
MINUTES of the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held in person and livestreamed at www.hrcc.vic.gov.au at 5.30pm on 28 June 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; Kevin O'Brien, Director Communities and Place; John Martin, Director Infrastructure; Fiona Kelly, Executive Assistant to the CEO and Councillors.

Alison Foletta, Matthew Hughes, Abby Walter, Neville McIntyre, Graeme Oliver, Nerida Oliver, Kathy Ross, Kath Dumesny, Jane McIntyre, Kerry Flynn, Jack Flynn, Allan Mills, Tom Blair, Lance Netherway, Russell Peucker, Allen Williams, Noel Hopper, Peter Jackson, Des Brennan, Kevin Pymer, Adrian Booth, Maurice Dumesny, Fletcher Mills, Mark Flowright, Glenn Jenkinson.

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 Wotjopaluk, 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

Chairman, Cr Robyn Gulline formally welcomed those in attendance 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.

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 24 May 2021 and 5.00pm on 15 June 2021 be adopted.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr Ian Ross

That the minutes emanating from the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held online and livestreamed at 5.30pm on 24 May 2021 and 5.00pm on 15 June 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

Nil

9. OFFICERS REPORTS

9.1 MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF HORSHAM AQUATIC CENTRE

Author's Name:	Carolynne Hamdorf/Kevin O'Brien	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	Manager Arts, Culture and Recreation/Director Communities and Place	Directorate:	Communities and Place
Department:	Arts, Culture and Recreation	File Number:	F06/A12/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

2021-2022 proposed fees and charges for the Horsham Aquatic Centre (**Appendix "9.1A"**)

Additional document also provided in confidential report on this subject.

Purpose

To approve extension of the current contract (12/046) with the YMCA (The Y) in relation to the Management and Operation of Horsham Aquatic Centre for 12 months until 30 June 2022, and also approve the proposed fee schedule for the 2021-2022 financial year.

Summary

The Y has a long standing relationship with Horsham Rural City Council, having held the contract with Council since 2012 to manage the Horsham Aquatic Centre. The contract in total was for nine years with each contract term being for three years. It has been extended with Council approval on two occasions. The current contract was due for renewal expiring on 30 June 2021, however, based on the devastating impacts of Covid-19 on the recreation and aquatic industry, a Ministerial Exemption has been sought by Council and approved for an additional 12 months. This enables Council to navigate the next 12 months with the current contractor, which will provide a degree of stability and certainty in a very volatile and disrupted market. It is intended to go back out to market prior to 30 June 2022.

Many Councils have sought Ministerial Exemptions to temporarily extend service contracts until there is greater stability, the nature and impact on businesses is clearer and to ensure the operating environment is conducive and attractive to potential new contractors.

Recommendation

That Council:

- Approve the YMCA's 12 month contract extension proposal for the non-guaranteed contract sum amount of \$37,500.00 per month as per Model A –business as usual (BAU).
- Review the monthly contract payment amount before the start of the seventh month and if appropriate introduce the *Reduced Service Offerings* as per Model B, noting this would be subject to a further council decision.
- Approve the proposed fees and charges for the 2021-2022 financial year for the Horsham Aquatic Centre as per **Appendix "9.1A"**.

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

That Council:

- Approve the YMCA's 12 month contract extension proposal for the non-guaranteed contract sum amount of \$37,500.00 per month as per Model A –business as usual (BAU).
- Review the monthly contract payment amount before the start of the seventh month and if appropriate introduce the *Reduced Service Offerings* as per Model B, noting this would be subject to a further council decision.
- Approve the proposed fees and charges for the 2021-2022 financial year for the Horsham Aquatic Centre as per **Appendix "9.1A"**.

Amendment**MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Ian Ross**

That a fourth dot point be included in the Council resolution:

That Council:

- Approve the YMCA's 12 month contract extension proposal for the non-guaranteed contract sum amount of \$37,500.00 per month as per Model A –business as usual (BAU).
- Review the monthly contract payment amount before the start of the seventh month and if appropriate introduce the *Reduced Service Offerings* as per Model B, noting this would be subject to a further council decision.
- Approve the proposed fees and charges for the 2021-2022 financial year for the Horsham Aquatic Centre as per **Appendix "9.1A"**.
- Recommends that the YMCA have a high focus on marketing and demonstrations of specialised equipment and programs in the community and businesses to promote the Horsham Aquatic Centre and increase members and users.

When the amendment was PUT it was CARRIED. The amendment then became the substantive motion and when it was PUT it was CARRIED.

REPORT

Background

The Horsham Aquatic Centre (HAC) operations are contracted to YMCA Victoria (the Y). The contract includes provision of a range of services, including: aquatic services, managing the Indoor and Outdoor Pools, Health club, fitness classes, crèche, aqua classes, swimming lessons, gym and personal training.

Each month, HRCC's Contract Manager meets with the Y's Centre Manager. The Centre's operations are formally reviewed. Monthly written reports are provided to the Contract Manager and if satisfactory, the standard monthly contract fee is paid in arrears. Over the past 12 months the monthly contract fee has been \$21,675.00 (exc GST). The financial model for the Y is a balance of Council's monthly contract fee and revenue generated through activities and services.

At the time of the first closure due to Covid-19 (March 2020), the Centre was experiencing the highest membership rates since the Y took on the contract. The sustainable operations of the Y have been significantly disrupted by Covid. Revenue generated from memberships has been lost due to membership suspension and despite the introduction of Job Keeper, standing down of casual staff, managing costs from month to month and varying the service levels, the Y has had to draw on an additional *Covid deficit provision payment* allocated in Council's 2020-2021 budget. The provision allows for an annual subsidisation amount over the 2020-2021 financial year for an amount of \$140k.

Variations to the contract have been closely scrutinised, through forecasted attendance, reducing costs and enabling profitable parts of the business to operate. Variations are managed on a month by month basis and approved quarterly and ultimately signed off by the CEO. Variation payments for the current FY have fluctuated depending on when the facility could be open, Covid density quotients, participation limits and the extent and frequency of allowable programming. Even when closed, the facility still incurred costs (including pool chemicals use, insurances, centre security, maintenance, basic cleaning, increased communications with members through shut down, running virtual programs, increased social presence, reduced centre management wages, water, and utilities).

Council has made the most of the closure period and has undertaken scheduled works, including removal and upgrading of the indoor pool deck, painting hard to access surfaces, installation of a fully compliant access ramp, upgrading the concourse and investigation into the cost benefit of solar blankets for the indoor and outdoor pool. In addition to costs, there were also forecast savings due to the closures, these included a decrease in electricity by approx. \$45k, gas use by \$15K, building maintenance by \$18k; water charges by \$6k, with a bottom line increase forecast at approx. \$53k.

Based on this context, it is proposed that the current Contract be extended until 30 June 2022.

- This recognises that the figures for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 are not reflective of the true terms of trading and is not a fair nor accurate financial position to inform the market and to seek a new contractor.
- This provides HRCC with an additional 12 months to hopefully better reflect the financial operations of the Y and to go out to test the market in early 2022.
- There is a high level of trust with the Y brand and level of service at the moment. They have delivered an excellent quality service and responded with extreme attentiveness to the Covid crisis.
- The public needs certainty and continuity, not necessarily more change.
- Separately, the Y delivers additional services in the municipality including after school care and these services are required at present.

A business as usual budget for 2021-2022 has been put forward by the Y which proposes the following:

- Income includes full operations including Childcare
- A 2.3% increase on Fees and Charges (on average)
- Does not include outdoor pool extended (Shoulder periods) hours (approx. \$8K pa)
- Contract Partner income increases to \$37,500.00 (GST Exc) per month (non-guaranteed).

Fees and charges

Under the terms of the contract, the Y collects and retains all fees and charges and as a result, these charges are not reported separately through Council's budget process. The Y also employs all staff at the centre, manages programs and undertakes general maintenance, this is in addition to Council's monthly contract fee mentioned above. Council is responsible for utilities, major maintenance and capital requirements. Council reserves the right to annually approve all fees and admission charges levied through the period of the contract up to a maximum based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The Y proposes to increase the fees by an average of 2.3% (refer to **Appendix "9.1A"**). There was no fee increase in the 2020-2021 financial year.

Options to Consider

Impact of Covid on HAC operations.

On 23 March 2020, the facility was forced to close due to the impact of Covid-19. With the facility then being able to open with limited services and tight restrictions in June before a second closure in August 2020. Services then recommenced in a staged reopening, under restrictions from the 12 October 2020 and members given the option of reactivating their membership. Service was further disrupted by Victoria's fourth wave in June 2021.

