

**MINUTES of the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held in person and livestreamed at [www.hrcc.vic.gov.au](http://www.hrcc.vic.gov.au) at 5.30pm on 27 January 2021.**

**PRESENT**

Cr Di Bell, Cr David Bowe, Cr Penny Flynn, Cr Robyn Gulline, 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 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, Jupagalk, Jaadwa and Jadawadjali people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community.

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

**3. OPENING AND WELCOME**

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

**4. APOLOGIES**

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 in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm on 14 December 2020 be adopted.

**Council Resolution****MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr Di Bell**

That the minutes emanating from the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm on 14 December 2020 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**

Nil

## 9.1 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND GROWTH REPORT

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Fiona Gormann	<b>Director:</b>	Kevin O'Brien
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Manager Investment Attraction and Growth	<b>Directorate:</b>	Communities and Place
<b>Department:</b>	Communities and Place	<b>File Number:</b>	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 November 2020.

### Summary

The Investment Attraction and Growth Report provides a summary of economic development activities in the municipality during the reporting period.

### Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Investment Attraction and Growth Report for November 2020.

### Council Resolution

**MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn**

That Council receive and note the Investment Attraction and Growth Report for November 2020.

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

The Investment Attraction and Growth report is tabled monthly at a Council Meeting.

Discussion

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

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Planning Policy Framework Translation

The Strategic Planning Unit is advancing the finalisation of the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) translation with the Smart Planning Team of the Department of Environment, Land, Water, Planning (DELWP). The purpose of this translation is to bring the local elements of the Horsham Planning Scheme into conformity with the new structure for all Victorian planning schemes (introduced by Amendment VC148).

The translation involves policy neutral updates and changes to the existing Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF), including the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and local policies with no change to the purpose of Council’s local planning scheme policies. This will improve the operation of planning policy in Victoria and better aligns state and local policy. The PPF is structured under three-tiers that integrates state, regional and local policy, removing the repetition that occurred between state and local policy. The policies are grouped by themes (e.g. settlement, biodiversity, heritage) with directly relevant regional and local policies nested beneath the corresponding state planning policy and areas of duplication removed.

The table below shows the changes to the policy structure following Amendment VC148 and what the structure will be once the LPP Translation is complete.

Table 1 - Policy Structure of a Planning Scheme		
<b>Before VC148</b> A planning scheme before Amendment VC148 includes: Clauses 9-19 - SPPF Clauses 20-22 - LPPF <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clause 21 - MSS (including information required under Section 12A(3)(c) of the Act)</li><li>• Clause 22 - LPP (as relevant)</li></ul>	<b>After VC148 - transitional</b> A planning scheme after VC148, but before the local content is integrated includes: Clauses 10-19 - PPF Clauses 20-23 - LPPF <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clause 21 - MSS</li><li>• Clause 22 - LPP (as relevant)</li><li>• Clause 23 - LPPF Operation (transitional)</li></ul>	<b>After VC148 - Integrated</b> A fully-integrated PPF, with local content includes: Clause 02 - Municipal Planning Strategy Clauses 10-19 - PPF Clause 74.01 - Application of Zones, Overlays and Provisions (including schedule) Clause 74.02 - Further Strategic Work (including schedule, as relevant)

FIGURE 1 MODERNISING THE LPPF (DELWP, 2020)

In September 2020, Council endorsed the draft translation of the Horsham Planning Policy Framework and gave the authority to the CEO to finalise minor edits with DELWP. It also consented to the Minister for Planning preparing and approving 20(4) amendment to the Horsham Planning Scheme to implement the translation.

*Horsham South Structure Plan*

The Strategic Planning Unit is nearing the completion of Stage 1 of the Horsham South Structure Plan.

An Emerging Option, in other words, a high-level land use and infrastructure plan identifying general directions for planned growth and development and key issues to be resolved, was made available for public comment in March 2020. The Emerging Option Discussion Paper is a precursor to the formal preparation of a structure plan.



Council was required to enforce State government COVID-19 restrictions in regards to Horsham's community need to be physical distancing and self-isolating. Round 2 of face-to-face community consultation was due to occur in April 2020 but was postponed until August-September 2020 while Council transitioned to an online platform.

Council received 23 submissions in response to the Emerging Option Discussion Paper and approximately 50 participants attended the public webinar series via Zoom across three days (7, 9 and 10 September 2020). Feedback received has been compiled and will be provided on Council's website in the New Year. The next step for this project is to brief the Project Control Group and Councillors and seek authorisation to commence Stage 2 of the Horsham Structure Plan.

The structuring planning process (Stage 2) will involve the preparation of a framework addressing the planning intent for the Horsham South area. It will include information on environmental and heritage matters, future major infrastructure requirements, key features, zoning and residential densities. It will illustrate details such as road configuration and the location of future local convenience and community amenities such as open space and shared paths. It will be an important document in guiding Council when considering subdivision and development proposals of land.

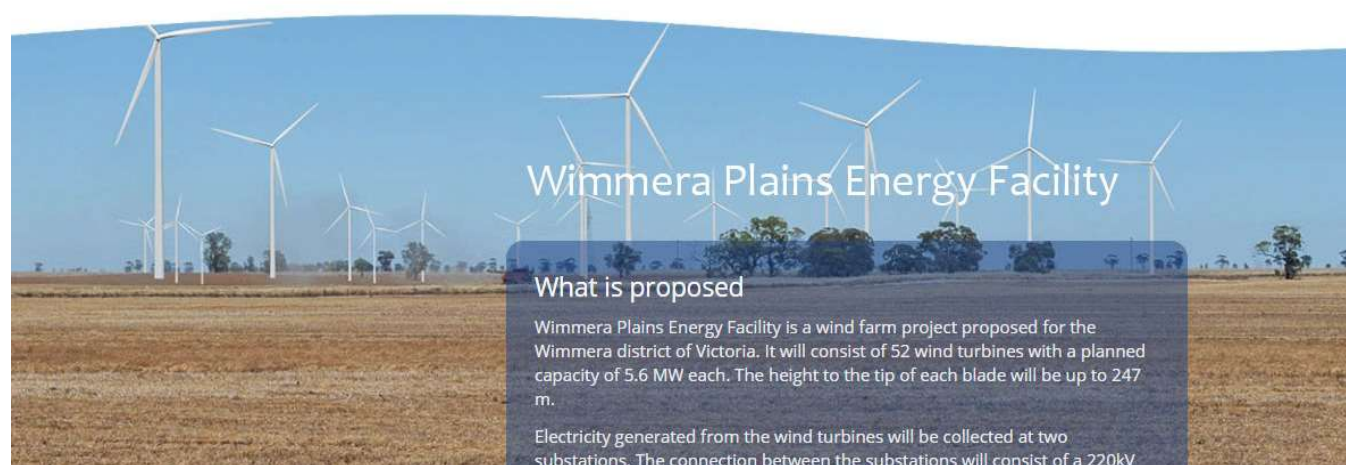
Further land owner, community and stakeholder consultation will occur once a draft structure plan is ready for consultation. The structure plan will then go through a formal statutory process which will seek to rezone land and/or amend planning controls.

