

AGENDA

MEETING OF THE
HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL

To be held on
26 February 2024
at 5.30pm

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



COUNCILLORS are respectfully requested to attend the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council on 26 February 2024 at 5.30pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham.

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, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community.

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

3. OPENING AND WELCOME

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

4. APOLOGIES

5. LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Recommendation

That the minutes emanating from the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held online and livestreamed at 5.30pm on 29 January 2024 be adopted.

7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest

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

Members of Staff

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers or people engaged under contract to the Council providing a report or advice to Council must disclose any conflicts of interests in the matter, including the type of interest.

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

CLOSE



SUNIL BHALLA
Chief Executive Officer

9. OFFICERS REPORTS

9.1 COMMUNITY HALLS' ASSET COMMITTEE ANNUAL MEETING

Author's Name:	Mandy Kirsopp	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	Coordinator, Recreation and Open Space Planning	Directorate:	Communities and Place
Department:	Arts, Culture and Recreation	File Number:	F04/A08/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Endorsed Minutes of annual meeting held 23 November 2022 (**Appendix 9.1A**)

Draft Minutes of meeting held 23 November 2023 (**Appendix 9.1B**)

Purpose

To present the endorsed minutes of the annual meeting of the Community Halls' Asset Committee held on 23 November 2022 and the draft minutes of the annual meeting held on 23 November 2023.

Summary

- The Community Halls' Asset Committee (the 'Committee') was established 29 September 2021
- The Committee meets in November each year for an annual meeting to receive reports, make recommendations re: hire fees for the community halls and transact other business as required.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Note the endorsed Minutes of the annual meeting held 23 November 2022.
2. Note the draft Minutes of the annual meeting held 23 November 2023.
3. Adopt fees and charges for use of Community Halls, as recommended by the Community Halls' Asset Committee for the 2024-2025 year as follows:

Bond \$100 - \$700

Hourly rate \$ 10 - \$ 50

Half day hire \$ 25 - \$100

Full day hire \$ 25 - \$150

Commercial activities – full day hire (large organisations) \$200 - \$500

and if approved by a Motion from the sub-committee (ie: individual hall) fees might be waived for the following events:

- Fund-raising for health groups or health-related equipment
- Health and well-being activities and fund-raising (physical, mental health)
- Emergency Service events and meetings (eg: CFA, SES) or when the hall is used as an Emergency Recovery Centre.

REPORT

Background

A Community Halls' Committee of Management was established 4 September 2017 through an Instrument of Delegation authorised by Horsham Rural City Council. The Instrument delegated decision making powers from Council to the various hall committees represented via a single Committee of Management.

As a result of changes to the Local Government Act (2020) a review of the Committee governance structure occurred and on 24 August 2020 Council endorsed a revised Instrument of Delegation. The revised Instrument delegates specific decision-making responsibilities from the Chief Executive Officer to the Community Halls Asset Committee (the 'Committee').

The Committee is comprised of single representatives from ten community halls within the HRCC municipality. The ten halls represented on the Committee are:

- Dadswell's Bridge Hall
- Hamilton lamb Memorial Hall
- Jung Hall
- Laharum Hall
- Mitre Hall
- Natimuk Community Centre (NC2)
- Natimuk Soldiers' Memorial Hall
- Sailors' Home Hall
- Taylor's Lake Hall
- Telangatuk East Hall

In November each year, hall representatives meet to discuss the operation of the halls, community usage of the facility, financial status of each hall and maintenance. Hire fees require the endorsement of the Chief Executive Officer and Committee representatives recommend fees for the next calendar year.

The annual meeting also provides an opportunity for hall and Council representatives to share information, identify and work through issues and concerns and to work collaboratively to provide important community infrastructure across the municipality.

Discussion

The Committee recognises the challenges associated with an ageing and declining volunteer base. This includes changes to the concentration and composition of rural populations and changing workforce patterns. Annual reports and financial statements provided by the hall representatives reveal a trend showing decreased activity and increased pressure on volunteers to support the operation of the facilities.

Strengthening the partnership between Council and the hall committees and an increase in building maintenance support by Council is enabling committees to continue to provide opportunities for social connections within their communities.

Following requests from representatives at the 2022 meeting, Council now provides contracted cleaning of external toilets at Sailors' Home, Telangatuk East and Mitre Halls.

At the November 2023 meeting, representatives endorsed the following Motion:

MOTION

That the Halls' Committee express its appreciation for the support provided for maintenance of community facilities and assistance with cleaning of the external toilets.

Moved: Judy Berendsen **Seconded:** Kieran Loughran **CARRIED**

Fees

Committee members discussed annual fees and noted conditions confirmed in 2023 re: possible waiving of fees. It was agreed that these conditions be continued.

MOTION

The Community Halls' Asset Committee recommends:

1. *The adoption of the suggested range of fees and charges for use of Community Halls for the 2024 year:*

<i>Bond</i>	<i>\$100 - \$700</i>
<i>Hourly rate</i>	<i>\$ 10 - \$ 50</i>
<i>Half day hire</i>	<i>\$ 25 - \$100</i>
<i>Full day hire</i>	<i>\$ 25 - \$150</i>
<i>Commercial activities – full day hire (large organisations)</i>	<i>\$200 - \$500</i>

2. *And that, if approved by a Motion from the sub-committee (ie: individual hall) fees might be waived for the following events:*
 - *Fund-raising for health groups or health-related equipment*
 - *Health and well-being activities and fund-raising (physical, mental health)*
 - *Emergency Service events and meetings (eg: CFA, SES) or when the hall is used as an Emergency Recovery Centre.*

Moved: Clare Dunn **Seconded:** Keith Fischer **CARRIED**

Options to Consider

Fees

There are two options to consider:

1. Accept the recommended fee structure as presented,
2. Develop and apply a different fee structure for the 10 community halls

Option 1 is recommended.

The fees have been identified as being appropriate for the various rural local communities and fees collected are adequate to pay for hall expenses.

Conditions identified where fees might be waived were established by HRCC and the Motion includes a continuation of an established process.

Option 2 is not recommended.

A review of all fees will occur as part of another HRCC project (Property Strategy - Fees and charges). In the interim, it is recommended fees remain as suggested by the Committee.

Sustainability Implications

Community halls provide an important opportunity for people living in rural areas to gather for family and community events and changing demographic and lifestyle patterns are increasing challenges to the viability of community halls.

The provision of additional maintenance and renewal support provided by HRCC (solar panels, installation of LED lights, more consistent asset maintenance) assists the financial viability of the halls.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is not required for the annual meeting.

Each hall representative provides a summary of activity at the respective hall (year in review) and shares planning of potential activities at the hall. Business of the Annual meeting is shared with hall committees by Committee representatives.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The model of a Committee of Management representing a collective of representatives from the different halls was developed in 2017 and was recognised as a Victorian state-wide initiative responding to the previous Local Government Act (1989).

In response to changes associated with the Local Government Act (2020), the model was modified to reflect requirements of Community Asset Committee. The model provides a process to share and receive information with community volunteers, and for volunteers and Council to work collaboratively in the provision of community assets.

Collaboration

Collaboration with agencies not part of the ten hall Community Asset Committee was considered but was not required.

Financial Implications

Volunteer committees assisting with the operation of community halls provide a valuable community service and support community cohesion and wellbeing, community pride and practical resources that improve local amenity.

There is a cost in the provision of maintenance of community facilities but the cost is off-set by the value of located community gathering places.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Victorian Volunteer Strategy 2022-2027

Goal 3 - Supporting volunteers to be resilient, supported and empowered

Priority outcomes:

- Volunteers have safe, effective and rewarding experiences. Their rights are understood and protected
- Volunteers have the right resources, tools and supports

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 2 – Liveability

Initiatives and Priorities

Create engaging spaces and places for social connection and wellbeing to build community resilience.

Theme 5 – Leadership

Strategies:

Good governance, through leadership and connection with community

Initiatives and Priorities

Enable a customer/stakeholder-focused approach that delivers efficient and responsive service.

HRCC Open Space Strategy 2019

Goal 4 – Enhance Collaboration

4.1.2 Engage and partner with user groups on Council managed and Crown land to enhance community accessibility and multi-use of facilities.

Risk Implications

Changes regarding facility maintenance have resulted in HRCC assuming greater responsibility for building maintenance. Changes recognise and mitigate risks associated with asset maintenance and provide increased opportunity for communities to focus on event planning for their community.

Declining rural population and changing age structures are a long-term risk to the operation of community halls, and this is being monitored.

Conclusion

The annual meeting of the Community Halls' Community Asset Committee provides an insight into the operation of ten community halls within the municipality.

Hall members are reporting changes and challenges to the operation of rural halls, but also recognise the important role of community halls, providing opportunities for community wellbeing and social connection.

Hall representatives are appreciative of the support provided by HRCC and the collaborative partnership that has developed.