Highlights

- 24 March 2020, the HAC Team created Covid-19 Fitness Crew Facebook group where they provided local and outside content for members to stay fit and active, including complimentary access to Les Mills on Demand - the group continued until September 2020
- 31 October 2020, Kids Resilience and Wellbeing Webinar for Risky Kids
- 2 November 2020, Swimming lessons return
- Summer Family and Community Engagement days were reintroduced to encourage families to return to the facility including: Hawaiian pool party, Inflatable fun day, Santa Day pool party, Australia Day Pool Party, Tunes by the Pool and End of Season Pool party.

Rules (Covid)

- Covid Safe Plans established and implemented with staff trained
- All staff completed the infection control training before returning to work
- Retro fitted the facility to be Covid compliant with sanitising stations throughout the centre, additional signage and temperature scanning
- Contact tracing using the Y-Vic QR app and Nabooki, with full transition to Vic Government QR app.

Ongoing operations focus areas

- Ongoing compliance changes from State Government, for example, ongoing changing density limits, with quick response and community communications, which are managed centrally.

Current vs pre-Covid membership numbers – rebuilding

- Health and Wellness:

Month	Active Membership #
Pre Covid Feb 2020	1,284
May 2021	922
% Returned	71.8%

- Learn to Swim:

Month	Membership #
Pre Covid - Feb 2020	522
May 2021	423
% Returned	81%

Membership Options - Opt-IN / Opt-OUT

- Membership Opt-IN available from 12 November 2020. Meaning members can select to activate or remain suspended in their memberships
- Membership Opt-OUT commenced 25 February 2021. Meaning members commence automatic activation of membership
- Price rise for Health and Wellness memberships and Swim Lessons delayed until 1 July 2021.

Post Covid Lockdown Challenges

- Staff recruitment post Covid; a number of staff have moved on during the facility closure periods to other more secure employment. This didn't significantly exceed normal attrition however staff could not be replenished, there was no work to offer, nor were courses available to become life guard or swim instructor.
- Some services, swimming lessons specifically, aren't able to return to pre-Covid offerings due to lack of available staff and national supply challenges.
- Some rostering challenges as staff on Job keeper are offering limited availability – **Job Keeper** staff are getting paid the same amount if working 1 shift or 3.
- Global challenges – no international students in the workforce.

Below are the financial models that have been developed by the Y for 2021-2022.

Model A – based on business as usual (BAU)

The financial forecast are based on the following key principles;

- Memberships start July 2021 at 998 (which is currently 304 behind where memberships were pre-Covid 2020)
- Swimming Lessons start July 2021 at 421 (which is currently 82 behind where memberships were pre-Covid 2020)
- Recreation Swimming income based on 2019-20 actuals
- 44 staffed Group Fitness Classes offered per week
- Hours of Operation (total hours 84 winter / 88 Summer)
 - Monday (6:00am – 8:00pm)
 - Tuesday (6:00am – 8:00pm)
 - Wednesday (6:00am – 8:00pm)
 - Thursday (6:00am – 8:00pm)
 - Friday (6:00am – 6:00pm)

- Saturday (8:00am – 4:00pm) and (8:00am – 6:00pm in Summer)
- Sunday (8:00am – 4:00pm) and (8:00am – 6:00pm in Summer)
- 3 hours per week day unstaffed Health Club hours

Model B – Reduced service offerings

The financial forecast are based on the following key principles;

- Childcare operating 2 days per week
- Memberships start July 2021 at 998 (which is currently 304 behind where memberships were pre-Covid 2020)
- Swimming Lessons start July 2021 at 421 (which is currently 82 behind where memberships were pre-Covid 2020)
- Recreation Swimming income based on 2019-2020 actuals
- 38 staff Group Fitness Classes offered per week
- Reduction in Customer service Hours
- Reduction in operating hours
- Hours of Operation (total hours 74 winter / 78 Summer)
 - Monday (6:00am – 8:00pm)
 - Tuesday (6:00am – 6:00pm)
 - Wednesday (6:00am – 6:00pm)
 - Thursday (6:00am – 6:00pm)
 - Friday (6:00am – 6:00pm)
 - Saturday (8:00am – 2:00pm) and (8:00am – 4:00pm in Summer)
 - Sunday (8:00am – 2:00pm) and (8:00am – 4:00pm in Summer)
 - 3 hours per week day unstaffed Health Club hours

Reduction in service offerings will likely result in declined memberships and casual visitations.

Implications of a lockdown can result in;

- Increased lag of membership uptake
- Increased cancellation
- Reduced participation

All of which could potentially impact the financial performance of the Centre.

Sustainability Implications

As one of Council's key pieces of social infrastructure, the Horsham Aquatic Centre requires particular consideration in how it sustainably offers a range of cost effective of services, especially when demand is low, membership revenue decimated and programs pared back due to number limits. However, the re-activation phase coming out of periods of closure due to Covid has been slow, but consistent. The provision of services provided by the Y has been professional and responsive.

Staffing shortages, a loss of casual staff to less impacted industries and a national shortage of swim teachers has also put pressure on the Y to fully reactivate programs and service demand post Covid.

In addition, many competitors in the health and fitness sector have been able to reactivate quickly, compared to the Y, who have had to negotiate with Council all reopening plans, especially those that require further subsidisation.

Community Engagement

Monthly reports are provided to Council in relation to the Y's performance. The Aquatic Advisory Committee meets four to five times a year and provides feedback on the operation and programs of the facility.

Contract extension

A number of meetings have been held with senior Y staff and HRCC staff regarding the contract extension. A formal submission was made to the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Shaun Leane MP, through Local Government Victoria, which was approved on the 7 June 2021.

Fees and Charges

The Y will formally communicate the new fees and charges to members once approved by Council. The Y have flagged, as per the contract and subject to Council approval, an intent to increase fees 30 days prior to any increase. This notification took place in early June.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Y is focused on delivering continuous improvements to programs and services, with the aim to meet or exceed customer expectations. The current continuous improvement focus includes:

- a. Virtual Y- online leisure centre- <https://virtually.ymca.org.au/>
 - Funded through a grant from DHHS, the site aims to support the physical and mental wellbeing of young Victorians at a time when young people needed it most. It was implemented in 5 weeks and includes content such as, a comprehensive fitness and wellness timetable, youth programming, camping content, swimming lessons and action sports content. New partnered with organisations such as Nutrition Australia have been developed, the site has attracted over 13,000 registrations. The site provided over 120 people with meaningful work during lockdown. Virtual Y is now run in tandem with regular face to face programming.
- b. Workforce Planning
 - The Y has focussed on operating optimally. It has reviewed its processes, systems and management functions, with more operational staff- CSOs, life guards and swim instructors engaged and less middle managers. The Y has planned a 2 phase recruitment strategy focusing on areas such as swim teachers.
- c. Y Careers
 - The Y is working with the federal government to introduce career pathways for young people, including micro-credentials, apprenticeships and graduate programs. It will also include portability of compliances like WWCC, compliance training and police checks to enable young people to participate more seamlessly in portfolio work/ multiple employers/ gig economy.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

Council has allowed an amount of \$380,000 in the draft 2021-2022 budget for contract payments in relation to the Horsham Aquatic Centre.

The Y has requested a non-guaranteed payment of \$37,500 per month for business as usual. This equates to a yearly figure of \$450,000. The actual contract amount per month may be more or less than this amount depending on membership income projected compared to actuals and any Covid restrictions not foreseen. Actual financial performance will be monitored monthly. There is an opportunity to adjust service levels before the start of the seventh month if required.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

- Council Plan 2020-2024
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017 2021
- Horsham Aquatic Centre Master Plan 2017
- Early Years Plan 2014

Risk Implications

Competition in the fitness sector in Horsham is extremely high. Not being in the market is problematic, loss of membership to competitors is a real. Remaining closed would have seen the Y lose membership and market share to competitors. This is still a risk for the viable operations of the Centre.

Monthly contract meetings and review of benchmarks will continue and be assessed. As restrictions have eased, further programming has been introduced, however, bringing more programs on line also increased costs, more member are required to balance revenue against cost of delivery.

To continue mitigating the risk, it is proposed that:

- Aim to keep the monthly variation to the minimum
- Maintain constructive and open dialogue with the Y Centre Manager and regional manager
- Continue to negotiate the best value outcomes for Council, balance the broadest service at the best cost
- Keep an eye on public expectations and demand and respond to Merits promptly, ideally on the same day
- Aim to keep building the business and growing membership through quality and diverse service.

Conclusion

That Council:

- Approve the YMCA's contract extension for one year as allowable through the Ministerial Exemption approval
- Consider changes to service levels if required due to financial circumstances before entering into the seventh month of the contact
- Approve the proposed fees and charges for the 2021-2022 financial year for the Horsham Aquatic Centre.