## STATUTORY PLANNING

The Statutory Planning team have been very busy in the lead up to the Christmas break with a large number of applications for medium density housing, licensed premises variations and small lot subdivisions with approximately 40 applications currently in progress.

### Windfarm

The Wimmera Plains Windfarm application is currently being considered by the Minister for Planning and proposed 52 wind towers to the north west of Jung. During November and December, the planning permit has been on Public Notice to landholders within 5km of the proposed windfarm. All submissions are likely to be considered by a Planning Panel in 2021. Further information can be found at <https://wimmeraplainsenergyfacility.com.au/>.



### Victoria's Big Housing Build

As part of the response and recovery to the COVID-19 pandemic the State Government announced the Big Housing Build to address social and affordability housing and in 2020/21 will commence to build 1,100 new homes and create 2,000 new jobs. The State Government also approved Amendment VC187 to Planning Schemes across Victoria which introduces a new particular provision, to streamline the planning permit process for housing projects by or on behalf of the Director of Housing. The Minister for Energy, Environment, and Climate Change is the responsible authority for assessing the development of 10 or more dwellings and apartments. Proposals for less than 10 dwellings will be assessed by the local council.

### Planning Applications Determined

Below are the number of Planning Permits issued for the month of November 2020 and a comparison with the same period last year.

Type	2020		2019	
	No.	*Value \$	No.	*Value \$
Miscellaneous Domestic	8	\$1,535,080	6	\$2,171,000
Industrial/Commercial	3	\$10,626	2	\$530,000
Subdivisions	Nil (lots)	-	1(2 lots)	\$625,000
Other	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>\$1,545,706</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>\$3,326,000</b>

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

Total number of planning permits issued in the Horsham Rural City Council area from 1 January to 30 November 2020 was 89 compared to 123 in 2019.

Planning permits issued for subdivisions have created 43 new lots from 1 January to 30 November 2020 compared to 72 in 2019.

## **BUILDING SERVICES**

### *The HRCC Building Services*

- Respond and attend to building related emergencies, unsafe or dangerous buildings and land within the scope of the Act and the building regulations
- Investigate safety matters concerning buildings, pool safety barriers, essential safety measure requirements, and the like
- Issue building permits
- Issue report and consents
- Carry out inspections of buildings and building work
- Issue certificates of final inspection and occupancy permits
- Referral agency in the case of subdivisions
- Respond to general building enquiries
- Approve temporary occupation of buildings, and
- Issue of siting consent for prescribed temporary structures.
- Enforce safety and building standards through:
  - Giving and enforcing directions to fix non-compliant building work
  - Causing a building notice to be served ○ Applying for search warrants
  - Making building orders,
  - Making emergency orders (municipal building surveyors only)
  - Advising and appearing before the Building Appeals Board in relation to certain decisions of the MBS and the relevant council
  - Enforcement of the new pool and spa registration, certification, safety and compliance laws

### *The difference between Council and Private Building Surveyors*

Private building surveyors only issue building permits, and only carry out inspections / sign-off on those building works for which they have issued the permit. Council building surveyors carry out all of the functions of a private building surveyor; however, building permits are only a small part of the functions, as detailed above. Building Services have the added responsibility for the safety and building standard of all buildings within the municipality. Council building surveyors also undertake the regulatory function of issuing report and consents, and act as a referral agency in the case of subdivisions. Council building surveyors are typically the first point of contact for all general building enquiries.

## **Building Permits Issued**

Below are the number of building permits issued for the month of November 2020 and a comparison with the same period last year.



## Permits issued by Horsham Rural City Council for this Municipality

Type	NOV 2020		NOV 2019	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	-	-	-	-
Alterations to Dwellings	-	-	-	-
Dwelling resitting's	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	8	\$177,235	2	\$62,622
Removal/Demolish	-	-	1	\$24,948
Industrial/Commercial	-	-	2	\$361,892
Signs	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>\$177,235</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>\$449,462</b>

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

Type	NOV 2020		NOV 2019	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	10	\$4,959,926	7	\$2,768,977
Alterations to Dwellings	3	\$367,722	1	\$32,230
Dwelling resitting's	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	7	\$296,379	6	\$120,410
Removal/Demolish	2	\$29,000	-	-
Industrial/Commercial	-	-	4	\$4,103,708
Signs	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>\$5,653,027</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>\$7,025,325</b>

A total of 65 Building Permits have been issued by the Horsham Rural City Council at a total value of \$4,575,198 from 1 January to 30 November 2020 compared to 78 Building Permits at a total value of \$4,385,465 in 2019.

Private Building Surveyors have issued 177 Building Permits at a total value of \$36,395,395 from 1 January to 30 November 2020 compared to 171 at a total value of \$49,022,980 in 2019.

One of the many homes recently inspected by the HRCC Building Services Unit.





Photo Courtesy Herald Sun

*Home ripped apart by 'mini tornado'*

## **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND EVENTS**

### **Business Support**

The Business Support Team has continued to make direct contact with hospitality businesses to ensure the Council response to outdoor dining, both temporary and permanent, is appropriate and meets the specific needs of business. Events are starting to make a return to Horsham, as the COVID-19 requirements have become known.

### **Direct business engagement**

	October	YTD
General business	14	158
New or expanding business	6	30
Event organisers	8	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>223</b>

### **COVID-19 Business Contact YTD**

Specific industries	No.
Retail	149
Industry (building and construction and other industries)	54
Accommodation	72
Health Services	20
Beauty	19
Service Industry	66
Foods	33
Hospitality	69
Events - approximately	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>542</b>

Location:	No.
Wartook Valley (including Mt Zero, Laharum, Wartook and Brimpaen)	26
Horsham	460
Natimuk	19
Dooen	3
Haven and Surrounds	15
Dadswell's Bridge	19

**Note:** Businesses may have been contacted more than once to assist with changes in restrictions impacting on certain industries more than others.

### Outdoor Dining

The Roberts Place pop-up parklet area which has been well received by the community will help inform other similar parklet type and locations. Currently there is a survey for community, visitors and businesses to complete which will advise future expansion of outdoor dining. It is envisaged that this will be a combination of casual and permanent infrastructure. Horsham has a very prominent number of outdoor dining businesses and the approach will be to encourage permanent infrastructure. This will see a long-term use and sustainability of outdoor dining. Other communities located in the municipality are invited to consider outdoor dining options too.