9.2 MUNICIPAL EARLY YEARS PLAN 2024-2028

Author's Name:	Louise Kelly	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	Coordinator Youth & Early Years	Directorate:	Communities & Place
Department:	Youth & Early Years	File Number:	F08/A04/000002

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Draft HRCC Municipal Early Years Plan 2024-2028 (**Appendix 9.2A**)

HRCC Municipal Early Years Plan Data Snapshot 2024-2028 (**Appendix 9.2B**)

Purpose

To present the Draft HRCC Municipal Early Years Plan 2024-2028 and release it for public consultation.

Summary

- The purpose of the Municipal Early Years Plan is to provide children and their families with the best possible foundation for life success.
- Data analysis (**Appendix 9.2B**), stakeholder engagement, adult and child community surveys all used as input to develop key themes and actions
- Key themes are: Supporting families to thrive; Building blocks for lifelong learning; Strong voices for our community.
- Plan contains a series of actions developed by engagement with key stakeholders that Council will undertake in collaboration with a range of partners over the next 4 years.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Horsham Rural City Council Municipal Early Years Plan 2024-2028 (**Appendix 9.2A**) and make it available to the public for comment for a period of 5 weeks.

REPORT

Background

The purpose of the Municipal Early Years Plan (MEYP) is to provide children and their families with the best possible foundation for life success. While not a statutory requirement, Council has supported the MEYP in the past as a key tool in setting the strategic direction for delivery in the early years' sector of Horsham Rural City.

Discussion

Data analysis, Government policy context, stakeholder engagement and community engagement, were used when forming the key themes and actions. The key themes are: Supporting families to thrive; Building blocks for lifelong learning; Strong voices for our community.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

The plan involved several months of community engagement performed using the IAP2 methodology, this included:

Two workshops – one with Council staff involved in the service delivery, strategic planning and program delivery of Early Years and one with agencies, schools and organisations working in the Early Years industry.

Two community pop ups at Up Tempo Café and Kmart Plaza involving 14 parents and 8 children.

Two digital surveys:

- An Adult Survey – which included a 19-question survey that received 59 responses and a number of comments.
- A Child Survey – which was a three-question survey completed by 7 children

Several one-on-one discussions with key stakeholders as well as individual Council staff.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The key stakeholders that were engaged as outlined in the Plan will continue to meet (an outcome of one of the actions in the Plan). This will establish the Early Years Network and look to grow over to surrounding Local Government Associations.

Collaboration

Collaboration is key to successful delivery of the Municipal Early Years Plan and the Early Years Stakeholders will continue to meet (an outcome of one of the actions in the Plan).

Financial Implications

Not applicable

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Key</i>
National Quality Framework for early Childhood Education and Care	Federal	The National Quality Framework (NQF) supports quality care experiences, environments and relationships.
Preschool Reform Funding Agreement	Federal	Includes funding for kindergarten
Early Childhood Reform Plan	Victorian Government	Aiming to deliver systematic change targeted at supporting the children who need it most. Help prepare children for kinder, school and life.
Kindergarten for Every 3-year-old Building Blocks for 3-Y-O kindergarten	Victorian Government	From now until 2029 extra hours of subsidised kindergarten will be progressively introduced. New kindergarten has been built and Hub will be used for long day care.
MCH Memorandum of Understanding	Victorian Government	Free services available to all families with a child aged birth to six
Roadmap to Reform	Victorian Government	Aimed at improving the lives of vulnerable children
Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan	Victorian Government	Outlines public health strategic directions.
Local Government Policy	Local	Councils, state and Federal governments have a joint responsibility to ensure locally accessible family and children's services are available to support families in care, protection, health, development and education of children.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan	Theme 1: Community Theme 2: Liveability Theme 4: Accessibility
HRCC Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2024	Health and Wellbeing Plan priorities include: Support gender equity initiatives in the prevention of family violence; Enhance the inclusivity, accessibility and safety of our places and spaces; Support the communication process to increase knowledge of local health and community services available to the public; Create engaging spaces and places for social connection and wellbeing to build community resilience; Advocate for educational opportunities, delivered locally, to support and encourage lifelong learning; Respond to key community needs, ensuring our municipality is child and youth friendly and encourages positive ageing; Advocate and support the establishment and growth of integrated health services and facilities that meet the needs of all community members; Promote recreational and social environments for people to enjoy (open spaces, waterways etc); Planning for places and spaces to provide connectedness and social inclusion.

Officers Reports

Play Space Strategy	Being developed – goal of Council Plan - Increase the percentage of urban population within 400 m of a fully developed open space
Social infrastructure plan	The Social Infrastructure Framework identifies and assesses existing social infrastructure provision focusing predominantly on Council owned facilities.
Community Inclusion Plan	Plan to help HRCC fulfil its vision as an inclusive place for people with disability, so they can participate, thrive and reach their full potential.
Child Safe Policy	Eleven Standards, reflecting the National Principles for a Child Safe Organisation developed following the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Betrayal of Trust Enquiry).
Gender Equality Plan 2021-2025	Ensuring fairness for all people, so that everyone in HRCC and in the Horsham community can enjoy the same opportunities, rights and respect, regardless of their gender.
Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006	Human rights are essential in a democratic and inclusive society that respects the rule of law, human dignity, equality and freedom and belong to all people without discrimination, and the diversity of the people of Victoria enhances our community.

Risk Implications

Over the past few months, we’ve actively listened to the community. Many of the solutions to issues raised lie within council, within the community and in advocacy to change the way services and funding is delivered to our region. This plan aims to begin the process of bringing stakeholders and community together to tackle these issues on behalf of our children. We need to be clear to the community on what council can and will deliver and on where we all need to work together across the rural city, the Wimmera and potentially the state to collectively bring about changes that will help our children all lead their best life.

Conclusion

This draft plan is presented for consideration to Councillors with the recommendation that the Plan be provided to the public for feedback.

9.3 REGIONAL SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

Author's Name:	Susan Surrige /Carolynne Hamdorf	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	Coordinator Community Relations & Advocacy/Manager Arts Culture and Recreation	Directorate:	Communities and Place
Department:	Arts Culture and Recreation	File Number:	F20/A06/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Nil

Purpose

To approve funding applications to the State Government's Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund.

Summary

- The State Government have announced a new sports infrastructure funding program to be delivered through Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) – The Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund.
- This program (to be delivered over two rounds) will support the construction, programming and activation of community sport and active recreation infrastructure. The first round is open now and will close on 27 March 2024. Round 2 will open in November 2024.
- Council resolved in June 2023 as part of the City Oval Community Facility Funding Strategy (Council Report) that HRCC would make an application to any SRV grant opportunity that arose to off-set some of the cost of the Community Facility project.
- This current report recommends approval of an application for \$1million for the City Oval Community Facility if Council receive a positive outcome to the Commonwealth Growing Regions fund prior to the SRV lodgement date.
- This report also recommends that Council staff prepare a 'back-up' application for the Skate Park Redevelopment, to be lodged if the Growing Regions Fund application has either not been announced or is unsuccessful.
- A funding application was also considered for a warm-water pool at the Horsham Aquatic Centre. This was not considered viable for this funding round given the estimated total project cost of \$8,059,726 and the maximum grant available through the SRV program of only \$3million. This project was considered not affordable due to the required Council contribution being \$5 million, however it is still deemed to be a high priority for Council and funding opportunities will continue to be explored including advocacy to State and Federal Government.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Approve a grant application for \$1million to the Community Facilities Stream to be lodged for the City Oval Community Facility and Change Rooms and note that this application is dependent upon a favourable outcome of Council's current application to the Federal Government's Growing Regions Fund.
2. Approve a back-up application for \$1million to the SRV Community Facilities Stream be lodged for the Skate Park Redevelopment (Stage 1) in the event that the application to the Federal Government's Growing Regions Fund is unsuccessful.
3. Approve the inclusion of a 2024-2025 CAPEX budget allocation of \$250,000 to confirm Council's funding commitment to the Skate Park Redevelopment Stage 1 application.
4. Allocate funds in the Long-Term Financial Plan for a warm water pool at the Horsham Aquatic Centre and advocate for funding through State and Federal Governments.

REPORT

Background

Following the cancellation of the 2024 Commonwealth Games, the Victorian Government have launched a new funding program which will have two rounds (March 2024 and March 2025).

The funding program is additional to the normal annual funding rounds available through SRV and has more generous maximum grant limits and funding ratios.

Applications for Round 1 must be lodged by the closing date of 27 March 2024.

Key elements of the funding program:

- **Community facilities stream**
Up to \$1million grant available with a funding ratio of \$4 SRV: \$1 Council
- **Aquatics Stream**
Up to \$3million grant available with a funding ratio of \$3 SRV: \$1 Council.

Council resolved in June 2023 to seek a grant of \$4.8million from the Commonwealth Government's *Growing Regions Fund* as part of the City Oval Community Facility Funding Strategy. Council also resolved to apply for any future SRV funding to help offset the cost to Council of the Community Facility project.

