relationship and we need to keep talking to them to drive repeat visitation
- Supporting businesses is one of the key reasons we're doing this. Needs to be greater onus on the operators to do more, can't sit back and say councils aren't doing enough for me. Needs to be a holistic industry approach
- Stephen Ex Phillip Island. Horsham – no active tourism association, struggle to get people to tourism advisory committee, event like last night, profile on Australian tourism data warehouse.
- We want to understand where to put resources How to better integrate with another services council is providing – effective and cost efficient.
- Ambassador role making sure all our retailers are trained and educated

9.4. Michael Tudball, Southern Grampians CEO

- Invest \$200,000 into VIC (excluding staff) and \$35k to GT. It's all about collaboration
- In Hamilton, doing digital infra really well – free Wi-Fi. Dunkeld – biggest questions is there a map? I don't think local govt should produce maps
- How do we coordinate spend? View from industry that everyone questions GT, what do they do for me? We don't give them enough money to do it all. Strategic plan to invest more into destination marketing – all we'd need to do is take \$50k from each of us and GT would have another \$200k
- My goal is to gain efficiencies and getting better back for our buck – doesn't necessary mean dollars savings but could be ROI. And if we're not then we have to reduce the input
- In Port Fairy industry runs VICs. Some Tourism Associations get dominated by one aspect – beds, plates. Whereas local govt / GT are independent.
- Work hasn't been done to quantify the member benefits of being a member of GT. Perception that GT is Halls Gaps, usually to do with where it's placed Marc is trying to engage the other bits of the area, particularly down south
- Michael been in role for three years. Was in Melton. The four CEOs went on to the board of GT to change the focus to be more strategic, inclusive and get board members buying into trying to redefine what GT was rather than trying to be everything to everyone. Marc is engaging but there's still not enough clarity in GT's role with Councillors and community.
- Previously huge tension between Southern Grampians and GT but nowhere near as much now. Real drive from the 4 CEOs to make GT work. There's been a restructure and re-focus from GT contributing to the changes not just the 4 CEOs, but a new Chair, new CEO, clearer focus. GT's role in visitor services could be expanded to fee-for-service and co-ordinated across the region.
- Might be a hybrid for all of us – coordination and running/managing are two different things. Once we determine what our model is and how we can collaborate then we need to look at the delivery
- Great Ocean Road GOR. Have formed an authority, hasn't started yet. Starts 1 July, legislation is written. Going to be a state authority, totally funded by government. GOR Tourism Board will still exist alongside the Authority. The Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority, being set up to manage the 243 kilometres of public land between Allansford and Torquay.
- All of us have too many facilities – Dunkeld not too bad, but the last things we need is to build something new. We need to look at shared services and partnerships - this is the greatest opportunity for visitor services in Hamilton.
- Art Gallery in Hamilton \$200k feasibility study done. \$100k to now progress to

detailed design. then look to award the build.

- Hamilton visitors made up of passers through; visiting families; and local residents
- Dunkeld: There is a plan for the VIC to be remodelled. Viewing platform at the back. Closing facilities there and moving them across the road. \$300k from the state and we would match to start next year or the year after
- Money in the budget for the loop walk, shuttle services and car parking in Dunkeld. Encourage them to leave the car there for days while on the trail.
- Michael. Vision for glamping for Dunkeld.
- Hamilton – VIC presence in the new arts precinct potentially
- Peshurst Volcanoes - Owned by the crown. SGSC responsible for it. Run by a volunteer committee. Can be opened to private sector to do something with. Ex Mt Rouse council offices. They have AV in there which is good. Not too cluttered. Good stuff about geology (and can do more indigenous related to geo)
- Current visitor journey: GOR – straight up through Peshurst into Dunkeld into the Grampians. Redefine the southern touring route (give a reason to include Hamilton. How do you deliver them to Hamilton? Use the indigenous story (all the others have one.)

10. REVIEW OF REPORTS/PLANS/STRATEGIES

Statewide

- Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2020
- Rethink! Reimagining Visitor Servicing (Draft Confidential), commissioned by Visit Victoria on behalf of the Statewide Visitor Servicing Steering Group.

