

# AGENDA

MEETING OF THE  
**HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL**

To be held on  
**15 December 2025**  
At 5.30pm

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



**COUNCILLORS are respectfully requested to attend the Council Meeting  
of the Horsham Rural City Council to be held on 15 December 2025  
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm**

### **Order of Business**

#### **PRESENT**

#### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

#### **1. PRAYER**

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

#### **2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY STATEMENT**

Horsham Rural City Council acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, 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 Brian Klowss 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 in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm on 24 November 2025 and 27 November 2025 be adopted.

## 7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

### **Declarations of Interest**

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

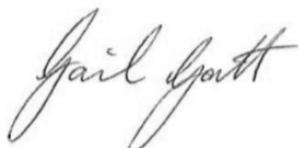
### Members of Staff

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

**8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

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<i>Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(h) - Confidential Meeting Information</i>	

**CLOSE**



GAIL GATT  
Chief Executive Officer

## **REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION**

### **9. OFFICERS REPORTS**

#### **9.1 COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL AND REGULATORY COMMITTEES**

<b>Director:</b>	Kim Hargreaves
<b>Directorate:</b>	Corporate Services
<b>File Number:</b>	F19/A15/000001

#### **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 specifically nominate Councillor representatives to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) and other Committees requiring Councillor involvement.

#### **Summary**

- The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) require formal advice of the Councillors appointed following a resolution of Council.
- Council has one Regulatory Committee, the Audit and Risk Committee, that requires annual appointments to be made for representation by the Mayor plus one other Councillor.
- There are also several external committees that also require annual appointments to be made for representation by Mayor and Councillors.
- Some Committee representation is allocated to the Mayor noting Cr Brian Klowss was appointed Mayor at the Statutory Meeting on 27 November 2025.

#### **Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Nominate the Mayor as Council's representative for 2026 to the Municipal Association of Victoria with the Deputy Mayor as substitute.
2. Nominate Cr O'Loughlin as Council's representative for 2026 to the Victorian Local Governance Association.
3. Receive and note the Committee appointments as follows:
  - Audit and Risk Committee – the Mayor and Cr Munn
  - Aboriginal Community Roundtable – the Mayor
  - MAV Wimmera Southern Mallee Central Highlands Group – the Mayor with the Deputy Mayor as substitute
  - Rail Freight Alliance – Cr McDonald
  - Western Highway Action Committee – Cr Sluggett
  - Wimmera Southern Mallee Transport Group – Cr Wilson

## REPORT

### Background

There are various Committees that require representation or involvement by Councillors. While some Committees require the Mayor to be the representative, there are other Committee responsibilities that can be undertaken by other Councillors. Where an office of Deputy Mayor is established by Council there are some Committee responsibilities that will naturally fall to that position.

Some Committees require confirmation of representatives following a resolution of Council. For example, formal notification is required of Councillors appointed to represent Horsham Rural City Council at the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and Victorian Local Governance Association.

### Discussion

Following the review of Committees with Council representation, Council has proposed the appointment of the following Councillors to the respective Committees:

- ***Municipal Association of Victoria***

- The MAV is a membership association and the legislated peak body for Victoria's 79 local Councils.
- The MAV State Council is the governing body of the MAV and is made up of representatives of each member Council.
- The MAV offer diverse business services to our council members including specialist policy and advocacy, governance and legislative advice, sector development, insurance and procurement services.
- More information is available at <https://www.mav.asn.au/>

Council has proposed the appointment of the Mayor to the MAV with the Deputy Mayor as substitute.

- ***Victorian Local Governance Association***

- The Association is an independent organisation that supports Councils, Councillors and communities in good governance.
- Their vision for local government is to support a diverse and growing network of community leaders elected to local government who are more connected, informed, and capable of providing good governance for the communities they serve.
- They provide a range of services to the benefit of council members.
- More information is available at <https://www.vlga.org.au/>

Council has proposed the appointment of Cr O'Loughlin to the VLGA.

- ***Audit and Risk Committee***

- The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is an independent advisory committee to Council established under section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- The Committee's objective is to provide appropriate independent advice and recommendations to Council on matters relevant to the Committee's Charter to facilitate decision-making by Council in relation to the discharge of Council's accountability requirements.
- The Committee consists of five members: three independent members and two Councillors. Under the ARC Charter one of the Councillor representatives will be the Mayor.
- More information is available at <https://www.hrcc.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Governance-and-Transparency/Audit-and-Risk-Committee>

Council has proposed the appointment of the Mayor and Cr Munn to the Audit and Risk Committee.

- **Aboriginal Community Roundtable**

- The Horsham Rural City Aboriginal Community Roundtable's purpose is to provide strategic advice and guidance on the development of policies, plans and projects that integrate reconciliation processes into Council business, services and programs.
- The Roundtable provides a platform for ongoing engagement between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities with Council across a broad range of issues relating to Reconciliation.
- Membership includes one Councillor, two Council officers, and six Aboriginal members (one representing Barengi Gadjin, two representing Goolum and three community members).

Council has proposed the appointment of the Mayor to the Aboriginal Community Roundtable.

- **MAV Wimmera Southern Mallee Central Highlands Group**

- The MAV Wimmera Southern Mallee Central Highlands group plays an advocacy and lobbying role for its member Councils and is represented on the Municipal Association of Victoria Board.
- It is one of 10 regional groupings across the state.
- The Councils in this group are Ararat, Ballarat, Hepburn, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Moorabool, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack.
- More information on the MAV regional groupings is available at <https://www.mav.asn.au/who-we-are/governance>

Council has proposed the appointment of the Mayor to the MAV Wimmera Southern Mallee Central Highlands Group with the Deputy Mayor as substitute.

- **Rail Freight Alliance**

- The Rail Freight Alliance is made up of Victoria rural, regional and metropolitan local government Councils (Ararat Rural City, Buloke, City of Ballarat, City of Melbourne, City of Melton, East Gippsland, Gannawarra, Glenelg, Hindmarsh, Horsham Rural City, Latrobe City, Loddon, Maribyrnong City, Mildura Rural City, Mitchell, Moyne, Northern Grampians, Southern Grampians, Swan Rural City, Warrnambool City, West Wimmera, Wyndham City and Yarriambiack).
- The alliance represents the local government sector in Victoria and adjoining states in freight logistics interests connecting Victoria nationally and internationally.
- More information is available at <https://railfreightalliance.com/>

Council has proposed the appointment of Cr McDonald to the Rail Freight Alliance.

- **Western Highway Action Committee**

- The Committee aims to pursue upgrades to the Western highway to achieve improvements to safety, transport efficiency and amenity.
- Membership of the committee is the 10 local governments along the Western Highway corridor from Melton to the SA border (City of Melton, Moorabool, City of Ballarat, Pyrenees, Ararat Rural City, Northern Grampians, Horsham, Hindmarsh, Yarriambiack and West Wimmera).
- Representatives of the Department of Transport and Planning, and Major Road Projects Victoria also participate in the meetings.