9.2 REVIEW OF COMMUNITY LOCAL LAW

Author's Name:	Robyn Spiller	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	Project Officer Local Law Review	Directorate:	Communities and Place
Department:	Community Safety and Environmental Health	File Number:	F25/A03/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Proposed Community Local Law (**Appendix "9.2A"**)

Comparison of Community Local Law and Proposed New Local Law (**Appendix "9.2B"**)

Purpose

To receive and note the proposed Community Local Law.

Summary

The Community Local Law for Horsham Rural City is automatically revoked on 20 December 2021.

Council's Local Law Review project officer has conducted a series of internal consultations with technical officers and Councillors and developed the proposed Community Local Law which responds to perceived problems within the municipality and to ensure it is consistent with local laws commonly made by other councils to protect public health, safety and amenity.

In keeping with the Ministerial Guidelines, the public notice period must be completed by 2 August 2021 to allow adequate time for Council to consider community submissions, make changes and adopt the new local law by the sunset date of 20 December 2021.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receive and note the proposed Community Local Law (**Appendix "9.2A"**).
2. Make available to the public the proposed Community Local Law for comment for a period of 34 days commencing on 29 June 2021.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Les Power

That Council:

1. Receive and note the proposed Community Local Law (**Appendix "9.2A"**).
2. Make available to the public the proposed Community Local Law for comment for a period of 34 days commencing on 29 June 2021.

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

The Community Local Law is used by each Directorate of Council and regulates activities:

- On roads and land under control or managed by Council
- The keeping and control of animals
- Building site management
- Overgrown and unsightly premises; and
- Nuisances such as noise and smoke not covered by other legislation.

The current Community Local Law will sunset on 20 December 2021, and to ensure that these matters continue to be controlled a new Community Local Law is proposed.

The proposed Community Local Law must be publicly notified on 29 June 2021 to meet the required timeframes so to be adopted and in place before the Community Local Law sunsets on 20 December 2021.

Discussion

Council's Local Law Review Project Officer, using the Ministerial Guidelines, has conducted a review of the current local law.

Technical officers from each directorate have been consulted to determine if sections of the current Local Law are still relevant and required or if further controls are required to address new and emerging issues.

The Project Officer also reviewed state and federal legislation to ensure that the local law does not duplicate existing legislation, removing sections where duplication was identified.

A briefing of Council was conducted on 19 April 2021 and information collected from Councillors regarding particular issues were considered in the proposed local law. Councillors also provided feedback via email and through the merit request system.

Research of other Council Local Laws was conducted to determine consistency of language and approach to certain issues. Certain sections of the current local law have been re-written to create efficiency and ease for the application and enforcement of the proposed local law.

At the conclusion of this review, it was determined that the majority of issues controlled by the current Local Law are still required with the addition of:

- Prohibition of incinerators
- Change to the definition of "recreational device" to include items constructed by a member of the public, for example powered bicycles
- Control of Freight Containers
- Nuisance caused by vehicles on the Wimmera River, i.e. party boats
- Control of four wheel driving on Council land.

One section was removed that related to the erection of signs on certain roads as this power was covered by the *Road Safety Act (Traffic Management) Regulations 2019*.

See **Appendix "9.2B"** for the full breakdown and rationale of the review process.

The project timeline for the remainder of the project is:

28 June 2021	Council meeting to resolve to give notice of the proposed local law
29 June – 2 August 2021	Public notice inviting submissions
27 September 2021	Council meeting to consider submissions
22 November 2021	Council meeting to– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revoke the existing Community Local Law • make a replacement local law

Options to Consider

Not applicable

Sustainability Implications

Not applicable

Community Engagement

Division 3 of Part 3 of the *Local Government Act 2020* says Council must make a local law in accordance with its community engagement policy.

The Community Engagement Plan for the local law review and for Council's community engagement policy provides for:

- Feedback from a Technical Reference Group on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions in the research for and drafting of the proposed local law in **Appendix "9.2A"**. In particular, engineering matters for road management and road safety, compliance and enforcement for the aerodrome movement area, environmental matters relevant to the amenity of persons in the municipality, the permitting process and, matters of safety and amenity in relation to the keeping of animals were the subject of consultation with subject matter experts within Council and at CASA.
- The capture in an issues register of matters to the date of Council Briefing on Monday 19 April 2021 all of which have been reviewed and researched for drafting of the proposed local law in **Appendix "9.2A"**.
- Issues identified by and for Councillors from the Council Briefing on Monday 19 April 2021 have all been reviewed for the research and drafting of the proposed local law in **Appendix "9.2A"**.
- Public notice from 29 June to 2 August 2021 to inform the community that the Community Local Law has been reviewed, to identify any changes made and to invite submissions.

In order to comply with the *Local Government Act 2020* it is recommended that:

- Notice is published in the Government Gazette
- A copy of the proposed local law is available for inspection at Council's office and on the Council's Internet site by 29 June 2021 and so that a new local law is in place before the automatic revocation of the Community Local Law on 20 December 2021.

Further consultation will be conducted along with other projects as part of the Horsham Talks Engagement Expo.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Ministerial Guidelines – Guidelines for Local Laws Manual have been followed. The Guidelines are to assist Council achieve better practice in the review of the local law.

Collaboration

The Local Law is used by each Directorate of Council. The Community Engagement Plan for the Local Law review required collaboration with a Technical Reference Group.

Financial Implications

Council adopted Budget 2020-2021 and committed \$10,000 for the review of the Community Local Law.

Section 74 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires a certificate by an Australian lawyer admitted to the legal professions for at least 5 years to be obtained before Council makes a local law. That certificate is required for the Council meeting of 22 November 2021.

A written fee estimate has been obtained in accordance with Council's procurement process. It is likely that the total budget commitment will be applied to obtain the certificate from a qualified person.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

A range of State and National Plans and Policies have been considered in the research and drafting of the proposed local law in **Appendix "9.2A"**. For example:

- National and State policies relevant to the proposed local law provision about local nuisance – smoke
- The State policy for enhancement of the health, environment and liveability of the Wimmera River relevant to the proposed local law provision prohibiting discharge of anything other than untreated stormwater to Council's stormwater system
- The Austroads June 2020 report for motorised mobility devices for any relevance to Council's management of footpaths.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

The proposed local law in **Appendix "9.2A"** has been researched and drafted so that it complies with relevant council plans, strategies and policies and does not intrude on imminent or current reviews of plans, strategies and policies.

Risk Implications

The Community Local Law is automatically revoked on 20 December 2021. Unless public notice of the proposed local law at **Appendix "9.2A"** commences on 29 June 2021, a new local law will not be made by 20 December 2021. This means the matters regulated by the Community Local Law will no longer be regulated with consequences for:

- Management of roads and land under Council control
- The keeping and control of animals
- Building site management
- Overgrown and unsightly premises
- Nuisances such as noise and smoke.

Conclusion

The Community Local Law has been reviewed and it is recommended that the proposed new local law is made available for public comment.

9.3 REGIONAL TOURISM STRUCTURE REVIEW

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/A05/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Regional Tourism Review Paper Discussion 2019 (**Appendix "9.3A"**)

Victoria Tourism Industry Council (VTIC) Visitor Economy Recovery Submission 2021 (**Appendix "9.3B"**)

Wimmera Southern Mallee Tourism Collaboration and Destination Management Plan Updated #1 April 2018 (**Appendix "9.3C"**)

Purpose

To receive and note the outcomes of the Regional Tourism Structure Review and confirm Council's preferred Visitor Economy Partnership.

Summary

- A Visitor Tourism Review commenced in 2019 and as a result Regional Tourism Boards will transition over three years into Visitor Economy Partnerships (VEPs).
- DJPR will take responsibility of the VEPs from 1 July 2021.
- The new VEP boundary lines for North West Victoria (Outback) include Horsham Rural City Council with Western Victoria currently excluding Horsham Rural City Council.
- DJPR have indicated that HRCC will not be forced to join the North West Victoria if they choose to continue with Grampians Tourism and transition into the Western Victoria Visitor Economy Partnership.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Continue as a member of the Grampians Tourism and over the next 3 years be part of the transition process to the Western Victoria Visitor Economy Partnership.
2. Seek a partnership with the North West Victoria (Outback) Visitor Economy Partnership to ensure that the tourism needs of Horsham Rural City Council are met both through the Western Victoria Partnership and North West Victoria Visitor Economy Partnership.
3. Continue to support the development of local tourism products through the Business Development and Tourism Unit and development of local marketing content through Council's visitor services.
4. Support the North West Victoria (Outback) Visitor Economy Partnership through promoting their tourism destinations through Council's Visitor Services.

Cr Bell requested the Mayor to put the motion to the vote in separate parts.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr David Bowe

That Council:

1. Continue as a member of Grampians Tourism for the next 12 months as part of the transition process to the Western Victoria Visitor Economy Partnership.