Regional / Local Government

- Grampians Tourism 2016-20 Strategic Plan
- Horsham Economic Development Strategy, 2017 - 2021
- Background Report, Horsham Economic Development Strategy, 2017 - 2021
- Ararat Visitor Economy Strategy, 2018–2021
- Ararat Economic Strategy, 2014, 2030 Industry Sector Plans Update, Northern Grampians Shire Council, 2016
- Halls Gap Action Plan, 2018, Northern Grampians Shire Council
- Grampians Peaks Trail (GPT) Masterplan, Parks Victoria
- Trailhead background report (references VICs) Economic Development Strategy 2011-2021, Parks Victoria
- Southern Grampians Shire Tourism Strategic Plan 2010-2015

HRCC = Horsham Rural City Council

ARCC = Ararat Rural City Council

NGSC = Northern Grampians Shire Council

SGSC = Southern Grampians Shire Council

PV = Parks Victoria

Grampians Visitor Servicing Review

THE FUTURE OF VISITOR SERVICING

*Visit
grampians*

Project background & purpose

The **Grampians Tourism Board**, on behalf its local government partners, managed a review of Visitor Information Centres across the Grampians region.

The project was delivered to LGA partners at the end of August 2019.

The aim of the project was to:

- develop a **Future Visitor Servicing Action Plan** to **improve visitor servicing and the visitor economy** in the region that is **aligned with the recommendations** in the statewide Visitor Servicing project, **“Rethink! Reimagining Visitor Servicing”** developed by Komosion, in partnership with Visit Victoria.
- Komosion were appointed by GT to deliver the review.

Project background & purpose cont.

LG partner Council identified a need to review the **appropriate role and function of a Visitor Information Centre** to **ensure, efficient use of resources, relevance to visitors**, the tourism industry and local community in light of:

- growing technological demands
- increasing expenses
- decreasing revenue
- ageing infrastructure

Project background & purpose cont.

The review considered:

- The growing ease of access to **online information and booking services** and **advances in technology**
- **Role and relevance of the Visitor Information Centre** in the context of the broader tourism industry and engagement to increase visitor length of stay, spend and activities
- Review of the **operating model** with a view to improving cost efficiencies, exploring partnership and co-location opportunities

Review conclusions

The review found...

Following extensive industry and local government stakeholder consultations, a number of conclusions have been reached:

- The roles of marketing to potential visitors and in-destination **visitor services** are part of a continuum of activity but are, in the main, **managed separately** and therefore disjointed, **inconsistent and at times overlap**;
- The resources, systems, processes and expertise to join the two up do not currently reside in any one entity.
- Some Visitor Information Centres (in evolved forms) should be part of a regional marketing and visitor servicing network – but they are currently not networked or fully fit for that purpose.

3 key recommendations emerged

Key recommendations

1. Omnichannel Strategy....what is it?

- The review by Komosion found that an Omnichannel Strategy should be commissioned and the role and future of Visitor Information Centres be determined in the context of that strategy
- **An omni-channel retail strategy is an approach to sales and marketing that provides customers with a fully-integrated shopping experience by uniting user experiences from brick-and-mortar to mobile-browsing and everything in between**
- The Regional Omnichannel Strategy should aligned to an agreed Vision and Mission, a common brand and common digital channel for the region, and collaborative/consolidated approach – which identifies required systems, processes, expertise and assets - should be commissioned

1. Omnichannel Strategy cont.

- It needs to be executed to an agreed Governance and Business Model and be adequately resourced
- This could be by way of what's described as the Collective Impact model whereby an organisation is established and/or resourced to play a co-ordination role of committed resources from participants
- An enabling organisation would need to in-source expertise in Service Design, Customer Relationship Management practice and software and various other digital tools and systems for a period of time to build capability and culture
- Based on the experience of others, various test-and-learn initiatives should be undertaken on the journey to implementing a full Omnichannel Strategy

