

AGENDA

MEETING OF THE **HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL**

To be held on
24 February 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 24 February 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 Ian Ross 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 28 January 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.

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CLOSE



CRAIG NIEMANN
Chief Executive Officer

REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

9. OFFICERS REPORTS

9.1 POLICY REVIEW: LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Author's Name:	Andrea Coxon	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author's Title:	Governance Officer	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Governance and Community Relations	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

Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy (**Appendix 9.1A**)

Purpose

To present an updated Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy for adoption.

Summary

- The policy has been reviewed in accordance with the review schedule outlined in the policy.
- Updates to the policy include improvements to terminology and definitions.
- There are no substantive changes to the guidelines or procedures of live streaming and recording proposed.

Recommendation

That Council endorse the updated Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy (**Appendix 9.1A**).

REPORT

Background

The Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy (Policy No. C04/217) was adopted on 13 December 2021, with the purpose of enhancing transparency and community access to Council decision-making. The policy outlines provisions for live streaming, recording, and public access to Council meetings while addressing legal, technical, and privacy considerations. The policy is subject to periodic review, with the current version last amended in March 2023 to update the document to the new template.

Discussion

This Policy establishes the guidelines for live streaming and publishing recordings of Ordinary and Unscheduled/Special Council Meetings through the Council's website. It aims to inform both the community and Councillors about Council's procedures, highlight the potential benefits, and outline risk mitigation strategies.

Council is dedicated to enhancing accessibility and fostering greater community engagement in its meetings. By live streaming meetings and providing recorded content online, the policy ensures residents have more flexible and convenient access to Council proceedings. This initiative allows the public to view meetings in real time or at a time that suits them, without the need to attend in person. Ultimately, this approach increases public access to Council decisions and debates, while removing geographic and time-related barriers that may prevent people from attending meetings physically.

Minor administrative changes have been made to the policy to reflect updated departmental terminology and ensure consistency with organisational standards. These changes include improvements to terminology and definitions and do not alter the substantive content, purpose, or functionality of the policy.

Options to Consider

1. Endorse the updated policy to maintain consistency with current administrative standards.
2. Request further review or substantive amendments, though none are identified as necessary.

Sustainability Implications

Nil.

Community Engagement

Not applicable as the changes are administrative and do not affect policy implementation.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not applicable

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

Not applicable

Regional, State, and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies, and Policies

The policy aligns with the 2021-2025 Council Plan, particularly Theme 5 – Leadership, by enhancing good governance, accountability and transparency and access to decision-making processes.

Risk Implications

The policy aligns with the *Local Government Act 2020* and Horsham Rural City Council Governance Rules. It upholds Council's commitment to transparency, accessibility, and effective governance.

Conclusion

The Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy has been reviewed as per the policy review schedule. Administrative updates have been made to ensure the policy's alignment with current organisational standards. The changes do not materially alter the policy's intent or implementation, and it is recommended that the updated policy be endorsed.

9.2 HORSHAM YOUTH COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE

Author's Name:	Alicia Drew	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	Youth Services Planning and Engagement Officer	Directorate:	Communities and Place
Department:	Youth and Early Years	File Number:	F20/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

Proposed Youth Council Terms of Reference (tracked changes) (**Appendix 9.2A**)

Current Youth Council Terms of Reference (**Appendix 9.2B**)

Community Grants Youth Grants funding guidelines (**Appendix 9.2C**)

Horsham Youth Strategy (**Appendix 9.2D**)

Purpose

To seek Council approval to make changes to the Horsham Youth Council Terms of Reference (**Appendix 9.2A**).

Summary

The current Terms of Reference was developed in 2019 (**Appendix 9.2B**), and since then changes have occurred to the naming of 'The Station' youth building. The title of the Youth Councils supporting staff, referred to in the document also requires change to ensure clarity.

It is also proposed to alter the nomination period for the Youth Council. At present, the Youth Council term is by the financial year, the change proposed is to reflect the changing of the Youth Council's term to run with the calendar year.

At present the Community Grants Youth Stream funding guidelines (**Appendix 9.2C**) state that the Youth Council will have input on the outcomes or applications. This has been added to the Terms of Reference in section (1), purpose of the Youth Council.

Recommendation

That Council amend the following items for the Terms of Reference:

1. **Section (1) Purpose of document. Bullet Point 7.** Currently refers to the Youth Hub as “Pynsent Street Building”. Amend to ‘The Station’. This has been the name of the Youth hub since 2022. This is a change to the name of a Council site, and the main Youth building for the Horsham Rural City Council.
2. **Section (1) Purpose** Including “Provide input to the awarding of Horsham Rural City Council’s Community Grants Youth Stream” into section (1) of the document outlining the purpose of the Youth Council.
3. **Section (3) Membership.** Current Document states that Applications for Youth Council will open on the 1st of June until the 30th of June every two years. Amend this to early January to 28th of February every two years. This change allows us to install a Youth Council at the start of the calendar year and better reflects the movements of young people during the school or study year.
4. **Section (4) Roles and Responsibilities.** Add the Youth Council will have the ability to form working groups that may focus on specific events, projects or activities during their term of office.
5. **Section (5.7) Horsham Rural City Council Support.** Current document states that the “Horsham Rural City Council Youth and Early Years team” will provide support. Seek to amend to “Horsham Rural City Council Youth Team”.
6. **Section (5.8) Horsham Rural City Council. Horsham Rural City Council.** Horsham Rural City Councillors will be invited to meet with the Youth Council at the beginning of each Youth Council term and invited to participate in the Youth Councillors’ induction and orientation training sessions where appropriate. Horsham Rural City Councillors may be invited to, or request to attend Youth Council Meetings, or by the agreement of both parties, hold a joint sitting of Council and the Youth Council.
7. Any reference to the ‘Youth Engagement Officer’ be amended to ‘Youth Services Planning and Engagement Officer’. This is to correctly name the senior position of the youth team. There are seven references to this role to be amended across paragraphs 5.4, 5.5, 5.6.

REPORT

Background

The establishment of a Horsham Youth Council is an objective of the Horsham Youth Strategy which was developed in August 2018 (**Appendix 9.2D**). The 10-year strategy was developed through engagement with local young people, community services and schools. Objective 2 of the Horsham Youth Strategy is to “Identify opportunities for young people to be empowered to make decisions on service delivery that suits their needs and increase meaningful engagement opportunities for young people with Council.” Part of this objective is to establish a representative group of young people to respond to and advocate for issues relevant to young people, and support Council’s engagement with young people.

The first Youth Council was entered into office in July 2019, and the current Terms of Reference was developed during this period. The Terms of Reference document was discussed at the July 2019 Council meeting.

In November 2022, Horsham Rural City Council entered an MOU with the Foundation for Young Australians, who would take on the guidance and facilitation of the Youth Council, in June 2023 the Horsham Youth Council became the first democratically elected Youth Council in Victoria – and the second in Australia.

In the September of 2024, this MOU was terminated, and the decision was made to return the Youth Council to the control of the Horsham Rural City Council Youth team to better achieve strategic and community objectives.

Discussion

The proposed changes are administrative in nature, this ensures the document is up to date and relevant for the 2025-2026 Youth Council and ongoing.

Three of the changes pertain to the changing of names of buildings and officers, while the fourth relates to the timeline of the term of office of the Youth Council. Once these changes are approved, we will open nominations for the Youth Council for the 2025-2026 term.

Options to Consider

1. Approve the proposed changes to the Youth Council Terms of Reference
2. Not approve the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference

Option 1 is recommended as the proposed changes are required.

Sustainability Implications

Not applicable

Community Engagement

Not applicable

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not applicable

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

Not applicable

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

Horsham Rural City Council Youth Strategy 2018 – 2028

Objective 2.1

Establish a representative group of young people to respond to and advocate for issues relevant to young people, and support Council's engagement with young people including outreach and social media engagement. The Terms of Reference for the group could include that it:

- Is made up of young people aged 12 to 25, who reflect the diversity of young
- people in Horsham municipality
- Meets on a regular basis, with a Councillor present
- Has a focus on outreach and digital engagement, to represent all young
- people in Horsham municipality
- Delivers grassroots projects to deliver on emerging priorities, and advocate to
- Council on priorities for young people, and
- Provides directions on Council's Community Engagement Strategy and
- activities.

Risk Implications

Not applicable

Conclusion

The approval of this updated Terms of Reference will allow us to move forward with taking nominations for the next Horsham Youth Council. The changes are administrative in nature and will ensure that we are working within a true and updated framework.

9.3 LIVING LIBRARIES INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM: OPEN ACCESS FITOUT FOR WIMMERA LIBRARIES BRANCHES

Author's Name:	Sarah Wiesner	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	Coordinator Wimmera Libraries	Directorate:	Communities and Place
Department:	Community Services	File Number:	F11/A07/000001

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

2024-2025 Living Libraries Infrastructure Program – Grant Guidelines (**Appendix 9.3A**)

Purpose

To seek Council endorsement to apply for grant funding to implement an Open Access service model for Wimmera Libraries. This would enable after-hours access to the five Wimmera Libraries branches across Horsham and West Wimmera, facilitating increased community engagement.