Council has proposed the appointment of Cr Sluggett to the Western Highway Action Committee.

- **Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Group**

- The purpose of the group is to collaborate and promote a regional transport position through the preparation and updating of Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Strategies.

**Officers Reports**

- The group is the priority setting body for transport related issues in the Wimmera-Southern Mallee and makes recommendations for project funding to government.
- Member Councils are Buloke, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Northern Grampians, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack.

Council has proposed the appointment of Cr Wilson to the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Group.

Once confirmed all relevant Committees will be notified of their respective representative.

**Options to Consider**

1. Council can opt not to nominate representatives for all committees.
2. Council can opt to nominate substitutes for some or all the committees.
3. Council can opt to nominate the Deputy Mayor to certain committees noting an office of Deputy Mayor was established at the statutory meeting held on 27 November 2025.

**Sustainability Implications**

Nil

**Community Engagement**

Council's involvement on these Committees is part of the overall process through which Council engages with some specific sectors of the community.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Not applicable

**Collaboration**

Collaboration with other Councils in the region occurs by virtue of membership on these Committees. For example, the Western Highway Action Committee is a collaboration of 10 Councils from Melton to the South Australian border.

**Financial Implications**

Provision for Councillor participation on Committees has been made within the existing Council budget.

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

Not applicable

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

2025-2029 Council Plan

Theme— Leadership: 15 – Strengthen engagement, advocacy and partnerships

**Risk Implications**

The Municipal Association of Victoria and the Victorian Local Governance Association require formal advice of the Councillors appointed to represent Horsham Rural City Council following a resolution of Council. There is consequently a risk to Council associated with a failure to nominate councillor representation. Further, the *Local Government Act 2020* (s53) requires that Council establish an Audit and Risk Committee which includes members who are Councillors of the Council, specifically the Mayor and one other Councillor therefore nominations to this Committee are required to meet the requirements of the Act.

**Conclusion**

The 2026 Councillors appointments to the nominated Committees, including nominations to the Municipal Association of Victoria and the Victorian Local Governance Association, have been prepared for consideration and endorsement by Council. Following endorsement, the respective Committees will be notified of their respective 2026 Councillor representatives.

## 9.2 COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

<b>Director:</b>	Gail Gatt
<b>Directorate:</b>	Office of CEO
<b>File Number:</b>	F19/A11/000001

### 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

Outstanding Council Resolutions Action List (**Appendix 9.2A**)

Completed Council Resolutions Action List (**Appendix 9.2B**)

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### Purpose

To receive and note the Outstanding Council Resolutions Action List and the Completed Council Resolution Action List.

### Summary

- Immediately following each Council meeting, all formal resolutions are placed on the Outstanding Council Resolutions Action List.
- The Council Report author is responsible for updating outstanding actions on the Outstanding Council Resolutions Action List in a timely manner.
- The Outstanding Council Resolutions Action List is reviewed by the Executive Management Team and is to be provided to Councillors quarterly.
- The Outstanding Council Resolutions Action List (**Appendix 9.2A**) and Completed Council Resolutions Action List (**Appendix 9.2B**) are formally presented to Council annually.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receive and note the Outstanding Council Resolutions Action attached as **Appendix 9.2A**.
2. Receive and note the Completed Council Resolutions Action List attached as **Appendix 9.2B**.

## **REPORT**

### **Background**

Horsham Rural City Council has a Council Resolutions procedure in place to ensure that all resolutions of Council are closely monitored and actioned within the required timeframe.

### **Discussion**

Resolutions of Council are placed on an Outstanding Council Resolutions Action List and circulated to Directors and Responsible Officers immediately following each Council meeting. The author of the Council Report is responsible for ensuring that their actions are updated in a timely manner. The action list is reviewed by the Executive Management Team and circulated to Councillors. The last update was provided to Councillors in June 2025 however moving forward the intention is to provide an update quarterly. Completed actions are transferred to the Completed Council Resolutions Action List.

The Outstanding Council Resolutions Action List (**Appendix 9.2A**) and Completed Council Resolutions Action Lists (**Appendix 9.2B**) are formally presented to Council annually.

### **Options to Consider**

Not applicable

### **Sustainability Implications**

Nil

### **Community Engagement**

Not applicable

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Not applicable

### **Collaboration**

Not applicable

### **Financial Implications**

Nil

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

Not applicable

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

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme 5 Leadership

Procedure No P04/003 – Council Resolutions

### **Risk Implications**

There may be significant risks to Council if formal Council resolutions are not monitored and actioned in a timely manner.

### **Conclusion**

This report provides an update on outstanding and completed Council resolutions.

## 9.3 HORSHAM BYPASS PLANNING – PROJECT PLAN

<b>Director:</b>	John Martin
<b>Directorate:</b>	Director Infrastructure
<b>File Number:</b>	F24/A05/000001

### 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

Horsham Bypass Project Plan (**Appendix 9.3A**)

Horsham Bypass CRG Terms of Reference (**Appendix 9.3B**)

### Purpose

To present a project plan to assist Council establish a position in relation to a Western Highway Bypass or Truck Route around Horsham, including the establishment of a Community Reference Group to guide this project.

### Summary

- Earlier in 2025, Councillors received a presentation about a study with the Department of Transport and Planning into an Alternative Truck Route of Horsham.
- Further consideration of how Council might progress that work, at subsequent briefing meetings, highlighted the imperative of actively engaging with the community at all stages in developing a preferred position for Council in relation to a future Western Highway Bypass or Truck Route around Horsham.
- A draft project plan was presented to the 20 October 2025 briefing meeting. The project plan has now been updated to incorporate Councillor input from that meeting.
- This report proposes the establishment of a Community Reference Group to assist Council in this process, and a proposed terms of reference for that CRG.
- The draft project plan highlights the regular interaction with the community proposed throughout the conduct of the planning process.
- The report also discusses key resourcing requirements for this project.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Confirm its intent to seek to identify a preferred alignment for a full Bypass of Horsham, incorporating all three highways, the Western, Wimmera and Henty Highways.
2. Adopt the Project Plan (**Appendix 9.3A**) for the Horsham Bypass Community Reference Group, and commence implementation of that in early 2026.
3. Adopt the Terms of Reference for the Community Reference Group (**Appendix 9.3B**) and seek nominations for the positions on that Group, also in early 2026.
4. Appoint Councillors (name 1), (name 2) and (name 3) to the CRG, with the Mayor to be its Chair.
5. Refer an estimate of \$80,000 for resourcing for the project to the 2026-27 budget process.

## **REPORT**

### **Background**

The 2025-29 Council Plan has highlighted planning for a Horsham Bypass as a major initiative for this Council term.

Councillors received a presentation on the Horsham Alternative Truck Route study earlier in 2025. Subsequently, a further briefing presented to Councillors a collation of previous studies relating to consideration of a Horsham Bypass, as background to Councillors' consideration of this matter.