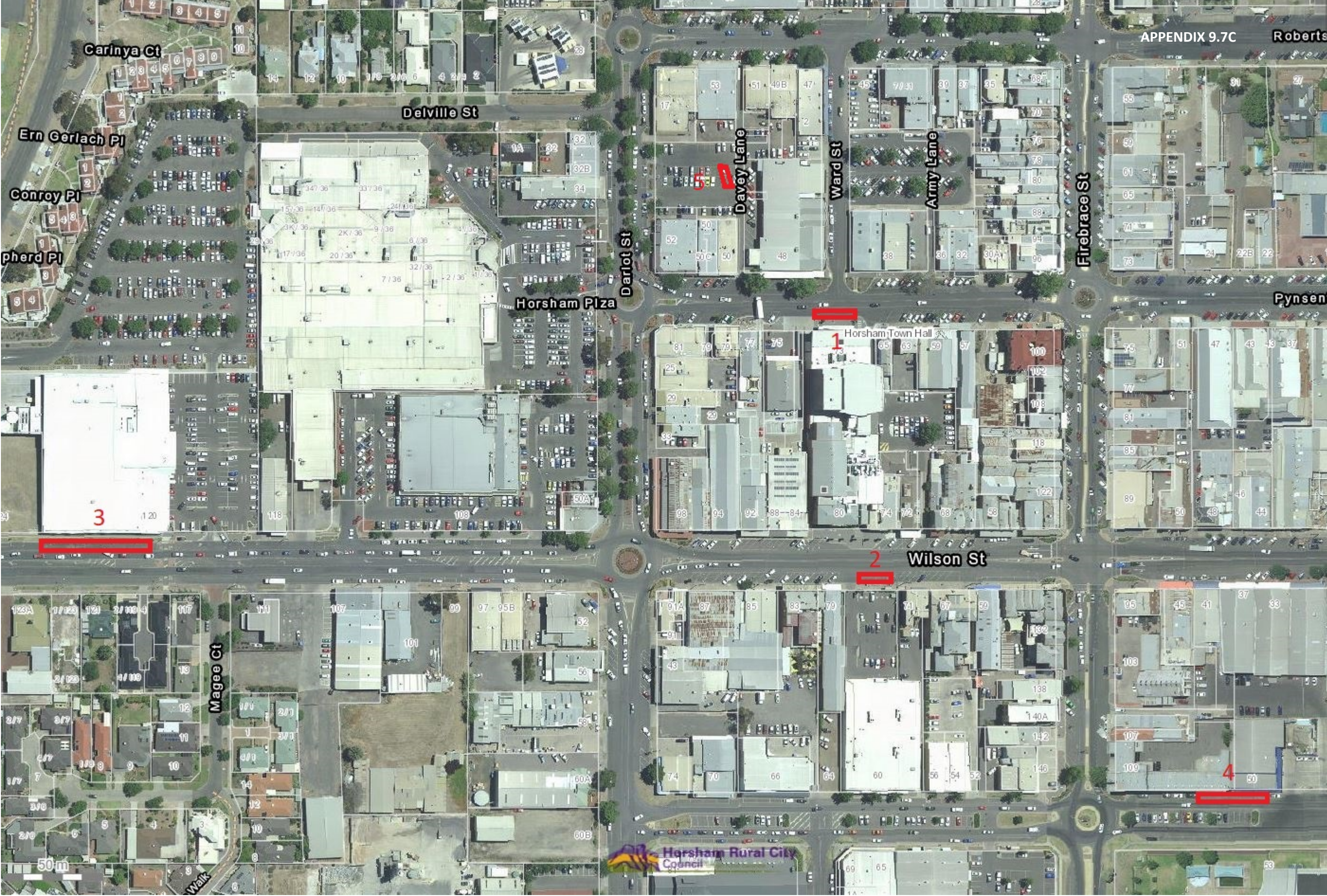
2. Further research

Further research may be required to more comprehensively understand the journeys of primary segments of the targeted visitor audience, recognising the diversity of the region's tourism offerings means one size does not fit all.

- This includes formalising experiments with mobile visitor servicing, a more focused and co-ordinated effort on creating/consolidating and serving entertaining content as well as “utility” content.
- Such content should feature local stories, experiences and activities and be made available via digital and physical channels.
- This should be done to a clear plan which also identifies Content by type - eg audio-visual, images, infographics, text etc - and Channel - eg, Printed brochures, website, in-VIC screens, social platforms etc.)