CARRIED

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr David Bowe

2. Seek a partnership with the North West Victoria (Outback) Visitor Economy Partnership to ensure that the tourism needs of Horsham Rural City Council are met both through the Western Victoria Partnership and North West Victoria Visitor Economy Partnership.
3. Continue to support the development of local tourism products through the Business Development and Tourism Unit and development of local marketing content through Council's visitor services.
4. Support the North West Victoria (Outback) Visitor Economy Partnership through promoting their tourism destinations through Council's Visitor Services.

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

The State-wide Visitor Tourism Review (refer to **Appendix "9.3A"**) which commenced in 2019 received submissions across the region from stakeholders and community members who completed online surveys. Information provided during the submissions noted that Regional Tourism Boards were first established in 2008, with 11 now operating across Victoria. They set regional strategic directions and work with industry, local councils and the Victorian Government to drive tourism in their region. Stakeholders broadly support Regional Tourism Boards, with some working well and others showing good potential. They said high-performing boards engage with councils and industry, and see the benefits of regional collaboration. Their partners invest in the tourism boards to drive regional and local marketing, strategy and industry development activities. They are influential in setting regional priorities and in providing a clear voice to government. Boards are the key point of contact between local industry, councils and government on tourism marketing, destination planning, and industry development and tourism product priorities. They have a key role in the immediate response to crisis, connecting local industry and travellers with government, as well as in recovery planning.

Stakeholders recognise the boards deliver services that most councils and businesses would find difficult to provide on their own. They also play an important role in engaging with local businesses and the community. Many people at regional conversations said government should not unnecessarily change things that work well, but there are real opportunities to strengthen boards.

People described key ingredients for success as follows:

- Clear roles and responsibilities across boards, local councils and Visit Victoria to reduce duplication and support long-term success
- A collaborative cross-regional approach led by boards, working with councils, industry and local tourism organisations to feed through to the Victorian Government
- Skills-based boards with senior local council and industry participation
- Transparent priority setting, including strategy and advocacy that reflects local community and business aspirations, and broader regional industry development needs
- Increased capacity and capability supported by scale and resources to deal with complex issues.

Overall, stakeholders saw board remit, capacity and resources as vital to meet regional tourism objectives. Boards need to be given authority by councils and government to deliver clear outcomes for their region, and they need skilled staff and the means to deliver those outcomes. Stakeholders also said any changes to boards will need to recognise they are a partnership between governments and industry, and all partners will need to be brought along (refer to **Appendix "9.3B"**, Theme 4 Enhancing Regional Tourism Boards page 19).

Delays in the delivery of the Regional Tourism Review have contributed to uncertainty and instability in the visitor economy, however, this can be mitigated with a strong and well-resourced implementation plan. There are major funding challenges for Regional Tourism Boards (RTBs) that need to be considered. With the unprecedented business disruption caused by Covid-19, industry is no longer in a position to co-fund RTB initiatives at the usual level, and local government funding is also under increasing pressure. Certainty of funding will be the key to success as Victoria transitions to the new Visitor Economy Partnerships structure. A commitment of at least \$1 million per annum over 4 years allocated to each of the current regional structures is required to fund the transition and implementation of the new Visitor Economy Partnerships structure. If regions are amalgamated under the Regional Tourism Review, these larger structures will require funding commensurate with their size and responsibilities (i.e. two regions merged will require \$2 million funding) to provide a strong foundation for success (refer to **Appendix "9.3B"**).

The CEO of Grampian's Tourism attended a Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan: Update on Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy's (TEVE) work and future plans on Friday, 21 May 2021 following the positive Victorian State Government budget announcements.

The 2021-2022 Victorian State Budget has provided additional funding to support the transition from Regional Tourism Boards (RTB) to Visitor Economy Partnerships (VEP). An additional \$8.92 million over four years will support the RTBs to transition through to VEPs by:

- Supporting improved capabilities and capacity of RTB's including resourcing
- Supporting a staged transition of RTB's to VEP's
- Providing operation support, funding for new offices, websites and other operational activity.

DJPR will take responsibility for Regional Tourism Boards from 1 July 2021.

- VEP's will be the voice for tourism in their region and provide a direct channel to Government on priorities in their region
- 3-year funding agreements (to 2023) to support RTB's while the VEP transition occurs
- The transition process will be staged (Wimmera Mallee and Goulburn Valley will be the initial focus)
- Transition committees will be appointed in-region to support the process.

The TEVE Branch will issue draft funding agreement and will work with RTB's on content and then finalise ahead of 1 July 2021.

- Industry development funding will go directly to RTB's
- Support to improve digital capability in tourism businesses
- Support for maintaining Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) listings for the 2021-2022 year. (This income in 2019-2020 was approx. \$25K)
- Funding to support industry development resourcing within RTB's and VEP's
- TEVE to issue draft funding agreements including funding for industry development.

Horsham Rural City Council will need to position themselves with the Visitor Economy Partnerships that best place them to promote Horsham as a destination and a place to stay longer and that would encourage return visits.

There are two Visitor Economy Partnerships which Horsham essential bookends:

1. North West Victoria (Outback)
2. Western Victoria (Grampians)

The North West Victorian Visitor Economy Partnership will encompass six Council areas, Mildura Rural City Council, Buloke Shire Council, Yarriambiack Shire Council, West Wimmera Shire Council, Hindmarsh Shire Council and Horsham Rural City Council. The Western Victoria Visitor Economy Partnership will encompass six Council areas Moorabool, Pyrenees, Ballarat, Northern Grampians, Southern Grampians, and Ararat.

Attracting international, interstate and in-transit visitors to the region requires a regional approach. This has been the key role of Regional Tourism Boards and will be transferred as the responsibility of the Visitor Economy Partnerships moving forward. They are responsible for developing the marketing the campaigns to create Victoria's tourism destination. Every tourism destination needs a regional tourism drawcard (Tourism Conference 2021). This drawcard is then used to enhance the local tourism content to keep visitors here longer, ensuring the experience is enjoyable it results in multiple return visits.

Whether Council decide to align with the North West Victoria or Western Victoria Visitor Economy Partnerships, the promotion of our local tourism products are unlikely to be promoted more broadly at a regional level. Local tourism product and content development and marketing is the responsibility of the local government and the tourism operators. That is why it is important for Council to continue to support the local tourism product development through the Business Development and Tourism Unit and market local content through Council's visitor services. Collectively, visitor services promote each other's tourism products when people are visiting or planning a holiday in the region.

As a result of the Regional Assemblies held in Horsham in October 2016 and August 2017, the Wimmera Southern Mallee Tourism Collaboration and Destination Management Plan evolved. The project was designed to develop a Governance Model and the development of a Destination Management Plan for the Wimmera Southern Mallee. The project was funded by the Victorian Government through Regional Development Victoria and was managed by Wimmera Development Association. A project control group was established to guide the project and this includes a representative from Grampians Tourism, Wimmera Mallee Tourism, an independent tourism provider, Regional Development Victoria; Northern Grampians Shire, Buloke Shire, and Wimmera Development Association (refer to **Appendix "9.3C"**).

It needs to be noted that there were no representatives on the project control group from Horsham Rural City Council. It is the understanding that the North West Visitor Economy Partnership evolved from this project, however, it is unclear as to who or how Horsham Rural City Council was identified to be included as part of the North West Visitor Economy Partnership and not the Western Victoria Visitor Economy Partnership.

The North West region have recently developed the Silo Art Trail as their drawcard. Statistical information recorded monthly through the Horsham Town Hall is indicating that the Silo Art Trail is becoming a key destination for the region, with people choosing to stay in Horsham and doing a number of day trips to visit the Silo Art Trails (approximately 1-2 overnight stays). The region is identifying itself as the sunset and outback region. Buloke is host to the Lake Tyrrell. Prior to the pandemic this destination was receiving overseas visitors from China, however, visitors were predominantly doing day trips out of Melbourne. Sea Lake are working towards creating the infrastructure to support overnight stays.

The Western Victoria's draw card is the Grampians mountains, a playground for adventures and haven for food and wine lovers, with a fascinating Aboriginal story to tell. The Grampians National Park is home to an incredible mountain landscape dotted with small towns including Wartook. This drawcard is being reinvigorated with the Grampians Peak Trail Heads to be launched later this year. This new product will provide additional experiences for attracting tourists to the region to stay longer and encourage return visits.

Mt Zero is home to the one of the Grampian Trail Heads and it is anticipated the Mt Zero Resort Stage 1 a \$12M private investment will be built within 2 to 3 years. This Resort will be located at the foot of the Mt Zero Trail Head. This drawcard is within our municipality and will be promoted internationally as part of the broader Grampians region.

Horsham Rural City Council has been a founding partner of Grampians Tourism since inception, and over this period has invested \$667,498 (exc GST) to build a strong Destination Brand. This investment has:

- Delivered (pre-Covid) 10 year annual average growth in visitation growth and yield
- Supported the growth of major following (see below) and over last 10 years have grown our consumer and industry databases to over 10,000 people.