A report to the 1 September 2025 Councillor briefing presented a broad approach to how Council might develop a position in relation to a Horsham Bypass or Truck Route. A key outcome of that discussion was the recognition of the importance of community engagement in this process. A subsequent briefing on 20 October 2025 considered an early draft of a project plan for this purpose.

This has led to the development of this report which proposes the formation of a Community Reference Group to help inform Council about the community's views regarding a Bypass.

This report also aims to seek clarity on Council's intent regarding a Bypass compared to other variants, such as a Truck Route.

### **Discussion**

A key risk associated with planning for a Horsham Bypass is the potential for it to be a divisive issue within the community.

An understanding of the community's perspectives developed through a sound engagement process is at the heart of good decision making, in particular on major projects such as a Horsham Bypass.

It is proposed that a Community Reference Group (CRG) be established, comprising a range of community and stakeholder representatives to provide advice to Council on this subject.

Attached to this report is a project plan that outlines the process by which the CRG would consider this matter, including the key steps where direct engagement with the community would occur, and a means of providing regular updates to the community throughout the conduct of the project.

The project plan also describes suggested membership of the CRG and how it would be resourced, largely from within Council, but with some external assistance required for the key options evaluation task.

Determining a preferred route, or corridor, for a Horsham bypass is not a simple matter. The project plan reflects that to do so, and fully engage the community in that process, could take at least 16 months, through to March 2027.

The draft project plan is proposed for adoption by Council, noting that it might be refined during the course of the project, and that material variations to the plan would be considered by Council at its regular reviews of progress with the project.

A further point also requiring consideration is Council's intent regarding a bypass. The definitions section of the draft Terms of Reference for the CRG includes the following:

- **Bypass** - A road that enables traffic to avoid a built-up area of a town, that is, to avoid residential, commercial and industrial areas, to enhance the amenity of those areas, and avoid congestion of the built-up areas. Typically, a Bypass would be able to be developed to full freeway standards, in time, with a speed limit of up to 110 km/h.
- **Ring Road** - A road, that may be built to freeway standards, that encircles a town to provide a connection around or within the perimeter of the town and links roads that service or traverse through the township area.
- **Truck Route** - A road intended primarily for trucks either to provide a more efficient route for trucks, or reduce the impacts of truck traffic in the avoided area. A truck route is likely to be designed for speed limits associated with urban areas, e.g. 60-80 km/h.

There are many variations on these definitions; these are interpretations considered relevant to Horsham. The Terms of Reference also contain the following definition of the proposed project:

- **Project** - The aim of the Horsham Bypass Project is to provide sufficient information to Council so that it can make a decision on a bypass route for Horsham that is preferred by the community. Council's goal is to identify a Bypass route that services the three main highways that traverse Horsham.

A recommendation of this report is to seek Council's clarification of its intent for this proposed project.

### Options to Consider

The project plan aims to ensure the community is well heard in considering route alignment options for a Bypass.

It is planned that the CRG will be given the opportunity to identify further means to ensure the community is effectively engaged through this process.

### Sustainability Implications

Sustainability is often presented as having three components, social, environmental and economic. The process proposed in the Bypass CRG Project Plan primarily addresses the social and economic aspects of a Bypass, aiming to ensure an ongoing sustainable community. It is anticipated that environmental aspects would be fully addressed in subsequent technical work that follows identification of a community preferred bypass corridor.

### Community Engagement

An emphasis on community engagement is central to this report and the proposed project plan as presented.

### Innovation and Continuous Improvement

N/A

### Collaboration

Proceeding with a Bypass will require collaboration with the Department of Transport and Planning, and the State and Federal Governments.

However, in the first instance, identifying a preferred bypass route or corridor will require effective engagement and collaboration with the community and local stakeholders.

### Financial Implications

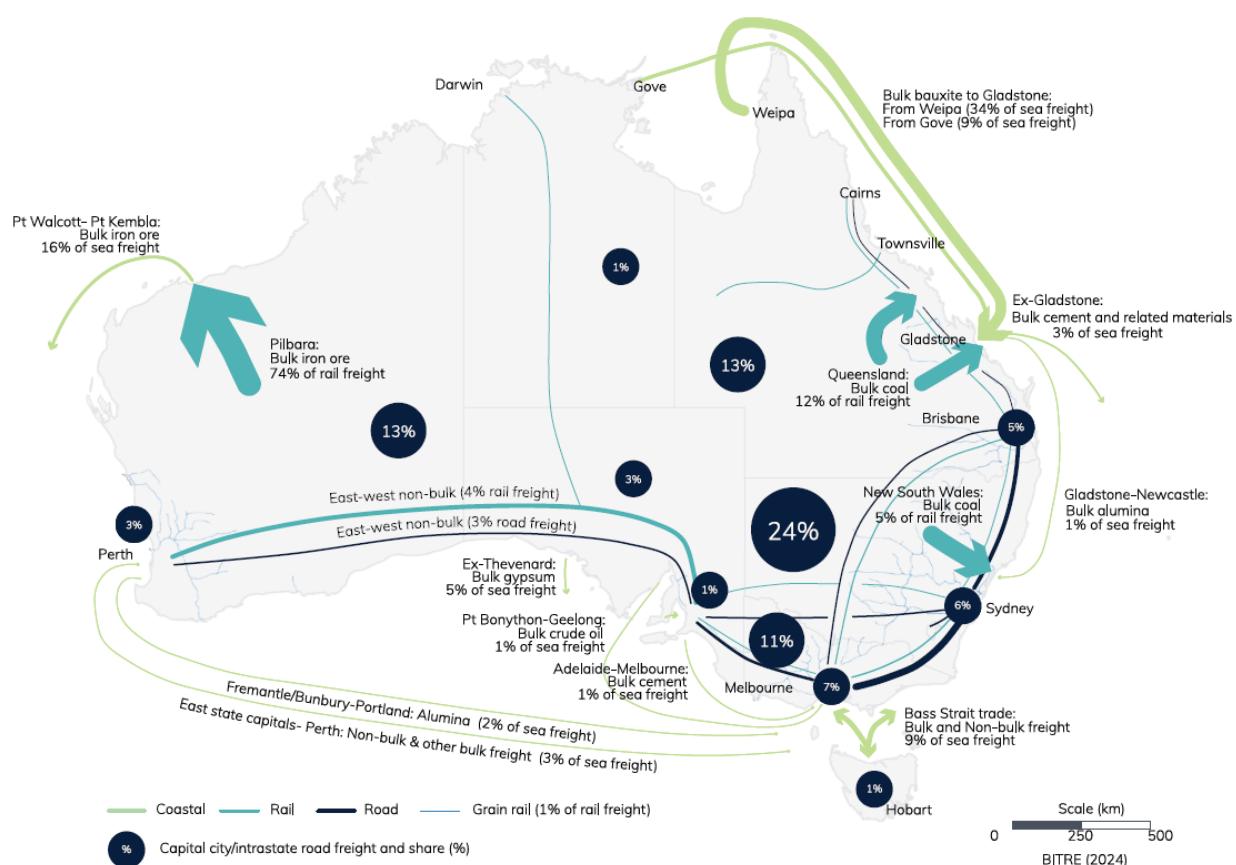
Conduct of much of the project will be able to be resourced internally, with relatively minor costs associated with the conduct of meetings and media / engagement events. These will be covered within existing budget provisions.