3. Inspiration Hubs

1. A number of existing VICs could be converted into Hubs of Inspiration. **Horsham Town Hall was identified as being a potential ‘evolved Visitor Information Centre’**
2. Ways of maintaining, reinvigorating and reinventing the Volunteer networks should be trialed.
3. A Visitor Information Centre Best Practice Checklist including the following criteria that could be used to assess VIC’s as part of the Omnichannel Strategy:
 - Visitor Servicing not Visitor Information is the Focus
 - Location Reality is Faced (there is high level of “footfall”)
 - Offers a “Wow” Experience
 - Is a Custodian of Regional Stories
 - Includes a Tourism Industry Engagement Focus
 - Embraces Digital Visitor Servicing
 - Engages Residents, Retail + other Service Providers
 - Has an innovation mindset - Never Accepts the Status Quo
 - Has Strong Leadership + Management



Carinya Ct

Delville St

Ern Gerlach Pl

Conroy Pl

pherd Pl

Horsham Plaza

Darlot St

Davey Lane

Ward St

Army Lane

Firebrace St

Pynsen

3

1

2

Wilson St

4

Horsham Town Hall

50m



Charter Agreement

Introduction

This Charter is a commitment between your council and the Victorian Small Business Commission (VSBC) to work together to create a fair and competitive trading environment for Victorian small businesses. It also tells you what you can expect as a business owner from your local council and the VSBC. By signing the charter, the VSBC and local councils agree to meet these commitments within 12 months.

Commitments and what you can expect from us

Part 1 | Work with small businesses disrupted by infrastructure projects

The VSBC will:

- a. provide councils with VSBC resources for managing the impacts of disruption
- b. provide dispute resolution services in relevant matters
- c. advocate on behalf of small businesses with authorities who undertake major works
- d. work collaboratively with council to develop practical initiatives that benefit small businesses

Your council will:

- a. refer to the VSBC's [Small Business Engagement Guidelines](#) when planning new works and request that external project managers do the same
- b. provide small businesses with the VSBC's guide for small businesses on [Managing Disruption](#)

Part 2 | Support the creation of small business networks across Victoria

The VSBC and your council will:

- a. distribute the VSBC's guide to building [Stronger Networks](#)
- b. actively engage with small business networks and identify new opportunities for development
- c. include representatives of associations in conversations concerning small businesses

Part 3 | Faster permit approvals processes for small businesses

Your council will:

- a. work towards faster permit approvals for new small businesses. This may mean:
 - i. registering with the Better Approvals Project and completing this as scheduled; or
 - ii. implementing strategies to streamline permit approvals processes for small businesses

Part 4 | Prompt payment to small businesses

The VSBC will:

- a. raise awareness of the Australian Supplier Payment Code¹ across Victoria to ensure your business is paid within 30 days of issuing an invoice

Your council will:

- a. initiate processes to ensure invoices from small businesses are paid promptly; or
- b. commit to signing up to the Australian Supplier Payment Code to pay small businesses within 30 days

Part 5 | Easy to read, easy to understand information for Victorian small businesses

The VBSC will:

- a. liaise with Small Business Victoria on the development of new resources for your business and communicate requests from your council about what is needed
- b. refer your council to new resources as they are made available

Your council will:

- a. link your business with the resources available at business.vic.gov.au
- b. provide the VSBC [Retail Lease Checklist](#) to prospective tenants

Both parties will:

- a. identify opportunities for the development of new resources for your business

Part 6 | Open channels of communication between the VSBC and local councils

The VSBC will:

- a. advocate on behalf of small business when your council notifies VSBC of key issues of concern
- b. work with relevant agencies to progress matters of concern to local councils and small businesses

Your council will:

- a. notify the VSBC of issues affecting local small business communities
- b. refer commercial disputes to the VSBC dispute resolution team as appropriate
- c. provide details of the VSBC's dispute resolution services on its website

¹ Further information on the Australian Supplier Payment Code can be found on the website of the Business Council of Australia | www.bca.com.au

Additional commitments

Promotion of Initiative

The VSBC will:

- a. provide all participating councils with the Small Business Friendly Council Initiative logo to use in their own materials
- b. provide all participating councils with an animated video promoting the benefits of having a small business friendly council to Victorian small businesses
- c. share success stories and case studies from participating councils in the VSBC eNewsletter and on social media
- d. list all participating councils on the VSBC website

Your council will:

- a. utilise the Small Business Friendly Council Initiative and videos in relevant communications
- b. provide VSBC with case studies and success stories associated with the initiative

Quality assurance and review

The VSBC will:

- a. contact your council 12 months after signing the charter to assess their status on each commitment
- b. review feedback from your council about the value of the charter and modify it as appropriate after 12 months

Your council will:

- a. work towards fulfilling each commitment within the first 12 months of signing the charter
- b. work with the VSBC to amend the charter if required

Acceptance

On behalf of we agree to the terms outlined in this Charter and agree to implement the Small Business Friendly Council Initiative.

