
MINUTES of the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held online and livestreamed at www.hrcc.vic.gov.au at 5.34pm on 25 October 2021.

PRESENT

Cr Robyn Gulline (Mayor), Cr Di Bell, Cr David Bowe, Cr Penny Flynn, Cr Claudia Haenel, Cr Les Power, Cr Ian Ross.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Sunil Bhalla, Chief Executive Officer; Graeme Harrison, Director Corporate Services; John Martin, Director Infrastructure; Kevin O'Brien, Director Communities and Place; Fiona Kelly, Executive Assistant to the CEO and Councillors.

1. PRAYER

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

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY STATEMENT

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

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

3. OPENING AND WELCOME

Chairman, Cr Robyn Gulline formally welcomed Councillors, staff, members of the public and the media to the meeting. The Mayor advised that the meeting will be recorded to maintain an audio archive, which will be available on the Horsham Rural City Council website as soon as possible. She also stated that the meeting was being streamed live on the internet.

The Mayor advised that Councillors participating in the meeting by electronic means will be taken to be present and part of the quorum for the meeting, provided that they can hear proceedings, they can see and be seen by other members in attendance, and they are able to speak and be heard by those in attendance. The Mayor asked Councillors individually to confirm that they could see and hear other members in attendance and be able to speak. Confirmed by all Councillors.

4. APOLOGIES

Nil

5. LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS

Nil

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Recommendation

That the minutes emanating from the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held online and livestreamed at 5.30pm on 27 September 2021 and 5.00pm on 11 October 2021 be adopted.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Claudia Haenel

That the minutes emanating from the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held online and livestreamed at 5.30pm on 27 September 2021 and 5.00pm on 11 October 2021 be adopted.

CARRIED

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.

Nil

8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

PUBLIC QUESTIONS FROM BRIAN BASHAM OF HORSHAM

Question 1:

A few meetings back you stated to Cr Haenel that Councillor Briefings are closed to the public and therefore the minutes are confidential. I have conducted a random audit of various councils and found that they do not mark their councillor briefings as confidential. Also, I found that that Chapter 6 of the Governance Rules states that:

Chapter 6 – Miscellaneous

1. Informal Meetings of Councillors

If there is a meeting of Councillors that:

- 1.1 is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors;
- 1.2 is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
- 1.3 is not a Council meeting, Delegated Committee meeting or Community Asset Committee meeting.

the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are:

- (a) tabled at the next convenient Council meeting; and
- (b) recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting (emphasis added).

Can you please explain the legal grounds on which you claim that the meetings are confidential and the minutes being confidential?

Response from Cr Gulline, Mayor

Thank you for your question, Mr Basham. I can confirm that a summary of topics discussed at Councillor briefings always have been and will continue to be included in Agenda item 13.1 at scheduled Council meetings.

Question 2:

The Local Government Act permits a Council to make a Local Law "for or with respect to any act, matter or thing in respect of which the Council has a function or power under this Act or any other Act". I note the Draft Local Laws replicates numerous items from the *Road Safety Road Rules 2017* (Victoria). Can you explain why this has been done or is it just a money maker as the Local Laws fines go to Council and not the State Government?

Response from Kevin O'Brien, Director Communities & Place

Thank you for your question, Mr Basham. Both the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 2020* protect the public from any overreach in proposed Community Local Law 2021.

This means that if a Local Law is inconsistent with regulations such as the *Road Safety Road Rules 2017*, section 111(3) of the old Act and section 71(3) of the new Act say that part of the Local Law is inoperative.

For example, if Council made a Local Law to say an owner or occupier can park on nature strips in front of their own home or business this would be inoperative. Because Rule 302 prohibits driving on a nature strip adjacent to a length of road in a built-up area (with exceptions, none of which are relevant). And because Rule 197 prohibits stopping on a nature strip adjacent to a length of road in a built-up area.

The procedure for making Local Laws is governed by State legislation. Council is bound by the procedure for making Local Laws. The procedure for making Local Laws says Council must have regard to the Ministerial Guidelines.

The *Ministerial Guidelines for Local Laws Manual* requires Council to:

- Identify existing legislation that might be used instead of a Local Law; and
- Take steps to ensure that a Local Law does not duplicate, overlap, conflict with, or is inconsistent with existing legislation.

PUBLIC QUESTION FROM RAEHEL O'DONNELL OF JUNG

Question 1:

On reading the agenda Item 9.1 Investment attraction and growth report I note the conclusion of the report to say as follows:

If you want to support our businesses; buy locally, even if you don't need what you purchase. Do all your Christmas shopping in town and make sure you spoil everyone.

How can the Council, in a time of financial hardship, encourage spending strategies that would incite wasteful practices and hasten our environmental decline?

Response from Kevin O'Brien, Director Communities & Place

The intent of Officers' comments is to continue to support local businesses who as a result of the COVID pandemic have endured hardships. Buying locally assists our local businesses to recover from the COVID pandemic. These comments are meant to encourage community to buy locally and not intended to impact on individual financial position.

PUBLIC QUESTION FROM KATH DUMESNY OF HORSHAM

Question 1:

My question is about our draft Local Laws, specifically Clause 57 (iv) local nuisance issues. Can you tell me how many complaints have been lodged by ratepayers in the past 12 months which would fit into that very specific category, differentiating between commercial, rural and residential ratepayer complaints?

Response from Kevin O'Brien, Director Communities & Place

This question is taken on notice and a written answer will be provided to the submitter in due course.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS LOCAL LAW REVIEW

Response from Cr Gulline, Mayor

There was a number of questions in relation to the local law review.

- Kim Adams (2 questions)
- Angela Munn (2 questions)
- Terry O'Donnell (2 questions)
- Kim O'Donnell (1 question)

It would be premature to answer the questions given that the matter (Local Laws Review) is scheduled to come to the November Council meeting. In preparing for that meeting Council will be in a better position to respond to the issues raised.

9. OFFICERS REPORTS

9.1 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND GROWTH REPORT

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

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Nil

Purpose

To receive and note the Investment Attraction and Growth Report for August 2021.

Summary

The Investment Attraction and Growth Report provides a summary of investment attraction and growth activities in the municipality during the reporting period.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Investment Attraction and Growth Report for August 2021.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Les Power

That Council receive and note the Investment Attraction and Growth Report for August 2021.

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

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

Discussion

The work undertaken across Investment Attraction and Growth includes Strategic Planning, Statutory Planning, Building Services, Business, Tourism and Events. This report also includes statistical information from the Visitor Services which is now located at the Horsham Town Hall and forms part of the Arts, Culture and Recreation Units.

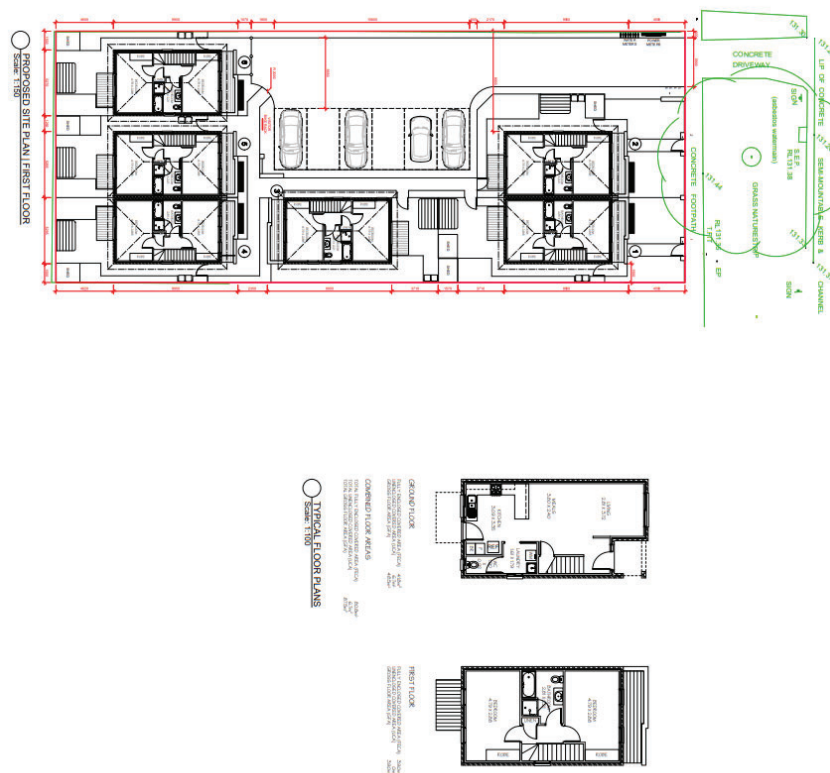
STATUTORY PLANNING

VCAT Hearing

VCAT held a hearing on 6 August 2021 to consider the proposed development of six dwellings at 6 Searle Street, Horsham by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The tribunal overturned Council's decision to refuse the development made at the Council Meeting on 23 August 2020. The VCAT member determined that the proposed development is respectful of the neighbourhood character and amenity of Searle Street and the two-storey design is acceptable design noting that 'There are many examples of two-storey developments in the city and in country towns and the tribunal has long held that a one-storey transition in height is an acceptable change to a neighbourhoods character' Full details can be found at -

<http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi->

[bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VCAT/2021/875.html?context=1;query=horsham;mask_path=au/cases/vic/V](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VCAT/2021/875.html?context=1;query=horsham;mask_path=au/cases/vic/V)
[CAT](#)



Planning Applications Determined

Below are the number of Planning Permits issued for the month of August 2021 and a comparison with the same period last year.

Type	AUGUST 2021		AUGUST 2020	
	No.	*Value \$	No.	*Value \$
Miscellaneous Domestic	7	2,666,861	3	1,557,143
Industrial/Commercial	3	590,000	2	412,000
Subdivisions	2 (4 lots)	0	2 (4 lots)	0
Other	-	-	-	-
Total	12	3,256,861	7	1,969,143

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

Total number of planning permits issued in the Horsham Rural City Council area from 1 July 2021 to 31 August 2021 is 19 compared to 15 in the same period in 2020-2021.

Planning permits issued for subdivisions have permitted 22 new lots from 1 July 2021 to 31 August 2021 compared to 10 in the same period in 2020-2021.

BUILDING SERVICES

Six signs your builder or plumber is not registered

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) has released its top six warning signs for identifying an unregistered builder or an unregistered or unlicensed plumber. Building a house or renovating is often the biggest investment most people will ever make, so it is important homeowners protect themselves from unqualified and unregistered building practitioners and plumbers.

Homeowners should take basic steps to minimise the risk of things going wrong and costing more money in the long term. You need to do your research and ask for some key information up front, so there are no surprises. Victorians should be wary of anyone offering their building or plumbing services on online marketplaces and through apps, consumers should always check the credentials of anyone advertising.

You can check whether the builder or plumber you're looking to use is registered with the VBA and whether they've faced any disciplinary action.

The VBA's top six warning signs for identifying an unregistered builder or plumber are:

- No results are found when you type their name into the VBA's 'Find a Practitioner' tool
- They do not ask you to enter into a written contract before the project starts
- They ask for too much money up front or at each set payment stage. By law in Victoria, a deposit can be no more than five per cent of the total project cost (for projects over \$20,000)
- They are not prepared to tell you about, or show you, examples of recent work or provide contact details of their former clients
- They cannot or will not show you their VBA ID card – which details who they are and what classes of work they are registered (or in the case of plumbers, licensed) to do

- They don't provide you with a copy of their domestic building insurance policy or a certificate of currency covering your property before construction begins.

The VBA is currently investigating a number of unregistered people advertising their services through online forums. Victorians can visit vba.vic.gov.au/check to make sure their builder or plumber is registered or licensed.

Building Permits Issued

Below are the number of building permits issued for the month of August 2021 and a comparison with the same period last year.