A provision of (estimated) \$80,000 will be required to conduct the specialist evaluation of route options as outlined in the project plan. That work is proposed to occur during 2026-27, hence this amount should be allowed for in planning the 2026-27 Council Budget.

### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy 2025 identifies the Western Highway as one of the major freight corridors in Australia, as shown in the diagram below. It follows that it is inappropriate for this high level of freight movement to pass through the Horsham urban area, given the impacts on amenity and road safety.

Figure 2.3: Major freight flows in Australia (by volume per mode)



### Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

The Council Plan 2025-29 includes as one of its major initiatives the following:

#### 9.1 Confirm a preferred route for the Horsham bypass

### Risk Implications

The emphasis of this report is on addressing a key risk associated with planning for a Horsham bypass, being the potential for this issue to be divisive within the community. The formation of a CRG and an extensive engagement process are proposed to address this risk.

**Conclusion**

Councillor discussion is sought on the proposed project process to facilitate a decision on a Horsham Bypass.

Subject to Councillor comments, an updated Project Plan and CRG Terms of Reference will be prepared for the 15 December 2025 Council meeting.

## 9.4 AVIATION SECTOR – FEDERAL PARLIAMENT INQUIRY – DRAFT SUBMISSION

<b>Director:</b>	John Martin / Brett Luxford
<b>Directorate:</b>	Infrastructure / Communities and Place
<b>File Number:</b>	F19/A01/000001

<b>Officer Conflict of Interest</b>	<b>Status</b>
Officer disclosure in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 – Section 130:	Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 – Section 3(1):
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Reason:</b> Nil	<b>Reason:</b> Nil

### Appendix

Draft submission ([Appendix 9.4A](#))

Inquiry Terms of Reference ([Appendix 9.4B](#))

### Purpose

To present a draft submission into a Parliamentary inquiry into the State of Australia's Aviation Sector in relation to rural regional and remote communities.

### Summary

- The Australian Senate's Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee is conducting an inquiry into the "State of Australia's aviation sector and its ability to deliver reliable and affordable services to rural, regional and remote communities"
- The inquiry is receiving submissions up to 20 January 2026.
- Some of the key terms of reference of the Inquiry relate to costs including government fees, taxes and charges, that relate to airfares for passenger services.
- The inquiry also creates the opportunity to provide input into the measures that could be put in place to assist the aviation sector to provide services to rural, regional and remote communities.
- A draft submission has been prepared which highlights the importance of an aerodrome, such as Horsham's, in provision of emergency services, but for which there is no revenue stream to Council to manage the associated costs of operating the aerodrome.
- The submission also draws on salient points from the draft Horsham Airport Master Plan, highlighting the potential to offer regular public transport services, and the importance of that in supporting development in the region.

### Recommendation

That Council endorse the draft submission into the Aviation inquiry, as per [Appendix 9.4A](#) to this report.

## REPORT

### Background

The Australian Parliament is conducting an inquiry into the state of Australia's aviation sector and its ability to deliver reliable and affordable services to rural, regional and remote communities. The terms of reference are included as **Appendix 9.4B**. Some of the key elements of these terms of reference are:

- a. costs, fees, levies, taxes and charges that are core components to the pricing of airfares*
- b. disparities of these costs across rural, regional and remote airports and the basis for the disparities;*
- d. competitiveness of the aviation sector to service regional, rural and remote communities and the implications of reducing or withdrawing those services;*
- g. policy and practical measures in place, or that could be established, to assist the aviation sector to provide services to rural, regional and remote communities;*

Council has undertaken significant background work in preparing a draft Horsham Airport Master Plan, though this Plan remains in draft form. While not adopted, the Plan proposes a range of opportunities for future development of the aerodrome that are relevant to this Inquiry. This report does not propose adoption of the Master Plan, recognising that there are a range of factors that remain to be addressed. Nevertheless, it provides some relevant context for the submission.

Council incurs significant costs in operating the aerodrome, yet only recovers part of these costs through direct income streams. Upgrades and major renewal works at the aerodrome have been heavily dependent on grant funding for the service to remain viable.

A submission is proposed to the inquiry to highlight the lack of current passenger services, and the absence of reliable funding streams as examples of the disparity of service afforded to our region.

### Discussion

The draft submission, included as **Appendix 9.4A**, draws on the background work undertaken for the draft Horsham Airport Master Plan, and Council's experiences with maintenance and renewals of some of the key components of the aerodrome, to highlight the funding barriers to operation of the aerodrome and what might be required to upgrade the aerodrome's infrastructure to address the absence of regular airline services in the region.

For example, Council has suffered repeated damage to the apron area, often associated with heavier emergency services aircraft. These emergency services are very welcome in the region, but it is problematic that failures to the apron occur due to a lack of pavement strength. Council had been successful in obtaining a grant from the Australian Government in 2021 for \$280,000 which has enabled about 40% of the apron area to be strengthened. This grant required no contribution from Council. The availability of grants such as this is critical to enable Council to continue to deliver relevant services from the Horsham aerodrome.

Participating in an Inquiry such as this is an important way of helping to influence Government policy to address our regional needs.

### Options to Consider

Council is not required to make a submission to the inquiry, and could opt not to, in particular on the basis that the Aerodrome Master Plan has not been finalised or approved by Council.

Council could opt to exclude certain parts of the submission if that was its preference.

### **Sustainability Implications**

A submission to the Inquiry is intended to aid the long term financial sustainability of Council's Horsham aerodrome.

### **Community Engagement**

None proposed for this submission.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Nil

### **Collaboration**

Nil

### **Financial Implications**

The submission aims to highlight needs specific to Horsham aerodrome, as that may then increase the opportunities for Government funding programs of relevance to Horsham.

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

This proposed submission is in response to a Parliamentary Inquiry, with the aim of trying to influence Government policy.

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

The submission to this Inquiry aligns with the following Council Plan 2025-29 commitments and measures:

- 9. Improve transport networks within our community and beyond
- 11. Ensure our community can access resilient and reliable assets and services
  - Number of formal advocacy submissions made to State and Federal Governments

### **Risk Implications**

Without adequate planning and funding for ongoing maintenance and development of Horsham Aerodrome, Council may not be able to offer the facility as a regional base for relevant emergency and passenger services.

### **Conclusion**

It is proposed to make a submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry on the Aviation Sector to highlight the challenges facing regional aerodromes such as Horsham's.

## 9.5 QUARRY INVESTIGATIONS

Director:	John Martin
Directorate:	Infrastructure
File Number:	N/A

### 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 provide background to Councillors about current investigations into new quarry sites and propose a budget allocation be brought forward to progress a pilot of one of these sources.