### Tourism

Volunteers for Visitor Services, the Art Gallery and Horsham Town Hall have been updated about the relocation and changes to services. The staff look forward to welcoming the volunteers back once restrictions allow.

Visitor services have been introduced to a new program being shared by the Horsham Hub which is designed to collect statistical data. This data will be captured and reported on in future Investment Attraction and Growth reports.

The Horsham and Grampians Visitor Information Centre and the Horsham Town Hall Integration is progressing well. The sale of local produce is extremely popular. To support local producers Wimmera Development Association in partnership with the staff at the Visitor Services have created local produce hampers to sell over the Christmas period.



Photo: CHRIS MICHAELS Courtesy The Horsham Times

Dorian and Melissa Doti from The Little Shopper Place, Tamara Hallam-Brook from the Horsham and Grampians Visitor Centre, WDA project manager Mark Fletcher, Andrea Hogan from Visitor Services and Tanya Stanley, Cooper Stanley, Toby Stanley and Warren Stanley from Beetanicals.

## Events

The lead up to the Christmas and New Year holiday break has seen an increase interest in what there is to do in and around Horsham and is reflected in the continued increase in the visitation to the [www.visithorsham.com.au](http://www.visithorsham.com.au) website as shown in the table below.

	November	YTD
Notice of intention to hold an event application	8	17
Visitor Information Centre visits	147	507
Visithorsham.com web visits	3687	14,269

The State Government recently release the Events Framework to guide COVID safe event planning. Markets are deemed a retail experience and sits outside this framework. Other events will have more requirements based on the complexity of the proposed event.

## Options to Consider

Not Applicable – no decision required

## Sustainability Implications

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

## Community Engagement

The report has been prepared in consultation with range of agencies and will be made publicly available to Business Horsham, WDA and on HRCC website.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

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

**Collaboration**

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

**Financial Implications**

The Business and Community Support package will deliver projects that make up Councils direct financial contribution of \$484,000.

Further projects will be developed to support businesses through the Outdoor Eating and Entertaining program for \$500,000. These funds need to be fully expended by 30 June 2021.

**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**

The activities undertaken by the Investment Attraction and Growth Department are designed to support a broad sector of those who live here, do business here and visit here. November has been an extremely busy month for the department, especially for our Business Services team who were responsible for assessing the homes damaged by the recent mini tornado.

## 9.2 RECONSTRUCTION AND WIDENING OF DRUNG JUNG ROAD – CONTRACT 21/003

**Author's Name:** Mazen Aldaghstani  
**Author's Title:** Manager Engineering Services  
**Department:** Engineering Department

**Director:** John Martin  
**Directorate:** Infrastructure  
**File Number:** 2020- 0728

### 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 (refer to confidential report on this subject)

### Purpose

To award the contract for the reconstruction of 2.145 km of Drung Jung Road as follows:

1. Stage 2 from chainage 2915 to chainage 4020 ( 1.095 kilometres)
2. Stage 3 from chainage 4020 to chainage 5070 ( 1.050 Kilometres)

### Summary

- Council has budgeted for the reconstruction of Drung Jung Road stage 2 in the 2020-21 financial year.
- In May 2020, Council submitted a funding proposal through the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program (HVSP) to be able to incorporate stage 3 of the road reconstruction.
- Council was also successful in securing extra funding for this and some other projects through the *Agrilinks Upgrade Program Funding* as announced by the Minister Agriculture on 22 December 2020.
- Both Stage 2 and Stage 3 were incorporated into one tender proposal in two separate pricing schedules.
- Public tenders were sought through Council's normal procurement processes.
- A good response was received, and a preferred tenderer has been identified to conduct the works through the normal evaluation process.

### Recommendation

That Council accept the tender submitted by Millers Civil Contractors for the reconstruction of Drung Jung Road Stages 2 and 3 for the lump sum price of \$762,575.

### Council Resolution

#### MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Claudia Haenel

That Council accept the tender submitted by Millers Civil Contractors for the reconstruction of Drung Jung Road Stages 2 and 3 for the lump sum price of \$762,575.

CARRIED

## REPORT

### Background

The reconstruction of Drung Jung Road is part of the 2020-21 rural roads reconstruction program. The contract for the reconstruction of 2.145 km of Drung Jung Road is as follows;

- Stage 2 from chainage 2915 to chainage 4020 ( 1,095 metres)
- Stage 3 from chainage 4020 to chainage 5070 ( 1,050 metres)

The diagrams below show the sites of the works (hatched in each diagram). The section of Drung Jung Rd south of Stage 2 was widened in last financial year.

**Drung Jung Road Stage-2**



**Drung Jung Road Stage-3**



**Discussion**

A detailed tender evaluation report is provided in the appendix to the confidential report on this subject.

Key aspects include:

- Council received six tender returns for the reconstruction of Drung Jung Road stage 2 and stage 3
- The evaluation of tenders was based on the criteria as presented in the tender documents.

The availability of contractors has been a significant issue for the overall program in the past. Size and location and funding opportunities were considered in bundling the two stages into one tender.

**Options to Consider**

If funding for the project was insufficient, the works could have been split into two separate stages, with stage 3 being constructed in a subsequent year.

**Sustainability Implications**

Nil

**Community Engagement**

The key communication aspect with these projects will be the interaction between the appointed contractors, Council's project supervisor and the adjacent landowners. Council has standard arrangements in place for this communication.

A community issue that has arisen in planning for this project has been ensuring the flood levels in this area are not exacerbated by changes in the road levels.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

The reconstruction of rural roads is an annual asset driven program which addresses the replacement of degraded pavement and improving the geometrical design, ultimately enhancing safety and reducing maintenance cost.

**Collaboration**

- Council was successful in obtaining \$284,000 through the Federal Government's Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program (HVSPP)
- Council was also successful in obtaining \$451,000 through the Agrilinks Upgrade Funding Program, part of which will be used for this project
- Council staff have liaised with the Wimmera Catchment Management Authority (CMA) to ensure that the new design levels have no implication on flooding and the natural watercourses which cross the road.

**Financial Implications**

The preferred tender for this project is for the sum of \$762,575. Funding for this will be sourced from Council rates, the Federal Government's Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program and the Victorian Government's Agrilinks Upgrade Fund. Details of the finances for this project are presented in the confidential report on this subject.

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

Not applicable



**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

2020-2024 Council Plan

Goal 3 – Asset management - 3.4 Deliver works to develop and maintain Council's physical assets for long term sustainability, amenity and safety

**Risk Implications**

Standard construction risks will apply. Council officers will be supervising the works to manage these risks.