Summary

- Proposal to introduce Open Access library services to up to five branches, allowing registered members after-hours access.
- Model aligns with successful implementations in other Victorian public libraries.
- Funding will be sought through the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program (**Appendix 9.3A**), requiring a 1:2 funding match by Horsham Rural City Council.
- Total project cost: \$189,200, with Council's contribution at \$19,667.
- Expected benefits include increases in membership and use of library spaces and technologies, and therefore, more opportunities for community connectedness, learning and wellbeing.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorses the application for funding under the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program for the Open Access fitout for Wimmera Libraries branches project.
2. Commits the required funding contribution of \$19,667 in the 2025-2026 financial year if the grant application is successful.

REPORT

Background

Wimmera Libraries seeks to implement an Open Access model, allowing after-hours access to (up to) five branches via special membership and induction. The initiative aims to address accessibility challenges in rural and regional communities, ensuring equitable access to library services. Similar models are successfully operating in other Victorian public libraries, providing a tested and refined approach.

The proposed fitout includes security and access control installations, including CCTV, keypad entry, and automated announcements. The project aligns with previous Council priorities and is eligible for funding through the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program, requiring a 1:2 co-contribution from Council.

Discussion

The Open Access model would:

- Enable broader community access beyond standard staffed hours.
- Improve library utilisation without significant operational cost increases.
- Address existing barriers for full-time workers, older persons, and individuals with sensory needs.
- Increase book borrowing by breaking down barriers to library access.
- Leverage grant funding to implement a cost-effective solution for modernising library services.

Grant applications close on 14 March 2025, with funding announcements in May 2025 and funding agreements executed in June 2025. Construction timeframes will be determined post-approval, with an outcomes report required 12 months after completion.

Options to Consider

- *Proceed as proposed:* Implement Open Access at up to five library branches.
- *Modify rollout:* Focus only on West Wimmera Shire branches to reduce HRCC's financial contribution.
- *Adjust installation scope:* Choose lower-cost security and access control options where feasible.

Sustainability Implications

- *Economic:* The grant presents a cost-effective opportunity for service expansion.
- *Social:* Open Access increases community access, benefiting diverse sectors of the community, including full-time workers/students, seniors, and people with sensory needs.
- *Environmental:* No significant environmental impact identified.

Community Engagement

Feedback from library users has highlighted the desire for extended access. The proposal aligns with community priorities identified in Council plans, including the HRCC Social Infrastructure Plan.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Open Access model represents a progressive approach to library service delivery, aligning with modern trends in public library operations. See, for example, [Yarra](#), [Bayside](#), [Myli \(Gippsland\)](#), and [Goulburn Valley](#), among others who have (or are preparing to) launch this service model.

Collaboration

The project benefits from knowledge-sharing with other Victorian public libraries and aligns with state-level priorities for library accessibility and service enhancement.

West Wimmera Shire Council (WWSC) will also require to submit a Living Libraries grant submission, with no co-contribution required. The information herein has been provided to WWSC for endorsement.

Financial Implications

- Total Project Cost: \$189,200
- Grant Contribution: \$169,533
- Our Council Contribution: \$19,667
- Ongoing Costs: \$8,519 annually (HRCC's share: \$1,703.80)
- Cost Savings: Compared to staffing additional library hours, this model offers significant long-term savings.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The findings of the Victorian Public Library Survey and Victorian Public Library Census identified that the community would like local libraries to "evolve to meet future need", including to:

- "extend library opening hours, including evenings, weekends and public holidays", and
- "provide 24/7 access to branches" ([Inside Our Public Libraries](#)).

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

- 2021 – 2025 Council Plan Theme 1 (Community): "Enhance the inclusivity, accessibility, and safety of our places and spaces."
- 2021 – 2025 Council Plan Theme 2 (Liveability): "Create engaging spaces and places for social connection and wellbeing."
- 2021 – 2025 Council Plan Theme 4 (Accessibility): "Diverse facilities that are accessible to all."
- Social Infrastructure Plan: "Integrate Technology: [...] Technology may allow 24/7 access to a facility and reduce operational expenses involved in managing facilities (bookings and arranging access)."
- Age-Friendly Plan Priority: "Acknowledge the diversity of our ageing community and remove barriers to participation."
- Disability Access & Inclusion Plan 3.9: "Cater for quiet spaces in new and existing buildings."

Risk Implications

- *Operational Risks:* Unauthorised access or misuse of library facilities is a potential risk. This will be mitigated through security measures, controlled access policies, and CCTV monitoring.
- *Reputational Risks:* Community concerns about the future of library jobs could arise. This can be mitigated by a robust communication strategy to address public concerns and champion this librarian-driven project, which has a great many benefits for both staff and the community.

Conclusion

The Open Access fitout presents a cost-effective opportunity to enhance library access for the community. With a tested and refined model, external funding support, and alignment with Council priorities, the initiative represents a prudent investment in public library services.

9.4 REGIONAL COMMUNITY SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

Author's Name:	Carolynne Hamdorf	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	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

Horsham Central Park Playspace Application Presentation (**Appendix 9.4A**)

Proposed Schematic Plan for Horsham Central Play Space (**Appendix 9.4B**)

Engagement Report (January 2023) for the Horsham Central Park Playspace Design (**Appendix 9.4C**)

Purpose

To provide information on the State Government's Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund Round 2 and seek endorsement of funding opportunities made available through the release of the Round 2 guidelines.

Summary

- In late 2023 the State Govt. announced a new 'once off' sports infrastructure funding program delivered through Sport & Recreation Victoria (SRV) called *The Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund* (RCSIF). This Fund is a reallocation of investment from the cancelled Commonwealth Games, into community sport and the regions.
- Funding ratios are attractive and higher than the usual co contribution rates at 4:1, rather than 2:1.
- Delivered through two rounds, the Fund supports the construction, programming and activation of community sport and active recreation infrastructure. Round 2 was made public on 28 October 2024.
- Council approved the concept plan for Horsham's Central Play Space at its' meeting on 24 April 2023
- In February 2024, Council approved the Horsham Central Play Space as a shovel ready recreational priority and its' application for Round 1 of the RSCIF, (noting that Council also sought funding through the Federal Government Play Our Way program in April 2024, which was unsuccessful).
- HRCC made an application to Round One on 27 March 2024, to upgrade the Horsham Central Park Play space (aka the Skatepark). This application was competitive, but unfortunately unsuccessful.
- HRCC was invited to resubmit its application to Round 2 of the RCSIF, through the Community Facilities stream with a number of minor adjustments, which are currently being worked through.
- An allocation of \$250,000 is factored into the 2026-2027 FY budget to cover the co contribution, subject to receiving \$1M from SRV.
- The RCSIF \$1M grant together with the \$250,000 council co-contribution will cover all recreational components of the plan, with landscaping and other amenities required to be factored into a second stage of works, in subsequent budgets.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorse the Horsham Central Park Playspace application to the Community Facilities stream of Round 2 of the Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund (\$1.25M total project cost, Council Contribution 250K).
2. Endorse an application to Round 2 Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund for the All-Abilities Participation Stream for a grant of \$50,000 to support programming and activation of the new Playspace for people living with a disability.
3. Reallocate the existing 2024-2025 budget commitment of \$50,000 for the Aquatic Centre Water Play and Splash Park Planning and Design to support the following projects:
 - (a) Co-contribution of \$10,000 to support the application to the Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund for the update of the Horsham Aquatic Centre Facilities Plan.
 - (b) Co-contribution of \$10,000 to support the application to the All-Abilities Participation Stream of the Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund for the new Playspace (refer to recommendation 2 above).
 - (c) Balance of budget allocation (\$30,000) to be applied to an energy savings action plan for the Horsham Aquatic Centre.

Background

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

The RCSIF is additional to the normal annual funding rounds available through SRV and has more generous maximum grant limits and funding ratios. Applications for Round 2 must be lodged by the closing date of 17 March 2025. Details of the funding streams are shown below:

Funding Stream	Indoor Stadiums and Aquatic Facilities	Community Facilities	Women and Girls Facilities	Planning New	All Abilities Infrastructure	All Abilities Participation
Number of applications	1 application per LGA/ARV	Unlimited but cannot exceed \$1 million in total across all applications per LGA/ARV	Unlimited but cannot exceed \$1 million in total across all applications per LGA/ARV	One application per LGA/ARV	Unlimited but cannot exceed \$1 million in total across all applications per LGA/ARV	1 All Abilities Participation Initiative Request per infrastructure application (excl. applications to the Planning Stream).
Maximum total grant amount per applicant	Up to \$5 million for Indoor Stadium or Indoor Aquatic Facilities Or Up to \$3 million for Outdoor Aquatic Facilities	Up to \$1 million	Up to \$1 million	Up to \$40,000	Up to \$1 million	Up to \$50,000 per Participation Initiative Request

The proposed streams to be applied to are summarised below:

- **Community Facilities Stream**
Up to \$1million grant available. Funding ratio of \$4 SRV: \$1 Council
- **Planning Stream**
One application per LGA. Up to \$40K. Funding ratio of \$4 SRV: \$1 Council
- **All Abilities Participation Stream**
Up to \$50K per participation Initiative request
Local contributions not required but encouraged.