Permits issued by Horsham Rural City Council for this Municipality

Type	AUGUST 2021		AUGUST 2020	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	-	-	1	295,000
Alterations to Dwellings	-	-	-	-
Dwelling resiting's	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	5	71,763	2	37,250
Removal/Demolish	4	113,948	1	5,000
Industrial/Commercial	1	10,000	2	300,000
Signs	-	-	-	-
Total	10	195,711	6	637,250

A total of 17 building permits have been issued by the Horsham Rural City Council at a total value of \$1,126,533 from 1 July 2021 to 31 August 2021, compared to 11 Building Permits at a total value of \$795,898 for the same period in 2020-2021.

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

Type	AUGUST 2021		AUGUST 2020	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	7	3,762,300	8(11)*	3,835,249
Alterations to Dwellings	3	369,628	1	25,000
Dwelling resiting's	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	6	288,068	6	92,499
Removal/Demolish	1	8,550	-	-
Industrial/Commercial	5	3,798,594	3	4,023,909
Signs	-	-	-	-
Total	22	8,227,140	18	7,976,657

(*8 permits for 11 dwellings)

Private Building Surveyors have issued 41 building permits at a total value of \$13,073,123 from 1 July 2021 to 31 August 2021, compared to 37 at a total value of \$11,429,661 for the same period in 2020-2021.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

UrbanFold are landscape architects and urban designers who were engaged by Council to undertake the CAD Revitalisation project in July 2021. The project will involve an urban design analysis of the CAD, followed by the creation of a streetscape plan that identifies public realm capital works projects to be undertaken by Council in the future. The project will focus on improving connectivity within the public realm at key locations throughout the CAD and is part of the overall City to River project. The consultants are undertaking preliminary analysis (desktop analysis) currently and plan to visit Horsham for a site visit, in accordance with current COVID-19 restrictions.

Council officers have prepared and finalised a community engagement plan to engage with businesses and the community on what improvements should be prioritised within the CAD study area, to inform the work of the consultants.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND EVENTS

Natimuk Economic and Social Plan - Council will seek to engage a consultant to examine the economic and social sustainability of Natimuk. The purpose of the Natimuk Economic and Social Plan is to address issues and concerns within the community and create a plan to improve the economy and livability within the town.

Initial engagement has occurred with key members of the Natimuk community in order to inform the project brief and determine the main issues they are facing, what existing opportunities could be improved upon and what new opportunities could be developed to improve the economic and social opportunities for the town.



Stay West Campaign - The Stay West Road Trip project will deliver a regionally specific and bespoke tourism campaign funding partnership and recovery marketing for the region to increase conversion to overnight stays and grow yield. This project will deliver a regionally specific, bespoke, destination marketing campaign that will increase visitor tourism to the west of our state. The project will include content partnerships (National, Victorian and South Australian), radio advertising in Melbourne and Adelaide, PR and influencer campaign, digital advertising, promotion through owned channels and print advertising in key intrastate markets.

The key project aim is to raise the profile and front of mind awareness of the Wimmera Southern Mallee and Grampians region, and support the return of visitor arrivals, increased length of stay and spending to pre-COVID-19 levels. The project will deliver:

- Increased awareness for the region in key markets
- Increase day trip and overnight visitation to the Wimmera Southern Mallee and Grampians region to support local businesses
- A campaign to encourage dispersal around the Silo Art Trail and Indigenous tourism assets
- Support to increase length of stay in region and increase yield
- Increased visitor spend across the region
- Encouragement for travel through engaging Road Trips creative
- Increased website traffic and conversion.

Business Development Team – Business Visitations for the Month of August

The Business Development Team continued with businesses engagement during the month of August via telephone contacts due to current COVID-19 restrictions.

Visitations	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	YTD
Retail / Services/ Accommodation	11	24	40	8	22	25	30	10	170
Hospitality	12	77	61	10	11	12	12	2	197
Events – interactions/ contacts	10	21	31	9	4	6	15	6	102
Event applications	8	9	5	6	2	2	6	11	49

Grampians Resident and Workforce Attraction

Relating to the Live the Grampians Way website: <https://grampianslife.com.au/>

In early August changes were made to the registration form - introducing Levels of Privacy that candidates could select. Once these changes were completed in mid-August the number of registrations started to increase.

The registration of skills form was reviewed/re-worked in early August. The system has introduced three new levels of 'Privacy' for candidates registering:

1. *Standard* - willing to share all information
2. *Discrete* - willing to share their skill, location but not name/contact details - platform has created a "Connection Request" for Councils use - and eventual employer use
3. *Private* - only accessible by Pepper/Shift team.

The 'scraping' of jobs was extended to include the 'aggregators' such as *Indeed*, *Adzuna*, *Career Jet* and other job boards. This resulted in an immediate lift in jobs being posted to grampiansjobs.com.au. These are being imported on a daily basis. Pepper Brand Marketing is checking each job daily (for expiry date, relevance and location) before publishing.

The 444 users of the Grampians Jobs site, with 34 of these clicking on the '*Apply Now*' buttons are very encouraging statistics for the campaign. Pepper Brand Marketing have been invited to present to the *HR Network* that the Wimmera Development Association are facilitating on Thursday 16 September 2021.

Business COVID Officer

Over the month of August, the Business COVID Officer has carried out over 60 contacts in person with visits to businesses within the Horsham area – with a focus on small and large retail businesses including bottle shops, petrol outlets, butchers, giftware, beauty therapy, hospitality and take away outlets.

These visits are used as both an introductory and information sharing event, with the focus of the role to help businesses with any COVIDSafe practice or compliance concerns they may have. The main areas discussed include COVIDSafe plan creation, density signs and posters, facemasks and QR code check-in requirements.

Follow up visits or email/phone calls have focused on supplying posters and density limit signage to those businesses who do not have them, sharing links to the www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au website and providing information and templates for COVIDSafe plans. Queries have also come in around Essential Worker permits, checking of ID's, fogging up of glasses and facemask options.

Targeted emails relate to:

- Update guidelines and requirements around checking Melbourne ID
- Update restrictions and information on Essential Worker Permits
- Links to Coronavirus website and information on free COVIDSafe plan.

Tourism Report – Update provided by Grampians Tourism - Grampians Tourism has signed a new 3-year core funding agreement with the Victorian State Government that will ensure our ability to continue the ongoing recovery and reform support for the visitor economy in the Grampians region.

The funding agreement will provide security and continuity and affirms the State Government commitment to supporting the recovery of regional tourism. The agreement is also supported by a further \$100,000 marketing funding and \$264,000 of industry strengthening/support funding for 2021-2022.

Industry strengthening – Prime Mentoring by DTM Program to support Grampians Tourism Businesses- The program aims to guide businesses to develop refreshed visitor experiences, aligned to their region's destination marketing strategy. Participants will receive mentoring to enhance tourism operations and marketing skills.

The program will deliver upskilling in the following areas:

- P Product operations for practicality, efficiency and profit
- R Relevance to target audiences, market demand drivers, competitiveness and readiness
- I Innovation to stand out from the crowd, find a gap in the market
- M Marketability to be authentic to the region and their own brand
- E Engagement with partnerships and distribution

Grampians Tourism is excited to work with DTM Tourism to deliver the Prime Mentoring Program. DTM Tourism is a team of experts with exceptional tourism industry knowledge and recognised experience in tourism product assessment, visitor experience design, tourism marketing strategy and capability building within the tourism sector. Grampians Tourism will be rolling this program out across Ararat, Horsham, and Southern Grampians this year.

Visitations to the www.visithorsham.com.au website

	Google Analytics statistics for www.visithorsham.com.au website
January	5,212
February	3,438 - Visitations between 1 to 28 February 2021 resulting in 12% returning visitors and 3,329 new visitors to the site
March	5,290 - Site visitations between 1 to 31 March 2021, resulting in 12.5% returning visitors and 87.5% (5,154) new visitors to the site
April	4,971 - Site visitations between 1 to 30 April 2021, resulting in 14% returning visitors and 88% (4,755) new visitors to the site
May	3,350
June	3,100 - Site visitations between 1 to 30 June 2021, resulting in 12.5% returning visitors and 87.5% (3,012) new visitor to the site)
July	2,929 - Site visitation between 1 to 31 July 2021, resulting in 14.6% returning visitors and 85.4% (2,757) new visitors to the site
August	2,168 - Site visitation 1 to 31 August 2021, resulting in 11.5% returning visitors and 88.5% new visitors to the site
YTD	January 2021 to August 2021 - Visitations to the site, resulting in 30,458 isers

HORSHAM VISITOR SERVICES

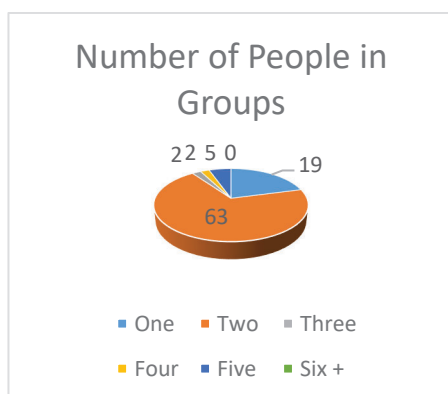
The Visitor Services again had COVID-19 shorten the month with lockdowns. They reopened on 10 August 2021 and were shut down again on 21 August 2021. The numbers therefore have dropped over the last month considering they were only open for two weeks. The people that were coming through were saying much the same as last time, they had jumped into the car and took off as soon and lockdown finished, just needing to get out and travelling.

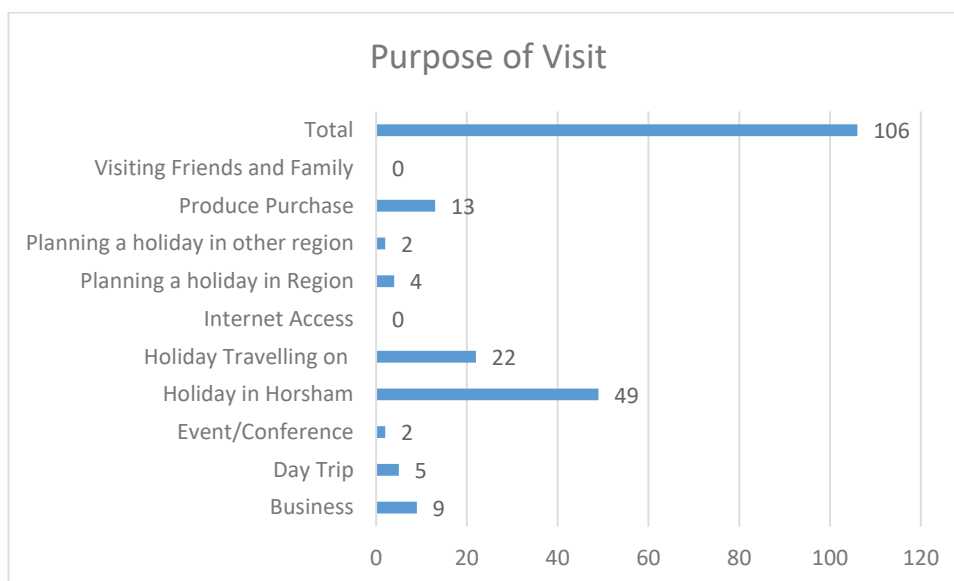
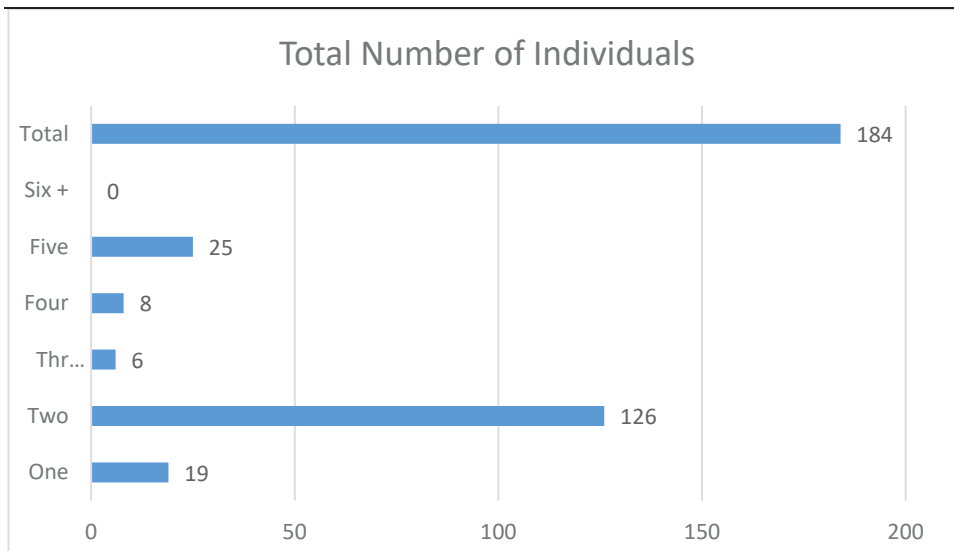
The numbers for the Visit Horsham website show there was still traffic on the site but looking into it a little more, it was disappointing that they were only viewing 2.27 pages per session so the website was not holding the interest of the users. Hopefully, with the updates happening at the moment it will show an improvement.