Extract from minutes:

That Council:

1. Submit an application to the Commonwealth Government's Growing Regions Fund Round 1 to complete the Community Facility project – Total Budget \$9,611,110, Grant request of \$4,805,000. (noting maximum of 50%).
2. Allocate Council expenditure of \$4,806,110 funded through borrowings and inclusion in the CAPEX budget over two financial years: 2023-2024 and 2024-2025.
3. Submit an application to SRV if a timely funding opportunity arises before the end of the year, noting that State funding programs under SRV are yet to be announced following the May State budget and the maximum grant opportunity is likely to be \$800,000 which could offset some of Council's co-contribution.

Discussion

The Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund will be highly competitive, and Council Officers have sought advice from Sport and Recreation Grampians region around developing up the most competitive projects.

The Guidelines emphasise that projects must be ready to commence with strict documentation requirements to support the application including site specific schematic plans; quotations or a Quantity Surveyor estimate dated less than 6 months old; and a Council Resolution confirming Council's funding commitment to the chosen projects.

Given the Council resolution in place from June 2023, the highest priority is to apply for additional funding to support the City Oval Community Facility project. This project is "shovel ready" with all necessary documentation to support a strong SRV application. This priority, however, is dependent upon the outcome of Council's application for a \$4.805million grant from the Commonwealth's Growing Regions Fund. The outcome is expected in mid-March. The \$9.6million project will only proceed at this time if the large Commonwealth Grant is forthcoming.

As a back-up project, should Council not be able to apply for the City Oval Community Facility, a second application is being developed to fund the first stage of the Skate Park Redevelopment. The concept plan for this project has been approved by Council and all necessary documentation is available to make this a strong application. An amount of \$250,000 has been included in Council's forward CAPEX budget for 2024-2025.

For Council to apply for the maximum grant of \$1million, Council must contribute a matching \$250,000 (4:1 ratio). This would allow the first stage of the Skate Park Redevelopment to be undertaken which consists of upgrades to staged sections, north and west of the bowl. High-level probable costs (provided by Laimiga Design Studio) were provided previously to Council, the Overall estimate being \$1,539,165 ex GST. Break up as follows:

- Skate Park & Parkour \$554,320 ex GST
- Pump Track & Multipurpose Court \$288,290 ex GST
- Play and Gather \$450,885 ex GST
- Fitness & Ninja / Dirt Track & Jumps / Picnic space \$245,670 ex GST

The Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund also allowed Councils to apply for multiple streams and Council staff considered the next stage of the Aquatic Centre Master Plan - the construction of a warm-water pool for an application for the Aquatics Stream. An updated QS costing of \$8,059,726, however, meant that Council would need to contribute in excess of available funding in the Long-Term Capital Works Plan. Further advocacy work in partnership with Grampians Health will look at alternative funding sources for the warm water pool.

Options to Consider

Nil

Sustainability Implications

Environmental implications of both projects have been considered and will be delivered as part of the project where appropriate and part of the project budget.

Community Engagement

The two projects identified for application have been developed through extensive engagement with key stakeholders and the general community. Additional consultation will be undertaken as required throughout the delivery phase to minimise impact on our community.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Both projects are examples of continuous improvement in the provision of community, sport and active recreation.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

In June 2023, Council confirmed a matching funding commitment of \$4.8million to the Growing Regions Fund application for the City Oval Community Facility. There is no additional funding commitment required to lodge an application for this project to SRV.

If Council must lodge the 'back-up' project, a resolution is required to approve the allocation of \$250,000 in the 2024-2025 CAPEX budget.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

There are no specific references to Regional, State and National Plans and Policies in the proposed application.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 2 Liveability

- Create engaging spaces and places for social connection and wellbeing to build community resilience.
- Encourage participation, diversity and growth in sports, events, arts and culture.

Risk Implications

Effective project management plans have been developed for these projects to ensure timely delivery of the projects.

Conclusion

The Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund is an additional funding stream currently being offered by the State Government through SRV. This Council Report sees to maximise this grant opportunity.

9.4 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT: OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2023

Author's Name:	Sarah McIvor	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author's Title:	Project Officer – Corporate Reporting	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Governance and Information	File Number:	F18/A10/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Quarterly Performance Report: October – December 2023 (Appendix 9.4A)

Purpose

To receive and note the Quarterly Performance Report for Quarter 2: 1 October – 31 December 2023.

Summary

- The Quarterly Performance Report is a key component of our commitment to continuous improvement, transparency and accountability back to Council and the community.
- The Quarterly Performance Report brings together a range of reports including:
 - Quarterly Finance Report;
 - Progress against Annual Action Plan deliverables;
 - Service Performance Indicators;
 - Councillor Expenses.
 - Progress against Major Projects and Capital Works
 - Customer Service Performance
 - Consolidated data on Community Engagement

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Quarterly Performance Report for Quarter 2: comprising 1 October – 31 December 2023. (Appendix 9.4A).

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.

The Quarterly Performance Report encapsulates a quarterly budget report, progress against the Annual Action Plan, the tracking of any major initiatives, Council expenses and key data relating to the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework. It also encompasses a report on Council's community engagement activities for the quarter, which is subject to ongoing review and development in future quarterly reports.

To further support our reporting, Council has a Financial and Performance Reporting Framework in place that provides guidance on reporting processes. It states 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 Quarterly Reporting Framework, are the following objectives:

- Council is committed to providing accurate, correct and quality information to the community relating to 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, Councillors and the community;
- Council is committed to sound governance through the alignment of performance reporting with its strategic direction; and
- Performance reporting 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 Council's continual improvement process, this report provides Councillors and the community with updates on progress against the Annual Action Plan 2022-2023 and other key strategic items. The report also provides Local Government Performance Reporting (LGPRF) data which is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian councils. LGPRF data is listed as "Service Performance Indicators" within the report.

A report on community engagement is now a regular section of this report and provides an overview of Council's community consultation on a wide array of projects and initiatives over the course of the financial year.

Options to Consider

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian councils. It ensures that councils are measuring and reporting on their performance in a consistent way to promote transparency and accountability in the local government sector.

Sustainability Implications

Not applicable other than any reporting included in the report on Council's environmental and sustainability goals.

Community Engagement

The Quarterly Performance report is prepared through cross-departmental consultation within Council. Following executive management team's endorsement, it will progress to Council Briefing before formal endorsement at a Council Meeting.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Ongoing refinements are made to ensure the report provides clear and concise reporting on key strategic items.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

This report is prepared using existing staff resources.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan – all aspects

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 provides that *"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 the budgetary and financial planning goals are being met"*.

Conclusion

The Quarterly Performance Report provides a regular and succinct report for Council and the community to assess Council's performance against a number of key measures.

9.5 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN – YEAR 3

Author's Name:	Sarah McIvor	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author's Title:	Project Officer – Corporate Reporting	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Governance and Information	File Number:	F14/A03/000003

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Draft Annual Action Plan 2024-25 (Appendix 9.5A)

Purpose

To present the draft Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 (Year 3) to Council and seek approval to make it available to the Community for their feedback.

Summary

- The Council Plan 2021-2025 was adopted by Council on 25 October 2021.
- Following extensive community engagement and feedback, the adopted Council Plan included the requirement for the development of an Annual Action Plan to detail how the initiatives and priorities identified in the Council Plan will be implemented.
- The 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan was adopted on 23 May 2022 and the 2023-2024 Annual Action Plan was adopted on 24 April 2023.
- The proposed Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 will be presented for community feedback upon Council's recommendation.
- It is proposed that the document be made available to the community for a period of four weeks.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the draft Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 and make it available to the public for the period 27 February 2024 to 26 March 2024 to enable the community to provide feedback.

REPORT

Background

Following a comprehensive community engagement process in 2021 both the Council Vision and the Council Plan 2021-2025 were adopted by Council. Development of an Annual Action Plan was then undertaken to identify the key activities that would be implemented to achieve the priorities and initiatives outlined in the Council Plan. An update of the Annual Action Plan for 2023-2024 (Year 2) has since been developed and is currently in progress with reporting occurring quarterly against that plan.

Discussion

Broad consultation was undertaken with Councillors, Executives, Managers, Co-ordinators and other staff to develop actions that aligned to the priorities and initiatives in the Council Plan, including measures and expected timeframes over the period of the Plan. The 2024-2025 Annual Action Plan represents the third iteration of the annual plan and outlines those priorities for delivery in the third year, plus those multi-year projects due for completion by June 2025 or December 2025 in line with the conclusion of the current Council Plan.

As the Annual Action Plan outlines major initiatives identified by Council as priorities in the Council Plan 2021-2025 to be undertaken during the 2024-2025 financial year, it has an impact on the development of the associated annual budget. Given the significant commitments that already account for most of the budget through endorsed capital projects, operational costs and similar there is only a small percentage of the overall budget that is available for discretionary spending and is therefore open to input from the community.

Given the Annual Action Plan reflects those aspects of the budget it will be used as the only period of community consultation and engagement during the budget development process as it represents the only stage in that process where there is any ability to inform and shape the budget. Council is therefore asking residents to provide input about their priorities to inform this discretionary part of the budget.