Round 2 of the RCSIF was announced by the Minister on 28 October 2024. Since then, staff have consulted SRV, received feedback and have been invited to resubmit to Round 2. Not all unsuccessful applicants were invited to resubmit.

A funding application was also considered for a warm-water pool at the Horsham Aquatic Centre in Round 1. This was considered not viable for the RCSIF funding given the estimated total project cost of \$8,059,726 and the maximum grant available through the SRV program of only \$3 million.

Discussion

The RCSIF 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 (QS) estimate dated less than 6 months old; and a Council Resolution confirming Council's funding commitment to the chosen projects.

All these components have been worked through with staff and the project's design consultant- PLAYCE. and has provided an up-to-date QS costings for the Plan.

The Community Facilities application will focus on the key recreational elements of the plan. Cost escalations since Covid has seen capital projects well exceed costings developed beyond 12 months. Staff have been working with the consultant to ensure the commitments for the upgrade do not exceed the maximum costed budget of \$1.25M. This means that landscaping and other ancillary costs cannot be delivered through the initial project budget of \$1.25M but can be factored into staged budgets over successive years summarised as follows:

- Plain concrete and slightly smaller hard court sports surface
- Reduced landscaping, garden beds, shelters and benches

Council could submit to the RSCIF the full cost of \$1,601,750 (Total project cost of \$1.49M + 7.5% Project Management cost \$111,750) supported by a higher co contribution from Council of \$601,750 to complete all elements- recreational components, landscaping and other amenities. Noting maximum grant is for \$1M. If Council was to support this approach, they would need to allocate an additional \$351,750 from a future Council Budget.

The concept plan for the Horsham Central Park Playspace project was approved by the previous Council and all necessary documentation is available to make this a strong application (**Appendix 9.4A & 9.4B**). An amount of \$250,000 has been included in Council's forward CAPEX budget for 2026-2027. These funds will need to be brought forward if Council supports this application.

To apply for the maximum grant of \$1million, Council must make a contribution of \$250,000 (4:1 ratio). This will allow the First Stage of the Horsham Central Park Playspace Redevelopment to be undertaken which consists of upgrades to large sections, of the park. The component elements include:

- Learn to ride/ roll bowl adjoining the main Skate bowl
- Beginner and advanced Pump Track
- Multipurpose Sports Court
- Play and Gather space
- Site preparation and readiness for additional staging
- Footpaths and connectors

The Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund allows Councils to apply for multiple streams and Council staff are also preparing to make an additional 2 applications subject to Council endorsement and the reallocation of existing funds. It is suggested that the existing project- *The Aquatic Centre Water Play & Splash Park Planning & Design* (\$50K committed in 2024-2025 FY) is reallocated to support the RSCIF applications. It is suggested that this commitment be better utilised to take advantage of the additional funds available at higher ratios in Round 2 of the RSCIF. It is suggested that the existing commitment be reallocated as follows:

1. Planning Stream (\$10K)

\$10K may be allocated as a co contribution to the new Planning Stream. Seek \$40K to undertake an updated Facility Plan for the Horsham Aquatic Centre. The current Master plan is over 10 years old. Existing projects in the plan require reprioritisation and re-costing. The provision for a future Waterplay and Splash Park design can be factored to in a new, updated and more contemporary Facility Plan. Other elements may include sustainability, climate impacts and multi-use spaces.

2. All Abilities Stream (\$10K)

\$10K be allocated to the development of a detailed participation plan to increase usage of the Horsham Central Park Play space site. A co-design approach with people with lived experience of barriers to participation and a range of disability service providers will identify programs and participation opportunities to increase use and activity of park. This plan strengthens Horsham's competitiveness in its' bid for the Community Facilities stream.

3. Update the energy savings plan and actions for the HAC (\$30K).

This work is required for the Horsham Aquatic Centre, which relies on gas for the majority of its heating. Current aquatic facilities use heat pumps and other renewable options to reduce the cost of operations and make the centre more thermally efficient. Some works are required now, so part of the suggested relocation will see the plan and implementation of some improvements to Horsham's aquatic centre this FY.

All three projects have been canvassed with SRV and the funders are supportive of all 3 projects being made as applications to the current and final round of the RCSIF.

Options to Consider

1. Support the projects as proposed in the report as per the recommendation.
2. Not support the projects in the report.

Option 1 is recommended in order to take advantage of funding available and deliver on a shovel ready project. Also to increase participation at the facility and for carry out further planning at the aquatic centre.

Sustainability Implications

Environmental implications of all 3 applications have been considered and will be delivered as part of the project where appropriate and part of the project budget.

Community Engagement

The Horsham Central Park Play space upgrade undertook extensive community consultation and the concept plan has been signed off and approved by the previous Council. Refer to **Appendix 9.4C**, the project's Engagement Report.

If funded, both the Planning Grant and the All-Abilities Grant will require detailed engagement as part of the delivery. Additional consultation will be undertaken as required throughout the delivery phase of all three projects to maximise benefits for our community.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Utilising where available, state and federal funding sources to offset capital costs of priority community sport & active recreation projects, results in improving assets, increases liveability and maximises value for money on committed projects.

Collaboration

Feedback loops and regular formal meetings are held between Recreation and Open Space staff, the Projects Office at HRCC and with project funders SRV. We have an excellent relationship with this funder and have entered multiple projects with SRV as our primary partners in these funded projects. If funded, SRV will be represented on the project's governance structure, to monitor and manage delivery and outcomes.

Financial Implications

The Community Facility Stream through the State Government's RCSIF will fund the main recreational components of the Horsham Central Park Play space upgrade. However, additional commitments will be required in subsequent budgets or grants to cover additional landscaping and other ancillary parts of the projects. The site will be fully functional however without the additional investment. The suite of plans and costings developed for the application provide a current account of costs for additional landscaping and other non-funded components, which can be applied to other grants if opportunities arise.

The ratios available for the SRV RCSIF will unlikely be repeated due to the source of this grant fund.

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 the Community Facilities project to ensure timely delivery of the projects. If approved to proceed, the Planning and All Abilities stream will have projects management plans developed as preparation for the applications.

Conclusion

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

9.5 INTENTION TO SELL LAND AT THE WIMMERA AGRICULTURE LOGISTICS HUB

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Department:	Investment Attraction and Growth	File Number:	F15/A07/000001

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

Plan of Subdivision PS848949A (Lot S3 & Reserve No.2) (**Appendix 9.5A**)

Proposed Plan of Subdivision PS928689F (**Appendix 9.5B**)

Purpose

To provide Council with an update on the activities within the Wimmera Agriculture Logistics Hub (WAL Hub) and to seek Council approval to give notice of Council's intent to sell land at the WAL Hub located at Dooen by private treaty.

Summary

- The recent Council developed subdivision on Burgin Drive which is part of the WAL Hub precinct at Dooen has had positive outcomes since it was released for sale in 2021 (**Appendix 9.5A**).
- There were 9 lots that made up Burgin Drive, Subdivision Stages 1 and 2 of which three have been sold and one is under contract.
- The public notice to sell the land at WAL Hub in Stages 1 and 2 issued in May 2024 and has become stale and the proposed lot sizes for two of the lots have also changed, Therefore, it is proposed to issue another public notice for remaining land in Stage 2, and the land occupied by Lots 13 and 14, as depicted in the proposed plan of subdivision PS928689F (**Appendix 9.5B**).

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Note the progress report in relation to the sale of lots within Stages 2 and 3 of the Wimmera Agriculture Logistics Hub (WAL Hub).
2. Is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances justifying Council forgoing the benefits of a public process of sale in favour of private treaty negotiations with interested parties, for the reasons identified in the report to Council.
3. Give notice of its intention to sell the land known as Lots 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, Stage 2 WAL Hub, Dooen. This notice also includes Lots 13 and 14, Stage 3 as identified in the proposed plan of subdivision PS928689F, having regard to the proposed key terms of sale identified in the report to Council.
4. Undertake a community engagement process in accordance with its community engagement policy by seeking written submissions in relation to the proposal and providing an opportunity for submitters to appear in person or online to speak to their submissions if they so request.
5. Obtain a valuation of each lot in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, which is not more than six-month-old at the time of sale.
6. Request Council officers to report back to Council in relation to any submissions received as part of the community engagement process, provide Council officer assessment in respect of those submissions and the proposal as a whole, and submit a recommendation in relation to the same.