For the time opened in August, visitors were only coming to have a look at Horsham. The Grampians and accommodation were the third and fourth most popular destination. The Silo Art Trail continues to be the main draw card to the region as most that were coming to see Horsham were going onto the Art Trail. The top three purposes for visitation to Horsham were: to holiday in Horsham - 49, followed by holiday travelling on - 22, produce/souvenir purchase - 13.

	August	Previous Month	YTD (Jan-Aug)	Previous Year
Groups recorded	91	133	1804	N/A
Total for individuals within groups	184	273	3803	N/A
Visithorsham.com.au web visits	2168	2900	30184	N/A
Emails	185	219	1789	N/A
Produce Sales	N/A	\$949.60	\$7682	N/A

The most popular destinations were: Horsham – 63, Victoria– 33, Silo Art Trail— 22. There were two New in Town Kits handed out.





Options to Consider

Not applicable – no decision required

Sustainability Implications

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

Community Engagement

Report has been prepared in consultation with range of agencies and will be made publicly available to Wimmera Development Association and on the Horsham Rural City Council website.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Report provides overview of activity and assists with continuous improvement.

Collaboration

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

Financial Implications

Nil

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable – no direct relationship or requirements

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2020-2024 Council Plan

Goal 2 – Sustaining the Economy

Risk Implications

Not applicable – no decision required

Conclusion

Once again COVID-19 restrictions have impacted our hospitality and retail businesses, both financially and mentally. If you want to support our businesses; buy locally, even if you don't need what you purchase. Do all your Christmas shopping in town and make sure you spoil everyone. Celebrate with family and friends by going out to eat and most importantly keep checking in on each other. Don't forget to ask others if they are ok. *Are you ok too?*

9.2 WIMMERA DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION: TRANSFORMATION TO A NEW ENTITY

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

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

WDA Memorandum of Understanding 2021-2026 (**Appendix 9.2A**)

WDA Transformation Process and Timetable (**Appendix 9.2B**)

Draft Constitution of WDA Ltd (**Appendix 9.2C**)

Purpose

To endorse the Memorandum of Understanding for the transformation of Wimmera Development Association (WDA) to a new entity.

Summary

- The Regional Innovation Project (RIP) has identified the most effective model for the transformation of WDA.
- Five Wimmera Councils comprising of Horsham Rural City, Hindmarsh, Northern Grampians, Yarriambiack and West Wimmera worked in collaboration to support the transformation and the development of the Memorandum of Understanding.
- The new entity will be governed by a skills based board and constitution.
- The Memorandum of Understanding requires Council to enact the new entity.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorse the Memorandum of Understanding 2021-2026 (**Appendix "9.2A"**) between the Wimmera Development Association and Member Municipalities comprising of Horsham Rural City, Hindmarsh, Northern Grampians, Yarriambiack and West Wimmera, and authorise the CEO to execute on its behalf.
2. Note the timeline and process to transition the Wimmera Development Association to the new structure (**Appendix "9.2B"**).
3. Note the Draft Constitution for Wimmera Development Association Ltd (**Appendix "9.2C"**).

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn

That Council:

1. Endorse the Memorandum of Understanding 2021-2026 (**Appendix “9.2A”**) between the Wimmera Development Association and Member Municipalities comprising of Horsham Rural City, Hindmarsh, Northern Grampians, Yarriambiack and West Wimmera, and authorise the CEO to execute on Council’s behalf.
2. Note the timeline and process to transition the Wimmera Development Association to the new structure (**Appendix “9.2B”**).
3. Note the Draft Constitution for Wimmera Development Association Ltd (**Appendix “9.2C”**).

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

Over the past four years, the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership (Partnership) has been discussing factors that limit business, social and economic opportunities across the region. During 2020, the Partnership undertook the 'Regional Innovation Project', an inclusive engagement process to review current cross sector regional planning practises and establish a preferred governance and operational model going forward. Following extensive collaboration with other leaders throughout the region, it was recognised that a more contemporary, flexible and strategic way of working was required for the region to maintain and grow its competitive position, increase liveability and proactively seek new opportunities.

In late 2020, the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership considered the Regional Innovation Project Business case and agreed that:

- The business case be provided to the WDA as the preferred delivery agent, and
- The Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership work with the WDA to secure a co-investment amounting to \$500,000 (spread over two years) from the State Government to support the transition phase of the new entity.

At its meeting in February 2021, the WDA Board considered the Regional Innovation Project Business Case and resolved:

- *That the WDA board endorse the Regional Innovation Project Report and the Governance Structure included in section 6.1.1 of the report*
- *That WDA present a roadmap of next steps at the March WDA Board meeting with the aim of transitioning the current WDA governance structure to the structure outlined in section 6.1.1 of the Regional Innovation Project Report by 1 July 2021*
- *That WDA work with WDA executive group and LGA CEO's to identify a Consultant to help drive the change process.*

Discussion

The recommended solution comprises a 'new entity' representing the Wimmera Southern Mallee as a region with aligned strategies, priorities and outcomes that delivers desired, sustainable and transformational change.

The new entity structure will be highly functional and represent government, industry and community and provide strong governance with qualified, capable and diverse members who assume ownership and accountability for outcomes.

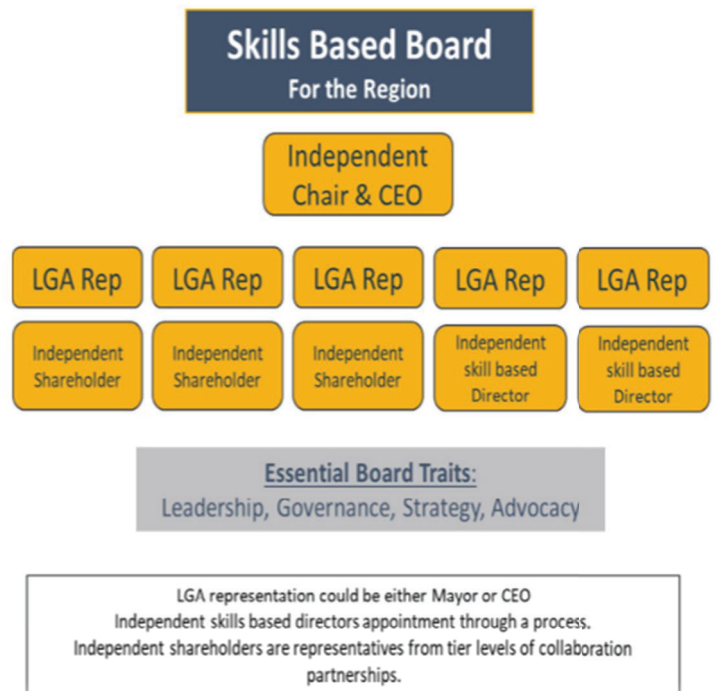
The new entity will be functional and skills-based and will adhere to the principles of strong governance, accountabilities with clear outcomes and performance metrics. The new entity will include:

- Skills Based Board – established as an independent governing body that represents the region and defines the strategic direction for the region
- Strategic Pillars – will become the agreed strategic focus areas that form the basis of collaboration and to develop key partnerships
- Innovation Teams – are multidisciplinary teams (cross-organisation and cross-sector) to identify levers for, or impediments to, grow activities that are aligned to the Strategic Pillars

- Underpinned by its founding charter to create a new, focussed regional service delivery model, the new entity will be owned by the region, build local potential and confidence and deliver on community driven aspirations.

Transitional governance structure

The WSM RIP Project Control Group endorsed the option to establish a “transitional” governance structure in the form of a “skills-based board” to represent the Wimmera Southern Mallee as a region. This will require all board members to align on the strategies, priorities, and outcomes required to deliver desired, sustainable, transformational change.



To enable transition of the WDA to a new governance structure, a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between WDA and the five Member Councils in the region has been developed, and will replace the existing MOU effective 1 December 2021. As the funding contributions by the Member Councils for 2020-2021 financial year have already been paid, contributions under the new MOU will become effective from the start of 2022-2023 financial year. The MOU is now provided for endorsement by Council (**Appendix “9.2A”**).

The timeline and process to transition WDA to the new structure is provided in **Appendix “9.2B”**. A draft Constitution has also been prepared for the new WDA, which is attached in **Appendix “9.2C”**.

Options to Consider

- Council can choose to endorse the MOU 2021-2026
- Council can choose not to endorse the MOU 2021-2026

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

The Partnership has undertaken an inclusive engagement process to review current cross sector regional planning practises and establish a preferred governance and operational model going forward. This process is known as the Regional Innovation Project.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The COVID-19 pandemic, and the economic and social impacts of containment measures, are anticipated to have a significant negative impact on the region. However, there is an opportunity to use the crisis as a catalyst for regional revitalisation through a heightened sense of urgency and an acceptance of the need for collective action.

Collaboration

The five Councils listed below worked in collaboration to identify the new entity and constitution.

1. Horsham Rural City Council
2. Northern Grampians Shire Council
3. Yarriambiack Shire Council
4. West Wimmera Shire Council
5. Hindmarsh Shire Council

Financial Implications

Under the existing MOU, Council's contribution to WDA for 2021-2022 is \$228,231. It is proposed to maintain the 2022-2023 contribution at the same level, with an annual adjustment of 1.5% for the following years.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2020-2024 Council Plan

Goal 2 - Sustaining the Economy

Risk Implications

Not applicable

Conclusion

Transformation of the WDA to a '*new entity*' is expected to stimulate collaboration across our region to ensure its competitiveness and sophistication as a significant region within Victoria.

9.3 ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

Author's Name:	Krishna Shrestha / John Martin	Director:	John Martin
Author's Title:	Manager Strategic Asset Management / Director Infrastructure	Directorate:	Infrastructure
Department:	Infrastructure	File Number:	F02/A05/000005

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

Road Management Plan 2021 – Draft (**Appendix “9.3A”**)

Purpose

To adopt the updated Road Management Plan.

Summary

- The Road Management Plan documents Council’s approach to maintenance of roads, footpaths and related roadside areas to facilitate their safe and serviceable use for vehicles and pedestrians.
- The Plan is established under the provisions of the *Road Management Act 2004* for a range of reasons, including to limit Council’s liability to road related claims in certain circumstances, providing that Council is operating in accordance with the Plan.
- Council is required to review the plan each four years, in the year following a Council election, by 31 October of that year.
- This year’s review of the Plan has incorporated the findings of an internal audit on the plan conducted in 2019. Extensive changes were made to the plan as a result of that audit.
- The Plan has also been reviewed in consideration of an audit by the Victorian Auditor-General’s Office into maintaining local roads in March 2021. The relevant recommendations of that report required no changes in the Plan.
- Consultation on the Plan has occurred in accordance with, and exceeding the requirements of the relevant regulations.
- The community consultation included a series of workshops across rural parts of the municipality, and one in Horsham, in May 2021. This was followed up by a well-advertised web-based process in August and September 2021.
- It is proposed that the updated Plan be adopted.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the updated Road Management Plan (**Appendix “9.3A”**).