Name
Position
Signature

.....

Date / /

Name Judy O’Connell
Position Victorian Small Business Commissioner
Signature

.....

Date / /

Please provide the contact details for the CEO for your organisation, and the details of a contact person that we can use as matters for discussion arise.

	CEO	Point of contact
Name		
Position		
Phone		
Email		
Postal address		



ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS REGISTER

**COUNCIL BRIEFING HELD IN THE RECEPTION ROOM
ON MONDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 5.00PM**

PRESENT: Cr MA Radford, Mayor; Cr P Clarke, Cr DA Grimble, Cr J Koenig, Cr A Gulvin (from 5.10pm), Cr L Power; Sunil Bhalla, Chief Executive Officer; Angela Murphy, Director Development Services; Graeme Harrison, Director Corporate Services; Kevin O'Brien, Director Community Wellbeing; John Martin, Director Infrastructure

APOLOGY: Cr J Robinson

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Cr Radford welcomed everyone.

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

Nil.

3. COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION

3.1 School Areas Traffic

Discussed.

3.2 Quarterly Finance and Performance Report

Discussed.

3.3 Customer Service Charter

Discussed.

4. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

4.1 Sports Marketing Australia Event

5. GENERAL DISCUSSION

Meeting closed at 6.33pm

ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS REGISTER

**COUNCIL BRIEFING HELD IN THE RECEPTION ROOM
ON MONDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 5.00PM**

PRESENT: Cr P Clarke, Cr DA Grimble, Cr A Gulvin (from 5.34pm), Cr J Koenig, Cr L Power; Sunil Bhalla, Chief Executive Officer; Graeme Harrison, Director Corporate Services; John Martin, Director Infrastructure; Angela Murphy, Director Development Services; Kevin O'Brien, Director Community Wellbeing; Heather Proctor, Finance Manager (item 3.1 only); Zac Gorman, Management Accountant (item 3.1 only); Martin Bride, Community Facilitator (item 3.2 only); Justine Kingan, Co-ordinator Strategic Planning (item 4.1 only)

APOLOGIES: Cr MA Radford, Mayor, Cr John Robinson

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Cr Clarke welcomed everyone.

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

Nil

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Finance and Performance Committee

Discussed.

3.2 Talk about Online Engagement Tools

In attendance: Matthew Gordon, CEO, Head of Consulting, Our Say

Discussed.

4. COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION

4.1 Horsham South Structure Plan - Presentation

Discussed.

4.2 Gender Equity Project Final Report

Discussed.

4.3 Sport and Recreation Victoria Grants

Discussed.

4.4 Grampians Tourism Visitor Servicing Review

Discussed.

4.5 Funding of Community Facilities incl Halls

Discussed.

4.6 Horsham Bicycle Advisory Committee Community Representatives

Discussed.

4.7 Natimuk Proposed Property Sale

Discussed.

4.8 Zero Carbon Plan

Discussed.

4.9 Small Business Friendly Charter

Discussed.

4.10 Reconciliation Action Plan Progress Report

Discussed.

4.11 Nuseed Lease

Discussed.

5. CLOSE

Meeting closed at 7.35pm

ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS REGISTER

**COUNCIL BRIEFING HELD IN THE RECEPTION ROOM
ON MONDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 5.00PM**

PRESENT: Cr MA Radford, Mayor; Cr P Clarke, Cr DA Grimble, Cr A Gulvin, Cr L Power; Sunil Bhalla, Chief Executive Officer; Angela Murphy, Director Development Services; Graeme Harrison, Director Corporate Services; Kevin O'Brien, Director Community Wellbeing; John Martin, Director Infrastructure

APOLOGIES: Cr J Koenig, Cr J Robinson

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Cr Radford welcomed everyone.

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

Nil.

3. BUDGET REVIEW

3.1 Funding Summary

Discussed: rate increase, enterprise bargaining, general issues/challenges.

3.2 Draft Capital Works List

Discussed: capital prior year comparisons, capital works list and capital works not funded.

3.3 Draft Initiatives List

Discussed.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

4.1 Councillor Allowances

Discussed.

4.2 Rates Strategy

Discussed.

5. NEXT STEPS FOR BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

Discussed.