Council's contribution to Grampians Tourism in 2020-2021 Financial Year is \$35,000 for operations and \$15,000 for marketing, a total of \$50,000. Grampians Tourism also receive \$315,000 in State Government funding. Grampians Tourism has leveraged up HRCC investment into a \$1.6m budget and \$700K allocated toward marketing activities to attract visitation and support economic growth.

For the 12 months to December 2019, the Grampians attracted a record 2.5 million visitors to the region. Total visitor expenditure increased 20 per cent to \$553 million, with almost 3 million room nights booked across the region.

Grampians Tourism is the peak industry body for tourism in the Grampians region. It encompasses and is directly supported by Visit Victoria, Ararat Rural City, Horsham Rural City, Northern Grampians Shire, Southern Grampians Shire and over 150 industry partners.

Grampians Tourism has a leadership and co-ordination role in the development of the region's Visitor Economy. It relies heavily on the goodwill, financial support and cooperative efforts of its public and private industry partners to develop and deliver tourism programs for the region. Grampians Tourism also engages specialists digital and PR agencies to deliver components of the annual marketing plan.

2020-2021 Priority Activity included:

- Regional Marketing Campaign (Metro Melbourne Locked down)
- Visiting Friends and Relatives Marketing Campaign (LGA collaboration)
- Live the Grampians Way – New Resident and Workforce Attraction Marketing Campaign
- New Road Trips Marketing Campaign
- Wine Amplification Activity – Regional Marketing and WGF 3 activity
- Working closely with LG partners to increase content on www.visitgrampians.com.au

Discussion

In making a decision, Council needs to understand the complexities in regards to marketing Horsham as a destination.

The importance of supporting regional tourism brand development and marketing, and local tourism product development and local content marketing, is to encourage visitors once here to stay longer and encourage return visits.

However, Council's decision whether to continue their partnership with Western Victoria (Grampians Tourism); a partnership which has developed over a period of 10 years and with a financial contribution of over \$660,000 resulting in a destination brand that is now recognised internationally, interstate and within the metro Melbourne and regional Victoria, or join a new North West (Outback) partnership which will consist of six local Council areas inclusive of Horsham, and reinvent their tourism brand through the Silo Art Trails, Sunsets and Tyrrell Lake, has potential to impact on Horsham as a tourism destination for the next decade and beyond.

A decision to stay with Grampians Tourism and become part of the Western Victoria Visitor Economy Partnership does not preclude a partnership being developed as well with North West (Outback) Visitor Economy Partnership to ensure Horsham's tourism needs are met in this region as well.

Options to Consider

1. Continuation as a member of Grampians Regional Tourism Board and over the next three years be part of the transition process to the Western Victoria Visitor Economy Partnership.
2. Join the North West Victoria (Outback) Visitor Economy Partnership and cease to be a member of the Grampians Regional Tourism Board.
3. Continue to support the development of local tourism products through the Business Development and Tourism Unit and marketing content through Council visitor services.
4. Not continue to support the development of local tourism products through the Business Development and Tourism department and marketing content through Council visitor services.
5. To support the North West Victoria (Outback) Visitor Economy Partnership through promoting their tourism destinations through Council's visitor services whether a member of their VEP or not.
6. To support the Western Victoria Visitor Economy Partnership through promoting their tourism destinations through Council's visitor services whether a member of their VEP or not.
7. Choose not to have a membership with either the Western Victoria or North West Visitor Economy Partnership and move away from promoting Horsham as a tourism destination.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

In 2019, the Special Adviser and the Regional Tourism Review team travelled across the state to meet, *those who know what regional tourism needs*, the people in rural and regional Victoria. The review sought the real, lived experience of Victoria's regional tourism industry through extensive consultation that made sure local voices were heard. The review consulted broadly including with local businesses, industry leaders, local government, Regional Tourism Boards, Regional Partnerships, Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities, community groups and local residents. This document provides an overview of those conversations, how they worked, what they heard, and what comes next.

The Special Adviser and the review team met stakeholders for one-on-one early consultations to help them understand how best to consult: where to go, who to talk to and what to ask. In early consultations, stakeholders frequently identified five key themes that present opportunities for regional tourism:

- Strengthening our tourism offering
- Making the most of our marketing spending
- Supporting industry
- Enhancing Regional Tourism Boards
- Better coordinating efforts.

They used these themes to frame consultations, along with a focus on community engagement.

The Regional Tourism Review discussion paper was released in July 2019 to help tap into community and industry knowledge from all over the state. There was a strong response to the discussion paper, which demonstrates the level of interest and passion regional Victorians have for tourism. Stakeholders responded to the discussion paper in two main ways:

- 533 formal submissions through the Engage Victoria website
- 662 participants at 18 roundtable consultations across the state.

Stakeholders gave extensive feedback and were generous with their time.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not applicable

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

Currently Council's financial contribution to be part of Grampians Tourism is \$50,000 (as discussed above). Transiting into the Visitor Economy Partnerships, the financial contribution is unknown. If based on size of municipality and number of councils identified within each Visitor Economy Partnership, Council's contribution to the North West could be substantially higher. Unfortunately, at the time of this report DJPR had not provided any information to Council in relation to the financial implications.

Council already has a budget to support the development of local tourism products through the Business Development and Tourism Unit and marketing local content through Council's visitor services, and as a result, there are no additional financial implications to continue this service.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2020-2024 Council Plan

Goal 2 – Sustaining the Economy

Promotion and Tourism – Tourism Development

Risk Implications

Not applicable

Conclusion

Over a period of 10 years, Council has been part of Grampians Tourism. Council in supporting the tourism industry has a strong commitment from the Victorian State Government in the transitioning of Regional Tourism Boards to Visitor Economy Partnerships to promote Horsham as a tourism destination; where people stay longer and through enjoyable experiences will have return visits.

9.4 HORSHAM SOUTH STRUCTURE PLAN STAGE 2 – PROJECT BRIEF

Author's Name:	Stephanie Harder	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
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Department:	Investment Attraction and Growth	File Number:	F24/A11/000006

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 Project Brief for the Horsham South Structure Plan Stage 2.

Summary

- The report provides an overview on the Horsham South Structure Plan Stage 2 Project Brief.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the contents of the finalised Horsham South Structure Plan Stage 2 Project Brief.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn

That Council receive and note the contents of the finalised Horsham South Structure Plan Stage 2 Project Brief.

CARRIED

Cr Penny Flynn called for a division of Council.

For the motion:

Cr Di Bell

Cr David Bowe

Cr Penny Flynn

Cr Les Power

Cr Ian Ross

Cr Robyn Gulline

Against the motion:

Cr Claudia Haenel

SUSPEND STANDING ORDERS

MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn

That Standing Orders be suspended.

CARRIED

The time being 6.14pm, the Council meeting was suspended.

RESUME STANDING ORDERS

MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn

That Standing Orders resume.

CARRIED

The time being 6.17pm, the Council meeting resumed.

REPORT

Background

The Strategic Planning Unit has recently finalised the preparation of the Project Brief for the Horsham South Structure Plan.

In September 2020, the Strategic Planning Unit concluded Stage 1 of the Horsham South Structure Plan. The outputs for Stage 1 included a set of strategic directions, a vision and a preferred development scenario. The next phase is to develop a structure plan for the area that provides a framework for the coordinated development of the area for future residential, commercial and industrial activity and coordinated delivery of infrastructure.