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr David Bowe

That Council adopt the updated Road Management Plan (**Appendix “9.3A”**).

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

The Road Management Plan is a document which describes the maintenance systems in place for Council's road and footpath network to facilitate their safe and serviceable use for vehicles and pedestrians. When a Council has a Road Management Plan and complies with the inspection and maintenance regime established in the plan, Council's liability to claims for damages arising from road-related incidents (e.g. damage to tyres, or trips along footpaths) is limited.

The *Road Management Act 2004* (the Act) establishes the provisions for Road Management Plans. All road management authorities in Victoria may have them, including Regional Roads Victoria, DELWP and Councils.

Regulations made in support of the Act describe the process for renewing a Road Management Plan, including the consultation process. One such aspect is the requirement for the Plan to be reviewed in accordance with the timetable for establishment of a new Council Plan following the election of a new Council, i.e. by 31 October 2021.

Council has reviewed its Plan each four years since 2012 in accordance with the requirements. In addition, Council undertook an internal audit on the Plan in 2019, aiming to understand compliance with the Plan and any improvements that should be made to the plan. This audit led to the implementation of an enhanced footpath defects backlog program to address an accumulation of hazards that were identified in the footpath network. This program, and related actions, are aiming to ensure that full compliance is achieved by December 2021.

In addition, the audit identified a range of improvements to the Plan document itself.

The review also considered the recommendations of the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) in its March 2021 report "Maintaining Local Roads". The relevant recommendations from that report are:

- 11. collect and retain data on compliance with timeliness standards in road management plans*
- 12. establish performance measures for road management plans and use them to annually review performance and the practicality of standards set out in the plans.*

Council's maintenance management system, Reflect, ensures the collection and maintenance of data to meet the requirements of recommendation 11 (refer Section 4.5 of the Plan). Section 5.1 of the Plan outlines the approach in the Plan to address recommendation 12.

No changes were required to the Plan to address the VAGO recommendations.

Discussion

The draft Road Management Plan 2021 document is attached as an appendix to this report (**Appendix "9.3A"**).

Extensive changes have been made to the 2017 document based on:

- The internal audit described above
- Workshops with operations staff to ensure the capacity to undertake the rectification works in the times listed within the Plan
- Feedback from Council's insurer.

In addition, since completion of the 2019 audit there has been an ongoing program of monthly meetings and training with Operations staff to ensure that:

- Relevant staff are fully aware of the requirements of the Plan
- Suitable resourcing is provided to achieve the response times for inspections and rectification of identified defects
- The Reflect maintenance management system is able to provide staff information about the defects in a suitable form, to action priority defects, i.e. within the timeframe allowed for actions
- Monitoring of achievements is reported on a regular basis.

Feedback from external consultation was relatively limited. Several respondents identified specific roads that they consider should receive a different level of maintenance. This aspect is being addressed through the Rural Road Network Plan, which will consider changes to hierarchy levels of all roads in Council's rural areas. This is due for completion by the end of 2021.

A further issue identified in community responses was the level of trip hazards that should be actioned for footpath defects. The Plan identifies 25 mm as the relevant trigger level. This has been the case since 2015, however historically Council had the practice of painting a yellow line for trip hazards at 15 mm height. With Horsham's highly reactive soils, it is not practical to repair hazards at this height. The 25 mm trigger level is consistent with the level set in Road Management Plans in neighbouring municipalities.

Options to Consider

Council is required to maintain its Road Management Plan to maintain the limitations to liability provided for through the *Road Management Act 2004*.

Sustainability Implications

Nil directly

Community Engagement

An extensive engagement process was undertaken, which exceeded the requirements set in the regulations. This process included:

- Advertising the review of the Plan in the Government Gazette
- Publishing the reviewed draft Plan on Council's website
- Extensive advertising of the release of the reviewed Plan
- The series of community workshops for the Rural Road Network Plan held in May 2021 included consultation on the Road Management Plan, visiting eight sites, and specifically included Horsham, to ensure that urban residents could comment on or inspect the Road Management Plan.

Emergency services agencies were also consulted, with a copy of the Plan being forwarded to each member of the Horsham Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee.

Despite the extensive engagement process, only seven submissions were received. This is a similar number to previous reviews.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Since the last update to the Plan, Council has introduced Reflect as its electronic maintenance management system. The use of this system has facilitated the accurate reporting of achievement of the requirements with the Plan, and the identification of improved processes and resources to ensure compliance with the Plan.

Collaboration

Nil

Financial Implications

Costs associated with engagement on the Road Management Plan have been covered through the Rural Road Network Plan process.

The key financial implications for the Road Management Plan are:

- Ensuring there are sufficient resources to maintain compliance with the Plan
- The limit to liability the Road Management Act provides.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The Road Management Plan is prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Road Management Act 2004* and its regulations.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

The Road Management Plan is a key Council plan.

Risk Implications

Risk management is at the heart of the Road Management Plan. The Road Management Plan is based on the hierarchical structure of Council's road and footpath networks, with different response times and hazard levels identified for different defect types based on the importance of the road/footpath according to its hierarchy level.

Conclusion

The Road Management Plan has been through an extensive review process and is proposed for adoption by Council.

9.4 COUNCIL PLAN, ASSET PLAN AND FINANCIAL PLAN – FINAL DOCUMENTS

Author's Name:	Graeme Harrison	Director:	Graeme Harrison
Author's Title:	Director Corporate Services	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Corporate Services Management	File Number:	F06/A09/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 (**Appendix "9.4A"**)

Draft Financial Plan 2021-2031 (**Appendix "9.4B"**)

Draft Asset Plan 2021-2031 (**Appendix "9.4C"**)

Community Submissions Received (**Appendix "9.4D"**)

Councillor listening Post Feedback (**Appendix "9.4E"**)

Purpose

To adopt the Council Plan 2021-2025, Asset Plan 2021-2031 and Financial Plan 2021-2031 following community comment and feedback.

Summary

- Under the new *Local Government Act 2020*, there is a requirement for Council to develop a Council Plan for at least the next 4 years, an Asset Plan for the next 10 years and a Financial Plan for the next 10 years.
- All of these strategic documents were developed using deliberative engagement practices in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* through a community panel process.
- The Health and Wellbeing Plan has been incorporated into the Council Plan for the first time this year and the draft document has been approved by the Department of Health and Human Services.
- The draft documents were placed on public exhibition from 24 August 2021 to 24 September 2021, calling for comments and feedback. A total of three submissions were received.
- Following the consideration of the submissions, further information has been added to the Council Plan to explain how detailed actions will be provided in an Annual Action Plan.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt the Council Plan 2021-2025 (**Appendix "9.4A"**)
2. Adopt the Financial Plan 2021-2031 (**Appendix "9.4B"**)
3. Adopt the Asset Plan 2021-2031 (**Appendix "9.4C"**).

Council Resolution**MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr David Bowe**That Council adopt the Council Plan 2021-2025 (**Appendix "9.4A"**).**Amendment****MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Ian Ross**

That once the Council Plan annual action plan is completed and after community consultation that Council bring the action plan back to Council for adopting.

When the amendment was PUT it was LOST. The original motion then became the motion and when it was PUT it was CARRIED.**Council Resolution****MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Claudia Haenel**That Council adopt the Financial Plan 2021-2031 (**Appendix "9.4B"**).**Amendment****MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded _____**That Council adopt the Financial Plan 2021-2031 but exclude 5.2 (Borrowings Strategy) in **Appendix "9.4B"** until reviewed by Council.

MOTION LAPSED

Council Resolution**MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Claudia Haenel**That Council adopt the Financial Plan 2021-2031 (**Appendix "9.4B"**).

CARRIED

Cr Ian Ross voted against the motion. (Cr Ross asked for his dissent to be recorded)

Council Resolution**MOVED Cr David Bowe, Seconded Cr Les Power**That Council adopt the Asset Plan 2021-2031 (**Appendix "9.4C"**).

CARRIED

Cr Di Bell voted against the motion. (Cr Bell asked for her dissent to be recorded)

Council Resolution**MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded Cr Di Bell**

That Council workshop the action plan before approval.

LOST

REPORT

Background

The new *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires the following:

- Section 90 – That Council prepare a Council Plan, using deliberative engagement methods, for a period of at least the next 4 financial years and for it to be adopted by 31 October in the year following a general election.
- Section 91 - That Council must develop, adopt and keep in force a Financial Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices, for a period of at least the next 10 financial years and for it to be adopted by 31 October in the year following a general election.
- Section 92 - That Council must develop, adopt and keep in force an Asset Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices, for a period of at least the next 10 financial years and for it to be adopted by 31 October in the year following a general election other than in the first year where this timeline was extended until 30 June 2022.

The Council Plan is the key strategic planning document and sits at the centre of Council's Integrated Planning Framework. It is informed by the Community Vision and in turn should inform all of the activities that Council undertakes across the organisation. This year, the Health and Wellbeing Plan requirements are being integrated into the Council Plan, as allowed for in Section 27 of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*. Local government is also identified in the *Climate Change Act 2017* as a decision-maker that must consider climate change when preparing its municipal public health and wellbeing plan.

The Financial Plan is an important strategic document that provides a forecast for what the future financial position of Council may look like after consideration of the Council Plan, Asset Plan and based on certain parameters and assumptions.

The Asset Plan forecasts the long-term costs of managing Council's assets to deliver services to the community in line with the initiatives and priorities in the Council Plan. The Asset Plan establishes the long-term costs of maintaining and renewing assets, and outlines the process for identification of, and prioritisation of, projects for the Long Term Capital Works Plan which is an integral component of the Financial Plan.

Discussion

The three documents were placed on exhibition to the public for the period from 24 August 2021 to 24 September 2021. On-line and written submissions were called for of which three were received.

The first submission did not provide any specific feedback relevant to any of the plans. The second submission was on the Council Plan and highlighted the impacts of climate change and the challenge for the community in balancing growth with the requirement to address climate change. The third submission provided feedback on all 3 plans; the Council Plan, questioned how specific actions will be delivered, the Asset Plan, questioned some specific items re footpaths, bike paths, driveways, building essential safety measures and asset renewal, the Financial Plan, raised a question around the opportunity for Council to utilise borrowings more at this point in time.

As the Council Plan now includes the Health and Wellbeing Plan the document must have the formal sign-off by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). During their review they noted that the Council Plan as presented was a good plan but that it could be strengthened by adding an initiative around the role of gender equity in addressing issues of family violence. The draft plan has now received DHHS formal sign-off to proceed.

The detailed community submissions are provided in **Appendix “9.4D”** together with individual responses from Council Officers.

Additional to the formal submissions received, Council undertook a series of Councillor listening posts over the week commencing 20 September 2021. During these listening posts, some 50 people discussed a range of very broad matters, and whilst everything essentially relates to these strategic documents in one way or another, there was no specific feedback received on any of the three documents. The topics discussed are summarised as follows, and show a balance between both positive and negative comments mixed with some questions and suggestions:

	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Question	Request/ Suggestion	Grand Total
Community	2	1	1		4	8
Economic Development			1		2	3
Education		1				1
General			1			1
Recreation			7		9	16
Regulatory	3		1	1		5
Transport	7		2		6	15
Grand Total	12	2	13	1	21	49

The details of this feedback are included as **Appendix “9.4E”**.

The changes that have been made to the Council Plan post the receipt of feedback are:

- Have included a section in the plan detailing how the Annual Action Plan will communicate specific actions to the community
- Have added an additional initiative and priority to Theme 1 Community “Support gender equity initiatives in the prevention of family violence”
- Have added measures as to how we will measure achievements for each of the 5 themes.

Options to Consider

Nil

Sustainability Implications

The Council Plan, Asset Plan and Financial Plan touch all elements of Councils operations into the future and therefore influence and impact all sustainability matters, environmental, climate change, social and economic.