To assist with the process the proposed initiatives identified for delivery in 2024-2025, that represent projects over and above the actions committed to under the Council Plan, will be presented in more detail online to enable the community to provide input during the consultation process. This will therefore form the consultation for the budget and will be supplemented by a related community engagement period seeking feedback on the Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 (Year 3) that will replicate the processes adopted for the first and second year of the Plan. Both engagements will be made available on the *Have your Say* page on Council's website and will run for the period 27 February 2024 to 26 March 2024 as a means to enable the community to provide feedback to further inform the Plan as well as the development of the annual budget.

Options to Consider

Council can opt not to consider the Annual Action Plan and/or release it for community engagement to inform both the plan and the Annual Budget but this would be inconsistent with the approach previously adopted for the AAP. It would also result in a missed opportunity to inform the development of the budget.

Sustainability Implications

The Annual Action Plan relates to all elements of Council's operations so will impact all sustainability, environmental, climate, social and economic matters.

Community Engagement

Council developed the Community Vision and Council Plan using deliberative processes with a Community Panel in 2021. Community feedback was sought and considered in the development of the Council Plan which included the Health and Wellbeing plan. The initiatives and priorities listed in the Council Plan fall under the five long-term strategic objectives and themes of Community, Liveability, Sustainability, Accessibility and Leadership.

The draft Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 represents the third iteration of the plan and outlines how Council will deliver the Council Plan to the community. It will be made available via Council's Have Your Say page for the period 27 February 2024 to 26 March 2024 to enable the community to provide feedback to further inform the Plan and the development of the annual budget.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The work undertaken to develop the Council Plan 2021-2025 represented a significant change from previous years and led to better connection between the community priorities and their implementation by the organisation. The addition of an Annual Action Plan to steer the implementation of the Council Plan, and provide regular reporting to the community, represented a new innovation for Council. As anticipated at adoption, the plan will naturally evolve over time as our strategic planning processes become more embedded within the organisation.

Collaboration

The Annual Action Plan was developed from the Council Plan and created in collaboration with a range of stakeholders including input from the Councillors and Council officers.

Financial Implications

The activities within the Annual Action Plan will be financially resourced from various methods including available resources, new initiatives, reserves and grants. The financial resourcing is considered as part of the annual Budget development process.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Nil

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan – all strategic objectives

Risk Implications

Strong and robust planning allows Council to align its objectives with those of the community and in turn ensures that the operations of Council are also working towards the same goals as the community that it is working for.

Conclusion

The draft Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 outlines how Council officers will implement the next phase of the Council Plan 2021-2025. Feedback from the community on the 2024-2025 Plan will also inform the development of the 2024-2025 Annual Budget.

9.6 DRAFT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Author's Name:	Susan SurrIDGE	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author's Title:	Co-Ordinator Community Relations and Advocacy	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Governance & Information	File Number:	F06/A13/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Draft Community Engagement Policy (**Appendix 9.6A**)

Purpose

To present the updated Community Engagement Policy and release it to the community for comments and feedback.

Summary

- The *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to adopt and maintain a Community Engagement Policy with specific requirements relating to community engagement and the content of Council's Engagement Policy outlined at sections 55 and 56.
- The first HRCC Community Engagement Policy was adopted by Council on 22 February 2021, in accordance with the requirements of the Act, and is reviewed and updated when required.
- The Act requires the Council to engage with the community on the Community Engagement Policy.
- Engagement will be undertaken at the Consult and Involve level on the IAP2 spectrum.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receive and note the updated Community Engagement Policy (**Appendix 9.6A**).
2. Approve release of the updated Community Engagement Policy for a period of four weeks to seek community feedback and comments on the policy.

REPORT

Background

The *Local Government Act 2020* states that a Council must adopt and maintain a community engagement policy (s55(1)). The Council's current Community Engagement Policy was adopted on 22 February 2021 to comply with that requirement.

Discussion

The existing policy has been reviewed to take into account any relevant changes in legislation or local government requirements for community engagement.

The following changes have been proposed for the policy:

1. The policy has been updated to reflect the Local Government Engagement Strategy detailed in the Recognition and Settlement Agreement between the State of Victoria and the Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.
2. Inclusion of the Community Relations and Advocacy Team as an approval step in the engagement process, in line with the recommendations of an internal audit undertaken in 2023.
3. To note that the policy does not apply to community engagement processes that are imposed by other Victorian legislation, such as land-use planning applications, or Council processes such as service requests or complaints.

It is proposed that the revised policy be provided for public comment for a period of four (4) weeks. This engagement would be at the IAP2 level of Consult or Involve, with opportunities for input to be communicated through the print media, on Council's website and social media.

Options to Consider

Council could opt not to consider the updated policy and/or release it for public consultation however both would be in breach of the policy endorsed by Council in 2021. The updated policy also reflects changes resulting from the recommendations of an audit and ensures Council align with the Local Government Engagement Strategy as detailed in the Recognition and Settlement Agreement referred to in this report.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

Councillors were briefed on this report on 5 February 2024. There is also a community engagement process proposed for the revised engagement policy and this report seeks the Council's endorsement for that engagement to take place.

Engagement will take place for a period of four weeks and will be promoted via multiple mediums and will provide opportunities for written and on-line submissions.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

This Policy is scheduled for review every three (3) years with reviews undertaken earlier as required by changed circumstances including changes to legislation and plans, strategies or policies of HRCC. While the policy was due for its first review there have also been changes to the policy recommended as a result of an audit. Undertaking these reviews therefore contributes to Council's continuous improvement.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

The adoption of the policy has no direct financial implications however, individual project budgets will continue to need to include allocations for community engagement activities.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

- Local Government Act 2020
- Recognition and Settlement Agreement between the State of Victoria and the Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan – Theme 5 Leadership – Build trust through meaningful community engagement and transparent decision making.

Risk Implications

Council's Community Engagement Policy is central to good governance and good decision making by Council. An effective Community Engagement Policy, supported by internal procedures that are properly implemented, will reduce the risk of poorly designed projects and reputational risk.

Conclusion

Council is required by legislation to have a Community Engagement Policy. The current policy requires review due to a number of external factors and as such we must engage with the community about the content of the revised Policy.

9.7 HORSHAM HERITAGE STUDY 2014, HERITAGE STUDY REVIEW 2022 AND PREPARATION AND EXHIBITION OF PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT

Author's Name:	Kirsten Miller	Director:	John Martin
Author's Title:	Strategic Planner	Directorate:	Infrastructure
Department:	Investment Attraction and Growth	File Number:	F19/A10/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Background information (**Appendix 9.7A**)

Summary of feedback (**Appendix 9.7B**)

Updated citation for the former Natimuk School (HO18) (**Appendix 9.7C**)

Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014) Volume 1: Introduction and Recommendations (Grieve Gillett Anderson) (**Appendix 9.7D**)

Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014) Volume 2: Heritage Overlay (HO) Places and Precincts (Grieve Gillett Anderson) (**Appendix 9.7E**)

Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014) Volume 3: Thematic Environmental History (Grieve Gillett Anderson) (**Appendix 9.7F**)

Heritage Study Review (2022) (Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd) (**Appendix 9.7G**)

Volume 2: Heritage Citations and Mapping (HRCC 2022) (**Appendix 9.7H**)

Purpose

To present the Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014) the Heritage Study Review 2022, Volume 2: Heritage Citations and Mapping (HRCC 2022), and the updated citation for the former Natimuk School (existing HO18); and to seek Council endorsement to request Ministerial authorisation and public exhibition of a Planning Scheme Amendment to update and implement heritage controls from the included information.

Summary

- In 2022, Council engaged a heritage consultant to undertake a review of the *Horsham Heritage Study 2014*.
- The review sought to ensure that the heritage citations and recommendations prepared in the *Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014)* have been prepared in accordance with the appropriate methodologies and that they are still accurate and consistent with current guidelines and practices.
- The *Heritage Study Review 2022* identifies:
 - 31 individually significant places
 - 4 heritage precincts and
 - 1 serial listing (6 silos) refer to heritage places that share a common history and/or significance, which do not adjoin each other or form a geographical grouping.
- To ensure the heritage values are protected, a Planning Scheme Amendment is required to identify these sites in the *Horsham Planning Scheme* and apply the heritage overlay.

- **Appendix 9.7A** provides detailed background information relating to the studies, timeframes, and general information around heritage protection.
- As part of the public exhibition process for Planning Scheme Amendment C82 (Corrections Amendment) a submission was received in relation to the existing heritage citation for the former Natimuk School site. Council appointed a heritage consultant from Grieve Gillett Architects to undertake a review and to update the citation. The updated citation is attached as **Appendix 9.7C**.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt the following Heritage studies:
 - *Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014) comprising*
 - Volume 1: Horsham Introduction and Recommendations
 - Volume 2: HO Places and Precincts Stage 2 (2014)
 - Volume 3: Thematic Environmental History Stage 2 (2014).
2. Adopt the Heritage Study Review 2022 and Volume 2: Heritage Citations and Mapping (HRCC 2022).
3. Adopt the updated citation for the former Natimuk School (existing HO18).
4. Pursuant to Section 8A of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, request the Minister for Planning to authorise Council to prepare and exhibit a Planning Scheme Amendment to the *Horsham Planning Scheme* to:
 - Amend the planning scheme maps to apply the Heritage Overlay to the 31 individually significant places , 4 heritage precincts and 1 serial listing
 - Amend Schedule 1 to Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay, Clause 15.03-1L Heritage Conservation and Clause 02.03-5 Built Environment and Heritage to meet the requirements of the *Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes*.