REPORT

Background

The WAL Hub is located approximately 8.5 kilometres north-east of the Horsham CBD. As Council is aware, the south-western portion of the WAL Hub, bound by the Henty Highway, Freight Terminal Road and the rail-line is Council owned which equates to approximately 87 hectares of the 470-hectare site. Council prepared a Structure Plan for the Wal Hub (formally known as the WIFT) with bespoke Planning Scheme controls providing the mechanism for controlling the development outcomes. Except for the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal (WIFT), the development of Freight Terminal Road, Burgin Drive, Johnson Asahi Hay Processing and Viterra Grain Receival the site is still largely undeveloped.

In April 2021, Council resolved to note a report which included information regarding the subdivision, scope of works for internal road construction and recent interest to purchase land within the estate and to publicly advertise Council's intent to sell land at the Dooen Industrial Estate. At this Council meeting, Council also resolved that the name for the Dooen Industrial Estate site be changed to WAL Hub.

In June 2021, Council resolved having received no submissions, to proceed with the intended advertising and sale of land as outlined in the proposal to sell industrial zoned land at Henty Highway Dooen. Council authorised that the CEO to enter in contracts to sell the land at the Wal Hub Henty Highway Dooen at no less than the current market valuation.

Illustrated below in Figure 1 is the development plan identified for the WAL Hub (formerly called the WIFT Precinct). This has further been modified with the Burgin Drive Subdivision. (See Figure 2) and Freight Terminal Road Proposed Plan of Subdivision (see Figure 3)

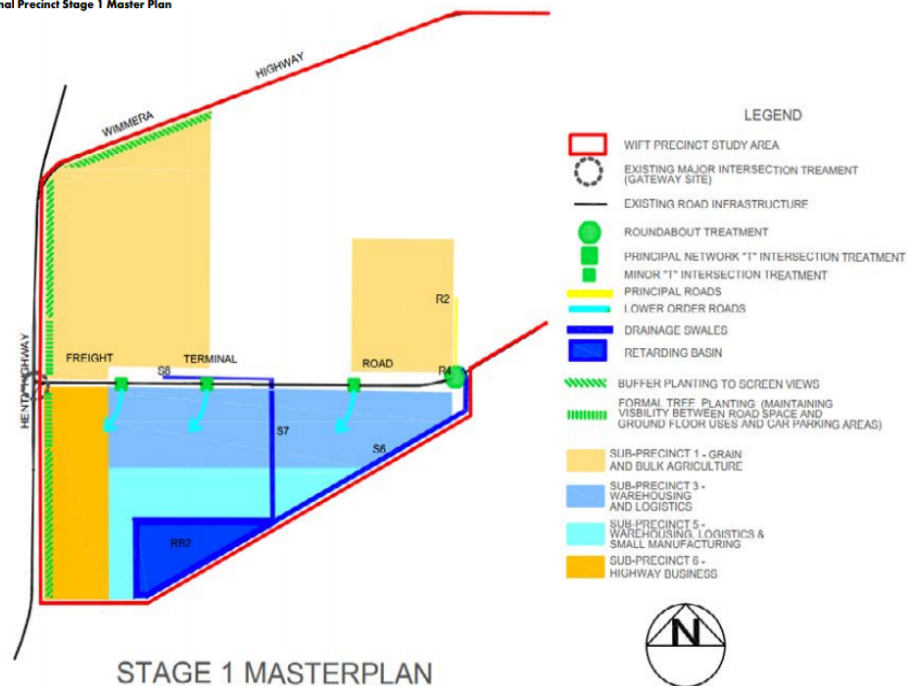
An amendment is proposed to amend the reference to Small Manufacturing to Manufacturing and remove any ambiguity regarding the size and scale of Industry within the precinct provided it is not incompatible with surrounding land uses and responds to changing economic circumstances that requires flexibility for the long-term development of the precinct.

A full assessment of the amended Development Plan Overlay application is to be undertaken by council officers and a decision is to be made under delegation to allow a timely and considered decision to be made.

Figure 1 - WIFT Precinct Development Plan

Figure 1 Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Precinct Stage 1 Development Master Plan, below, identifies the following elements of the development of the WIFT Precinct:

Figure 1:
Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Precinct Stage 1 Master Plan



Stage 1 Development Plan | 5

Figure 2 - Burgin Drive Subdivision

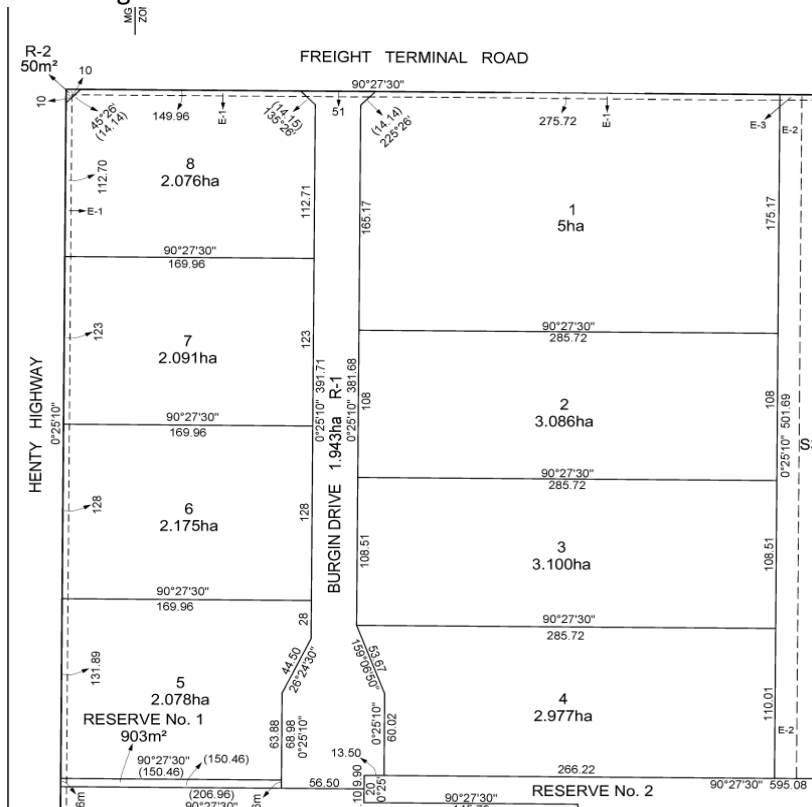
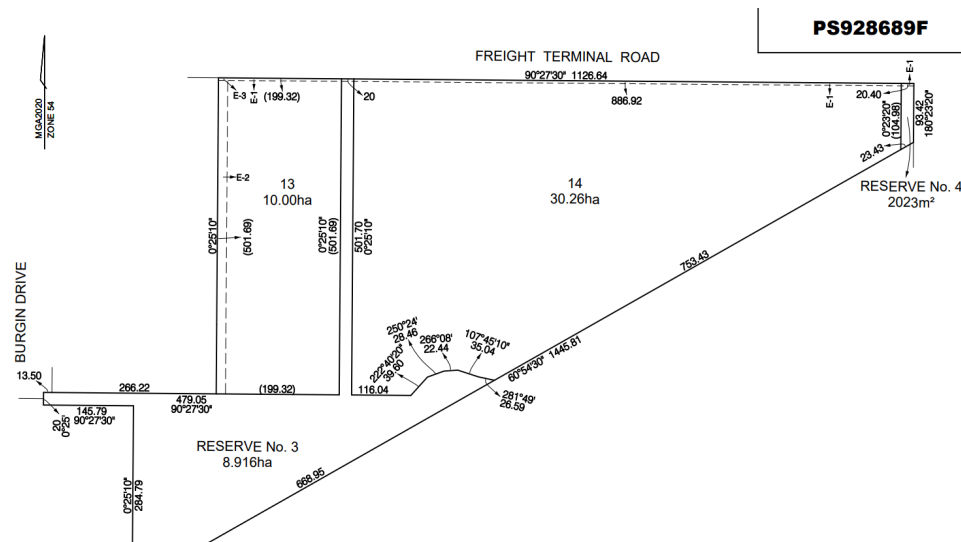


Figure 3 - Freight Terminal Road Proposed Subdivision Lots 13 & 14



Discussion

To date, Lot 1 (Stage 1) and Lots 2, 8 and 9 (Stage 2) have been sold and settled.

In respect of the remaining Lots 3 to 7 (inclusive) in Stage 2 and Lots 13 and 14 in Stage 3, Council cannot sell any of these lots unless Council initiates a fresh statutory process pursuant to section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, which requires the following:

- Council must give notice of its intention to sell on its website at least four weeks prior to the sale.
- Council must undertake a community engagement process in accordance with its Community Engagement Policy; and
- Council must obtain a valuation of the land which is not more than six months old at the time of sale.