Community Engagement

Council developed the initial documents using deliberative processes with a Community Panel that also developed the Community Vision for 2041. During that process, a major campaign was run called “Horsham Talks” that collected input and comments broadly from across all sectors of the community. Horsham Talks received 937 responses through a range of engagement opportunities, such as on-line submissions, community conversations, on-the-street engagement, postcards quick responses, through the community satisfaction random telephone survey, and from listening posts at the Horsham Plaza and Jung Market.

Additional broader community feedback was sought on the final draft documents as described in the discussion section above.

It is also important to note that this engagement took place during the extremely challenging times of community restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Improving upon how Council's strategic planning documents are developed is a continual process of improvement. The work undertaken this year to develop these plans has certainly been a significant change from previous years and will lead to better connection between the community priorities and their implementation by the organisation. Learnings from these processes and further improvements will be implemented in future processes.

Collaboration

The Council Plan, Asset Plan and Financial Plan have been developed collaboratively with a range of stakeholders, including input from the Community Panel, the Council and council officers.

Financial Implications

The community engagement has been assisted by the consultants "i.e. Community" with input from Council Officers. The engagement processes and particularly the running of the community panel were budgeted together with the development of the Community Vision, Asset Plan and Financial Plan. \$75,000 was budgeted over the two financial years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

These strategic documents have been developed in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

The strategic planning documents are central to Council's ongoing management and the alignment of its objectives with those of the community. Council's Integrated Planning Framework attempts to link all of the strategic work that council does to ensure that strategies ultimately drive the direction of council decision making on a day to day basis.

Risk Implications

Strong and robust strategic planning allows Council to align its objectives with those of the community and in turn ensures that the operations of Council are also working towards the same goals as the community that it is working for. To not establish this alignment creates a risk of reputational damage and loss of connection with the community.

Conclusion

The Council Plan 2021-2025, Financial Plan 2021-2031 and Asset Plan 2021-2031 have been developed and once adopted will guide the strategic direction of the Council for the future.

9.5 MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA (MAV) WORKCARE SCHEME

Author's Name:	Graeme Harrison	Director:	Graeme Harrison
Author's Title:	Director Corporate Services	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Corporate Services	File Number:	F21/A08/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

MAV Letter WorkCare Member Financial Liability (**Appendix “9.5A”**)

Purpose

To receive and note the financial impost by WorkSafe Victoria, following its decision not to renew the licence of the Municipal Association of Victoria's (MAV) WorkCare Scheme.

Summary

- 31 of the 79 Councils across the state were part of the scheme (mostly rural Councils).
- WorkSafe decision to end the self-insurance scheme has resulted in significant extra costs to the members.
- Council has \$600,000 available in the Unfunded Superannuation reserve that can largely cover this payment in the short term but the fund will need to be re-plenished for any future possible calls.
- Council needs to join with the MAV in lobbying the State Government to seek support for rural councils in meeting this liability.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Note the decision by the MAV Board to cease operations of the MAV WorkCare Scheme.
2. Approve the payment of the full amount owing by 31 October 2021 of \$702,600 to MAV WorkCare, to be funded \$600,000 from the Unfunded Superannuation Reserve and the balance from savings in operations.
3. Note that further payment of \$77,100 will be invoiced by MAV in instalments over the next 6 years and will form part of Council's ongoing WorkCover payments.
4. Write to the Minister for Local Government expressing disappointment in the lack of support being provided to rural Councils with respect to the WorkSafe decision and the extra costs that have been imposed on members as a result.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr David Bowe

That Council:

1. Note the decision by the MAV Board to cease operations of the MAV WorkCare Scheme.
2. Approve the payment of the full amount owing by 31 October 2021 of \$702,600 to MAV WorkCare, to be funded \$600,000 from the Unfunded Superannuation Reserve and the balance from savings in operations.
3. Note that further payment of \$77,100 will be invoiced by MAV in instalments over the next 6 years and will form part of Council's ongoing WorkCover payments.
4. Write to the Minister and Shadow Minister for Local Government and local members of parliament expressing disappointment in the lack of support being provided to rural Councils with respect to the WorkSafe decision and the extra costs that have been imposed on members as a result.

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

The MAV WorkCare Scheme (the Scheme) was Victoria's only local government workers' compensation self-insurance scheme. At its peak, the Scheme had 31 members.

Council was a member of the Scheme from 2017 until it ceased operations on 30 June 2021. The decision to cease the operation of MAV WorkCare followed WorkSafe Victoria's refusal of the MAV's application for renewal of approval as a self-insurer, despite a strong performance.

With the Scheme having now come to an end, its Council members and their communities - the majority of whom are regional and rural Councils - will be required to absorb significant financial cost as required by WorkSafe. It is an ongoing financial burden that will be felt by members potentially until the latter half of 2027.

As of 30 June 2021, WorkSafe's valuation estimated the Scheme members' unpaid claims was \$74.076 million, of which \$59.26 million is funded by existing assets held by MAV.

Discussion

The outstanding claims liabilities has significantly increased as a consequence of the cessation of the Scheme and the related funding gap has escalated materially. Among the reasons for the higher claims' liabilities include:

- The impairment of the scheme's reinsurance assets due to WorkSafe not recognising these contracts despite purchasing this reinsurance being a condition of the self-insurance licence
- A higher cost of claims management within the WorkSafe Victoria system
- Significant costs associated with the closure and transition of the scheme to a ceased self-insurer.

Obligations now exist for the MAV as a ceased self-insurer and the 31 members of the scheme until June 2027. These obligations are significant and will impose significant obligations and risks to the MAV and the Scheme's constituent members. These risks are particularly acute as WorkSafe has now assumed control of the outstanding claims.

The Scheme is constituted as a mutual which is formalised via a Participation Agreement between the MAV and each of its members. A mutual is a mechanism to operate collaboratively and share risk to reduce the overall harm to participants' workers and ultimately reduce costs.

As part of this structure, there exist a range of obligations on each participants, the most relevant of which is that any deficiency in funding is required to be paid by those members.

The WorkSafe Victoria obligations are set out in the Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act, which requires:

- Valuations of claims liabilities to occur annually by the WorkSafe appointed actuary.
- Any increase in the value of claims at the three and six-year period will be funded by the ceased self-insurer, which in this case is MAV
- Any reduction in the value of claims at the three and six-year period will be refunded to the ceased self-insurer by WorkSafe Victoria
- The ceased self-insurer is required to hold a bank guarantee of 50 per cent of the outstanding claims liabilities at all times until June 2027
- The ceased self-insurer is required to meet the cost of the actuarial review and audits for this six-year liability period.

The MAV has held briefing sessions for member Councils since March this year to inform Council of the wind down of MAV WorkCare and forecast potential financial implications.

The MAV has advocated for a range of solutions to reduce the financial consequence on councils. Among genuine solutions it had pursued - through meetings and correspondence with Work Safe Victoria, the Victorian Government and the State Opposition - to mitigate the financial consequences for members are:

- Calling on WorkSafe agree to recognise the MAV's re-insurance in the transfer of scheme assets
- Deferral or waiver of the bank guarantee
- Recognition of WorkSafe's underfunding of the Scheme at its commencement
- Recognition of WorkSafe's investment income that it will earn on the returned scheme assets.

As a result of consultation with Scheme members, the MAV has ceased its advocacy efforts and has requested more modest forms such as recognising the high credit rating of participating members by seeking a waiver of the bank guarantee requirement, or alternatively for the guarantee to be provided by the Treasury Corporation of Victoria and for an extension to the payment terms.

To date, there has been little acknowledgement of the significance of the cost to Councils despite previous WorkSafe Victoria public concerns about the financial consequence to scheme members in its consideration of the licence.

WorkSafe has determined and is invoicing the liabilities to the MAV. Full payment is due to WorkSafe Victoria on 12 November 2021. The initial payment of \$59 million will be made by the MAV on 11 October 2021. MAV has invoiced council and requires payment by 31 October 2021.

In line with advice from the MAV's actuary, the shortfall in funding has been allocated between members based on their share of the unpaid claims' costs. Given that not all claims' costs are known as yet, the allocation methodology will use the estimates of unpaid, open claims ("case estimates") and member premiums to estimate each member's share of the financial shortfall.

Options to Consider

There are no known alternative options

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

Nil

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not applicable

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

The total estimated amount owing is \$779,600, as provided in the letter from MAV (**Appendix "9.5A"**). Council currently has available \$600,000 set aside in a Reserve for any possible future call on the defined benefits superannuation scheme. This superannuation fund has been performing well in recent times so the likelihood of a call in the near future is minimal and is less likely as time passes and the scheme draws to a close, but this will not occur until the last member or their spouse leaves the scheme. The immediate payment of \$709,200 can be met from this reserve balance of \$600,000, together with \$109,200 from 2020-2021 operational savings.

It will be prudent to replenish this reserve and ensure that it provides a similar buffer for the future for not just the unfunded superannuation liability but also any future possible calls from MAV/WorkSafe prior to the end of 2027. This will need to be considered when reviewing the final cash result for 2020-2021.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2020-2024 Council Plan

Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

Long Term Goal – 4.2 Manage risk to the organisation

Risk Implications

Insurances are a means to manage risk. It is disappointing that WorkSafe has taken this course of action with respect to the MAV Scheme and it is difficult to understand the reasoning behind their decision and the increased financial risk that their decision has imposed on the 31 Council members. Setting aside additional funds in to a cash backed reserve is the most prudent approach that council can take to assist in mitigating against this risk in to the future.

Conclusion

That Council approve this initial payment and plan to set aside additional funds for any potential future call.

SUSPEND STANDING ORDERS

MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr Di Bell

That Standing Orders be suspended for a short break.

CARRIED

The time being 7.52pm, the Council meeting was suspended.

RESUME STANDING ORDERS

MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr Claudia Haenel

That Standing Orders resume.

CARRIED

The time being 8.01pm, the Council meeting resumed.

9.6 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE UPDATES AND INDEPENDENT MEMBER REAPPOINTMENT

Author's Name:	Diana McDonald	Director:	Graeme Harrison
Author's Title:	Acting Manager Governance and Information	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Governance and Information	File Number:	F18/A13/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix:

Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Minutes of 16 September 2021 (**Appendix “9.6A”**)

Purpose

To receive and note the outcomes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 16 September 2021.

Summary

- The Audit and Risk Committee meeting was held 16 September 2021.
- A range of matters were discussed as detailed below.
- Significant items were the Annual Financial Accounts and the Risk Management Final Internal Audit Report.
- Reappointment of independent member Mr Richard Trigg to the Audit and Risk Committee.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receive and note the Audit and Risk Committee meeting minutes of 16 September 2021 (**Appendix “9.6A”**).
2. Appoint Mr Richard Trigg to the Audit and Risk Committee for an additional 3 year term in accordance with the Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded Cr Claudia Haenel

That Council:

1. Receive and note the Audit and Risk Committee meeting minutes of 16 September 2021 (**Appendix “9.6A”**).

CARRIED

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr Di Bell

That Item No. 2 of the recommendation (That Council appoint Mr Richard Trigg to the Audit and Risk Committee for an additional 3 year term in accordance with the Audit and Risk Committee Charter) be deferred to the confidential section of the meeting.

CARRIED

(Refer to the confidential section of the minutes for Council resolution.)

REPORT

Background

The Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) Audit and Risk Committee is an advisory committee of Council, whose objective is to provide appropriate advice and recommendations to Council on matters as listed in its Charter, in order to facilitate decision making by Council in relation to the discharge of its accountability requirements.