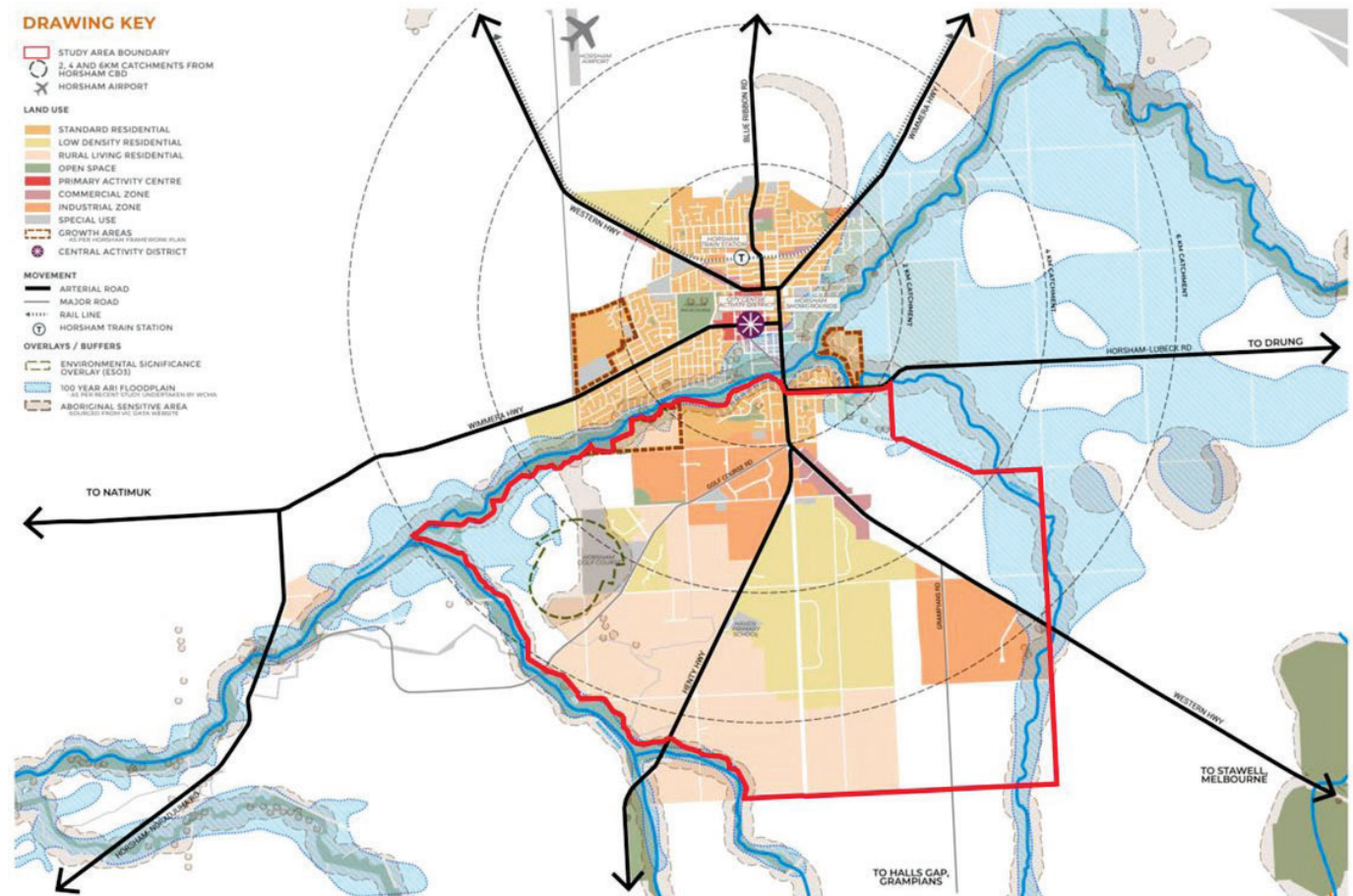


FIGURE 1 – CONTEXT MAP AND STUDY AREA – HORSHAM (AND HORSHAM SOUTH)

Discussion

A clear scope of works and program for the delivery of the Structure Plan is critical to the success of the project. The selected planning consultant is expected to provide a methodology, which is consistent with the staging and scope of works outlined below.

The Project Brief is currently with the Victorian Planning Authority for their review.

The following stages are required to be undertaken in the development of the Plan and resulting planning scheme provisions:

Stage 1	Project Inception
Stage 2	Technical and Background Report(s)
Stage 3	Draft Future Urban Structure and Consultation with State Agencies and Servicing Authorities
Stage 4	Community and Land Owner Engagement (Round 3)
Stage 5	Creation of Draft Structure Plan
Stage 6	Community and Stakeholder Engagement (Round 4)
Stage 7	Finalise Structure Plan and Planning Scheme provisions

The following section provides a breakdown of what is to be undertaken under each structure plan development stage.

Stage 1 - Project Inception

The consultant will be required to review the project brief, meet with Council's Strategic Planning officers and prepare a draft Project Plan comprising a proposed work program, project timelines including key milestones, budgets, progress reporting deadlines, Community and Land Owner Engagement Plan and a State Agencies and Servicing Authorities Engagement Plan.

A project methodology will be built into the Project Plan detailing:

- The research, investigation and consultation to be undertaken to achieve the aims, objectives and deliverables outlined in this brief
- Order of tasks, time (and budget) allocation and expected outcomes of each task
- The role, function and responsibilities of specific consultant participants and Council officers
- Reporting arrangements.

A Community Engagement Plan and Stakeholder Engagement Plan have been drafted and will be required to be reviewed and updated accordingly by the consultant. The Engagement Plans address:

- Methods of engagement with stakeholders including State agencies, servicing authorities, land owners and the community to obtain the relevant feedback and information needed to inform and finalise the Structure Plan
- Online and 'in person' options for internal and external consultation sessions
- Issues to be discussed
- Resources required to facilitate the discussion.

STAGE 1 DELIVERABLES

Project Plan including timeline, milestones, budget, task responsibilities and risk management

Engagement Plans x2

Stage 2 - Background and Technical Reports

The consultant will work with Council in refining the scope and determining the timing of the required technical reports. Technical reports (at this stage) will be required covering the following topics:

- Land Use and Economic Analysis
- Housing and Capacity Analysis
- Traffic and Transport Analysis
- Land (Soil) Contamination
- Bushfire Risk Analysis
- Ecology and Habitat
- Topography and Flood Risk
- Drainage, water and sewer (infrastructure)
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage.

Council will prepare draft Request for Quote (RfQs) for the above listed topics for the appointed consultant to review and provide input on before the tendering process.

The following tasks should also be undertaken during this stage:

- Review the Horsham Planning Scheme (provisions relevant to the study area)
- Review Council's strategic documents and policies, previous engagement summaries and reports, relevant to the project and study area
- Undertake any other background research or analysis relevant to the project, as discussed and agreed with Council.

Stage 2A – Technical Reports Review

- Review RfQs prepared by Council
- In collaboration with Council and selected consultants, provide input into the preparation of technical reports
- Review the technical reports before being released to State Agencies and Department
- Submit draft reports to relevant State Agencies and Departments and resolve matters where required before their finalisation
- The timeframe for the supply of technical reports will be determined in collaboration with appointed consultant and referred to within Table 1 of this brief.

Stage 2B – Draft Background Report

- Create draft Background Report (for the Structure Plan) that summarises the findings of Stages 2 and 2A that will form the basis for the first phase of community consultation for the development of the Plan
- Include a review of relevant literature (e.g. State and Local Policies/Strategies, Stage 1 work included predicted growth, demographics, community requirements, vision, strategic directions and Emerging Options Plan)
- The Background Report should set out recommendations (direction) for the Structure Plan that can be communicated easily during the first phase of community and stakeholder consultation.

STAGE 2 DELIVERABLES

Technical Reports (provided by various consultants yet TBC)

Creation of Draft Background Report (allowance for two rounds of feedback)

Stage 3 – Draft Future Urban Structure Plan and Consultation with State Agencies and Service Authorities

Drawing on the findings of the technical reports, key outcomes of the Horsham Structure Plan Stage 1 (including the strategic directions, vision, emerging option plan and round 2 consultation feedback) and the Victorian Planning Authority's (VPA) targets detailed in the draft *PSP Guidelines for Melbourne's Growth Areas* a draft Future Urban Structure (FUS) Plan will be developed.

Note - the new guidelines will require careful application as they are tailored to the Melbourne greenfield context. Slight modifications and ongoing consultation with the VPA will be required as the Regional Victoria Guidelines are yet to be released.

The Structure Plan's preparation will also require technical input and collaboration with key State agencies and servicing authorities to ensure:

- Issues have been identified for key topics
- Previous issues and opportunities raised are validated and prioritised
- Potential impacts are understood
- Early resolution of issues (or resolution pathways identified)
- Refinement of ideas and the vision (additional aspirations maybe be expressed)
- Opportunities for innovation are identified and explored.

Endorsement from key agencies and service authorities will be sought before proceeding to a public consultation process (**Stage 4**), where land owners and the community will be given a further opportunity to respond in detail to the Draft FUS plan.

The Draft FUS Plan will define the precinct boundaries, illustrate the location and indicative amount of land required for housing, low density, rural living, employment and retail/commercial uses, transport networks (infrastructure items), open space, recreation, conservation, waterways, drainage assets, education, community infrastructure, services and utilities (i.e. sub stations, easements), buffers and constrained land. It is envisaged that a draft FUS Plan will be prepared in parallel with agency and servicing authority consultation.

Council's Executive Management Team and Councillors will need to be briefed prior to public consultation taking place. The successful consultant may be required to present at a Council briefing.