### Summary

- The quality and cost of road materials, in particular gravel, are key factors that impact on the standard of Council roads and their ongoing maintenance and renewal costs.
- Investigations have been proceeding aiming to identify potential sources of gravel that could provide benefits to Council in particular through reduced cost and improved quality.
- Recently the focus of the investigations has been on two sites that offer potentially suitable materials, and it is now proposed to progress these investigations into practical trials of the materials on sections of Council roads.
- Approval is being sought to bring forward some funds in the 2026-27 budget from the gravel re-sheeting program to enable an initial trial to proceed.
- The report provides background information about the quarry sites and the likely benefits that could result from development of these quarries, as justification for the proposal.

### Recommendation

That Council approve:

1. Progressing with the further development of the two identified quarry sites and trials of the materials from these sites.
2. Utilise \$100,000 from the 2026-27 gravel re-sheeting approved budget in this financial year for an initial pilot using material from the Tooan quarry site and on a trial section of road.

## REPORT

### Background

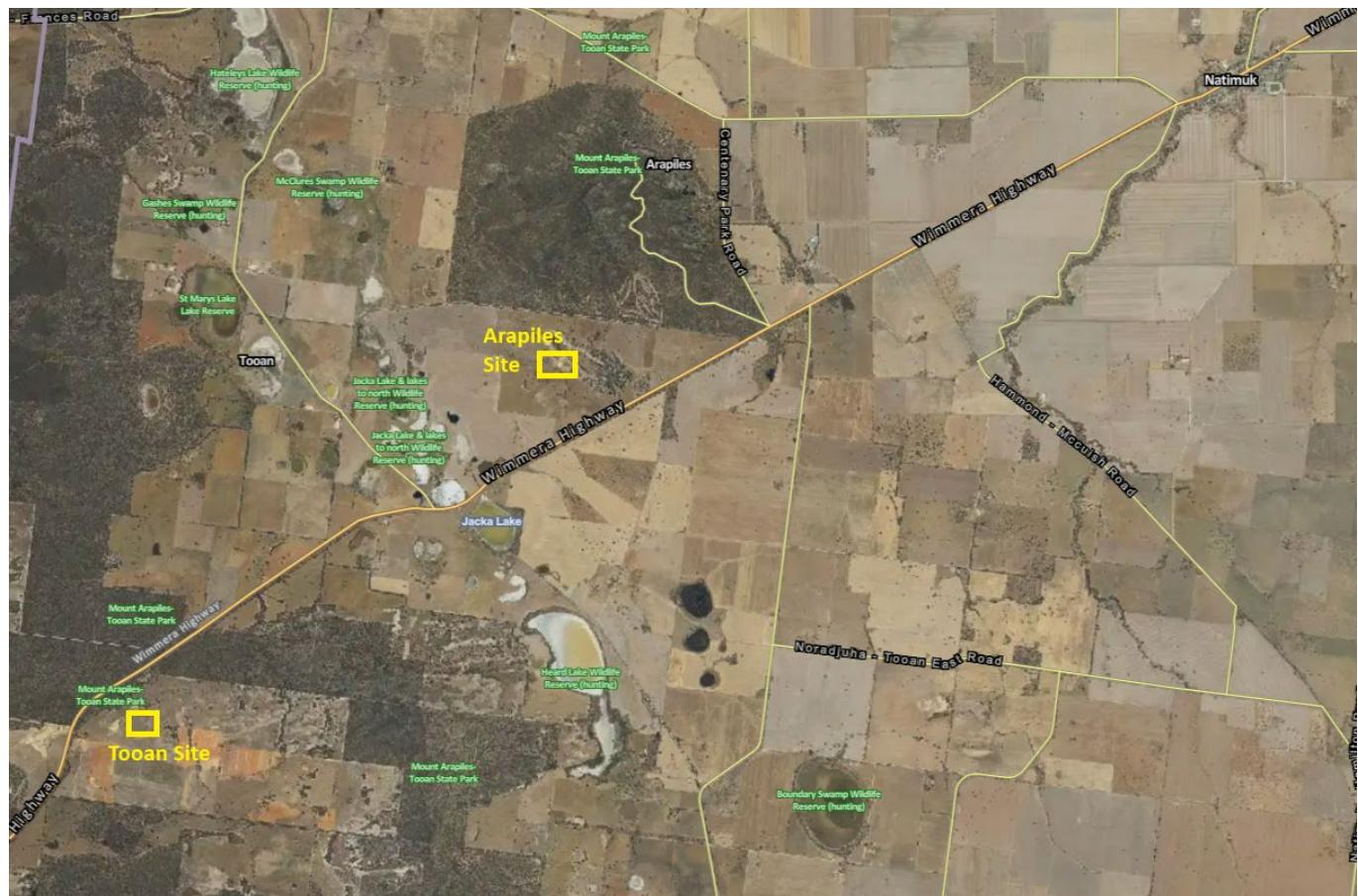
The cost of gravel is a significant component of Council's annual road maintenance budget, being approx \$440,000 (excluding carting costs) in 2024-25, with an annual use of approx 30,000 tonnes. Further, the quality of some gravel sources has been declining or variable in recent years. Some of the better quality gravel for our road program is sourced from outside the municipality, resulting in higher costs for cartage where this material is used.

Council has previously operated a series of its own quarries that it had sourced much of its material from. Most recently, Council operated the Arnotts quarry at Laharum until 2019, by which stage the Council-owned area was reaching the end of its available resource, and the adjoining landowner commenced extracting the remaining resource on his land.

Investigations to date have involved the following steps:

- Review of background geological information to identify likely resource areas.
- A media release in 2022 requesting landowners to contact Council if they believed they had a potential resource on their property that they were willing to have considered.
- Follow-up with respondents, including preliminary testing of likely material suitability.

This initial work has led to the identification of two sites as being most likely to yield suitable material of a high quality, and with sufficient quantity to provide several years of resource. These sites are as shown on the plan below, being a site just south of Mt Arapiles, and a second site at Tooan.



**Discussion**

An analysis of costs of fully developing these sites has been undertaken, considering:

- Site establishment costs (including approvals)
- Annual operating costs
- Final rehabilitation costs and demobilisation.

These costs have been compared with the costs of using materials from other quarries currently accessed by Council, taking into account both the material cost and the cartage cost to various sites within the municipality. The table below shows this comparison for the Tooan quarry site based on 25,000 tonnes per year of material (i.e. assuming that some material would still be sourced from alternative sites).