A fresh statutory process is necessary for the following reasons:

- any parties currently interested in purchasing lots within Stages 2 and 3, WAL Hub, have been identified by a marketing process this is the same process as identified in May 2024 but is unrelated to the original process undertaken by Council in 2021; and
- the 2024 statutory process, including the public notice of intention to sell land published in May 2024 is now out-of-date and stale.

It is best practice for Council to sell land by means of a public competitive process of sale, such as an auction, request for expressions of interest or request for tenders. This is regarded as a particularly effective means of testing the market as to the degree of market interest in the sale of land and for securing a sale on the most favourable terms. Council officers are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances in this case justifying the abandonment of the benefits of a public competitive process of sale in favour of private treaty negotiations for the following reasons:

- The Land at the Doon WAL Hub has some unique Planning and Zoning requirements (Industrial Special Use) that can only be catered for via a substantial amount of due diligence from both the Purchaser and Vendor (HRCC) in most cases.
- Purchasers require a price to commence their due diligence, so they do not waste their time or Council.

- When purchasers are seeking finance, they normally require a firm figure to work with.
- Generally speaking, the land component is the small part of the equation regarding the total cost of the project.

Tender/Expression of Interest

Normally utilised where it is expected that there are strong multiple parties interested in a particular property and is hard to ascertain the value of a unique property. Not suitable for the WAL Hub as the Purchaser may not meet the criteria to purchase. In the last 3 years, only 4 blocks have been sold.

Auction

Used where transparency is required and where strong competition is expected, or a result is required on the day. (i.e. Mortgagee Sales) as a purchaser is required to enter an unconditional Contract, Council is unable to ascertain suitability. Not suitable for the WAL Hub as the Purchaser may not meet the criteria to purchase. Again, only 4 blocks have been sold in the last 3.5 years.

Private Sale

Industrial Land Subdivisions are normally priced which allows buyers to perform their due diligence prior to Signing a Contract. Ideal, in the case of the WAL HUB where a buyer needs to meet the Special Use Zone criteria prior to entering into a formal Contract of Sale. It allows Council staff to have pre purchase meetings and discussions as to who may qualify for the land available at the time. Eliminates investors looking to landbank. It also allows the Agent to conduct some industry background checks prior to the relevant meetings/discussions.

Since June 2021, Council has finalised the Burgin Drive Subdivision and the lots have been publicly advertised for sale by our appointed Real Estate agent. There are 9 lots that make up Burgin Drive (Subdivision Stages 1 and 2) of which four have been sold, one lot is on hold pending due diligence and four lots remain on the market.

Options to Consider

1. Council may choose to give notice of its intention to sell land now within the WAL Hub Stage 2 and Stage 3 located at Dooen.
2. Council may choose not to give notice of its intention to sell land at this point in time.

Having regard to the exceptional circumstances identified in this report, it is recommended that Council gives notice of its intention to sell one or more of Lots 3 to 7 (inclusive), Stage 2, and Lots 13 and 14, Stage 3 as per Proposed Plan of Subdivision PS928689F, within the WAL Hub at Dooen by private treaty on the following proposed key terms:

- to purchasers who are engaged in one or more of the manufacture, processing, packaging, storage, transport, distribution and export of primary produce, raw materials or food products, service industries and ancillary uses;
- for market value; and
- in consideration for commitments from purchasers for prompt development of the relevant lots.

For Lots 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, there are existing titles so settlement can be as soon as preferred by the purchaser. For Lots 13 and 14 (formally known as Lots 10 and 11, Stage 3), these sales will be conditional upon registration of a plan of subdivision for Stage 3 with settlement to follow plan registration.

Interested parties are both related to agriculture industries predominantly in food manufacturing and storage and packing.

The following condition will be included on the Contract of Sale

1. It is specifically agreed:

- (a) The purchaser will seek connection of power supply onto the property for the Purchaser's own power needs at the Purchaser's own expense.
- (b) The Purchaser is responsible for connection at the Purchaser's expense of GWMWater supply (non potable) to the property sold.
- (c) The Vendor will supply a standard crossover for the property to the following specifications:
 - (i) Maximum 120m² coverage. A wider crossover can be supplied by the Vendor at an additional cost payable by the Purchaser to the Vendor as directed by the Vendor.
 - (ii) 9.6 m wide x 375 mm diameter reinforced concrete pipe with 2 drivable walls.
 - (iii) Minimum 400 mm class 1 crushed rock compacted to 9.5 m width and to boundary of block with 2 coat prime and seal.
- (d) The Vendor will install standard security fencing for 3 boundaries of the property sold (being for the property's side fencing and property's rear fencing to the following specifications:
 - (i) Total fence height 2100 mm, being 1800 mm galvanized chainwire mesh plus 2 rows barb wire above, with galvanized posts and stays concreted in ground.

2. The Purchaser acknowledges the use and future development of the property is subject to relevant planning and building permit approvals.

3. The Vendor acknowledges it will consent to the Purchaser submitting an application for planning and building approvals with respect to the property sold prior to settlement of the sale herein.

4. The Purchaser acknowledges being aware of the pending proposal for mining activities in the nearby precinct and is responsible for undertaking their own due diligence in regard to this.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

It is a legislative requirement of section 114(2)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020* that Council must undertake a community engagement process in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Nil

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

Nil

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) - Regional Victoria is a driving force behind our State's economic growth and prosperity. The Victoria's Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) identify strategic directions to further drive growth and prosperity in regional Victoria.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 3 - 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

Conclusion

Information in this report is provided to support Council to make informed decisions on the WAL Hub precinct located at Dooen. This is a multifaceted agricultural hub and needs to be supported by Council to enable investment and job growth within the municipality which also has significant benefits for the broader region.

9.6 VICTORIAN GRANTS COMMISSION SUBMISSION RE ROAD FUNDING

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Author's Title:	Director Infrastructure	Directorate:	Infrastructure
Department:	Infrastructure	File Number:	F20/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

2014 Submission to Victorian Grants Commission (**Appendix 9.6A**)

2014 Response from Victorian Grants Commission (**Appendix 9.6B**)

2006 Cost modifier formula (**Appendix 9.6C**)

2024-2025 Cost modifier formulae (**Appendix 9.6D**)

Proposed submission (**Appendix 9.6E**)

Purpose

To make a submission to the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission to review the formula for assessing the contribution to Councils for the Local Roads component of the annual Financial Assistance Grants.

Summary

- Comparison of asset data on the lives of Horsham's roads, compared to other parts of the State, indicates that our roads have shorter lives, and therefore increased costs of maintenance and renewal compared to many other Councils.
- The funding formula for the roads component of the annual Financial Assistance Grants, funded by the Federal Government through the Grants Commission includes a provision related to the geology (or sub-grade) of the roads' foundations, recognising the impact that highly reactive soils can have on the cost of maintaining roads.
- In 2012 and again in 2014, Council made a submission to the Grants Commission that highlighted the shorter lives of Horsham's roads, and that the funding formula used by the Grants Commission did not reflect the variation in road lives across the State.
- The Grants Commission did not adopt the recommendations of Council's submission, but did vary its formula for considering geology, but with no material change in the outcome for Horsham.
- A draft submission to the Grants Commission is presented for consideration to again highlight the case for review of this funding formula.

Recommendation

That Council endorse the draft submission in **Appendix 9.6E** for presentation to the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission.

REPORT

Background

Appendix 9.6A to this report includes a copy of a submission previously presented to the Grants Commission in 2012 and 2014. The key aspects of this submission are:

- Information collected by an independent road asset management consultant enabled a comparison of road lives across many of Victoria's Councils.
- This information showed the variation in lives of between 40 and 180 years, with Horsham's being at the lowest end of this range, i.e. a range of 450%.
- This is based on the highly reactive soils across much of Horsham municipality, referred to as the sub-grade in the Grants Commission explanation of its formula.
- The formula used by the Grants Commission to vary the roads funding due to sub-grade only provides a range of 15% between the Councils with the longest and shortest lives of roads in the State.

Appendix 9.6B is the response from the Grants Commission to Council's 2014 submission. In this response they advised that they had made a change to the method of calculating the sub-grade modifier, but that the range of the cost modifiers for this parameter was unchanged, being 0.95 – 1.10. Note that in its latest report the modifiers applicable in Horsham for sub-grade were 1.05 for rural roads and 1.06 for urban roads – which is below the higher end of the range that might be expected based on Horsham's reactive soils.

Discussion

The changes in the formula used for the sub-grade cost modifier by the Grants Commission are presented in **Appendix 9.6C & 9.6D**. In particular, attention is directed to the following on page 4 of **Appendix 9.6E** as follows:

Soil reactivity is a measure of how much the soil expands or contracts due to changes in the soil moisture content. Reactive soils expand upon increases in moisture content and contract as they dry out. The greater the volume change of the soil, the higher the reactivity of the soil is. It is theorised that for higher reactivity soils, associated road maintenance costs will be higher due to the damage caused to the paved surface due to movement.