Council officers will be asking the successful contractors to provide their work methodology and progressively update their OH&S plan to address COVID-19 requirements and identify their risk control measures.

The risk of flooding in the area will not be increased by these works, as the final road levels are the same as those of the current road formation.

**Conclusion**

The preferred tender provides the best value to Council.

### 9.3 AUDIT AND RISK EXTERNAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS ALLOWANCES

**Author's Name:** Diana McDonald  
**Author's Title:** Governance Co-ordinator  
**Department:** Governance and Information

**Director:** Graeme Harrison  
**Directorate:** Corporate Services  
**File Number:** F019/A10/000001

#### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

#### Status

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

#### Appendix

Nil

#### Purpose

To review and determine the Audit and Risk Committee Independent Members allowance.

#### Summary

- The Audit and Risk independent committee members allowances have not been reviewed since March 2016
- Given the changes in focus for this committee with the New *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA2020) and the new Council term, it is timely for a review to be undertaken.
- Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) currently pays the Chair \$500 per meeting and the other two external members \$250 per meeting attended.
- Council has benchmarked these amounts and believe that they need to be increased to align with similar sized councils.

#### Recommendation

That Council increase the level of the Audit and Risk Committee Members allowance, to \$750 per meeting for the Chairperson and \$450 per meeting for the other independent members and that the fee increase by CPI or 0%, whichever is the greater, effective 1 July each year.

#### Council Resolution

##### **MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn**

That Council increase the level of the Audit and Risk Committee Members allowance, to \$750 per meeting for the Chairperson and \$450 per meeting for the other independent members and that the fee increase by CPI or 0%, whichever is the greater, effective 1 July each year.

CARRIED

## REPORT

### Background

The Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) is an independent advisory committee to Council established under section 53 of the LGA2020.

Under the requirements of the LGA2020 the Audit and Risk Committee has additional responsibilities and oversight including a stronger emphasis on the key role that internal control environment plays and how the committee can monitor this area of Council's performance more effectively. This change includes references to the impact of the new Governing Principles on Council's policies and procedures and has been captured in the committee's new Charter and Annual Work Program.

The Audit and Risk Committee's objective is to provide appropriate independent advice and recommendations to Council on matters relevant to the Committee's Charter in order to facilitate decision-making by Council in relation to the discharge of Council's accountability requirements.

The Committee does not have executive powers or authority to implement actions in areas over which management has responsibility and does not have any delegated financial responsibility. The Committee does not have any management functions and is therefore independent of management.

The Committee provides oversight and guidance on the following matters:

- Council financial performance reporting;
- Compliance of Council policies and procedures with the LGA2020, particularly the governance principles;
- The effectiveness of the management and reporting of Council's risk management and fraud and corruption prevention;
- The effectiveness of Council's system of internal controls;
- The effectiveness of the internal and external audit functions; and
- The provision of an effective means of communication between the external auditor, internal audit, management and the Council.

Independent members must bring a high degree of skills and experience to their role in order to ensure that the function is delivered effectively for the benefit of Council.

Under the LGA2020 section 53(6) council may pay a fee to a member of an Audit and Risk Committee who is not a Councillor of the Council.

Council's Audit and Risk Committee Charter section (4.15) states *"Remuneration will be paid to each independent member of the Committee as determined by Council. Annual increases in the remuneration of Committee members will be limited to increases in the Consumer Price Index (CPI All Groups Melbourne) and adjusted annually on 1 July."*

### Discussion

A benchmarking exercise was undertaken of a number of like and similar sized councils, which indicated that HRCC's rate is at the lower end of the scale. Payments per meeting for the chair ranged from \$500 to \$2,020 and for other members from \$400 to \$1,600.

When this benchmarking exercise was completed many councils were also undertaking a review of their allowances with a view to increase them further, post the new responsibilities given to the committee with the new LGA2020.

Council last reviewed allowances in March 2016.

Council also pays independent members a travel reimbursement when they travel to attend meetings in person in Horsham, which is calculated in line with Council's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.

Council currently pays the Chair \$500 per meeting and the other two external members \$250 per meeting attended.

Council's Audit and Risk Committee meets on a quarterly basis and generally the meetings last for two hours. The meeting agendas are comprehensive and require all members to undertake significant pre-reading and to be well prepared and knowledgeable in a broad range of risk, governance and financial areas.

To increase the allowance to \$750 for the Chairperson and \$450 for the other two independent members would increase the amount to a mid-range fee for a similar sized council as per the benchmarking undertaken.

**Options to Consider**

The following are options that Council could also consider:

1. Pay the current amount plus a set % increase
2. Pay at a higher amount after gathering more current up to date information from other councils post the new LGA2020
3. Do not increase the allowances paid.

**Sustainability Implications**

Not applicable

**Community Engagement**

Not applicable

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Not applicable

**Collaboration**

Not applicable

**Financial Implications**

Operations of Council's Audit and Risk Committee is covered within the 2020-21 operational budget allocation. The proposed increases would increase the cost to council by \$2,600 per annum and would need to be factored in to the 2021-22 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 Priorities, 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 LGA 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 potential for fraud and corruption to occur.

**Conclusion**

This information is provided to Councillors to consider the review and determination of the Audit and Risk Independent Committee Members Allowances.

## 9.4 NAMING OF RESERVE MARDON DRIVE / BURNT CREEK AREA

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Kylie Fischer	<b>Director:</b>	Graeme Harrison
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Co-ordinator Rates and Valuations	<b>Directorate:</b>	Corporate Services
<b>Department:</b>	Finance	<b>File Number:</b>	F27/A15/000001

### Officer Direct or indirect Conflict of Interest

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

☐ 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 name a reserve on Mardon Drive, Horsham as the 'Jack Schier Reserve'.

### Summary

- Local residents who live on Mardon Drive, Graham and Julet Schultz, requested that a section of the reserve off Mardon Drive be named to honour the late Jack Schier.
- Jack Schier contributed generously towards the health and welfare of the local community.
- Council at its meeting on 24 August 2020, declared its intention to name a portion of the reserve alongside Burnt Creek, on Mardon Drive, Horsham after the late Jack Schier as the 'Jack Schier Reserve'.
- Community feedback has since been sought on the naming of the reserve, and the exact boundaries of the named area.

### Recommendation

That Council proceed to name the entire reserve alongside Burnt Creek, on Mardon Drive, as the 'Jack Schier Reserve', as depicted on the map in this report (Sections A, B & C).

### Council Resolution

#### **MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Ian Ross**

That Council proceed to name the entire reserve alongside Burnt Creek, on Mardon Drive, as the 'Jack Schier Reserve', as depicted on the map in this report (Sections A, B & C).