Cost Estimate Comparison to Tooan Quarry										
ITEM	Cost Per Ton on Quarry Site	Cost \$ Variance to HRCC Per Ton at Quarry Site	Loading & Haulage Rate (Per Ton/ Km)	Avg Distance to Construction Site (Km)	Loading & Haulage Cost	Total Cost Per Ton at sites	Cost \$ Variance to HRCC Per Ton Considering Haulage	Quantity	Total	Cost \$ Variance to HRCC
Mitre	\$18.50	\$6.11	\$0.24	65	\$15.60	\$34	\$4.91	25000	\$852,500	\$122,661
Arnotts	\$16.60	\$4.21	\$0.24	55	\$13.20	\$30	\$0.61	25000	\$745,000	\$15,161
Gre Gre	\$13.50	\$1.11	\$0.24	100	\$24.00	\$38	\$8.31	25000	\$937,500	\$207,661
Great Western	\$10.00	-\$2.39	\$0.24	100	\$24.00	\$34	\$4.81	25000	\$850,000	\$120,161
Tooan Quarry	\$12.39		\$0.24	70	\$16.80	\$29		25000	\$729,839	

This calculation shows that use of this material is marginally cheaper, by \$15,000 per year compared to the Arnotts site at Laharum and larger savings at other sites.

A similar calculation for the Arapiles site yields an even higher saving of \$180,000 per year compared to the Arnotts source, and in excess of \$300,000 for the other sites.

The calculations do not take into consideration the material quality, and hence the potential longevity of the material when applied to our roads. Initial testing indicates that both of these sources are likely to be notably better than the Arnotts material, and potentially of a similar high quality as the Gre Gre material.

The landowner of the Tooan site has constructed some roads on their property using the material, observations of these roads indicate this material should be very suitable, although that material was not crushed to as fine a grade as would be required for Council roads (to provide a good ride quality). Similarly, the Arapiles site is a former quarry, suggesting that the material has also proven suitable in the past.

The next proposed stages of the investigation are as follows:

- Excavate a series of pit tests across a larger area at both sites, to confirm the likely extent of the available resources.
- Extract sufficient material to sheet a pilot section of road with the chosen material to confirm its suitability in on-road trials.

In parallel with these steps, Council will need to commence relevant approval processes, in particular in relation to:

- Native vegetation removal (this could be a significant constraint at the Arapiles site).
- Planning Permits
- Approvals from Earth Resources for the quarrying works. Note that there are different levels of approval required depending on the extent of the proposed works.
- Formalising access arrangements and Council's responsibilities with the landowners.

The following costs are estimated for these various elements:

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• Test pit sample collection and analysis	\$10,000
• On-road trial establishment	\$80,000
• Approvals (initial)	\$10,000

Detailed costings have been prepared for these, including provision for land rehabilitation in the short-term, should the pilot prove not to be successful. Given the high cost, it is proposed to initially pilot the material at the Tooan site, as it is assessed as being more likely to be successful, and has fewer constraints.

Council approval is sought to proceed with these investigations and trials. A further report would be brought to Council if it is subsequently proposed to proceed with a pilot at the Arapiles site or to full establishment of either of the sites as a quarry, and seeking a budget allocation (or re-allocation) for that purpose.

### Options to Consider

This report outlines some potential future options for gravel sources for Council that are aiming to provide cheaper and better gravel than is currently available to Council.

### Sustainability Implications

Establishing a quarry is subject to a strict framework in relation to native vegetation removal, site management and rehabilitation. Council would be required to gain relevant approvals for each of these elements to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

### Community Engagement

The landowners at both potential quarry sites have been highly cooperative in the investigations to date (as have other landowners in the earlier testing). Permission has been gained from both to pursue these initial investigations.

A formal lease would need to be entered into should these investigations proceed to an operating quarry. Provisions for royalty payments have been included in calculations of costs presented in this report.

In the case of the Tooan site, the operation of a quarry and subsequent rehabilitation are considered by the landowner to be beneficial to their farming operation, by improving the ability to crop the area that currently has a very uneven terrain.

Broader communication will occur at the time of conducting trials of the materials on specific roads.

### Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The investigation of alternative gravel materials is an example of continuous improvement.

### Collaboration

As above, the landowners at both potential quarry sites have been highly supportive of these investigations.

### Financial Implications

The costs for the next stages of this investigation this financial year are proposed to be sourced by bringing forward an allocation of \$100,000 from the 2026-27 gravel re-sheeting budget. This is proposed as the four-year approved capex program has planned for an increase in the gravel re-sheeting program from \$1.3 M in 2025-26 to \$1.4 M in 2026-27. If successful, the lower cost / longer life of this new gravel source would quickly offset the trial's cost, and lead to the ability to consider graveling of additional roads in subsequent years.

An alternative to this source of funds is to defer several roads from the 2025-26 gravel re-sheet program, with the specific roads to be withheld to be selected based on conditions, and defer them to the 2026-27 program. This approach is not preferred as it would lead to a reduced service level to ratepayers.

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

Not applicable.

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

Investigations into better and cheaper sources of gravel is identified as a priority in the Asset Plan 2025-35.

If the new resources prove suitable, the cheaper cost and better quality gravel will lead to a greater efficiency in the gravel re-sheet program, and could enable roads identified as farm machinery routes in the Rural Road Network Plan to be upgraded over time, should grant funding not become available.

**Risk Implications**

The statutory approvals required for development of quarries provide a framework to manage environmental and key OHS risks.

There is a risk that these materials may not prove suitable for Council's ongoing use. The conduct of on-road trials is an important step prior to embarking on the full development of one or both sites as quarries.

**Conclusion**

A proposal is presented to bring forward part of an approved budget allocation to pilot an alternative source of gravel that could benefit Council's roads program.

## 9.6 HALLS COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEE

<b>Director:</b>	Brett Luxford
<b>Directorate:</b>	Communities and Place
<b>File Number:</b>	F19/A02/000001

### 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

Approved Minutes of meeting held 20 November 2024 (**Appendix 9.6A**)

Draft Minutes of meeting held 12 November 2025 (**Appendix 9.6B**)

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### Purpose

To receive the endorsed Minutes of the Annual meeting of the Community Halls Asset Committee held 20 November 2024, note the draft Minutes of the annual meeting, held 12 November 2025 and consider recommendations from the Committee.

### Summary

- The Halls Community Asset Committee (Committee) is a Community Asset Committee established under section 65 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- The Committee is comprised of single delegates from 10 community halls.
- The Committee meets annually to share information and to propose hire fees for the forthcoming financial year.

### Recommendation

That Council receive the:

1. Endorsed Minutes of the annual meeting held 20 November 2024
2. Draft Minutes of the annual meeting held 12 November 2025
3. Committee's recommendation regarding hire fees for 2026-2027
4. Committee's Motion to investigate of the cost and benefit of installation of battery storage

## REPORT

### Background

On 24 August 2020, Council resolved to establish the Community Halls Asset Committee as a Community Asset Committee in accordance with section 65 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. (the Act) The CEO subsequently executed an Instrument of Delegation on 29 September 2021 under section 47(1)(b) of the Act.

The Act requires that Instruments of Delegation be reviewed within 12 months of a general election. A review occurred and a revised Instrument of Delegation and accompanying Terms of Reference was developed and endorsed by Council 22 September 2025.