Meeting closed at 7.30pm

MINUTES

Bicycle Advisory Committee Meeting
Held on Wednesday, 12 February 2020 at 5.00 pm
Council Chamber – Horsham Rural City Council Offices

Present

Previous Members	Grant Hollaway	Community Representative – Cycling
	Cr Alethea Gulvin	Council Representative
	Gary Aitken	Wimmera River Improvement Representative
	Rudy Panozzo	Community Representative – Cycling
	Janine Harfield	Health Sector Representative

New Applicants	Ben Consedine
	Phillip Chalker

Officers	John Martin	Director Infrastructure
	Mandy Kirsopp	Recreation Planning Officer
	Mazen Saeed	Manager Engineering Services

Guests	Linda Oman	Regional Roads Victoria
---------------	------------	-------------------------

1. Welcome / Apologies

John Martin explained that the committee nominations have been received but are yet to be considered by Council, and that the invitation to attend does not pre-empt a Council decision. The meeting is to proceed on the basis that formalities, including election of a chair, would occur at the next meeting after the February Council meeting. John invited former Chair, Grant Hollaway to chair this meeting – all agreed to this proposal.

Apologies: Alan Bedggood, Lisa Ross, Hilton Jones, Ben Holmes

2. Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

Nil

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the 11 December 2019 meeting were circulated.

Noted.

4. Business arising from minutes (if not in General Business)

Action: Copies of the Strategic Plan to be provided to members at the next meeting, which will be the first formal meeting of the new committee. Also terms of reference to be circulated.

Youth members were specifically sought through the nomination process, i.e. public notices as advertised. **Action: JM to check if Youth Council was invited to suggest representatives.**

As an alternative, invite Youth Council members as guests, or give presentations to them.
Or they could rotate through the role.

5. Correspondence

- Nominations for new committee – not distributed, but provided to Council in confidential business
- Community Road Safety Grants Program (attached)
 - JM seeking ideas from the Committee. Meeting with RRV and VicPol in the next week or so to develop project proposals

6. General Business

6.1 Dimboola Rd Fatality

Linda Oman RRV outlined the background to a fatality of a cyclist on Dimboola Rd.

RRV is seeking ideas on what could be done to improve the safety of cyclists along the Western Highway. Could involve, say, promotion of other routes as preferred routes.

Suggestions:

- Bike lane should be separate from the traffic with a distinct bike lane. Or at least, line marked, preferably full width painting.
- Ensuring that routes are not impacted by bad sun angles.
- Riding in groups
- Trucks to be removed from the city of Horsham
- Discuss with these riders about why they use those routes. Can they use alternatives? Council and RRV to help “close some of the loops” to make better circuits
- Community Road Safety Grants could help?
- **Action: Invite reps to a separate meeting outside the regular BAC meetings.**

It was noted in the context of the works on the O’Callaghans Parade “roundabout” that it is beneficial for early consideration for cyclists in the design process of any changes.

6.2 River Directional Signage

Information to be forwarded after the meeting.

6.3 Update on Hamilton St works

Challenges with sufficient room for truck movements through the Firebrace St roundabout in the design preferred by this Committee (Option 3 in earlier meeting). The designer will liaise with the road safety auditor to resolve this.

It was discussed that children should avoid this intersection.

Need to also review the appropriateness of some routes as thoroughfares.

6.4 O’Callaghans Parade Roundabout update

Slip lane for cyclists not completed yet. Still on RRV’s works list.

6.5 Baillie St / Trinity Drive

Works imminent to improve safety for children crossing Baillie St.

Action: JM to share the Local Area Traffic Plan with this Committee.

6.6 Horsham Urban Transport Plan

JM outlined that the plan had been endorsed by Council. A budget proposal for further funding for cycling related works from the plan will be considered by Council as part of the budget process. Priorities for use of these funds will be considered by the BAC for advice to Council.

It is important for recommendations relating to dedicated cycling lanes be implemented through the City to River project.

6.7 Park and Walk

VicHealth grants to become available soon.

6.8 Other items as raised by members

- Linda showed the latest version of the proposed Stawell Rd roundabout. It is only at concept plan stage. JM to circulate plan to new members.
 - The design is advancing. Now working on the functional design.
 - Designed to cater for A-triples.
 - General public consultation will commence shortly.
- Discussion about the status of the tracks along the river
 - Irwin property
 - MacBain St area
 - Southbank side – delays with weirs

7. Next Meeting - 15 April

8. Meeting Close