STAGE 3 – DELIVERABLES

Finalise and agree to engagement methodologies detailed in the Engagement Plans

Collaborate with Council in the preparation of consultation material

Development of the FUS Plan (will require minor refinements as consultation occurs)

Attend (via Microsoft Teams) meetings with Agencies and Servicing Authorities

Lead the stakeholder workshop with the assistance of the Project Manager (Council)

Record and review the feedback

Stage 4 – Community and Land Owner Engagement Round 3

The purpose of the community and land owner workshops is to re-cap on the process so far and previous feedback and to present the key findings of the technical reports (and draft Background Report) as they relate to the Strategic Directions already established in previous engagement.

The proposed FUS Plan for Horsham South will be used as an engagement tool to elicit discussion, ideas for refinement and feedback during the workshops, in conjunction with the five Strategic Directions.

Consultation at this stage will aim to:

- Share the proposed urban structure
- Demonstrate how previous input and comments from the community have been considered and addressed through the FUS Plan
- Ensure all issues / implications of the proposed design have been identified
- Obtain agreement from the community on the desired outcomes of the FUS Plan
- Resolve issues with land owners early.

The planning consultant will be required to collaborate with Council in the preparation of engagement material for both online consultation and in person workshops / drop in sessions. This will also include developing opportunities to provide feedback online via a dedicated web page. It will be expected that the consultant will attend and participate in the community engagement workshop; roles will be confirmed with the appointed consultant.

Feedback will be recorded, clarified (during consultation), reviewed and compiled into a Community Engagement Report. Council's responses must also be documented and clearly presented, further clarification on some of Council's position may be required. Council will review and provide comment on this report before it is finalised and made public.

STAGE 4 DELIVERABLES

Creation of engagement material (as specified in the and Land Owner and Community Engagement Plan)

Attendance and participation at both the stakeholder workshops

Compile and review land owner and community feedback – Community Engagement Report

Key findings and recommendations to be translated into draft Structure Plan (Stage 5).

Stage 5 – Preparation of Draft Structure Plan for Horsham South

This stage requires the development of a draft Structure Plan, an infrastructure delivery plan (e.g. development contributions plan) and planning scheme amendment documentation for pre Exhibition consultation.

It is expected that the Structure Plan will be built upon the following elements; residential growth and housing, rural living and low density residential, urban design and neighbourhood character, commercial activity and employment, industrial land, open space, biodiversity, natural systems and landscape values, historic and Aboriginal cultural heritage access and movement, community and education, utilities and services and sustainability.

The draft Structure Plan will be informed by the findings of the previous stage, as well as initial consultation carried out with internal and external stakeholders.

The consultant will:

- Refine the vision for the Structure Plan area
- Provide detailed strategies, objectives, planning and design requirements and guidelines to implement the vision
- Clarify the role and function of the Horsham South area in relation to the Horsham CAD and areas generally north of the Wimmera River
- Identify where growth and change will occur in the study area
- Illustrate the form of future development and identify suitable locations for urban growth.

More specifically, indicative considerations and tasks for each structure plan elements (but not limited to) are:

Residential growth and housing

- Determine housing types and increased residential densities at strategic locations
- Identify intended housing yield, mix of lots and densities (including low density and rural living opportunities)
- Identify options for affordable and social housing and future retirement living options.

Rural living and low density residential

- Establish a preferred provision (ha) of low density zoned land and rural living zoned land which meets State Government directions
- Consideration towards preferred and aspirational local character (e.g. rural-urban lifestyle) and existing landscape values that provide a strong sense of place
- Maintain the predominant landscape character by focusing density of new residential development in preferred / strategic locations.

Urban design and neighbourhood character

- Appraisal of the existing residential built form and character
- Establish preferred and aspirational neighbourhood character principles
- Develop initial concept plans showing the future built form outcomes where required
- Facilitate workshops as required ensuring that any recommendations and outputs fully reflect the aspirations of the respective communities and market realities.

Commercial activity and employment

- Identify localised employment and economic and tourism opportunities
- Identify infrastructure and services (new and improvements) leading to enhanced employment opportunities
- Identification of land in suitable locations to accommodate commercial land reflective of local needs.

Industrial land

- Consolidate and refine current industrial zones (type and supply)
- Provide interface treatments (including buffers and separation distances) to resolve land use conflicts with residential land
- Investigate alternative truck routes to lessen impact of heavy vehicles movements on residential areas.

Open space, biodiversity, natural systems and landscape values

- Identify and protect significant environmental features, landscape values and areas of high biodiversity value.
- Plan for enhancing open space and environmental networks (distribution, proximity and amount)
- Identify new opportunities for open space and movement networks that enhance walking and cycling through the area
- Identify and plan for significant environmental networks and linkages, including linking habitat areas where possible
- Identify and integrate physical features of the Structure Plan such as topography, significant vegetation and environmental areas, drainage and habitat areas
- Identify the provision of drainage infrastructure and stormwater treatments that meet best practice requirements
- Incorporate Integrated Water Management and Water Sensitive Urban Design Principles
- Address requirements for fire hazard management.

<p>Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic cultural heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and protect areas of high Aboriginal cultural significance (tangible and intangible) in collaboration with the Registered Aboriginal Party Identify and protect areas of historic cultural heritage Ensure places of Aboriginal and historic cultural value are meaningfully integrated into the design of the Structure Plan.
<p>Access and movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide for an integrated and sustainable transport and movement network that provides direct access to key locations Identify constraints in the existing access and movement networks Identify improvements to the access and movement networks (walking, cycling, bus services, road based transport – both private vehicles and freight) with an emphasis on active and public transport modes Identify planned capital works and transport infrastructure projects.
<p>Community and education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess community infrastructure requirements Consideration towards the principles of colocation and integration of services Identify locations and opportunities for new and/or improved community facilities.
<p>Services and utilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify all current service and utility infrastructure Identify current capacity of all service and utility infrastructure Identify key opportunities and constraints for the provision of all future service and utility infrastructure Provide recommendations for infrastructure requirements Investigate access to services and recommend how provision of these services can be achieved in the short, medium and long-term Anticipate location and approximate cost of any trunk infrastructure Take into account both existing and expected conditions and consider the requirements generated by the future development of urban areas.

The consultant will also be responsible for developing an implementation program, which lists the actions to be undertaken by Council to facilitate the development of the Structure Plan area (these may include statutory controls, advocacy actions, and actions relating to the improvement of community facilities / public domain / movement networks).

The development of the Structure Plan will include workshops (or similar) with the Project Working Group, landowners, and key stakeholders, which will be detailed in the both Engagement Plan.

Stage 5A – Structure Plan development

Key tasks are as follows:

- Meet with Council's PCG (or similar) at commencement of draft Structure Plan process
- Update draft FUS Plan based on feedback from Stage 4
- Prepare a Structure Plan document including a vision, objectives, requirements, and guidelines (see Appendix 2 for elements to be addressed, tasks and deliverables and preliminary table of contents)
- Prepare all required graphics (diagrams, concept plans, plan set and cross sections) for the Structure Plan document
- Undertake any site visits required for photographic and other analysis (in collaboration with Council as required)
- Prepare a newsletter for land owners that provides guidance on 'how to read the Structure Plan'
- Consult with the Project Manager on any relevant matters
- Discuss the draft Structure Plan with the Project Manager to ensure it is ready to proceed to Stage 6.

Stage 5B – Draft Infrastructure and Services Provision Plan and funding mechanisms

The draft Infrastructure and Services Provision plans will need to:

- Demonstrate assessment of and detail all infrastructure and service requirements
- Proposed timing for infrastructure delivery
- Cost estimates for infrastructure and services.

Funding mechanisms (e.g. DCP/ICP) will be explored and informed by proposed capital works projects (including priority of works, estimated costs and indicative timing proposed for delivery).

A proposed funding option must be developed taking into account Horsham South's development context, and it may be possible that alternative infrastructure funding arrangements other than a DCP/ICP may be more suited to Horsham South. This will be determine during the development of the Structure Plan.

Stage 5C – Draft Planning Scheme Provisions

The successful consultant will be required to provide a detailed list of planning scheme changes and recommendations arising from the draft Structure Plan and the selected infrastructure funding mechanism. The scope of the recommended provisions and/or change to the Horsham Planning Scheme will need to be agreed upon with Council officers and must satisfy the provisions of the Planning and Environment Act.

The relevant planning scheme amendment documentation will be prepared addressing the agreed recommendations and directives of the structure plan including:

- Changes and/or additions to the Local Planning Policy Framework – Municipal Planning Strategy and Local Policy
- Rezoning of land
- Provision of any Overlays.

An allocation of up to \$5,000 should be provided within the tender budget for this particular output. This allocation may need to be amended following further discussion and agreement with the successful tender as the project progresses and matters are identified.

Council's Executive Management Team and Councillors will need to be briefed prior to public consultation taking place. The successful consultant may be required to present at a Council briefing.