REPORT

Background

In 2011 Council was successful in obtaining a grant from the Department of Transport and Planning (formerly Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning) to carry out a heritage study. The funding was used to prepare a thematic environmental history and establish a list of places of potential heritage significance within the municipality, which is the *Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014)*, including Volumes 1, 2 and 3. Heritage controls were not applied following the completion of the studies because a formal Planning Scheme Amendment was never commenced.

The outcome of Stage 1 was the identification of 167 individual places and nine precincts for further assessment. This then led to Stage 2 of the heritage study being undertaken, which resulted in the preparation of:

- Volume 1: Introduction and Recommendations (**Appendix 9.7D**)
- Volume 2: Heritage Overlay (HO) Places and Precincts (**Appendix 9.7E**)
- Volume 3: Thematic Environmental History (**Appendix 9.7F**)

Volume 2 provides a detailed assessment of 31 individual places, 6 silos and four heritage precincts. This includes heritage citations for each individual place, identification of the serial listing and heritage precinct and a finalised Thematic Environmental History. The updated citations are attached as **Appendix 9.7H** Volume 2: Heritage Citations and Mapping (HRCC 2022).

In 2022, the *Heritage Study Review 2022* (the review, **Appendix 9.7G**) was undertaken to ensure that the heritage citations and recommendations prepared in the *Horsham Heritage Study 2014 Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014)* have been prepared in accordance with the appropriate methodologies and that they are still accurate and consistent with current guidelines and practices.

The *Horsham Planning Scheme* currently identifies 27 individual places, with 7 of these listed at State level on the Victorian Heritage Register. Protecting identified heritage places and precincts in the municipality through the application of the Heritage Overlay will raise the number of protected individual heritage places from 27 to 58. It will also introduce a new serial listing for 6 silos and 4 new heritage precincts (Horsham is the only Rural City in Victoria with no heritage precinct places protected by the Heritage Overlay).

Discussion

Identification of heritage places and their inclusion in the Planning Scheme, provides the mechanism to protect Horsham's rich and varied heritage buildings that help define the municipality's character and identity. It is also necessary to ensure that Council is providing up-to-date information explaining why protected places have heritage significance.

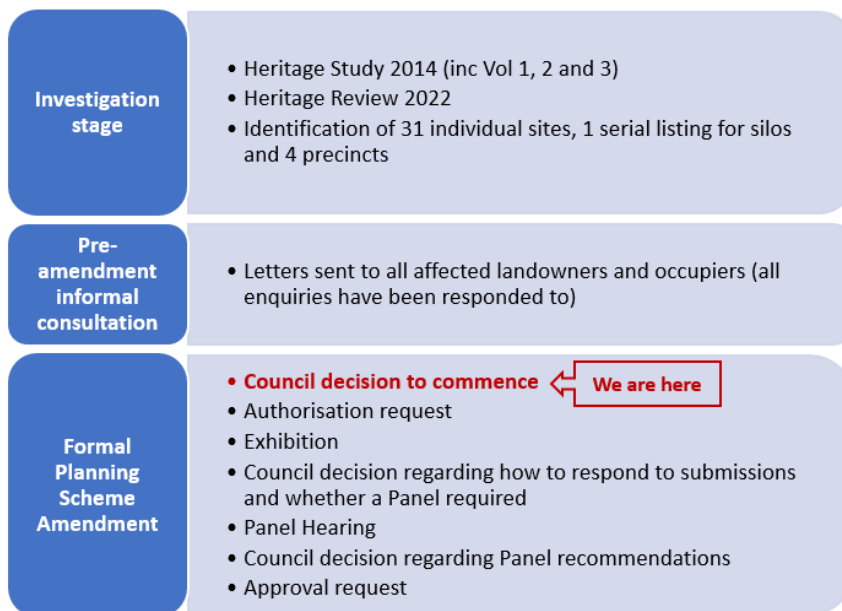
The *Heritage Study Review 2022* is an overview of the existing heritage study, which identifies heritage themes that are already well represented, those that are not, and which ones need to be included in the *Horsham Planning Scheme* and protected by the Heritage Overlay. Potential Heritage places and precincts have been identified through a review of previous heritage studies, state-wide thematic heritage studies, historical documents, and maps. As part of the original studies and through the review process, new places have been recognised and assessed for their potential heritage significance. Targeted fieldwork has been completed to view places already identified and to locate other places of potential heritage significance.

Should Council provide support to authorise and exhibit the Amendment, a formal Planning Scheme Amendment process will commence, and the Amendment will be prepared and exhibited to give effect to the findings and recommendations of the Studies.

The *Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014)* and *Heritage Study Review 2022* identified 31 individual properties, 4 precincts and 1 serial listing, with these studies identifying sites of historic significance within the city of Horsham and surrounds. To date these sites have not been included in a heritage overlay in the Horsham Planning Scheme.

It has been necessary for citations to be prepared for properties identified, this research has been scaled back to include properties that warrant listing under the heritage overlay and additional work will be completed later with a Heritage Gap Study. Council engaged Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd to undertake preparation of the citations and these were finalised in August 2023.

Planning Scheme Amendment Process



In addition to the above steps, an important part of the process will be to discuss any submissions with submitters and seek to clarify or resolve many issues as possible prior to the Panel Hearing.

Next Steps

1. Completion of amendment documentation for submission for authorisation and exhibition
2. Submission of amendment documentation to Department of Transport and Planning
3. Upon authorisation, exhibit the Amendment.
4. Following exhibition, Council will be presented with the submissions and recommendations for how to proceed.

Approximate Timeframes for the Planning Scheme Amendment process

Date	Planning Amendment Step	Outcome
February 2024	Council decision	Council resolves to adopt the Heritage studies and commence the Planning Scheme Amendment
March 2024	Minister decision	Authorisation to commence Planning Scheme Amendment
April 2024	Council	Public Exhibition of Planning Scheme Amendment (6 weeks)
July 2024	Council decision	Consideration of submissions and refer to Independent Planning Panel (if required)
August 2024	Planning Panels Victoria	Directions Hearing
November 2024	Planning Panels Victoria	Panel Hearing
December 2024	Planning Panels Victoria	Panel report provided to Council
February 2025	Council decision	Council resolves to adopt or abandon the Planning Scheme Amendment
March 2025	Minister decision	Approve the Planning Scheme Amendment

Options to Consider

1. Adopt the *Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014)*, the Heritage Study Review 2022, Volume 2: Heritage Citations and Mapping (HRCC 2022) and the updated citation for the former Natimuk School (existing HO18).
2. Adopt the *Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014)*, the Heritage Study Review 2022 Volume 2: Heritage Citations and Mapping (HRCC 2022) and the updated citation for the former Natimuk School (existing HO18) with changes to the heritage consultant's recommendations.
3. Not adopt the *Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014)*, the Heritage Study Review 2022, Volume 2: Heritage Citations and Mapping (HRCC 2022) and the updated citation for the former Natimuk School (existing HO18).
4. Agree to seek authorisation and exhibition of the Amendment
5. Disagree to seek authorisation and exhibition of the Amendment

Implications

Option 1 is recommended by this report. This is required so that a formal amendment process can be prepared.

Option 2 is not recommended because this course of action would carry the significant risk of a future Planning Scheme Amendment not being authorised by the Minister for Planning, as it would lack the strategic justification.

Option 3 is not recommended because this option would prevent heritage protection from being implemented within the Planning Scheme which puts heritage within the municipality at risk.

There is no planning justification for this approach, and it would be contrary to the recommendations of the qualified heritage consultants and Council who have prepared this report.

Option 4 is recommended by this report. Council support is required to seek authorisation to prepare and exhibit a Planning Scheme Amendment.

Option 5 is not recommended without Council support; Council cannot seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning and the preparation of the Heritage Amendment would be abandoned.

Sustainability Implications

The Heritage Study and the review will result in a positive environmental outcome by ensuring Horsham's historical past is protected and conserved for future generations.

Community Engagement

In 2012 a survey was released to the public as an opportunity for community members to nominate and discuss places they consider having heritage value. Five public workshops were conducted targeting landowners in Horsham and Natimuk and business owners within the Horsham town centre. Workshops focused on providing residents the opportunity to nominate and discuss places they felt best represented the historical identity of their town and settlement.

Consultation also occurred with special interest groups including the Horsham Family History Group, Wimmera Association for Genealogy, Arapiles Historical Society, Horsham Historical Society, and neighbouring groups such as the Murtoa and District Historical Society and the Wimmera branch of the National Trust.