Discussion

The Audit and Risk Committee meeting was held on 16 September 2021 and details of the items discussed were as follows:

- Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report (September 2021) (*as presented to Council Briefing on 4 October 2021*)
- Audit and Risk Committee Annual Work Program – Annual Review
- Councils IT Process for Managing IT Security and Cyber-attacks
- Community Vision 2041
- Draft Council Plan 2021-2025
- Draft Asset Plan 2021-2031
- Draft Financial Plan 2021-2031
- RSD Auditors Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2022-2024 and Annual Plan 2021-2022
- RSD Internal Audit – Risk Management Final Report
- Council's Internal Audit Actions Report
- *Local Government Act 2020* Implementation Update
- CEO Expenses 2020-2021
- Quarterly Performance Report (Quarter ending 30 June 2021)
- Governance Compliance Framework Biannual Update
- Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Biannual Report and Register (30 June 2021)
- CEO Update on Emerging Issues
- Rural Council's Corporate Collaboration (RCCC) Project Update
- Independent Committee Member Tenures.

There is a requirement under the Audit and Risk Committee Charter sections 4.2 and 4.10 that Council approve the reappointment of Independent Committee Member tenures.

Richard Trigg, current Committee Chair, has nominated for an additional three year term in accordance with the Audit and Risk Committee Charter, noting that Mr Trigg has currently served one previous three year term on the Committee commencing in March 2019.

There is a requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020* Section 53 and 54 that a Biannual Audit and Risk Committee Report be presented to Council by the Committee Chair. This was completed at the Council Briefing on Monday 4 October 2021.

Options to Consider

Council to receive and note the Audit and Risk Committee meeting minutes 16 September 2021 and to endorse the annual Chair recommendation.

Sustainability Implications

Not applicable

Community Engagement

Council's Audit and Risk Committee is comprised of Councillors and independent members. Consultation and communication is undertaken with Internal Auditors and external (Victorian Auditor-General's Office – VAGO) Auditors.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not applicable

Financial Implications

Operations of Council's Audit and Risk Committee is covered within the 2021-2022 operational budget allocation.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2020-2024 Council Plan

Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

4.2 Manage risk to the organisation and 4.4 Achieve high standards of organisational performance

Risk Implications

The Audit and Risk Committee is an important committee of Council required under the *Local Government Act 2020*. To not have a properly functioning or constituted committee would be in breach of the requirements of the Act. The committee has an important role in monitoring Council's financial governance and risks, to not have such a committee could increase Council's to potential for fraud and corruption to occur.

Conclusion

The Audit and Risk Committee is a legislated requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020* and Minutes are provided to council in-line with good governance and record keeping.

9.7 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT – JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2021

Author's Name:	Faith Hardman	Director:	Graeme Harrison
Author's Title:	Corporate Planner	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Governance and Information	File Number:	F18/A10/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: *If no type* Nil

Appendix

Quarterly Performance Report – July to September 2021 (**Appendix “9.7A”**)

Purpose

To receive and note the Quarterly Performance Report for the three months to 30 September 2021.

Summary

- This is the first Quarterly Performance Report of the 2021-2022 financial year and is part of the continual improvement process of reporting back to Council and the community.
- The Quarterly Performance Report brings together into a single, easy to read document, a range of reports including:
 - Quarterly Budget Report
 - Council Plan Updates
 - Local Government Performance Framework Indicators
 - The tracking of any major initiatives
 - Councillor Expenses
 - Audit and Risk Committee minutes.
- It reports all items over a consistent quarterly reporting timeline.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Quarterly Performance Report for the three months to 30 September 2021 (**Appendix “9.7A”**).

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Di Bell

That Council receive and note the Quarterly Performance Report for the three months to 30 September 2021 (**Appendix “9.7A”**).

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

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

The *Local Government Act 2020*, section 97, requires that as soon as practicable after the end of each quarter of the financial year, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a quarterly budget report is presented to the Council at a Council meeting which is open to the public. The Quarterly Performance Report encapsulates a quarterly budget report, Council Plan Goals and Actions, the tracking of any major initiatives, Council Expenses and Audit and Risk Committee minutes for the relevant quarter.

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

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

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

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

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

Discussion

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

The report contains the following sections:

1. CEO Overview
2. Council Plan Updates and Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF)
3. Customer Service Targets
4. Business Improvements
5. Capital Works
6. Councillor Expenses
7. Quarterly budget report.

The COVID-19 pandemic still had an impact on Council operations, however services recommenced but with limitations, as dictated by State and Federal Government Directives on social distancing, masking and gathering of numbers.

The format for this reporting has been evolving over time and may include additional sections, but essentially will be mindful of the need to be relevant, reliable, comparable and understandable. This report provides Local Government Performance Reporting data for the full year.

Options to Consider

Not applicable

Sustainability Implications

Not applicable save and except included reporting on council's environmental and sustainability goals.

Community Engagement

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

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Quarterly Performance Report's intention is to continuously improve communication and engagement with the community through effective and succinct reporting on key strategic items, in a clear and concise manner that is readable and informative.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

This report is prepared using existing staff resources.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2020-2024 Council Plan

Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

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

Risk Implications

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

Conclusion

The Quarterly Performance Report will provide a regular and succinct quarterly report for Council and the community to assess how Council is performing financially and against its key objectives.

9.8 QUARTERLY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Author's Name:	Martin Bride	Director:	Graeme Harrison
Author's Title:	Community Facilitator	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Community Relations and Advocacy Team	File Number:	F06/A23/000001

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

Community Engagement Report Details (**Appendix "9.8A"**)

Purpose

To receive and note an update on the community engagement undertaken in the past three months, from July 2021 and the proposed activities for the next nine months.

Summary

- Council had 14 community engagements partially or completely undertaken during the quarter.
- 1,534 responses have been received across all of these activities.
- 14 engagements are still open and active as at the end of this quarter.
- 10 additional engagements are currently planned to take place in the coming nine month period.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Community Engagement report and summary of activities to date (**Appendix "9.8A"**).

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr David Bowe

That Council receive and note the Community Engagement report and summary of activities to date (**Appendix "9.8A"**).

CARRIED

REPORT

Background


Community engagement is a continual challenge for Council and our relatively small community. There are many activities underway at any particular time and this is dependent upon the Council Planning cycle the Council term, and legislative requirements. There are some engagements that are not included in this report, these are smaller operational engagements usually at the inform level. This includes the ordinary notification processes involved in works such as footpath repairs, and road repairs and upgrades.

The level of engagement will be different for different projects but also for different stakeholders within individual projects. The level of engagement will impact on the exact type of activities that will occur and the particular response from Council. This is guided by the IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum and this is what will be used for determining the required response.

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

		INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 				
		INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
	PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

© IAP2 International Federation 2018. All rights reserved. 20181112_v1

Discussion

A. Highlight for the Quarter – Liveability Expo

A community engagement expo was held late June at Jubilee Hall with the intent to inform and seek input from the community on a range of topics. The Expo was an extension of the Horsham Talks engagement campaign and advertised under the heading "Horsham Talks... why we live here".

Held across five days from Thursday 24 June 2021 to Tuesday 29 June 2021 (excluding Sunday) it had 204 attendees. 71% of attendees were aged 65 and over and 54% were female and 46% male.

Led by the Recreation, Arts and Culture team the Expo included engagements from across the organisation. Topics and projects at the Expo included: Health and Wellbeing, Bike paths and walking tracks, Horsham Skate Park, Updates to Local Laws, Sawyer Park and City Oval redevelopment, Arts and Culture, Street Trees and Shade, Pop up Parks and Parklets and there was also a general comments area.

A number of scheduled sessions were held on particular topics. Local Laws held three information sessions with a total 25 attendees. Health and Wellbeing held two workshops with 34 attendees. These health and wellbeing workshops were run with internal Council stakeholders and then external organisation stakeholders. The output was displayed in the expo for community feedback and ultimately informed the health and wellbeing elements of the Council Plan.

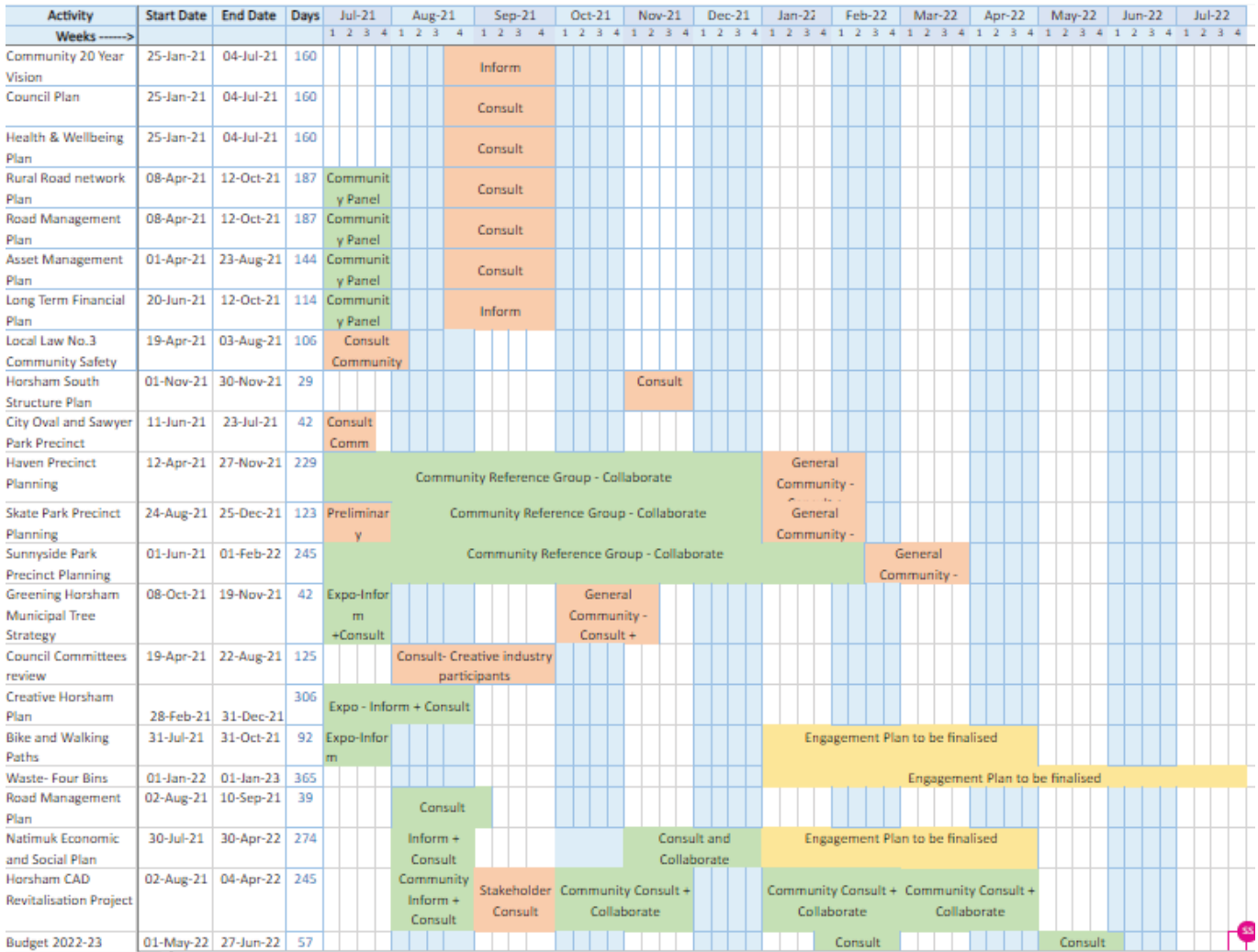
B. General Stats from all engagements:

Summary information is provided in **Appendix "9.8A"**, on all engagement currently finished, underway or planned for the previous quarter and the next nine months. The following summary statistics are provided for those engagement activities:

Sum of No of Recorded Engagements				
	Inform	Consult	Involve	Grand Total
Underway				
Council Initiative				
Council Committees review	150			150
Bike and Walking Paths	50			50
Creative Horsham Plan		217		217
Municipal Tree Strategy	50			50
Natimuk Economic and Social Plan				
Horsham CAD Revitalisation Project		15		15
Infrastructure				
Rural Road Network Plan		65		65
Land Use Planning				
Haven Precinct Planning		25		25
Horsham South Structure Plan			73	73
Recreation & Openspace				
City Oval and Sawyer Park Precinct		0		0
Skate Park Precinct Planning		120		120
Legislated/ Admin				
Asset Plan		53		53
Council Plan		103		103
Health & Wellbeing Plan		53		53
Longterm Financial Plan		53		53
Legislated				
Road Management Plan		3		3
Local Law No.3 Community Safety		283		283
Underway Total	250	990	73	1,313
Finished				
Legislated/ Admin				
Community Vision		956		956
Finished Total		956		956
Not yet started				
Legislated/ Admin				
Waste- Four Bins	0			0
Not yet started Total	0			0
Grand Total	250	1,946	73	2,269

C. Approximate Timelines for Engagement Activities underway or planned:

The following GANTT Chart summarises all of the planned engagement activities for the previous quarter and the next nine months (July 2021 – July 2022) (**Appendix “9.8A”**). All attempts are made to spread these activities out across the year and to avoid important times of the year such as Christmas holiday periods and any specific activities that may impact on a particular sector who are key stakeholders in the engagement e.g. harvest and sowing period for the farm sector. Although this is often challenging as many engagements are driven by legislated requirements that set the specific timeframes and need to consider many operational requirements as well.