E	(x5.0)	Extreme reactive clay or silt sites, which can experience extreme ground movement from moisture changes
H-E	(x5.0)	
M-E	(x4.0)	
H	(x3.3)	High reactive clay or silt sites, which can experience high ground movement from moisture changes
M-H	(x2.5)	
M	(x2.0)	Moderately reactive clay or silt sites, which can experience moderate round movement from moisture changes
S-M	(x1.7)	

This extract provides an explanation of how soil types impact on ground movement, and the table includes an index value. It is interesting to note that the index shown for the Extreme soils (E), which much of the Horsham municipality has, is shown as x5. This seems to align with the life variation outlined earlier of 450%.

But then, after calculating this index, the cost modifier is converted back into a range of 0.95 – 1.10. So the full effect of this broad range of the reactivity index, or road life, is not represented in the cost modifier.

This is the key aspect that is explored in the new submission proposed to be presented to the Grants Commission, attached as **Appendix 9.6E**.

Options to Consider

Nil

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

None proposed. This is an administrative matter seeking to gain additional funding for Council.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Nil

Collaboration

The initial submission was prepared with the assistance of an independent asset management consultant. Council has changed its approach for collecting and managing road asset data, however the information provided by the consultant remains valid.

Financial Implications

This report aims to gain additional funding for Council through the annual Financial Assistance Grants.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The Financial Assistance Grants are Federal funds distributed through the Victorian Grants Commission in accordance with its policies.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

Seeking additional funding through the Financial Assistance Grants aims to contribute to the following action from the 2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 4 – Accessibility: Advocate for supporting infrastructure to ensure connections to key places and services

Risk Implications

If Council does not invest sufficient funding in road and asset renewal and maintenance, the level of service to our community will decline.

Conclusion

A draft submission to the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission, outlining a rationale for increased funding for Council's roads, is presented for Council's consideration.

9.7 ROAD SAFETY FUNDING PROJECTS – FIREBRACE ST / MCLACHLAN ST ROUNDABOUT

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Author's Title:	Director Infrastructure	Directorate:	Infrastructure
Department:	Infrastructure	File Number:	F02/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

2022 Report on initial CBD Works (**Appendix 9.7A**)

2024 Report on Community Feedback (**Appendix 9.7B**)

Firebrace St / McLachlan St roundabout preferred design (**Appendix 9.7C**)

Purposes

To present Councillors with background information on the initial round of externally funded road safety projects that led to the installation of raised crossings at various sites around Horsham's CBD.

Summary

- This report provides background information about a series of road safety projects that Council had been granted funds to undertake.
- The works generally comprised installation of raised pedestrian crossings around the CBD area.
- Some of these works have attracted significant community criticism.
- The report explains why changes were made to the original designs for the two temporary installations.
- The report presents some options for the future of raised crossings in the CBD.

Recommendation

That Council:

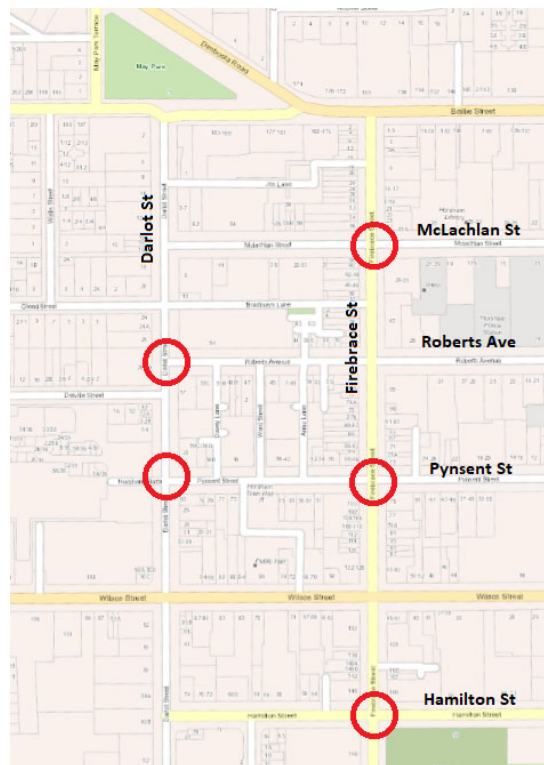
1. Remove the temporary speed humps at the Firebrace St / McLachlan St roundabout.
2. Remove the speed humps and pedestrian crossing at the Firebrace St mid-block crossing between Roberts Ave and McLachlan St.
3. Request a further report investigating and providing recommendations into:
 - a. The merit of well-designed raised pedestrian crossings compared to flat (zebra) crossings only at intersections, and compared to no formal pedestrian crossings at roundabouts,
 - b. The merit of a consistent approach to intersection treatments at all CBD roundabouts,
 - c. The pros and cons of mid-block pedestrian crossings at various locations within the CBD,
 - d. Options for a staged approach to these treatments,
 - e. Funding options for these works.

REPORT

Background

Council was invited to participate in a Federal Government road safety funding round via contact from the regional office of Department of Transport and Planning (at the time Regional Roads Victoria) in early 2021. The invitation requested Council to identify priority road safety projects to the value of \$1 million, without matching funding being required. An extensive list of projects was identified, based on Council's Horsham Urban Transport Plan, and records of complaints / incidents received from the community over a series of years.

The review of these projects by DTP identified upgrades to the five key roundabouts in the CBD (Firebrace St and Darlot Ave) as the projects most aligned with the Federal Government's funding criteria. Preliminary designs were prepared (also funded externally) for these works. These roundabouts are as shown in the diagram below in red:



The objective of these works was to enhance road safety, and in particular pedestrian safety, utilising the Safe System principles, which recognise that accidents will happen, but that the consequences of these should be taken into account to minimise the impact of them, i.e. to avoid fatalities and serious injuries. A specific objective relevant to these principles is that where there is a likelihood of pedestrian impacts, the speed of vehicles should be managed to 30 km/h or less so that the incidents are survivable for pedestrians.

These projects and the funding were discussed at an initial briefing with Councillors where concerns were raised about the potential for impacts on retail trade in the CBD. A view was expressed that the raised crossings proposed at the roundabouts would lead to traffic congestion. As a result, the suite of projects was changed to the seven sites shown in the report from the 14 June 2022 briefing meeting (**Appendix 9.7A**).

Discussion at that meeting led to changes to the scope of the projects as follows:

- The raised crossings at the Firebrace St / McLachlan St roundabout would be installed on a temporary basis, as pilot works.
- The mid-block crossing in Firebrace St between Roberts Ave and McLachlan St would also be installed on a pilot basis.
- The proposed upgrade of the existing pedestrian crossing in Roberts Place was omitted as it was assessed to be within the desired parameters.

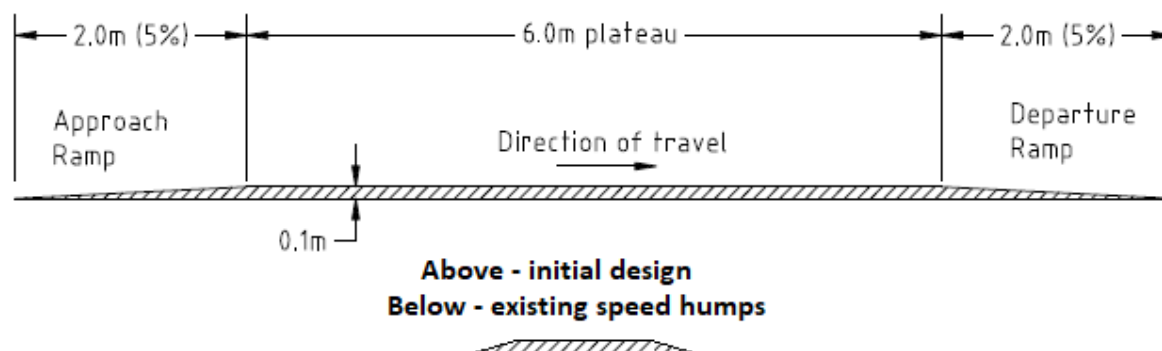
This package of works was subsequently endorsed at the 27 June 2022 Council meeting. The Firebrace St / McLachlan St roundabout was the last of the works to be installed.

The decision to change the works at the Firebrace / McLachlan roundabout and the Firebrace St mid-block crossing, to be pilots instead of permanent meant that the works were compromised in the following ways:

- Pin-down rubber matting was used instead of asphalt for the humps
- The approach/departure angles of the pin-down humps were steeper than the asphalt designs, leading to harsher impacts on vehicles
- The original design had a flat/uniform surface from footpath to footpath, facilitating easier movement for pedestrians or people in gophers/wheelchairs or pushing prams
- The rubber matting surface was found to be slippery at times.