CARRIED

## REPORT

### Background

Jack Schier originally moved to Horsham in 1974 with his wife and adopted son, purchasing land at Haven. Jack's son had been diagnosed as disadvantaged and upon seeing the lack of facilities to cater for his son's needs, Jack donated 40 acres of his land to develop the Karkana Day Centre. He continued to have a strong interest in the development of this facility for many years until passing away in 2014.

Over the course of his life Jack Schier was known as a man who demonstrated a deep concern for the health and welfare of his community, and as a truly humble, charitable and generous benefactor to a number of community projects. He was actively involved in the Pleasant Creek Training Centre and Stawell Special Development School for a number of years, he financially assisted the Sunnyside Lutheran Rest Home, and was also a major contributor to the public appeal to build the Matron Arthur House Nursing Home which was opened at the Wimmera Base Hospital in 1987.

Schier Drive in Haven was named after Jack's brother, Donald Schier.

Council previously proposed the naming of the reserve after Jack Schier, at its meeting 24 August 2020 and resolved to seek community comments and feedback.

The proposed naming for the reserve meets all official requirements however to finalise the process the community was provided with the opportunity to support or object to the naming. The community was also offered the opportunity to comment on the exact land that this reserve cover. Three options were provided for consideration and comment by the community.





**Discussion**

The community engagement regarding the naming of the reserve after “Jack Schier” and the exact land that the name will apply to, has been completed. There were eleven responses, ten were in favour of the name and one opposed to the naming of the reserve. Of the ten in favour, nine wanted the name to apply to the entire area and one just to area A.

The relatively few responses reflect the scope and impact of the proposal. The scope is small and the change will only impact current users of the reserve and the proponents of the proposal (those that wish to commemorate Jack Schier). The impact is also minor as current users of the park would only see signage within the reserve which would have little to no impact on their ability to enjoy the reserve. The largest impact would be on the proponents.

The late Jack Schier’s family members also wrote to Council in support of the proposal.

**Options to Consider**

That Council could approve the naming of the reserve over only a portion of the whole area identified.

**Sustainability Implications**

Nil

**Community Engagement**

Consultation was undertaken in accordance with the guidelines under Section 7.1 of the ‘Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for roads, features and localities 2016’. This requires that Council promote the proposal to the immediate and extended community through various forms of media. This was undertaken over a 28 day period during mid November and early December 2020.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Not applicable

**Collaboration**

Not applicable

**Financial Implications**

The costs to this proposal are limited to the costs of signage for the park which will be covered within council’s existing signage budget.

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

Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2016.

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

2020-2024 Council Plan

Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

Horsham Rural City Council Street Naming Policy

**Risk Implications**

Not applicable

**Conclusion**

The name Jack Schier conforms to the principles in the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for roads, features and localities 2016, and therefore may be used to name the reserve. The community feedback received indicates we should proceed to name the entire area the “Jack Schier Reserve”.

## 9.5 FINANCIAL HARDSHIP REPORT FOR THE PERIOD TO 31 DECEMBER 2020

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Andrea Hogan	<b>Director:</b>	Graeme Harrison
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Financial Hardship Coordinator	<b>Directorate:</b>	Corporate Services
<b>Department:</b>	Corporate Services	<b>File Number:</b>	F15/A07/000001

### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

### Status

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

### Appendix

Nil

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### Purpose

To receive and note an update on requests for financial relief for council rates and other charges due to COVID-19.

### Summary

- A summary of the requests received to date
- Health Registration renewals have been waived for 27 applicants for the current financial year for a total of \$6,770

### Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Financial Hardship Support report.

### Council Resolution

**MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn**

That Council receive and note the Financial Hardship Support report.

CARRIED

## REPORT

## Background

The Financial Hardship Officer is initially a singular contact point for residents, commercial tenants, sporting groups and ratepayers who are experiencing immediate problems or seeking information on meeting their commitments to Council. Some customers have payment obligations with more than one department or more complex requirements. The Financial Hardship Officer was appointed for a period of 9 months to 31 December 2020.

The following table summarises the requests received to date by type by month:

SUMMARY BY TYPE BY MONTH											
Count of Type Row Labels	3-Mar	4-Apr	5-May	6-Jun	7-Jul	8-Aug	9-Sep	10-Oct	11-Nov	12-Dec	Grand Total
Animals		12		3	1		1	2			19
General Enquiry		2			2						4
Health Registration		1						1	17	7	26
Infringement		1									1
Lease - Commercial	6	4		3	6	1	6				26
Lease - Community		5			1	16					22
Not applicable		1									1
Other				1							1
Planning Permit				1	1				1		3
Rates - Business		1	2		1	1	3				8
Rates - Residential		5		2	1	1	6				15
Recreation Reserve Operations			1			1					2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>128</b>

There were 7 enquiries/actions during December with all being requests for waiver of the Health Fee registrations all of who have been succesful in their application. There have been no applications made for rate relief during December.

The following table summarises the current status of all enquiries by month:

SUMMARY BY STATUS BY MONTH			
Count of Type Row Labels	Completed	In Progress	Grand Total
3-Mar	5	1	6
4-Apr	30	2	32
5-May	3		3
6-Jun	8	2	10
7-Jul	13		13
8-Aug	20		20
9-Sep	14	2	16
10-Oct	2	1	3
11-Nov	17	1	18
12-Dec	7		7
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>128</b>

The following table summarises the completed actions by type and by the action undertaken:

SUMMARY OF COMPLETED ITEMS BY ACTION UNDERTAKEN									
Count of Type Row Labels	Payment Plan	Referred	Waived	No Waiver Given	No Action Required	Deferred	General Enquiry	Other	Grand Total
Animals					11	4			15
General Enquiry			1		3				4
Health Registration			25		1				26
Infringement	1								1
Lease - Commercial			19	3	1	1		1	25
Lease - Community	1		18		3				22
Not applicable					1				1
Other		1							1
Planning Permit			2						2
Rates - Business	5						2		7
Rates - Residential	10				1	2			13
Recreation Reserve Operations					2				2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>119</b>

Key activities undertaken during the month:

- Ongoing communication and assistance for rent relief with holders of commercial leases in council facilities
- Businesses enquiries regarding what options may be available if needed when rates in full become due
- Continue to have personal contact with individuals to discuss their circumstances and payment or deferral options
- Supporting applicants to formally complete requests for assistance
- Mention in media articles and the Council public notices continue to appear in local papers and also Council social media. Health registration renewals provided information and contact points for assistance

## Discussion

### 1. Rates

At 30 June 2020 the total balance of outstanding debt across 346 assessments rolled over was \$545,913. The arrears against 137 of these assessments have since been paid in full.