Note: When there are multiple levels of engagement it is not possible to show all of that within this GANTT chart. The engagement depicted will be indicative of the highest level of engagement.

Options to Consider

Not applicable

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

This report summarises Council’s Community Engagement activities which are guided by Council’s Community Engagement Policy.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

This report is being provided as an innovative means to report back to Council and the community on all past and future community engagements.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

All engagement activities involve costs and many projects work within the resources already within departmental budgets. When planning large projects or projects with widespread impacts, individual projects should have within their budget an appropriate allowance for engagement.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Local Government Act 2020 Part 3 Division 1 S.55 and 56

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

The organisational values of Accountability and Integrity are directly linked to the reasons we engage and should guide our practice when engaging.

The Council Plan 2020-2024 includes the guiding principles "Consult, engage and work transparently with the community" and "Provide information to the community in a variety of formats using plain language where possible"

Risk Implications

The effective delivery of community engagement should reduce the risk of poorly designed projects and lessen reputational risk.

Conclusion

This quarterly community engagement report has been developed to help inform Council and the Community of the past and future engagements that Council has and is conducting. It will evolve to meet the needs of Council and the community as required.

9.9 2020-2021 HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

Author's Name:	Sue Frankham	Director:	Graeme Harrison
Author's Title:	Acting Co-ordinator Governance	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Governance and Information	File Number:	F06/A09/000001

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

2020-2021 Horsham Rural City Council Annual Report (**Appendix "9.9A"**)

Purpose

To receive and note the 2020-2021 Annual Report for Horsham Rural City Council.

Summary

- The 2020-2021 Annual Report for Horsham Rural City Council has been prepared in accordance with the requirements and guidelines of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014*, and includes the Annual Financial Accounts and Performance Statement.
- Under sections 18(1)(d) and 100(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Mayor must report on the implementation of the Council Plan by presenting the Annual Report at a Council meeting open to the public.
- The 2020-2021 Annual Report was forwarded to the Minister for Local Government on 8 October 2021.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the 2020-2021 Horsham Rural City Council Annual Report (**Appendix "9.9A"**) as submitted to the Minister for Local Government on 8 October 2021.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr David Bowe, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn

That Council receive and note the 2020-2021 Horsham Rural City Council Annual Report (**Appendix "9.9A"**) as submitted to the Minister for Local Government on 8 October 2021.

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

The 2020-2021 Annual Report for Horsham Rural City Council has been prepared in accordance with the requirements and guidelines of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014*.

The Local Government Act requires the Annual Report to be submitted to the Minister for Local Government by 30 September each year, however, formal advice was received on 16 September 2021 that the due date has been extended to 30 November 2021. The 2020-2021 Annual Report was essentially completed by the initial 30 September 2021 timeframe and forwarded to the Minister for Local Government on 8 October 2021, prior to the due date of 30 November 2021.

Sections 18(1)(d) and 100 (1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* require the Mayor to report on the implementation of the Council Plan by presenting the Annual Report at a Council meeting open to the public, within four months of the end of the financial year.

Discussion

The 2020-2021 Annual Report for Horsham Rural City Council includes the Auditor's Report and Performance Statement for the year ended 30 June 2021. The report also provides a summary of performance against the 2020-2024 Council Plan, together with achievements, highlights and challenges during 2020-2021, including Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Vision Australia's Colour Contrast Analyser has been used to check the foreground and background colour combinations to ensure good colour visibility of the Annual Report.

The Mayor will present the Annual Report to the Council and the community at the Council meeting on 25 October 2021.

Options to Consider

Not applicable

Sustainability Implications

A number of sustainability initiatives undertaken by Council have been reported in the 2020-21 Annual Report in the Council Plan section, Goal 5 – Natural and Built Environments.

Community Engagement

A public notice advising that the public is welcome to attend the Council meeting on 25 October 2021 where the Mayor will present the 2020-2021 Annual Report, was published in Council's public notices page on 15 and 20 October 2021 and weekly update email newsletter on 22 October 2021. These details have also been promoted on the Council website and Facebook page. The public notice advises that the 2020-2021 Annual Report (including the Auditor's Report and Performance Statement for the year ended 30 June 2021) is available for inspection on the Council website and at the Civic Centre Municipal Office.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not applicable

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

Costs associated with production of the 2020-2021 Annual Report are included in the 2021-2022 Council Budget.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2020-2024 Council Plan

Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

Four-Year Outcome 4.4 – Achieve high standards of organisational performance

Risk Implications

There is a statutory requirement to prepare an Annual Report. To not do so would lead to significant reputational damage to Council and would raise concerns with the State Government as to the Council's ability to manage its financial and non-financial obligations.

Conclusion

The 2020-2021 Annual Report for Horsham Rural City Council has been completed and was submitted to the Minister for Local Government in accordance with relevant legislation on 8 October 2021.

9.10 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S OPERATIONAL REPORT

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

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Nil

Purpose

To receive and note the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for October 2021.

Summary

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

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for October 2021.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Les Power

That Council receive and note the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for October 2021.

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

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

Discussion

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

A. Advocacy/Funding Announcements

Rural Council's Corporate Collaboration (RCCC) Board Meetings: The RCCC Board, which includes the Chief Executive Officers of Hindmarsh, West Wimmera, Loddon and Horsham met on Thursday 7 October 2021 by zoom. Besides discussing routine matters, the board also received an update on the status of the procurement process for the selection of IT Vendor.

Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership Meeting: The Chief Executive Officer attended the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership Meeting on Thursday 14 October 2021. Two reports initiated by Regional development Australia (RDA) Committee were presented at the meeting – Agriculture Value Add which identifies opportunities for local value-added production in the Grampian region, and For Want of a Worker which analyses the factors contributing to the worker shortage in the region and opportunities to address the issue.

Wimmera Regional CEO Meeting: The Chief Executive Officer met with the Chief Executive Officers of Norther Grampians, Buloke, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack and Hindmarsh on Thursday 14 October 2021. The discussions included approaches to manage the impact of mandatory vaccination requirements.

Regional Cities Victoria (RCV): The Mayor and Chief Executive Officer attended the launch of Regional Cities Victoria's 2022-2025 Advocacy Priorities on 15 October 2021 via zoom. A discussion was also held on why Victoria's success relies on thriving regional cities.

B. Community Engagement

Committee Review Engagement: Councillors and staff met with Council committees during the past few weeks to present an overview of the proposed new committee structure.

C. Projects and Events

Western Bulldogs Community Foundation: The Mayor and CEO attended a virtual graduation of the first Horsham Sons of the West Program participants on Wednesday 6 October at 6.30pm. Over the past 10 weeks they have been getting together on a Wednesday night to hear about different health and special interest topics and engaging in some exercise. They started out at the Horsham YMCA and due to COVID-19 restrictions completed the program online. There has been a good number consistently participating each week and embracing zoom (some for the very first time). They have also been on some walks along the river when the gym was closed. It has been a very successful program and they hope to bring it back to Horsham again. The men who participated have a new appreciation for looking after their health and wellbeing and now aware of options to get engaged into community groups and understand the importance of keeping active.

Seniors Week: Seniors Week events were due to take place in Horsham including a bus trip, a Seniors Concert and a Human Library but due to restrictions these events could not go ahead. Instead HRCC showcased a range of seniors stories, based off the concept of a Human Library. One video was released each day during Seniors Week. The profiled speakers were:

- Tom Cray – speaks about retirement in Horsham, he retired at 55 and keeps busy with hobbies
- Pam Cupper – sharing the story of a local man who fought in the First World War
- Mervyn Schneider – speaking about his trip to the Antarctic
- Robyn Lardner – her involvement in the Royal Flying Doctors Service
- Bruce Johanssen – his story of how he ended up living in the Wimmera.

After School Art Club: The “After School Art Club” workshops at the Art Gallery started on 18 October 2021, offering exciting ways to explore and connect with art making ideas and practices. During six weeks of workshops, Kids and Teens will learn new art-making techniques, build confidence in the skills they already have, while being inspired by amazing artists and their work within the Gallery exhibitions and beyond.

D. Staff Matters

Safety Training: The outdoor staff took part in snake and spider safety training last week by Mike Alexander of Black Snake Productions. It is timely to raise awareness of snakes in our work and community environments this time of year. Mike has over 20 years’ experience working with dangerous wildlife and in education and was very passionate and knowledgeable about his field. The training gave staff an in depth understanding of dangerous wildlife behaviour, accident prevention and first aid to make the workplace a safer one. The sessions ran for two hours and covered snake and spider identification, behaviour, reduction, PPE, first aid, legislation, avoidance and much more.

Gender Impact Assessment Workshop: Earlier this month, 14 HRCC staff attended a 2-hour Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) workshop hosted by Women’s Health Grampians. Participating staff discussed the criteria for completing a GIA, as outlined under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, and worked through an example scenario to assess the gendered impacts that Council programs, policies and services have on the public. The workshop was a great success and some very insightful and useful discussions were had.

Options to Consider

Not applicable

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

2020-2024 Council Plan

Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

Risk Implications

Not applicable

Conclusion

That Council receive and note the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for October 2021.