Informal pre amendment consultation

From September to November 2023 Council undertook further targeted consultation with landowners and occupiers affected by the revised heritage citations. For each individually significant place, serial listing, and precinct, a letter was sent to all affected owners and occupiers which included a copy of the heritage citation for their property.

In response, Council received feedback from 19 parties (**Appendix 9.7B**), the key issues raised were as follows:

- How will the heritage overlay, and controls impact my property?
- Concerns about implications on property values
- How was the study undertaken and initiated by whom?
- Will the heritage overlay impose additional controls and restrictions and increased costs?
- Concerns around access to insurance for heritage listed properties.

This was composed of:

- 9 written responses
- 10 phone discussions

At this stage nine of the responses remain unresolved, these parties are able to lodge a formal submission when the formal Planning Scheme Amendment commences, so their issues can be dealt with through the amendment process and will be reviewed by an independent planning panel (if required). Note that in some cases, the relevant properties are already subject to a Design and Development Overlay which places similar controls over those properties, hence the further impact of the Heritage controls is considered to be minimal on those cases.

Engagement as part of the Planning Scheme Amendment

As part of the engagement for the formal Planning Scheme Amendment process, an engagement plan will be developed to ensure the community will have a further opportunity to provide feedback and be able to access information in relation to their property. This engagement planning will include additional consultation as part of the public exhibition for the amendment, which is required under *the Planning and Environment Act 1987*. In addition to the normal statutory notice, it is proposed that a fact sheet be developed to provide this information in a clearer format.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Protecting heritage will have a positive social impact as it will ensure that places of cultural heritage significance will be conserved, and their significance can be properly considered early and in a meaningful way maintaining and enhancing the community's sense of place and identity.

Collaboration

Collaboration was undertaken with heritage experts and external agencies in the development of draft local planning policies and provisions to be implemented into the Horsham Planning Scheme. This has ensured that the application process, in practice, meets heritage objectives and avoids overly onerous assessment provisions and triggers.

Financial Implications

Council received a grant from DELWP (now Department of Transport and Planning) for \$80,000 to complete the Horsham Heritage Study 2014.

An allocation within the 2022-2023 Council budget has been used to commence preparation of and for Exhibition of a Planning Scheme Amendment and a further 2024-2025 budget allocation will contribute to the Independent Planning Panel (if required) as well as the costs associated with the preparation of expert witness statements.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

Heritage protection has been frequently raised as a high priority for the community during public consultation on a variety of plans and strategies. This feedback has influenced the development of heritage related objections and strategic directions. For example:

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 1 Community

2. A community that encourages and celebrates all cultures, heritage and diversity. By identifying the sites in the Horsham Planning Scheme and applying the appropriate development controls, the amendment will protect cultural heritage values.

Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan (2022)

Theme 4 Tourism

- 1.6.4 Implementation of the Horsham Heritage Study to protect buildings and places of historic cultural heritage to reinforce a sense of place and celebrate Horsham's character and distinctiveness.
- 1.6.6 Prepare heritage controls and complete Amendment to the Horsham Planning Scheme.

Risk Implications

Financial risk

Council has a responsibility to protect heritage places and in doing so reduce the risk and cost of legal representation and Councils resources.

Risks to the public

When public and Council managed heritage assets are neglected and become derelict as a result of inadequate protection, management or maintenance, there may be a direct risk to the safety of the public.

Reputational risk

Communities expect Council to protect significant heritage places and assets and make good decisions about changes to heritage places. Councils must also look after their own heritage assets, including buildings, parks, monuments, and gardens. Council could experience criticism in the press and negative social media attention if a heritage place is demolished, inappropriately developed or if Council heritage assets are not maintained.

Risk to property owners

Some landowners may consider that placing the heritage controls on their property creates a burden for them in terms of ongoing maintenance and potential sale of their property.

Culturally sensitive material

Council wishes to acknowledge our First Australian people as the Traditional Custodians of this country and their continued connection to land, sea, and culture. Council pays its respects to the resilience and strength of Ancestors and Elders past, present, and emerging.

It is acknowledged there may be some language used in the Horsham Heritage Study (2014) which refers to quotes that are not deemed as culturally sensitive by current standards. This has been acknowledged in the Heritage Study Review 2022, and steps have been taken to increase cultural safety for everyone and improve discoverability of content relating to First Australian peoples, cultures, and languages.

This is a common issue across Victoria where heritage studies have been completed in the past and which may draw from historic material where the language was considered acceptable at the time but do not reflect that our understanding and use of language have progressed over time.

Conclusion

Councils in Victoria are obligated to conserve places of cultural heritage significance through the preparation of heritage studies and the application of appropriate planning controls to conserve places identified in heritage studies. Preservation and protection of heritage not only demonstrate the importance of the tangible and intangible elements of a community's past but also create a sense of place, shared identity, and enhance community pride by connecting the present and future generations to their rich cultural histories.

The review overall seeks to build on from the previous studies and implement heritages places, precincts and serial listings by theme and priority. For example, places which are very rare or poorly represented on the existing heritage overlay are recommended for future work. This allows Council to devote its resources and funds most effectively, to ensure the heritage studies and the heritage overlay reflect the cultural and heritage significance, and diversity of the municipality.

With the consideration and adoption of the *Heritage Study Stage 2 (2014)* and the *Heritage Study Review 2022* there is clear strategic justification for this Amendment. Council has a statutory responsibility to introduce these controls into the Horsham Planning Scheme given that the investigative work and citations have been prepared by a suitably qualified heritage consultant.

Once authorisation is provided the Amendment will be publicly exhibited, including directly to affected landowners. A Council report will be prepared after the exhibition process is completed in relation to the submissions received and whether a Panel hearing is required.

REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

9.8 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND GROWTH DEPARTMENT REPORT

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

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Spendmapp Report December 2023 (data is from bank card transactions and may not capture all Ag Industry) **(Appendix 9.8A)**

Purpose

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

Summary

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

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report for December 2024.

REPORT

Background

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

Discussion

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

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

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

Year 1 - 2022-2023

Year 2 - 2023-2024

Year 3 - 2024-2025

Year 4 - 2024-2025

Year 5+ 2025+

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

INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured by	Progress
1.3.6 (2 year)	Implement priorities from Horsham North Local Area Plan for the Horsham Rail Corridor Project	Finalise Rail Corridor landscape plan Finalise concept design of the Pedestrian underpass.	Community feedback received. Specific changes and improvements have been made to the Landscape Plan. A summary Engagement Report has also been developed.
2.10 (ongoing)	Undertake regular meetings between Wimmera Southern Mallee Development and Investment Attraction Department to inform and discuss economic development opportunities	10 forums held per year.	Meetings held on a regular basis. Outcomes relate to business development opportunities that benefits the region overall.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured By	Progress
2.1.2 (ongoing)	Design, promote, participate and support municipal activities and events as scheduled including NAIDOC, Volunteers, International Women's Day & Seniors Week	Events reported on in the Investment Attraction and Growth monthly Council Report	Events have been delivered, also listed on the Visit Horsham website and on the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse.
2.6.1 (ongoing)	Promote recreational activities in our natural environment to increase destination tourism and visitation	Activities reported on in the Investment Attraction and Growth monthly Council Report	Campaign recently undertaken in regard to local lakes and fishing opportunities.
2.7.1 (ongoing)	Identify and seek out commercial opportunities to activate the riverfront	Commercial opportunities reported on in the Investment Attraction and Growth monthly Council Report	Pop Up Summer Series riverfront activation is underway with regular events including food and drink vans. Two six-month permits have also been issued for traders wanting to use the site on a regular basis.
2.8.1 (ongoing)	Support the delivery of tourism opportunities on the Wimmera River, Mt Arapiles and lakes in our region	Tourism opportunities reported on in the Investment Attraction and Growth monthly Council Report	Waterway project undertaken with the Australian Fishing Network during the month of Nov. Television segment will go to air April / May 2024. In addition to the project, the upgrade of the Visit Horsham Website now features a dedicated page relating to fishing in our local waterways.
3.1.3 (2 years)	Develop and implement the Natimuk Social and Economic Plan and Dadswell's Bridge Community Action Plan	Plan Developed & Progress report to Council	Natimuk Project Advisory Committee have been meeting on a regular basis with actions in place. The group has a positive outlook to ensure projects listed will benefit the whole community. The Dadswell's Bridge community have advised Council that they do not wish to form a Project Advisory Committee. Instead, they have plans to form their own working group to undertake projects.