In summary, the installed works represented a significantly poorer standard of works than the original design. Examples of the preferred treatments are the raised crossings in Darlot St (at Glead St), and in Pynsent St between the newsagent and Town Hall. These works are representative of the intended scope of the raised crossings at the two sites that were treated with the pilot works.

The attached detailed design extract (**Appendix 9.7C**) for the roundabout works illustrates the intended design for the Firebrace/McLachlan Sts roundabout. Note in particular the flatter grade of the ramps on the crossing, as per this extract below, compared to the steeper angle on the existing speed humps, drawn to the same scale, below.



This diagram shows the ramps having an elevation of 100 mm over a 2.0 m distance. In contrast the pilot pin-down speed humps achieve the 100 mm elevation over a distance of 400 mm, clearly being more abrupt.

The photo below shows the Pynsent St raised crossing which has ramps at the same angles as those originally designed for the Firebrace/McLachlan roundabout.



Councillors recently received a presentation from the Transport Accident Commission about the Safe System principles behind these road safety works. Some of the relevant aspects of these principles, as would be applied to Horsham's CBD include:

- The historical approach of reacting to crash statistics is no longer best practice
- A pro-active approach to avoiding injuries before they occur is preferred
- Raised pedestrian crossings are considered to provide the highest crash reduction factor potential for pedestrian safety
- A pedestrian crossing without a traffic calming treatment is not considered suitable for reducing the potential of injuries
- A consistent design of roundabouts at the key CBD intersections would assist in community understanding of their use.

Further information on these principles is available at this webinar:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNaktyLsw7U> in particular from around the 47 minute mark. (Or Google Youtube Road Safety Webinar Kenn Beer)

Community Engagement

Community feedback on the CBD pedestrian safety works was sought during September 2024 after completion of the roundabout works, and their subsequent re-configuration. A report on this feedback was prepared, although it was not submitted to Council at the time as it was then the caretaker period. This report is now attached as **Appendix 9.7B**.

In summary, the report shows that there was generally poor feedback on the installation of the safety works, including that only 11.7% of respondents indicated they believe the crossings have made the CBD safer / easier to move around. It is also noted that 62.5% indicated that none of the crossings have been successful.

Officers had previously met with the Disability Advisory Committee in August 2024 to discuss the road safety works. Feedback from this meeting informed the changes to the configuration of the Firebrace / McLachlan St intersection roundabout, in particular moving the speed humps to be not aligned with the pedestrian crossing path.

Discussion

It is clear from the community feedback that the pedestrian treatments in the CBD have caused a significant level of concern. This needs to be acknowledged. Having said that, the level of community concern only seemed to escalate when the poorer designed pilot works were installed in particular at the Firebrace St / McLachlan St roundabout.

Two key factors that may have contributed to this status are:

- The poor configuration of the pilot works, and
- The inconsistent treatment of roundabouts in the CBD.

In relation to this latter point, it could be that some drivers are not consistently giving way to pedestrians at these crossings as there is only the one each of the full roundabout treatments and mid-block crossings in the CBD area, while other roundabouts do not have the same treatment.

It is postulated that the community's acceptance of the CBD pedestrian treatments at roundabouts and mid-block crossings would be better if:

- All of the roundabouts had the same configuration, and
- The works were installed to the higher design standard with flatter ramps and flat crossings for pedestrians.

A question still remains about whether full roundabout treatments and mid-block crossings are both required. The introduction of the mid-block crossing near Bradbury Lane led to a desirable reduction in speed straight away (advice from TAC), but it is likely that the roundabout treatments at each intersection would achieve a similar effect. While this writer's observations have been that these crossings are frequently used, a key concern about them has been the loss of parking on either side of the crossings.

Analysis of speed data provided by the TAC since the introduction of the mid-block crossing in Firebrace St has shown a general reduction in vehicle speeds of close to 10 km/h, with vehicles now generally at or less than the target 30 km/h. Travel times northbound have only increased on average 12 seconds, with no increase in southbound travel times.

A potential approach to this would be to trial properly constructed crossings at all of the CBD roundabouts, and then review this after a period of time. A proposal for a further more detailed investigation is presented in the recommendations to this report.

Options to Consider

This paper presents background information for consideration of the following options:

- Removal of the pilot raised crossing treatments at the Firebrace St / McLachlan St roundabout and Firebrace St mid-block crossing.
- Whether further well-designed roundabout treatments should be considered for Horsham's CBD.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Historically, road safety treatments were often proposed in response to crash or incident statistics. The current approach, based on the Safe System principles, is aimed at proactively identifying risks and applying proven techniques to situations where there is a likelihood of incidents, aiming to avoid incidents or reduce the impact of them.

Collaboration

The priority sites for this round of works were identified in collaboration with the Department of Transport and Planning.

Financial Implications

The initial program of works was fully funded by the Federal Government. Any changes to the works would need to be funded by Council, unless Council is able to negotiate for TAC to support funding of improved designs for permanent works.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Funding for these works was sourced from a Federal government program aimed at improving road and pedestrian safety.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

Council Plan 2021-25 identifies the following relevant initiatives

Theme 1 – Community: Enhance the inclusivity, accessibility and safety of our places and spaces

Theme 4 – Accessibility: Ensure a safe and connected transport network including active transport

Risk Implications

Key risks with these works include:

- The level of community concern about poorly implemented works. Improved engagement and further education are proposed to address this.
- The risk of pedestrian injuries if appropriate safety measures are not retained / installed at key intersections.
- Construction risks. These are generally able to be managed. Interruptions to business or traffic will need to be considered for some sites.

Conclusion

This report provides background to the pilot road safety treatments in Horsham's CBD and proposes some actions to address community concerns and safety.

9.8 DADSWELLS BRIDGE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

Author's Name:	Rehan Majeed	Director:	John Martin
Author's Title:	Coordinator Project Office	Directorate:	Infrastructure
Department:	Engineering & Assets	File Number:	F06/A12/000001

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 advise Council about the process to award the contract for removal of the existing bridge, and supply and installation of a new pedestrian bridge at Mt William Creek in Dadswells Bridge.

Summary

- Council has secured funding for recovery of infrastructure impacted due to the February 2024 fires
- One of the major impacts of these fires was damage to the pedestrian bridge on Mt William Creek in Dadswells Bridge
- Council intends to use this funding to replace the bridge with a more sustainable structure and maintain the level of service provided to the community of Dadswells Bridge
- A public tender was released as per Council's standard procurement process, closing on 11 February 2025
- Evaluation of the tenders was not completed at the time of preparation of this report, however preliminary information is that the tender will be within the value of the Chief Executive Officer's delegation limit.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Acknowledge the funding support of the Australian and Victorian Governments to make \$305,000 available to support Council's fire recovery support for Dadswells Bridge.
2. Note that the value of the preferred tender is anticipated to be within the delegation limit for the Chief Executive Officer, and that the contract will most likely be awarded under the CEO's delegation.

REPORT

Background

One of the impact of bushfires that impacted Dadswells Bridge in February 2024 was the structural damage to the wooden pedestrian bridge on Mt William Creek. The bridge was constructed by Council employees for the community of Dadswells Bridge in 2008 with State Government funding support. The bridge holds significant value for the local community providing safe access for pedestrians over Mt William Creek, enabling them to avoid the narrow and dangerous Western Highway bridge.



FIGURE 1 MOUNT WILLIAM CREEK - LOCATION COORDINATES: - 36.916233, 142.510486

Council has secured funding through the Victorian State Government and Australian Federal Government for recovery of infrastructure, as part of a broader program to support Councils across Victoria impacted due to bushfires and storms that commenced on 13 February 2024. The funds were made available to make sure Councils have the capacity to support their communities as they continue to undertake long term recovery activities and to recoup recovery costs.

Discussion

Council has secured \$305,000 for recovery of infrastructure impacted by bushfire in 2024. The pre-tender estimate for the bridge replacement was \$250,000. The estimate included removal of the existing wooden bridge and installation of a new steel frame bridge. Design and detailed specifications for the bridge were prepared in house by Council's Engineering Department. It is anticipated the project will start in early March and will take around 8 to 10 weeks for completion.

Tenders for removal of the old bridge, fabrication, transport, and installation of the new bridge closed on Tuesday 11 February 2025. The tender evaluation report was not available at the time of distribution of papers for this Council meeting.

Initial examination of the tenders indicates that there are potentially suitable submissions within the available budget and within the Chief Executive Officer's delegation, hence it is anticipated that the Chief Executive Officer will be able to award the contract.

If this is not the case, an urgent business paper may be presented to Council to recommend award of the contract to enable construction to proceed as quickly as possible.

Options to Consider

Two options for construction of the new bridge were provided to tenderers to make a bid on, including:

- Steel truss bridge
- Steel arch bridge

Consideration was also given to repair of the bridge, rather than replacement. As the eastern piers of the bridge were also fire damaged, that task would have been relatively costly. Council did not have funds budgeted for these works. The available funding provides the option of a more durable steel structure.