The Committee is comprised of single representatives from ten Council owned community halls across 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
- Taylors Lake Hall
- Telangatuk East Hall

The hall delegates meet annually to share information, receive policy, planning and operational updates and to recommend hire charges for the use of the halls.

### Discussion

The Committee provides a forum to discuss challenges associated with a changing volunteer base. Social (mental health and wellbeing), environmental (fire and flood) and economic changes (financial challenges and compliance) are also discussed in the meetings.

Annual reports and financial statements provided by the hall delegates summarise changes occurring in the various settlement areas across the municipality. Despite demographic changes and challenges, each hall committee is responding creatively to the changing needs of their communities and delegates recognise the importance of providing local meeting and activity spaces for their community.

A representative from the HRCC Facilities' team attends the annual meeting and shares information re: completed and future maintenance planned for each of the halls. A Motion of appreciation for the work of the Facilities team made during the November 2025 meeting, reflects the committee's appreciation of the support received for community halls.

Solar panels have been installed on each community hall but energy feed-in rates are low, halls are used in the evenings and the service component of power bills remains disproportionate to use. The Committee has requested HRCC investigate the installation of solar storage batteries so power generated can be used by hall committees or excess power can be used to generate income for the halls.

A Motion was carried to support this request:

**MOTION**

*That HRCC investigate the installation of solar storage batteries (to complement the solar panels already installed) for each of the 10 community halls.*

**Moved:** Clare Dunn

**Seconded:** Mark Uebergang

**CARRIED**

The hall delegates had requested information re: insurance coverage, particularly public liability associated with committee activities and external hire of the facility. An officer from the People and Safety team attended the 2025 meeting and provided a summary of public liability considerations.

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has recently introduced new reporting requirements for entities with an Australian Business Number (ABN). Every hall committee represented on the Community Asset Committee holds an ABN and is subject to the reporting requirements. Delegates reported that they are managing the reporting requirements of the ATO with the main challenge being primary contact details provided when ABNs were registered.

The Committee discussed hire fees for use of the halls and endorsed the following Motion. The hire fees reflect previously endorsed hire fees and have been identified in consultation with local communities.

**MOTION**

The Halls Community Asset Committee recommends:

1. The adoption of the suggested range of fees and charges for use of Community Halls for the 2026-27 year:

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

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:** Wendy Byrne

**Seconded:** Terry O'Donnell

**CARRIED**

**Options to Consider****Solar storage batteries**

1. **SUPPORT the Motion to investigate the installation of solar storage batteries at each of the community halls** – supports community committees. Initiative may be supported by supplementary external funding and project may result in savings to each committee
2. **NOTE the Motion with no further action until external funding is secured** – endorses the initiative but within budget requirements.
3. **NOTE the Motion – but do not pursue.**

**Hire fees**

1. **SUPPORT the Motion** – hire fees identified by hall committees that reflect need of the local community
2. **NOTE the Motion and request further detail**
3. **NOT SUPPORT the Motion** – existing endorsed hire fees continue until June 2026 but then need to be reviewed

**Sustainability Implications***Nil***Community Engagement**

The Halls Community Asset Committee supports section 9(d) of the *Local Government Act 2020* by embedding community participation and input in strategic planning and decision-making.

The Committee provides a formal mechanism for local community members to contribute to the management, development and usage of Council-owned halls. The Committee enables a continuous and direct engagement method with a number of community groups throughout the municipality.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement***Not applicable***Collaboration***Not applicable***Financial Implications**

Community committees working with and on behalf of HRCC contribute to health and wellbeing outcomes in local communities and reduce administrative requirements of HRCC operational and administrative staff.

The installation of solar storage batteries may reduce energy usage in community halls and provide savings opportunities for local communities.

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies***Not applicable***Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme 1 – Community

Theme 2 – Liveability

Theme 5 - Leadership

### **Risk Implications**

The Terms of Reference Halls Community Asset Committee and Instrument of Delegation by CEO to the Community Asset Committee provide clear obligations and boundaries for decision making and reporting that mitigate legal and financial risks.

### **Conclusion**

The annual meeting of the Community Halls Asset Committee provides an insight into the operation of ten community halls across the municipality. The annual meeting also provides an opportunity to share information and strengthen both the halls' network and the relationship between the Committee and Council.

Each of the committees is experiencing different challenges in their communities with each responding creatively to meet the needs of their local community.

## 9.7 WESTERN REZ COUNCILS' SUBMISSION ON THE VICTORIAN ACCESS REGIME

<b>Author:</b>	Brett Luxford
<b>Directorate:</b>	Communities and Place
<b>File Number:</b>	n/a

### 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

Western Rez Councils' Submission on the Victorian Access Regime (**Appendix 9.7A**)

Western Rez Councils' Submission on the Victorian Access Regime Letter (**Appendix 9.7B**)

### Purpose

To endorse the submission made to VicGrid on the Victorian access regime.

### Summary

The Victorian Government's management of the energy transition's impact on our communities is a key issue for Horsham Rural City and its surrounding councils, and joint submission has been prepared for submission to VicGrid.

Three consultation papers were released by VicGrid on 23 September 2025:

- Access and Connections Consultation Paper
- Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects
- Draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines.

The region is experiencing the impacts of State Policy to support the energy transition to renewable with many projects constructed, planned or identified in the Western Renewable Energy Zone. Combined with a number of large mining projects planned, the rate of social, economic and environmental change occurring in our communities is significant.

The submission seeks a stronger role for councils to identify, plan and implement the strategic investment required in our region to address the following key themes:

1. **Local government:** Councils in the region operate with small rate bases and limited revenue and resources, despite having significant asset management responsibilities, particularly to maintain extensive local road networks.
2. **Community cohesion:** The uncertainty, complexity, and lack of genuine consultation has led to mistrust and anxiety within our communities.
3. **Workforce and skills:** The region faces a limited and ageing workforce, with shortages of workers across construction, trades, and essential services.

4. **Infrastructure:** Existing transport and service infrastructure is under pressure, including local and State roads. Trunk infrastructure to support housing growth, telecommunications, and rail also require significant investment.
5. **Housing:** There is a lack of both available and affordable housing, constraining the region's capacity to accommodate the existing workforce. It would be even further constrained by the workforce required for the energy and mining transition.
6. **Community services:** Access to essential services such as health care, childcare, and education is limited, affecting liveability and workforce attraction.

The submission seeks a shared understanding of the impacts on our communities, genuine engagement, and a strategic investment delivered in the region.

### **Recommendation**

That Council:

1. To endorse the submission made to VicGrid on the Victorian access regime as outlined in **Appendix 9.7A Western Rez Councils' Submission on the Victorian Access Regime.**

## REPORT

### Background

VicGrid was established by the Victorian Government in 2021 as an Administrative Office of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), and from 1 November 2025 became a state business corporation. It is responsible for the coordinated planning and development of Victoria's renewable energy zones and transmission to support the shift to renewable energy.