Officers Reports

3.2.1 (ongoing)	Work with local business leaders throughout the municipality to develop business confidence and growth	Two business forums held annually	Business leaders are encouraged to attend Industry Forums, delivered by Grampians Tourism.
(ongoing)	Host seasonal workshop sessions with Grampians Tourism (GT) and Wimmera Mallee Tourism to organise and update our businesses and tourism operators about relevant information for the region	Four industry workshops have been hosted	Business Development Team attended all four GT Industry Forums.
(ongoing)	Ensure constant communication through emails and business newsletters with tourism operators and local businesses regarding what is happening in the region	A minimum of 10 business newsletters distributed annually 4 business forums are held annually	Monthly newsletter was sent on 19/12 with 409 opens and 37 clicks.
(yearly)	Update and audit the Council Website Business Page	The annual audit identified no outdated information	The Wimmera Business Centre (WBC) webpage has been updated with information and new room hire/booking form links
3.4 (2 years)	Purchase equipment to support outdoor economic activity in public areas	Have outdoor cinema equipment purchased	Seating equipment purchased for use by local event organisers. The Horsham Town Hall have an inflatable outdoor cinema.
(ongoing)	Advocate for value-add opportunities with existing and future farmers through innovative practices such as smart farming practices, planting native perennial vegetation and implementing renewable energy sources on farms	Attend the Horsham Field Days to host conversations with farmers.	Annual event held in March, is attend by members of the Council’s Business Team.
(ongoing)	To promote Live the Grampians Way to local businesses and engage with people who show an interest in moving to the region	Ensure every person who contacts Live the Grampians Way has received a welcome/information sheet and follow up phone call	The Live the Grampians Way concept has slightly change with a new look including a video footage of all four LGAs. In additional Grampians Tourism has arranged a promotional campaign leading into the new year.

Grampians Tourism News

Industry Forum

Grampians Tourism celebrated another delivery of their Industry Forums held on Thursday 8 December at Pomonal Estate Winery.

The forum attracted over 70 industry partners and stakeholders from across the Grampians and Wimmera Mallee regions to hear from a number of guest speakers including the Hon. Steve Dimopoulos MP, Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events and Minister for the Environment and Outdoor Recreation.

SPENDMAPP

Please see below summary of spending for the month of December.

For the month of December, the 4.14% decrease in Resident Local Spend suggests some caution in the local consumer economy.

The biggest spending night of the month of December 2023 was Friday 15 December with Total Local Spend of \$0.4M. This was made up of \$0.2M in Dining and Entertainment spending and \$0.2M spending in all other categories.

M = Million	November 2023	December 2023	% Change Previous Month	% Change Previous Year
Resident Local Spend	\$25.3M	\$29.3M	13.65% increase	4.14% decrease
Visitor Local Spend	\$14.1 M	\$15.4 M	8.44% increase	3.3% decrease
Total Local Spend	\$39.4 M	\$44.7 M	11.86% increase	3.85% decrease
Resident Escape Spend	\$9.9 M	\$11.0 M	10.00% increase	0.86% decrease
Resident Online Spend	\$13.3 M	\$12.3 M	7.52% decrease	2.27% increase

Tourism and Business Development Report



Council accepted a proposal from the Australian Fishing Network (AFN) to deliver a promotional television campaign showcasing our “Waterways and Fishing” within the region.

The Fishing Show produced by Australian Fishing Network delivers episodes to Australia wide audience through the 7 Mate Network. The show segment reaches an annual audience of 1 million viewers from across Australia.

Filming had taken place early November 2023, featuring waterways such as Taylor’s Lake, Green Lake, Lake Toolondo, Wimmera River and possibly

Lake Wartook, with the episode going to air in early 2024. Whilst Rocklands Reserve will be part of Southern Grampians episode.

Council will have access to footage shots of the episode featuring our municipality. Further to this AFN will edit the footage and provide council with a vignette for our social / digital marketing, which will feature on the <https://visithorsham.com.au/waterways-fishing/> website. Part of the proposal included a full page advert within the Freshwater Fishing magazine.

Council was extremely pleased to have engaged David Brennan from WMCA as the local talent person to feature in the episode and speak of our lakes and fishing opportunities.

Major Events

Squash Victoria Junior Silver Tournament 20 to 23 January 2024

This event forms part of the Australian Junior Squash Tour (AJST). The series of junior squash events conducted in Australia are eligible for an Australian Junior Ranking.

Battle of the Borders Victoria versus South Australia, Saturday 20 January
Junior Open Section Tournament Championship round, Sunday 21 January
Junior Open Camp Clinic, Monday 22 and Tuesday 23 January

Tennis Victoria Pat Cash Cup - February 2024

Horsham will host Tennis Victoria's Pat Cash Cup this February with the State's young tennis stars ready to hit the grass courts at the Horsham Lawn Tennis Club. The event has a large drawcard of around 200 plus players, all competing in a round robin tournament.

Motorcycling Australia – Pro MX National

On the first weekend in April 2024, Horsham will host Round 2 of the 2024 Australian Motocross Championship Series (Pro MX) National. Pro MX events are the premium level of competition for the sport of Motocross in Australia. Horsham will see an influx of motorcycle enthusiasts, support teams, event staff, officials and media personnel, including TV crew. It is also anticipated the event will have a draw card of over 2,000 plus spectators.

Business Visitations for the Month of December 2023

Month Visitation	Retail Services	Hospitality & Accommodation	Event contacts	Over all contacts for the month
February	13	8	15	36
March	35	6	12	53
April	20	13	10	43
May	15	8	4	27
June	28	4	5	37
July	71	17	15	103
August	62	33	7	102
September	34	15	9	58
October	19	16	10	45
November	50	30	20	100
December	40	20	12	72
Total	387	170	119	676

Occupied Businesses:

Street and Number of Businesses	November 2023 Businesses Occupied	December 2023 Businesses Occupied	December 2023 Businesses Vacant	December 2023 Percentage Businesses Occupied
Darlot St – 43 car wash and businesses operating from a house included	41	41	2	95%
Firebrace St - 99	90	89	10	89%
Hamilton St - 17	16	16	1	94%
Wilson St – 34	28	29	5	85%
Pynsent St – 28 Cinema included	25	25	3	89%
Roberts Ave – 27 Coles included	24	25	2	92%
McLachlan St – 24 CFA & GWM included	24	24	0	100%
Total 272 Post February 2022 there were 262 shops identified in the study area	248/272	249/272	23	91%

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

STATUTORY PLANNING

Planning Applications Determined

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

Type	DECEMBER 2023		DECEMBER 2022	
	No.	*Value \$	No.	*Value \$
Miscellaneous Domestic	1	980,000	1	58,966
Industrial/Commercial	3	2,940,000	2	1,621,075
Subdivisions	1 (2 lots)	-	5 (12 Lots)	-
Other	-	-	-	-
Total	5	3,920,000	8	1,680,041

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

Total number of planning permits issued in the Horsham Rural City Council area from 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023 is 39 compared to 73 in the same period in 2022-2023.

Planning permits issued for subdivision have permitted 50 new lots from 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023 compared to 154 in the same period in 2022-2023.

Building Services

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

Permits issued by Horsham Rural City Council for this Municipality

Type	Dec 2023		Dec 2022	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings			-	-
Alterations to Dwellings			-	-
Dwelling resittings			-	-
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)			1	30,021
Removal/Demolish			-	-
Industrial/Commercial			1	64,000
Signs			-	-
Total	-	-	2	94,021

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

Type	Dec 2023		Dec 2022	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	3	1,565,453	7	2,243,888
Alterations to Dwellings			-	-
Dwelling resittings			-	-
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	9	394,816	9	185,662
Removal/Demolish	1	14,000	-	-
Industrial/Commercial	5	11,932,964	1	548,548
Signs			-	-
_Sub Total	18	13,907,233	17	2,978,098

A total of **15** Building Permits have been issued by the Horsham Rural City Council at a total value of **\$2,948,653** from **1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023** compared to **18** Building Permits at a total value of **\$1,968,436** for the same period in 2022-2023.

Private Building Surveyors have issued **105** Building Permits at a total value of **\$51,131,976** from **1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023** compared to **123** at a total value of **\$29,319,980** For the same period in 2022-2023.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured By	Progress
1.3.3	Develop a subdivision design and open space local planning policy.	Policy adopted by Council and Horsham Planning Scheme amended.	Draft Landscape guidelines prepared and will be reviewed and finalised by an external consultant.

Officers Reports

1.3.4	Develop an open space contribution rate(s) and a new local Public Open Space Contribution Policy.	Policy adopted by Council and Horsham Planning Scheme amended.	A consultant has been engaged to provide the strategic justification work required for a mandatory public open space development contribution rate for inclusion in the planning scheme.
1.6.4 (2 years)	Implement the Horsham Heritage Study to protect buildings and places of historic cultural heritage to reinforce a 'sense of place' and celebrate Horsham's character and distinctiveness	Horsham Planning Scheme amended	Letters have been sent to landowners whose properties have been identified by the study, to advise that their property is locally significant. A report seeking that Council commence a formal planning scheme amendment will be considered in February 2024.
(4 years)	Prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the Horsham Cinema	Management plan endorsed by Council	A draft Conservation Management Plan has been prepared and reviewed internally.
2.10.1	Implement the Horsham planning scheme and monitor land use and demand.	Investment Attraction and Growth Monthly Report	Corrections amendment completed. Flood amendment has been adopted and submitted for approval.
2.10.2 (2 to 3 years)	Develop and implement a Housing Affordability and Diversity Strategy and complete an amendment to the planning scheme	Strategy developed and implemented through a planning scheme amendment	SGS Economics and Planning have been appointed and have commenced technical work on this project.
2.10.3 (2 years)	Prepare and implement the Horsham South Structure Plan (Stage 2)	Plan adopted by Council	The Future Urban Structure (FUS) is out for public consultation until early February and generating interest and enquiries. Council officers have been meeting with landowners to discuss how the FUS affects their properties, as well as responding to enquiries.
3.1.1 (2 to 4 years)	Prepare and implement a Commercial & Industrial Land and include in the Planning Scheme	Plan developed & Strategy adopted by Council	A consultant has been engaged to undertake this study and will commence in early 2024.
3.1.2	Undertake a review of the Wartook Valley Strategy	Strategy adopted by Council and Horsham Planning Scheme	Deferred, pending 2024-2025 budget considerations.

		amendment. Progress reported to council	
(2 years)	Complete a Planning Scheme Review as a vehicle for specifying desired outcomes across the municipality	Planning Scheme Review Completed and suggested changes implemented	The Planning Scheme Review report is under internal review and nearing completion.