10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cr Robyn Gulline, Mayor

- 28 September 2021 – ABC Wimmera radio interview – telephone
- 28 September 2021 – Committee Review discussions
- 30 September 2021 – Committee Review discussions
- 1 October 2021 – Triple H radio interview with Di Trotter
- 4 October 2021 – Aboriginal Advisory Committee – virtual
- 5 October 2021 – Committee Review discussions
- 6 October 2021 – Met with Geoff Lord, Fed Uni and Stacey Taig, West Vic Business
- 6 October 2021 – Western Bulldogs Foundation Sons of the West Graduation Ceremony – virtual
- 7 October 2021 – Committee Review discussions – virtual
- 12 October 2021 – ABC Wimmera radio interview – telephone
- 15 October 2021 – Regional Cities Victoria Advocacy Priorities Launch – virtual
- 19 October 2021 – Committee Review discussions
- 19 October 2021 – West Vic Business AGM – virtual
- 21 October 2021 – LGV, FinPro, VLGA Connect Live Panel Discussion: Debt - Another Resource for Councils to Consider – virtual
- 21 October 2021 – Committee Review discussions
- 23 October 2021 – Community Engagement on Greening Greater Horsham: A Municipal Tree Strategy

Cr Penny Flynn

- 23 September 2021 – Electing the Mayor – What Leadership Requires: VLGA Connect Live Panel Discussion
- 30 September 2021 – Invitation: I'd Like to be Mayor – ALGWA Vic
- 1 October 2021 – VLGA – FastTrack 2021 Leadership Program Part 2
- 7 October 2021 – Victorian Women's Trust – Strong Female Lead - A Panel Discussion
- 9 October 2021 – Exhibition launch – *Return to the Beginning* and *To Resound, Unbound – Histories* exhibitions – Wimmera Regional Art Gallery
- 15 October 2021 – VLGA – Governance and Councillor Advisory Network

Cr David Bowe

- 1 October 2021 - Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) FastTrack 2021 Leadership Program Part 2 (online)
- 4 October 2021 – Council Briefing (online via zoom)
- 5 October 2021 - Committee Review Meetings - Domestic Animal Management and Haven Recreation Reserve (In person at The Station)
- 6 October 2021 – Respect Victoria - Preventing elder abuse through intergenerational bonds – (Online Forum)
- 11 October 2021 – Council Briefing (online via zoom)
- 15 October 2021 - Wimmera Regional Library Corporation Board Meeting
- 18 October 2021 - Metropolitan Transport Forum and Municipal Association of Victoria online forum for Councils about improving state-wide bus services
- 19 October 2021- Victorian Chamber of Commerce – Vaccinations Conversations (webinar via zoom)
- 19 October 2021 - Meeting with Aquatic Centre Advisory Committee (In person at The Station)

- 19 October 2021 - West Vic Business (formerly Business Horsham) AGM (online via zoom)
- 21 October 2021 - LGV, FinPro, VLGA Connect Live Panel Discussion: Debt - Another Resource for Councils to Consider (online via zoom)
- 21 October 2021 - Housing Emergency: Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) and Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) Australia Global Live Panel Forum (online via zoom)

Cr Di Bell

- 28 September 2021 -Council Committee Review meeting
- 29 September 2021- 3 hours driving around North area of Horsham to gathering an overview
- 29 September 2021 - Council Briefing
- 30 September 2021 - Council Committee Review meeting
- 30 September 2021- Regional Growth meeting
- 4 October 2021- Council briefing
- 5 October 2021- FRRR Grant seeker workshop
- 6 October 2021 - Land Use Planning training
- 8 October 2021 - GWM Workshop and Land Use Planning
- 11 October 2021 - Council Meeting followed by Council Briefing
- 12 October 2021 - WDA Meeting
- 13 October 2021 - Regional Growth Training
- 14 October 2021 - Leadership Wimmera training
- 19 October 2021 - Council Committee Review meeting
- 19 October 2021 - West Vic Business AGM
- 20 October 2021 - Regional Growth Training
- 21 October 2021 - Webinar – Debt – Council Resource
- 21 October 2021 - Webinar – Addressing Housing Crisis
- 21 October 2021 - Council Committee Review meeting

Cr Claudia Haenel

- 27 September 2021 - HRCC Council Meeting - Zoom
- 28 September 2021 - Committees Review Engagement – The Station, Horsham
- 29 September 2021 - Coffee with Councillor – Weir Park Horsham
- 1 October 2021 - MAV Strategic Planning and Decision Making Part 2 training - Zoom
- 4 October 2021 - Council Briefing Meeting - Zoom
- 6 October 2021 - Preventing elder abuse through intergenerational bonds - Zoom
- 6 October 2021 - Coffee with Councillor – Police Paddock Horsham
- 7 October 2021 - Committees Review Engagement – The Station, Horsham
- 8 October 2021 - GWMWater Customer and Stakeholder Workshop - Zoom
- 11 October 2021 - Additional Council Meeting - Zoom
- 11 October 2021 -Council Briefing Meeting - Zoom
- 13 October 2021 - Coffee with Councillor – Natimuk Showgrounds
- 17 October 2021 - Green Lake Foreshore invitation – Green Lake
- 18 October 2021 - Metropolitan Transport Forum – Buses 2 - Zoom
- 19 October 2021 - Meeting with Aquatic Centre Advisory Committee – The Station, Horsham
- 20 October 2021 - Coffee with Councillor – Laharum Community Hall
- 20 October 2021 - MAV Presentation and Public Speaking Skills – Zoom
- 20 October 2021 - Justitia Connect Online Event: Working Women and the Pandemic – Zoom

- 21 October 2021 - LGV, FinPro, VLGA Connect Live Panel Discussion: Debt - Another Resource for Councils to Consider - Zoom
- 21 October 2021 - Australian Local Governments Accelerating Action at COP26 Virtual Forum – Zoom
- 21 October 2021 - Committee Review HRLE - The Station, Horsham
- 21 October 2021 - Innovative Approaches to Addressing the Housing Crisis: VLGA and LGiU Global Live Panel Forum – Zoom
- 21 October 2021 - GCW LG Forum Meeting – Zoom

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

I would like to acknowledge all the community committee representatives who I have recently met through the committee review process. Representing a community committee as a volunteer requires many hours of unpaid volunteer effort. It is these groups and connections that form the fabric of our society. It was a pleasure to meet you all and please keep your passion burning for the groups you are so committed to.

I would also like to thank the community members who have come out to Coffee with a Councillor every Wednesday morning. I love meeting new people wherever I go, and all your concerns are valued and shared to the Council group. I hope to continue this meaningful way of listening to you, our community.

SUSPEND STANDING ORDERS**MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr David Bowe**

That Standing Orders be suspended for Verbal Councillor Reports and Acknowledgements.

CARRIED

The time being 8.49pm, the Council meeting was suspended.

RESUME STANDING ORDERS**MOVED Cr Penny Flynn Seconded Cr David Bowe**

That Standing Orders resume.

CARRIED

The time being 9.02pm, the Council meeting resumed.

MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Di Bell

That the Councillor Reports and Acknowledgements be received.

CARRIED

11. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

Nil

13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

13.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS

- Council Briefing Meeting held on Monday 4 October 2021 at 5.00pm
- Council Briefing Meeting held on Monday 11 October 2021 at 5.20pm

Refer to **Appendix “13.1A”**

13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

Nil

13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE

Nil

13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

- Horsham Tidy Towns Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 21 September 2021 at 12.30pm
- Western Highway Action Committee Meeting held on Friday 8 October 2021 at 10.00am

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.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded Cr Claudia Haenel

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.

CARRIED

14. NOTICE OF MOTION

14.1 NOTICE OF MOTION NO 191

Given by Cr Di Bell

TAKE NOTICE that it is my intention to move the following motion at the Council meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council to be held at the Civic Centre, Roberts Avenue, Horsham, on Monday 25 October 2021.

“That the priority of all projects included in the Asset Plan and Council Plan, be reviewed by this Council, in line with the Social Infrastructure Framework December 2020, by 31 December 2021.”

Rationale

This Council has not reviewed the detail and hierarchy of the full project list since being elected in 2020, and I believe this needs to be completed prior to developing the new Action Plan and beginning planning for the 2022 Budget.

As stated in the officer’s report to the Dec 2020 Council meeting, the Social Infrastructure Framework provides a strategic approach to asset management ensuring a fair, transparent, and consistent approach to renewal and upgrades.

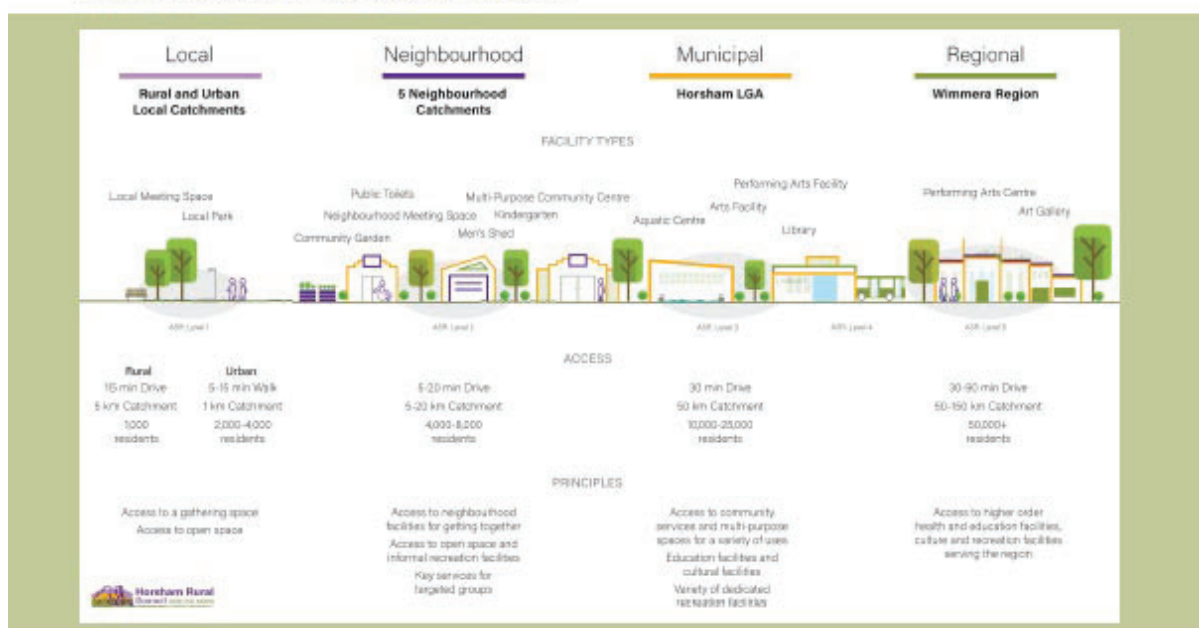
Social Infrastructure refers to our community facilities, services and networks which help individuals, families, groups and communities meet their social needs, for development and improved wellbeing.

I have submitted this NOM because I believe we are now in a period of very mixed and changing social needs in our community due to the Covid journey over the last 20 months, and that it is critical that not only our services and networks are developing and supporting a strong, well-resourced and connected community, but our ‘built infrastructure’ enables members of our community to not only recover, but also reach their full potential.

The Social Infrastructure Framework provides:

- Hierarchy categorisation and guiding principles
- Audit of existing infrastructure highlighting where supply meets needs, or if there is an oversupply/under supply both currently and in the future

Figure 1. Social infrastructure hierarchy framework



The four levels of hierarchy identified are:

- » **Local:** Local facilities are limited to facilities that should be accessible close to home such as a local meeting space and a local park. The access benchmarks are different for rural and urban areas. Rural areas of around 1,000 residents may require a local facility, however a similar facility in an urban area can serve a larger population (between 2,000 to 4,000 residents). In the rural area, local facilities may need to be accessed by car (approximately 15 minute drive), but in the urban area, they should be accessible by walking.
- » **Neighbourhood:** Neighbourhood facilities are a broader range of facilities, including neighbourhood meeting spaces, community gardens and kindergartens. Multiple neighbourhood facilities may be provided across the municipality including some in rural areas.
- » **Municipality:** Municipal facilities are higher order facilities such as a children's and community hub, aquatic centre, and library. Generally, one municipal facility is provided to serve the whole Horsham Municipality. As the centre of the Horsham Municipality, these facilities should all be located in Horsham City.
- » **Regional:** Regional facilities are significant facilities that serve the whole Wimmera Region. Regional facilities include regional arts and cultural facilities. As the regional centre, these facilities tend to be located in Horsham City.

The report also stated that the framework provides a summary of needs assessment findings, and an outline and that an action plan is the next step.

I believe it is critical that this Council, completes this review, in a workshop format, to prioritise infrastructure to be included in the Action Plan being produced to implement the new Council Plan, and would be included in the review of the Asset Plan which was to be completed following adoption of the Council Plan.

Refer to **Appendix "14.1A"** for copy of Notice of Motion.

Cr Di Bell

CIVIC CENTRE
HORSHAM 3400
20.10.2021

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Ian Ross

That the priority of all projects included in the Asset Plan and Council Plan, be reviewed by this Council, in line with the Social Infrastructure Framework December 2020, by 31 December 2021.

LOST

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr Bowe

That the meeting close to the public to consider Confidential Matters.

CARRIED

The time being 9.23pm, the meeting closed to the public.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn

That Council appoint Mr Richard Trigg to the Audit and Risk Committee for an additional 3 year term in accordance with the Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

CARRIED

CLOSE

After dealing with Confidential Matters, the meeting closed at 9.53pm

DocuSigned by:

Robyn Gulline

5FE6C19B2E524E5...

The Mayor, Cr Robyn Gulline
Chairperson