Sustainability Implications

The bridge is located within the Grampians National Park. Council has a consent for the structure and has sought approval from Parks Victoria for the replacement works.

Community Engagement

The project was triggered due to bushfires in February 2024 and has been discussed with the community of Dadswells Bridge at multiple community meetings.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The option for a concrete filled steel arch bridge would be the first of this kind in Victoria, if that option is selected.

Collaboration

The support of Emergency Recovery Victoria has been paramount in preparing relevant information to leading to the grant from the two Governments.

Financial Implications

Council has secured \$305,000 for recovery works, which forms the budget for this project. The pre-tender estimate was prepared with an estimated of \$250,000. The estimate includes removal of the existing wooden bridge and installation of a new steel frame bridge.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The project is being funded by the Australian Government and Victorian Government to support Councils in recovery of infrastructure and services impacted due to the storms and fires of February 2024.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

Proposed works align with Theme 3 – Sustainability, and Theme 4 – Accessibility, of the Council's Annual Action Plan 2024-2025

Risk Implications

Standard construction risks will apply. Supervision of works will be conducted by Council officers to manage these risks.

The successful contractor must provide their work methodology and progressively update their OH&S plan to address the specific site requirements and identify their risk control measures.

Conclusion

Australian and Victorian Government funding will lead to the replacement of the wooden pedestrian bridge at Dadswells Bridge that was extensively damaged in the February 2024 bushfire.

9.9 WAYS OF WORKING CHARTER

Author's Name:	Craig Niemann	Director:	Not applicable
Author's Title:	CEO	Directorate:	Not applicable
Department:	CEO	File Number:	F19/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

Ways of Working Charter (**Appendix 9.9A**)

Purpose

To present the Ways of Working Charter to Council for adoption.

Summary

The Horsham Rural City Councillors have developed a Ways of Working Charter that they want to formally adopt. This Charter outlines the agreed values, principles and behaviours that guide how the Horsham Rural City Councillors will conduct themselves throughout the 2024-2028 Council Term.

The values, principles and behaviours reflect the Councillors obligations outlined in the Local Government Act 2020 while the Charter has been developed as a companion document to the Model Code of Councillor Conduct.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt the Ways of Working Charter for the 2024-2028 Council Term.
2. Agree that each Councillor will sign the Ways of Working Charter(**Appendix 9.9A**).
3. Makes the Charter publicly available on the Council website and at the Council Office.

REPORT

Background

The Horsham Rural City Councillors have completed their required induction program as set by the Local Government Act 2020. As part of that induction the Councillors completed a Team Building session facilitated by Darrin Ray.

During this team building session the Councillors agreed to develop a Ways of Working Charter.

This Charter outlines the agreed values, principles and behaviours that guide how the Horsham Rural City Councillors will conduct themselves throughout the 2024-2028 Council Term.

The Charter includes Values, Principles and Behaviours that Councillors have agreed to which relate to their interaction with each other, Council staff, the community and other stakeholders.

It also includes a commitment to continuous improvement and ongoing review.

This is a Charter that has been developed by the Councillors and shows their commitment to working together and for the community.

Discussion

The Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) Ways of Working Charter is a structured approach aimed at fostering a positive, cooperative and effective working environment for councillors and staff. This charter outlines the core values, principles and behaviours expected from council members to ensure a united, transparent and community focused governance. The successful implementation of this charter holds numerous benefits, sets clear expectations and embodies hopeful aspirations for the 2024-2028 council term.

Benefits of Implementing the Charter

1. Enhanced Collaboration and Respect:
 - a. The charter emphasises mutual respect and genuine interactions creating a healthy and constructive working environment for all stake holders.
 - b. Encouraging empathy and mindful communication helps prevent conflict and fosters a culture of support and professionalism.
2. Improved governance and decision making
 - a. The principles of financial responsibility, consistent decision making and active participation ensure that the Council operates effectively and in the best interest of the community.
 - b. By upholding good governance practices, the charter strengthens transparency and accountability within council.
3. Stronger community engagement and trust
 - a. Public unity and community-centric decisions enhance public confidence in the council's ability to act in their best interests.
 - b. Maintaining positive communication and responsible media engagement reassures the public of the council's integrity.

Expectations from the Charter

1. Alignment with *Local Government Act 2020*
 - a. The charter compliments the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, reinforcing ethical standards and legal obligations for all council members.
2. Accountability and responsibility
 - a. Councillors are expected to adhere to agreed-upon principles and values, fostering a cohesive and productive working relationship.
3. Constructive handling of disputes and feedback
 - a. Feedback mechanisms should be embraced as a tool for growth rather than a source of contention.

Implementation Expectations

1. A more effective and unified council
 - a. By fostering positive relationships and reinforcing shared values, the council can operate more efficiently and achieve better outcomes for the community.
2. Stronger engagement with community
 - a. Ensuring that all decisions are made with the community's best interests at heart will enhance public trust and participation.
3. Long-term sustainable governance
 - a. By adhering to principles of financial responsibility and continuous improvement, the council can ensure sustainable and forward-thinking governance.

The HRCC Ways of Working Charter is a proactive initiative that seeks to establish a transparent, collaborative, and community-focused council. By implementing this charter, councillors will not only enhance their own working relationships but also strengthen their connection with the community. With clear expectations and a shared vision, the hope is that this charter will serve as a foundation for a more effective, respectful, and future-oriented Council.

Options to Consider

Not applicable

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

Not applicable

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

This is a commitment to each other, to staff and the community

Collaboration

The Councillors have collaborated in the development of this Charter.

Financial Implications

Not applicable

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The Charter fits well with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

The Charter aligns with the Code of Conduct as set out in the Local government Act 2020.

Risk Implications

There is a risk that the Councillors fail to adhere to the Charter. This will be mitigated by regular review and holding each other to account for their values and behaviours.

Conclusion

The Charter is ready for adoption by the Council.

10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cr Ian Ross (Mayor)

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
03/02/2025	Aboriginal Community Round Table
Other Council Activities	
February	Council Briefing Meetings (apology 4/02)
26/01/2025	Attended the Australia Day Ceremony at Sawyer Park
26/01/2025	Attended the Natimuk Australia Day Celebrations
27/01/2025	Attended the Opening of the Time Capsule
07/02/2025	Meeting with Royal Flying Doctor Service CEO, Michael Ben-Meir
08/02/2025	Attended the Blue Ribbon Ball
14/02/2025	Attended the Simon Fisher: from Red Earth and Big Sky Opening Event at Art Gallery

Cr Cam McDonald

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
	Nil
Other Council Activities	
20/01/2025	Attended Council Briefing
21/01/2025	Meeting with Steven Kingshott Councillor TAC Briefing 5.30 – 8.30
26/01/2025	Guest Speaker at Australia Day breakfast Brimpaen Hall
27/01/2025	Attended Time Capsule opening Councillor only meeting
28/01/2025	Attended Council Meeting 5.30pm – 8.30pm
29/01/2024	Apology for Solar Park meeting due to fires
01/02/2025	Attended Community fire briefing at Brimpaen Hall with Ian Ross and Mandi Stewart

Cr Rebecca Sluggett

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
	Nil
Other Council Activities	
28/01/2025	January Council Meeting
29/01/2025	Council Briefing
02/02/2025	Official Opening of the New Visitor Information Centre Location,
03/02/2025	Council Briefing
04/02/2025	Planning and Induction Session
08/02/2025	Blue Ribbon Ball 2025
10/02/2025	Council Briefing
11/02/2025	Mine Free Wimmera Meeting
12/02/2025	Community Engagement Training and Info Session
17/02/2025	Council Briefing
18/02/2025	Meeting re CEO Recruitment

Cr Angie Munn

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
	Nil
Other Council Activities	
29/01/2025	Council Briefing
29/01/2025	Meeting with Steven, our Monitor
02/02/2025	2925 Season Launch @ Town Hall
03/02/2025	Council Briefing
04/02/2025	Planning Induction Session
08/02/2025	Blue Ribbon Ball
10/02/2025	Council briefing
11/02/2025	Mine free Wimmera farms meeting
12/02/2025	Council briefing
14/02/2025	Exhibition opening: Simon Fisher/Red earth and Big sky
15/02/2025	Victorian mosque open day
17/02/2025	council briefing - budget
18/02/2025	CEO recruitment

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 Wednesday 29 January 2025 at 5:30pm
- Council Briefing Meetings held on Monday 3, 10 & 17 February 2025
- Planning Induction Session held on Tuesday 4 February 2025
- Community Engagement Presentation held on Wednesday 12 February 2025
- CEO Recruitment Meeting held on Tuesday 18 February 2025

Refer to **Appendix 13.1A**

13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

Nil

13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE

Nil

13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

- Natimuk Economic & Social Plan Project Advisory Committee meeting held on 5 February 2025

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