Between 30 June 20 and 18 August 20 interest was calculated against 75 assessments where no contact has been made with Council and no payments have been made. 17 of these debts have now been cleared in full (4 of these properties were sold).

As at 27 November 20 the total balance of outstanding 2019-20 arrears, arrears interest, current interest and legal fees across the remaining 209 assessments totals \$324,583. Of these 209 assessments, 23 have a balance of less than \$100, and of the remaining 186 assessments, 99 have a payment plan in place or are making regular payments of their own accord.

When comparing the rate arrears for levied amounts only; at 02 December 19 there was a total of \$208,031 in rate arrears outstanding, and at 27 November 20 there is a total of \$302,706 in rate arrears. The variance to this time last year is \$94,675.

There have been no financial hardship requests for rates during December.

### 2. Health Registrations

Request for waivers of Health Registration fees have declined sharply in December with many businesses choosing to pay their fees outright.

**Sustainability Implications**

Nil

**Community Engagement**

- Public Notices section of the local papers
- Conversations with community holders of commercial leases, commercial and residential ratepayers, Business Horsham, animal owners and debtors

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Nil

**Collaboration**

Nil

**Financial Implications**

The approximate costs to Council are as follows:

<b>COST TO COUNCIL BY CATEGORY</b>	
Row Labels	Cost to Council
<b>Payment Plan</b>	
Infringement	262
Payment Plan Total	262
<b>Waived</b>	
General Enquiry	80
Health Registration	6,770
Lease - Commercial	26,734
Lease - Community	34,491
Planning Permit	2,636
Waived Total	70,711
<b>Other</b>	
Lease - Commercial	45,474
Other Total	45,474
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>116,447</b>

The financial impact of the various deferrals, waivers and late payments are not yet clearly quantifiable and the full impact will be understood and reported at a later date.

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

Nil

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

Debt Collection Review for Council Rates and Charges, COVID-19 Hardship Policy and Procedure

**Risk Implications**

Continuing to build Council's relationship with the residents and ratepayers by being proactive and providing personal contact with each applicant.

**Conclusion**

Regular reporting will provide a snapshot of the financial impact of COVID-19 on our community who have financial obligations with Council. Providing extension of time and/or payment arrangements is relieving some financial pressure on the community.

## 9.6 REVIEW OF MAYORAL AND COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES

**Author's Name:** Diana McDonald  
**Author's Title:** Governance Co-ordinator  
**Department:** Governance and Information

**Director:** Graeme Harrison  
**Directorate:** Corporate Services  
**File Number:** F019/A10/000001

### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

### Status

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

## Appendix

Mayoral & Councillors Allowances – Category 2 Councils (**Appendix “9.6A”**)

### Purpose

To review and determine the level of Mayoral and Councillor Allowances.

### Summary

- The Mayor and Councillors are entitled to receive an allowance while performing their duty as an elected official.
- A new approach to the setting of Councillor and Mayoral Allowances will come in to effect with the new *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA2020) but Local Government Victoria (LGV) have advised that this will not occur before 30 June 2021 so Council must proceed to review its allowances in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* s74 (LGA1989).
- LGA1989, Council can choose what level of allowance to pay within the upper and lower limit for the Councils category as gazetted.
- Councillors may individually elect to receive a lesser amount or no allowance.
- The vast majority of Victorian Councils pay Mayoral and Councillor Allowances at the Upper Level of their respective categories
- Horsham Rural City Council is a Category 2 Council, and a Regional City, but does not pay the Mayoral and Councillor allowances at the Upper limit (see **Appendix “9.6A”**)
- To ensure legislative compliance with the *Local Government Act 2020* a review of Mayor and Councillor Allowances must be undertaken by 30 June 2021 and must provide an opportunity for members of the public to make submissions in accordance with s223 LGA1989.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Having reviewed the level of Councillor and Mayoral allowances and benchmarked these with other category 2 councils, propose that the Mayoral and Councillor Allowances be paid at the upper limits of the band for category 2 Councils.
2. Seek community submission and comment on the proposed allowances by close of business Wednesday 3 March 2021.

**Council Resolution**

**MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr Claudia Haenel**

That Council:

1. Having reviewed the level of Councillor and Mayoral allowances and benchmarked these with other category 2 councils, propose that the Mayoral and Councillor Allowances be paid at the upper limits of the band for category 2 Councils.
2. Seek community submission and comment on the proposed allowances by close of business Wednesday 3 March 2021.

CARRIED

**Cr Bell called for a Division of Council**

**For the motion:**

Cr Claudia Haenel

Cr Penny Flynn

Cr Les Power

Cr Robyn Gulline

**Against the motion:**

Cr Di Bell

Cr Ian Ross

Cr Bowe abstained from voting



## REPORT

### Background

Under the LGA 1989, Council is required to set an allowance for its Mayor and Councillors within the range that is set by the Minister of Local Government.

The Minister categorised each Council into one of three Categories, according to revenue levels and population. Horsham Rural City Council was re-categorised from a Category one Council to a Category 2 Council in early 2017 after the previous Council had adopted their allowances post their election. Whilst the previous council could have then elected to review their allowances post the category changing they did not choose to do so.

In Victoria most Councillors and Mayors are currently receiving an allowance at or near the top of their relevant range. A recent survey conducted by the Local Government Inspectorate states that a third of the Mayors dedicate more than 40 hours a week to their role and about 70 percent of Councillors dedicate more than 16 hours a week.

According to the Government's 2018 policy statement, Councillor Allowances are designed not as a form of salary but a recognition of their contribution.

Sections 74 and 75 of the LGA 1989 provide details of Council's obligations in relation to Councillor and Mayoral Allowances, reimbursement of expenses, and the support to be made available to the Mayor and Councillors to enable them to effectively undertake their civic duties. Under Section 74 (1), Council must review and determine the level of the Councillor allowance and the Mayoral allowance within the period of 6 months after a general election or by the next 30<sup>th</sup> of June, whichever is the later.

The following allowances were gazetted on 13 November 2019 and then no CPI increases were applied for 2020 so these amounts still remain as valid at this current point in time:



## Victoria Government Gazette

No. S 459 Wednesday 13 November 2019  
By Authority of Victorian Government Printer

### Local Government Act 1989

#### MAYORAL AND COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES ADJUSTMENT

Pursuant to section 73B(4)(a) of the **Local Government Act 1989**, notice is hereby given that an adjustment factor of two per cent applies to Mayoral and Councillor allowances.