As part of its role, it is formulating a new **Victorian Access Regime** to prescribe a set of requirements that renewable generation and storage projects must meet in order to gain access and connect to Victoria's transmission network.

The new access arrangements aim to improve coordination of new projects and transmission network development, remove barriers to connecting to the network, give investors certainty they can supply energy to the market, and set clear expectations about community engagement and benefits.

Three papers have been released for consultation and were seeking feedback by the 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2025.

Access and Connections

Draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines

Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines

The consultation papers and more information is available at <https://engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-access-regime>.

VicGrid will enforce these guidelines through the Victorian Access Regime and the procurement processes for transmission projects.

### Discussion

The region is experiencing the impacts of the energy transition to renewable energy with many projects constructed, planned or identified in the Western Renewable Energy.

The Western Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) covers a broad area of western Victoria, spanning multiple councils including the Northern Grampians Shire Council (NGSC), Buloke Shire Council (BSC), Yarriambiack Shire Council (YSC), and Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC).

Our region is expected to accommodate substantial energy projects including new and upgraded transmission lines, solar and wind energy projects and battery storage facilities. There is approximately additional 6Gw of projects already planned and the new Victoria New South Wales Interconnector (VNI) West is proposed through parts of the region.

These projects represent a significant change for the region with social, economic and environmental impacts on small and large communities. When the cumulative impact of renewable projects, mineral sands mining and other projects is considered it is estimated that 2500 jobs will be required to be filled, placing pressure on the local workforce, housing, short term accommodation and community services.

The Wimmera and Grampians regions contain important cultural and natural landscapes, highly productive agricultural lands, small rural communities and the regional city of Horsham that will be

impacted by these projects and there is a need to balance the energy transition with existing land uses and community values.

The submission seeks a stronger role for councils to identify, plan and implement the strategic investment required in our region to address the following key themes:

1. **Local government:** Councils in the region operate with small rate bases and limited revenue and resources, despite having significant asset management responsibilities, particularly to maintain extensive local road networks.
2. **Community cohesion:** The uncertainty, complexity, and lack of genuine consultation has led to mistrust and anxiety within our communities.
3. **Workforce and skills:** The region faces a limited and ageing workforce, with shortages of workers across construction, trades, and essential services.
4. **Infrastructure:** Existing transport and service infrastructure is under pressure, including local and State roads. Trunk infrastructure to support housing growth, telecommunications, and rail also require significant investment.
5. **Housing:** There is a lack of both available and affordable housing, constraining the region's capacity to accommodate the existing workforce. It would be even further constrained by the workforce required for the energy and mining transition.
6. **Community services:** Access to essential services such as health care, childcare, and education is limited, affecting liveability and workforce attraction.

The submission seeks a shared understanding of the impacts on our communities, genuine engagement, and a strategic investment, delivered in the region and includes key recommendations for the Victorian Access Regime.

### Options to Consider

1. Endorse the submission.
2. Do not endorse the submission and request it be withdrawn from the VicGrid engagement process

Option 1 is recommended as it provides advocacy for Horsham Rural City Council on the potential impacts of the Victorian Transmission Plan.

### Sustainability Implications

The submission advocates for social and economic sustainability associated with impacts of major projects.

### Community Engagement

The submission to VicGrid is a public process and Horsham Rural City is making a submission as part of this engagement. The broader public have been able to make individual submissions directly to the VicGrid process and this is joint submission between:

Northern Grampians Shire Council (NGSC)  
Buloke Shire Council (BSC)  
Yarriambiack Shire Council (YSC)  
Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC)

**Collaboration**

The preparation of the submission has been undertaken internally with Council Staff, Councillors, and neighbouring councils.

**Financial Implications**

The financial implications have been confined to engagement of consultants to prepare the submission and officer's time.

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

The engagement being prepared by VicGrid under state legislation and will involve a range of policies and legislation will be considered through the implementation.

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies****2021-2025 Council Plan**

Theme 1 – Sustainability - A sustainable community is driven by strong economic growth in a healthy and safe, natural environment.

Theme 5 – Leadership - Horsham Rural City Council, will build trust and connections with the community through good governance, community consultation, accountability, transparent decision making and financial stability.

**Risk Implications**

Council bears a reputational risk on all advocacy matters from the community, ratepayers, investors, developers, state, and federal government, etc and submission will be publicly available and considered by VicGrid.

**Conclusion**

VicGrid's consultation papers proposed a project-by-project approach to addressing the impacts of energy projects and fails to properly address the impacts of the energy transition on our region in a coordinated manner.

To ensure the energy transition creates lasting and meaningful benefits to our community a strategic investment framework should be established to provide clarity and certainty for all stakeholders.

## 10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Cr Brian Klowss (Mayor)

<b>Committee Representation</b>	
Date	Description
1/12/25	Aboriginal Community Round Table
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
27/11/25	Mayor Election
27/11/25	Monitor Presentation
4/12/25	Auditors and ARC Committee Meeting
4/12/25	HRCC Audit and Risk Committee Meeting
5/12/25	Western Highway Action Committee Meeting
5/12/25	Christmas Extravaganza – lighting of the giant Christmas tree
7/12/25	Carols By Candlelight
11/12/25	RCV General Meeting

### Cr Rebecca Sluggett (Deputy Mayor)

<b>Committee Representation</b>	
Date	Description
30/10/25	CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee.
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
3/11/25	Council Briefing
10/11/25	Council Briefing
17/11/25	Council Briefing
27/11/25	Monitor Presentation
28/11/25	Deputy Mayor/Mayor Training in Melbourne
1/12/25	Council Briefing
2/12/25	Meeting a Drummond Park with Community Member
2/12/25	Dropped into the cancelled Drinks with Dr Anne Webster and spoke to community members and Dr Websters advisors, who were there to make apologies to anyone who didn't get the cancellation notice, for a while.
6/12/25	Attended the Makers and Haven Twilight markets. Well done to the volunteers who work so hard to put these events on, especially with the weather that we had Saturday.
8/12/25	Meeting with the Mayor, CEO and West Vic Business.
8/12/25	Council Briefing

**Cr Cam McDonald**

<b>Committee Representation</b>	
Date	Description
	Nil
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
10/11/25	Council Briefing
11/11/25	Attended West Vic Business AGM at Norton Estate
17/11/25	Council Briefing
18/11/25	Councillor Only Meeting at Chambers
24/11/25	Council Meeting
27/11/25	Mayoral Election Monitor Report Presentation
28/11/25	Horsham Community radio Di Trotter Interview

**11. URGENT BUSINESS**

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## 12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

## 13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

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

- Council Briefing Meeting held on Monday 1 December and Monday 8 December 2025.

Refer to **Appendix 13.1A**

### 13.2 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Nil

#### **Recommendation**

That Council receive and note agenda items:

- 13.1 Informal Meetings of Councillors – Record of Meetings
- 13.2 Council Committee Minutes.

**14. NOTICE OF MOTION**