Options to Consider

Not applicable – no decision required.

Sustainability Implications

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

Community Engagement

The report has been prepared in consultation with a range of agencies and will be made publicly available to Wimmera Southern Mallee Development (WSM), West Vic Business, and Grampians Tourism and on Council’s website.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The report provides an overview of activity and assists with continuous improvement.

Collaboration

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

Financial Implications

Nil

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable – no direct relationship or requirements

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 5 – Sustainability

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

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

Destination Horsham Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan 2022 onwards.

Risk Implications

Not applicable – no decision required.

Conclusion

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

9.9 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 Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Nil

Purpose

To present the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for February 2024.

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 2024.

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

RCCC Board Meeting: The RCCC Board met at Wedderburn on Wednesday 21 February 2024. The discussions were primarily focussed around developing a roadmap for sharing of services and benefit realisation amongst the participating Councils in the group.

Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership Meeting (WSMRP): The CEO attended the WSMRP meeting on 1 February 2024 at the Grains Innovation Park. Besides the RDV and RDA updates, the discussion included maximising community benefits from the Energy transition and Mineral Sands development in the region.

Joint State/Local Government Monthly CEO Forum: The CEO attended the forum on 7 February 2024 via Teams. Discussions included preparation and planning for the 2024 Local Government Elections, Review of the Local Government Performance and Reporting Framework and the Community Satisfaction Survey.

Wimmera Regional Mayor & CEO Meeting: The CEOs and Mayors from Horsham, West Wimmera, Buloke, Hindmarsh, Northern Grampians and Hindmarsh had the joint quarterly meeting on Thursday 8 February. Barenji Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) and State Government representatives attended the meeting and discussed the local government engagement strategy.

Meeting with Premier, Hon Jacinta Allan and Minister for Emergency Services, Hon Jaclyn Symes: The Mayor and CEO attended a community meeting with the Premier and Minister for Emergency Services at Dadswell Bridge on Thursday 15 February 2024.

Funding Opportunities:

Farm Machinery Routes Upgrade	Department of Infrastructure	\$2,952,964
Jallumba Douglas Road Upgrade	Department of Infrastructure	\$1,234,310
Polkemmet Road Bridge	Department of Infrastructure	\$ 321,000
Rifle Butts Road	Department of Infrastructure	\$2,687,700
Spart Arts Program 24/25	Department of Education	\$ 169,090
Laharum Hall Upgrades	Regional Development Victoria	\$ 14,346

B. Community Engagement

Community Grant Information Session: HRCC held a community grant information session on 19 February at the Civic Centre and a capacity building workshop on 20 February at Natimuk. The workshops were led by Keith Whelan. Participants were provided practical insights and tips on capacity building and effective grant seeking for small community organisations.

C. Projects and Events

Horsham Regional Art Gallery: Official Opening of “Don’t Define Me” held at the Art Gallery on 23 February 2024.

Riverfront Event: Council’s Summer Series was held at The Meeting Place on the Wimmera River on Sunday 11 February 2024.

Wimmera River Boardwalk: The Wimmera River Improvement Committee unveiled a new boardwalk on 21 February 2024. The new boardwalk runs along the Wimmera River, extending from an existing boardwalk adjacent to Finlayson Court and continuing all the way to the river’s edge.

D. Staff Matters

Mt Stapylton/Dadswells Bridge fires: HRCC grader drivers worked tirelessly assisting with containment lines and their efforts significantly reduced the impact of the fire in open country. A number of other staff from the Operations team also assisted with the traffic management, signage, cleanup, etc. HRCC plays a crucial role in helping the community recover from these fires.

Financial Implications

Not applicable

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 5 - Leadership

Consultation/Communication

Not applicable

Risk Implications

Not applicable

Environmental Implications

Not applicable

Human Rights Implications

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

Conclusion

That Council receive and note the Chief Executive Officer’s Operational Report for February 2024.

10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cr Robyn Gulline

Committee Representation	
05/02/24	Aboriginal Community Roundtable
12/02/24	RCV Mayor's meeting (virtual)
13/02/24	Wimmera Southern Mallee Development Governance and Remuneration sub-committee meeting (virtual)
Other Council Activities	
30/01/24	ABC Wimmera Radio interview (phone)
02/02/24	Triple H Radio Interview with Di Trotter
02/02/24	Future Ready Region Project interview (virtual with CEO)
08/02/24	Met with Greyhound Racing Victoria
08/02/24	Quarterly Wimmera Southern Mallee CEO and Mayors meeting – BGLC briefing on Settlement Agreement
13/02/24	Hosted a Tidy Towns gathering to recognise contribution of David Eltringham to our city
14/02/24	Met Premier Allan and Minister Symes at the Horsham Incident Control Centre for a fire briefing
14/02/24	Attended the Horsham Incident Control Centre Dadswells Bridge Community Meeting
15/02/24	Attended the Dadswells Bridge Community Meeting with Premier Allan and Minister Symes
15/02/24	Chaired Wesley Fundraising Committee meeting
16/02/24	Attended the Emergency Recovery Victoria Dadswells Bridge Community Meeting
18/02/24	Attended the Horsham Hotrod run 2024 Show and Shine at Sawyer Park
19/02/24	Darwin Defenders Commemoration at the Cenotaph
20/02/24	Chaired Wesley Fundraising Committee meeting
21/02/24	Morning Tea with Wimmera River Improvement Committee to celebrate opening of the boardwalk
21/02/24	Met with Adam Liversage, Uniting re homeless forum
22/02/24	Opened the Wimmera Homelessness Alliance (WHA) Homelessness Forum
23/02/24	Official Opening of "Don't Define Me" at Horsham Art Gallery
24/02/24	Opened Tennis Victoria State Teams Championships

21/02/24	Dadswells Bridge Community meeting
23/02/24	Dadswells Bridge Community meeting

Cr David Bowe

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
07/02/24	CEO Employment & Remuneration Committee Meeting
Other Council Activities	
05/02/24	Council Briefing – Council Chambers
12/02/24	Council Briefing – Council Chambers
16/02/24	2024 Local Government Reform - Consultation with Mayors, Councillors and CEOs Session - Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) - online
19/02/24	Council Briefing – Council Chambers
23/02/24	Official Opening of Don't Define Me - Horsham Regional Art Gallery

Cr Claudia Haenel

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
07/02/24	CEO Employment & Remuneration Committee meeting
19/02/24	CEO Employment & Remuneration Committee meeting
Other Council Activities	
31/01/24	Coffee with Cr Claudia
31/01/24	Men’s Health Event – Horsham Football Clubrooms
02/02/24	Women’s Electoral Lobby Australia – National Co-Ordinating Committee meeting
05/02/24	Briefing meeting - HRCC chambers
07/02/24	Coffee with Cr. Claudia
12/02/24	Briefing meeting - HRCC chambers
14/02/24	Coffee with Cr. Claudia
16/02/24	Dadswells Bridge fire recovery community meeting – Dadswells Bridge Hall
19/02/24	Briefing meeting - HRCC chambers
20/02/24	‘Feeling the Pulse’ - Placemaking in Community Housing – zoom
21/02/24	Coffee with Cr. Claudia – Old Dadswell Town – Western Highway
23/02/24	Official Opening of Don't Define Me – Horsham Regional Art Gallery
25/02/24	Victoria Mosque Open Day – Horsham Mosque

26/02/24	SurePact funding management – zoom
26/02/24	Council meeting - HRCC chambers

11. URGENT BUSINESS

12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

13.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS

- Council Briefing meeting held on Monday 5 February 2024 at 5:00pm
- Council Briefing meeting held on Monday 12 February 2024 at 5:00pm
- Council Briefing meeting held on Monday 19 February 2024 at 5:00pm

Refer to **Appendix 13.1A**

13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

Nil

13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE

Nil

13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

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Refer to **Appendix 13.4A**

Recommendation

That Council receive and note agenda items:

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

14. NOTICE OF MOTION