Pursuant to section 73B(4)(b) of the **Local Government Act 1989**, the new limits and ranges of Mayoral and Councillor allowances, adjusted in accordance with the adjustment factor, are:

Category 1	Councillors: \$8,833–\$21,049 per annum	Mayors: up to \$62,884 per annum
Category 2	Councillors: \$10,914–\$26,245 per annum	Mayors: up to \$81,204 per annum
Category 3	Councillors: \$13,123–\$31,444 per annum	Mayors: up to \$100,434 per annum

This notice does not apply to the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and Councillors of the Melbourne City Council, and the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Greater Geelong City Council.

The new adjusted limits and ranges take effect on 1 December 2019.

Dated 12 November 2019

ADEM SOMYUREK MP  
Minister for Local Government

Horsham Rural City Council currently pays Councillor Allowances of \$21,049 and Mayoral Allowance of \$62,884 per annum. (Top of Category 1 levels)

### Discussion

The LGA2020 and the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019 (Vic)* (VIRTIPS Act), requires the Tribunal to make Determinations setting the values of the allowances payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors in Victorian Councils.

The first Determination will come into effect 6 months after the Tribunal receives a request from the Minister for Local Government to make the Determination. The Tribunal has not yet been requested to make a determination and when it has, the Tribunal has six months to make a determination from the date requested.

Consequently, Local Government Victoria has advised councils to undertake their own review of allowances under s74(1) of the LGA1989, which requires the review to be undertaken no later than 30 June 21 and that the community is provided with a 28 day period in which to make submissions. Following this review all future allowances will be determined by the Tribunal.

As at October 2020 all Category 2 Councils paid their councillor allowances at the top of the band.

Section 39 LGA2020 provides that the current allowances will temporarily apply until a new determination is made.

It is also worthwhile to note that under section 39(5) of the LGA2020:

A Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillors may elect:

- (a) to receive the entire allowance to which they are entitled; or
- (b) to receive a specified part of the allowance to which they are entitled; or
- (c) to receive no allowance.

### Options to Consider

Council may determine to pay allowances anywhere within the range of \$10,914 to \$26,245 for Councillors and up to \$81,204 for the Mayor.

### Financial Implications

To increase the Mayoral and Councillor Allowances to the top of category 2 as for all other Category 2 Councils, would see the amounts change and the full year financial impact, as follows:

	Current	Top of Category 2	% Change	Yearly Impact	Individual Councillor Impact
<b>Councillors x 6</b>	\$126,294	\$157,470	24.7%	\$31,176	\$5,196
<b>Mayor</b>	\$62,884	\$81,204	29.1%	\$18,320	\$18,320
<b>Total</b>	\$189,178	\$238,674	26.1%	\$49,496	

Council in its 2020-21 Budget provided for the possible increase in these allowances given that the Council category had changed from category 1 to category 2 in 2017.

### Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2020-2024 Council Plan - Goal 4 – Governance and Business Excellence

### Conclusion

This information is provided to Councillors to consider the review of Mayor and Councillor Allowances.

## 9.7 COMMUNITY VISION AND COUNCIL PLAN – PROJECT UPDATE

**Author's Name:** Graeme Harrison  
**Author's Title:** Director Corporate Services  
**Department:** Corporate Services

**Director:** Graeme Harrison  
**Directorate:** Corporate Services  
**File Number:** F06/A13/000001

### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

### Status

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

### Appendix

Nil

### Purpose

To receive and note an update on the project plan for the development of the 20 year Community Vision and 4 year Council plan during 2021.

### Summary

- The new Local Government Act 2020 (The Act) Section 88 requires Council to maintain a Community Vision for at least the next 10 financial years
- Section 90 of the Act requires Council to adopt a Council Plan for at least the next 4 financial years
- Both documents must be developed utilising deliberative engagement practices
- In order to meet the requirement to maintain a Vision for “at least the next 10 financial years” it is intended to make the Vision a 20 Year vision which will ensure it is long term and strategic in nature.

### Recommendation

That Council receive and note the update regarding the project plan for the Community Vision and Council Plan project.

### Council Resolution

#### **MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Les Power**

That Council receive and note the update regarding the project plan for the Community Vision and Council Plan project.

CARRIED

## REPORT

### Background

The new Local Government Act 2020 (The Act) Section 88 & 90 require Council to maintain a Community Vision for at least the next 10 years and a Council Plan for at least the next 4 years and to develop these documents using deliberative engagement practices.

Additional to these 2 items council must also adopt and keep in force for at least the next 10 years, a Financial Plan (Section 91 of the Act) and an Asset Plan (Section 92 of the Act). The contents of the Financial Plan are defined by regulation whilst the contents of the Asset Plan are specified in that Act that it must contain information about maintenance, renewal, acquisition, expansion, upgrade, disposal and decommissioning in relation to each class of infrastructure asset under the control of council. Both of these must also be undertaken using deliberative engagement methods with the community and be in place by 31 October 2021.

Council will also shortly be adopting a revised Community Engagement Policy that will assist in defining deliberative engagement practices that can be utilised for significant strategic engagement activities in the community.

Council undertook a competitive quotation process to select the consultancy firm i.e. Community in partnership with Max Hardy Consulting, to oversee the process and lead these deliberative engagement processes. The consultancy team have a wealth of experience in the fields of deliberative community engagement and will bring a new and enhanced approach to this important work for our community.

A core focus of Council beyond 2020 is to improve community consultation and align with the community on the direction and decisions made by Council. The consultants will seek to guide Council and the community to develop a Community Vision and a Council Plan that delivers on this aspiration, whilst identifying and addressing areas of tension and key trade-offs that will benefit from deeper deliberative discussion.

Central to the approach will be building community confidence in the process, strengthening the relationship between Council and the community, and ensuring that community members feel confident their input has been valued and is ultimately reflected in the strategic planning documents.

### Discussion

A detailed project plan and engagement plan has been developed and has the following broad phases and timelines:

**Phase 1 – Inception & Planning (Complete)**

**Phase 2 – Preparation for Implementation (January 2021)**

**Phase 3 - Engagement on the Vision (February to April 2021)**

A range of opportunities will be provided to make it possible for any resident in the municipality to make a contribution, such as:

- Community conversations
- Community group conversations using existing groups and networks
- Online engagement using a variety of accessible tools
- Targeted engagement and listening posts
- A deliberative Community Panel

**Phase 4 – Develop Vision & Council Plan (April 2021)**

**Phase 5** – Engagement on the Council Plan (April to June 2021)

**Phase 6** – Finalisation of Vision & Council Plan (July 2021)

**Phase 7** – Wrap up and close the loop - This will include:

- Evaluation
- Reflections session with Council
- Informing the community what we heard through the process and how it informed the outcomes.

Overlapping with the later stages of the project will be the commencement of the deliberative engagement with the community in regards to the Financial Plan and Asset Plan. Detailed timelines for these components are yet to be documented.

**Deliberative Community Panel** - A key element of the project will be to establish a Deliberative Community Panel consisting of between 30 to 40 people, depending on the composition agreed with Council. The panel will be recruited through an open Expression of Interest (EOI) process and targeted invitations to achieve a stratified representative, mini-public. The exact process will be clearly documented and approved by Council but the final makeup of the panel will be undertaken 100% independently from Council and the panel meetings will be facilitated by ie Community.

The panel will be recruited to undertake the deliberative engagement processes of all 4 components, Council Vision, Council Plan, Asset Plan and Financial Plan. Members will be expected to commit to a number of meetings. Two sessions are planned for the Community Vision & Council Plan with additional sessions to follow for Asset & Financial Plans. These sessions will take place over the period from April through to August 2021. They will also be paid a sitting fee for attending all of the meetings and further assistance will be provided with costs of travel or child care. Finalisation of all arrangements with respect to the Community Panel will occur during February and will need to take in to account COVID restrictions and safe distancing requirements applicable at the time.

**Length of Time for the Community Vision** – The requirements from the Local Government Act is to maintain a Community Vision for at least the next 10 years. In order to ensure we have at least a 10 year vision in place and to ensure that the vision is strategic in nature and forward thinking, it is proposed to make the vision a 20 year vision at this point in time. This will allow sufficient time for directional change, infrastructure decisions and related funding from other levels of government to potentially be realised.

Under the new Local Government Act the Community Vision must be reviewed at the beginning of each new 4 year council term.

**Online Engagement** – The online component of the engagement is expected to commence from 25 January on OurSay Horsham: <https://oursay.org/horshamruralcitycouncil> or alternatively from the home page of Councils website.

**Media & Communications** - There will be extensive media and promotion of the opportunities for individuals and groups to be able to engage in this exercise with the campaign title of “Horsham Talks”. Information obtained through the process will be made available for all to see.

### Options to Consider

Throughout the planned Community Engagement activities there will be many opportunities to take on diverse and new approaches to how we might encourage the community to engage in the process.

**Sustainability Implications**

The Community Vision & Council plan will set the key direction for our community going forward and hence is likely to touch on issues of importance involving the local economy, social issues, environmental issues and climate change.

**Community Engagement**

This report continues to provide open and transparent information about the project processes as this important task moves forward.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

The i.e. Community proposal will seek to bring some innovative approaches to engagement to get the whole municipality talking about the future of Horsham through community conversations, online engagement, campaigns and dynamic deliberative gatherings. It will seek to provide a comprehensive opportunity for the community to think, discuss and debate their future.

**Collaboration**

The development of the Community Vision and Council Plan will be a collaborative arrangement between all sectors of the Community, Councillors and council officers.

**Financial Implications**

Council has allocated \$50,000 to assist in the facilitation and development of the Community Vision and Council Plan, carried forward from the 2019-20 Budget for a Community Plan. Additional funds will be required in the 2021-22 Budget to complete the additional work re the Asset Plan and Financial Plan.

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

The State Government's review of the Local Government Act has clearly set the new 2020 Act to be based around some general clear principles:

- Transparency
- Accountability Openness
- Commitment
- Fairness
- Clarity

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

The Community Vision is the most important strategic document that informs the direction of the council Plan, whilst the Council Plan is the centre piece of the integrated planning framework for all that Council does.

**Risk Implications**

Not bringing the Community and Council together effectively can give rise to community conflict and lack of confidence in the future of the community thereby leading to negative outcomes for all.

**Conclusion**

This is the start of an exciting process that will seek to engage and capture the core 10/20 year Vision for the Community, and the focus for the Council Plan for the next 4 years using contemporary and constructive deliberative engagement practices.

## 10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Cr Robyn Gulline, Mayor

- 15 December 2020 - ABC Wimmera radio interview with Rebeka Lowe
- 15 December 2020 - HRLE Roof Opening
- 15 December 2020 - Met Dr Anne Webster MP, Member for Mallee, with CEO
- 16 December 2020 - Met Andy Meddick MP with CEO
- 16 December 2020 – COVID-19 Agency meeting
- 17 December 2020 – Horsham Community and Police Consultative Committee meeting
- 17 December 2020 - Toured Showgrounds with Andrea Cross
- 17 December 2020 – Audit and Risk Committee meeting
- 17 December 2020 – Horsham Pipe Band AGM
- 18 December 2020 – Triple H radio interview with Di Trotter
- 19 January 2021 – Met Minister Shaune Leane (Local Government) with Mr G Harrison
- 20 January 2021 – Interview with Andrew Kelso, ABC Wimmera
- 23 January 2021 – Greyhound Awards night

### Cr Claudia Haenel

- 11 December 2020 - I was delighted to be part of Grampians Central West Waste and Resource Recovery Group meeting where there was discussion about additional recycling bins for glass and green waste, also research into recycling and repurposing materials for our road and rail; really innovative solutions to waste issues facing all communities.
- 18 December 2020 - Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Group meeting where it was pleasing to hear that there will be improved school special bus services for primary and secondary schools in Horsham, \$450 million for road maintenance, surface replacement, bridge strengthening and other systems across Victoria, \$4 million for the Henty Hwy between Horsham and Lascelles, \$83 million for freight improvement including replacing sleepers and repairing ballasts and renewing level crossing equipment along almost 400km of critical freight only rail lines across Victoria. Most important for our aging population was the recommencement of the Overland service between Melbourne and Adelaide as of 3 January 2021.

### SUSPEND STANDING ORDERS

#### MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr Les Power

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

CARRIED

*The time being 6.08pm, the Council meeting was suspended.*

### RESUME STANDING ORDERS

#### MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Les Power

That Standing Orders resume.

CARRIED

*The time being 6.16pm, the Council meeting resumed.*

#### MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr Ian Ross

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**

Council Briefing Meeting held on 10 December 2020

Council Briefing Meeting held on 18 January 2021

Council Briefing Meeting held on 20 January 2021

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 8 December 2020

Refer to **Appendix “13.4A”**

#### **Recommendation**

That Council receive and note agenda items:

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

#### **Council Resolution**

##### **MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr Les Power**

That Council receive and note agenda items:

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

CARRIED

**14. NOTICE OF MOTION**

Nil

## 15. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

### Council Resolution

#### **MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr Di Bell**

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

CARRIED

*The time being 6.18pm, the meeting closed to the public.*

### **CLOSE**

After dealing with Confidential Matters, the meeting closed at 6.26pm



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The Mayor, Cr Robyn Gulline  
Chairperson