STAGE 5 DELIVERABLES

Draft Structure Plan suitable for community and land owner consultation

Proposed funding mechanism for infrastructure delivery (for internal review)

Draft Planning Scheme provisions (for internal review)

Stage 6 – Community, Land Owner and Stakeholder Engagement Round 4 (pre-exhibition consultation)

The draft Structure Plan will be released for public consultation for a minimum of four weeks. This consultation period must include drop-in sessions or similar, and online tools for obtaining information and making submissions.

The following tasks are required at the stage of notifying the community and inviting feedback and submissions on the Draft Structure Plan:

- Review the community and stakeholder engagement plan and finalise in collaboration with the Project Manager (for Round 4)
- In collaboration with Council, coordinate the required consultation material including printed material, online material (dedicated web page), locations where the draft plan can be viewed and information about how to ask questions and make a submission
- Participate a drop-in session (coordinated by Council at a venue TBD)
- Review the community and stakeholder feedback and update the Consultation Outcomes Report.

Council will provide the following to assist the consultant in the draft Structure Plan engagement process:

- Publication of the draft report for online and in person viewing
- Opportunities to inspect hardcopies at the reception area of Council offices (if permitted at the time of the engagement)
- A dedicated webpage relating to the project with details on consultation sessions, a link to download the draft report, and an online submission platform
- Local newspaper and social media notification of the public exhibition of the draft report and invitation to consultation sessions
- Direct letter notification of, and invitation to, consultation sessions for Horsham South residents and identified community stakeholders
- Venues (subject to Covid control measurement requirements)
- Catering (if required and applicable)
- Equipment (if applicable)
- Related arrangements for consultation sessions (if applicable)
- Collation of submissions received and acknowledgement response to submitters.

STAGE 6 DELIVERABLES

Consultation material (to be determined)

Participation in community and stakeholder engagement sessions

Updated and finalised Consultation Outcomes Report

Stage 7 - Final Structure Plan and Proposed Planning Scheme Provisions

Following public consultation (Stage 6), a consultation report will summarise submissions received and recommend changes to the draft Structure Plan. The consultant will be required to:

- Finalise the Plan and Background Report to the satisfaction of the Project Manager
- Finalise the Plan to ensure that it meets the overall project deliverables and is in a form that enables officers to prepare a council report for the Plans adoption
- Finalise draft local planning policy provisions in the new PPF translated structure to enable Council to pursue an amendment to the Horsham Planning Scheme
- Prepare other Planning Scheme provisions (such as schedules to overlays, zone and overlay maps, etc.) as agreed.

STAGE 7 DELIVERABLES**Final Structure Plan****Final Background Report****Final Consultation Outcomes Report****Draft Planning Scheme provisions (as discussed and agreed with Council)****Options to Consider**

Receive and note the finalised Horsham South Structure Plan Stage 2 Project Brief document.

Sustainability Implications

The Horsham South Structure Plan will translates the vision and strategic directions from the Horsham South Emerging Options Plan into a suite of objectives, strategies and actions to guide how the community should develop into the future. It will:

- Articulate a sustainable vision for Horsham and provide direction for the town that is consistent with state and local policy directions
- Provide a framework to manage urban development and growth opportunities and provide sustainable outcomes. These include social, community and physical infrastructure for existing and future residents
- Provide a growth boundary that protects the environmental and rural qualities of the landscape surrounding Horsham South while providing sufficient land to help accommodate sustainable growth for the next 30 years.

Community Engagement

Outlined below in the table is proposed engagement with Councillors.

Stage 1	Project Inception	
Stage 2	Technical and Background Report(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief councillors on the key findings of the technical reports
Stage 3	Draft Future Urban Structure and Consultation with State Agencies and Servicing Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop with councillors on the draft future urban structure • Seek endorsement to release draft future urban structure for public consultation
Stage 4	Community and Land Owner Engagement (Round 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief councillors on the results of community consultation and Council's response to feedback
Stage 5	Creation of Draft Structure Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief councillors on draft structure plan and planning scheme amendment documentation
Stage 6	Community and Stakeholder Engagement (Round 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief councillors on the results of community consultation and Council's response to feedback
Stage 7	Finalise Structure Plan and Planning Scheme provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek authorisation to commence Planning Scheme Amendment

The Strategic Planning Unit is currently preparing an Engagement Strategy for the structure plan. It will identify potential avenues and techniques to engage with the community. The community has already been engaged via multiple methods as part of Stage 1 including in person workshops, one on one meetings, webinars and online questionnaires and forums. The purpose of the initial phase of community consultation (round 1) was to provide the opportunity for the community to directly inform the scope and context of the structure plan before any proposals and ideas are developed. The second round of consultation was to test and review emerging ideas and proposals (vision and strategic directions) to help inform the future urban structure for Horsham South. The next two rounds of future engagement will be to seek comments from the community on the draft future urban structure prior to it being finalised and the full suite of planning documentation is developed. Land owners will be encouraged to maintain an ongoing dialog with the Strategic Planning Team, their participation throughout the process is critical. Land owners will also have the opportunity to provide formal comment on the proposed structure plan through the Exhibition period as the structure plan will be subject to a planning scheme amendment. The Strategic Planning Team will aim to resolve as many issues raised as possible with submitters.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Structure Plan will be adopt (and modify where necessary to the Regional Victoria context) the State Government's *Guidelines for Precinct Structure Planning in Melbourne's Greenfields 2020*. This will provide a framework for the preparation of the Horsham South Structure Plan and will guarantee quality and best practice led outcomes.

Collaboration

Project Control Group

The role of the Project Control Group (PCG) is to project manage and deliver the project elements identified by this Brief, through engagement with community, stakeholders and the Project Reference Group.

The PCG is effectively a project coordination group with responsibility for all project management (e.g. project brief, stage plans, issue register, communication and engagement strategy). It is expected the PMG will meet bi-monthly and consist of:

- Director Communities and Place
- Manager Investment Attraction and Growth
- Strategic Planning Officer
- Coordinator Strategic Planning
- Consultant team leader.

Project Work Group

The role of the Project Working Group (PWG) is to provide specialist input and ensure best practice is met across the structure plan's various technical elements. These elements include:

- Infrastructure planning, integration and provision
- Community services planning, integration and provision
- Transport connectivity, public transport and pedestrian movement
- Activity centre, business and employment and tourism
- Environment, natural systems and open space
- Sports and recreation
- Education
- Statutory Planning and Compliance.

The makeup of the PWG will be determined upon commencement. It will include internal and external participants.

Stakeholder Consultation Plan

The Strategic Planning Unit will prepare as part of this project a Stakeholder Consultation Plan. This will include State Government Departments, Agencies, Servicing Authorities and interest groups.

Financial Implications

This project is already funded.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2020-2024 Council Plan

5.2.01 Complete the Horsham South Structure Plan

Local Planning Policy

Municipal Strategic Statement Clause	Impact
21.02-1: Settlement – Horsham Framework for Managing Growth	Ensures that Horsham develops as a distinct regional city, with renowned natural landscapes, lifestyle and recreational attributes. As part of Further Strategic Work, Council has an objective to prepare a Precinct Structure Plan for Horsham South.
21.02-8: Settlement – Rural Living	Acknowledges that most of the Rural Living Zone is to the south of Horsham, in and around the area of Haven. Development between these two regions have merged, however Haven is currently yet to have been developed to its full potential so there is a need to consider the future demand for infrastructure and service provision.
21.10-4: Infrastructure – Community and Cultural Facilities	Acknowledges that there is a need to build an early learning centre in Horsham South over the next 10 – 15 years.

Local Planning Policy Clause	Impact
22.01: Commercial Development Policy	Seeks to encourage well planned commercial development throughout the municipality.
22.02: Resource Protection Policy	Provides the Council the freedom to contact the relevant Land and Water authorities in applications that potentially interact with these resources.
22.03: Small Lot Subdivision in the Farming Zone Policy	Seeks to reduce land fragmentation caused by inappropriate subdivision and maintain the productive capacity of the land.
22.04: Dam Policy	Seeks to control all aspects of new dam development.
22.08: Controlling Low Density and Rural Living Development	Seeks to encourage development within identified Preferred Sewered Development areas, provided that reticulated water and sewer is available to these lots. Ad hoc subdivision development within the LDRZ is discouraged
22.10: Floodplain Management Policy	Seeks to minimise the impact that flooding will have on new developments by discouraging developments in areas prone to flooding.

Risk Implications

A potential risk is community dissent with specific outcomes of the structure plan. Community consultation is critical to ensure an honest dialog to facilitate a sound working relationship between the community and Council. A Community Consultation Plan will establish a process for consultation that considers methods and monitoring of, and response to consultation events.

Conclusion

The Horsham South Structure Plan RfQ document has been prepared and is ready to commence the procurement process in appointing a planning consultant, subject to the Victorian Planning Authority's review.

9.5 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 April 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 April 2021.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Ian Ross

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

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

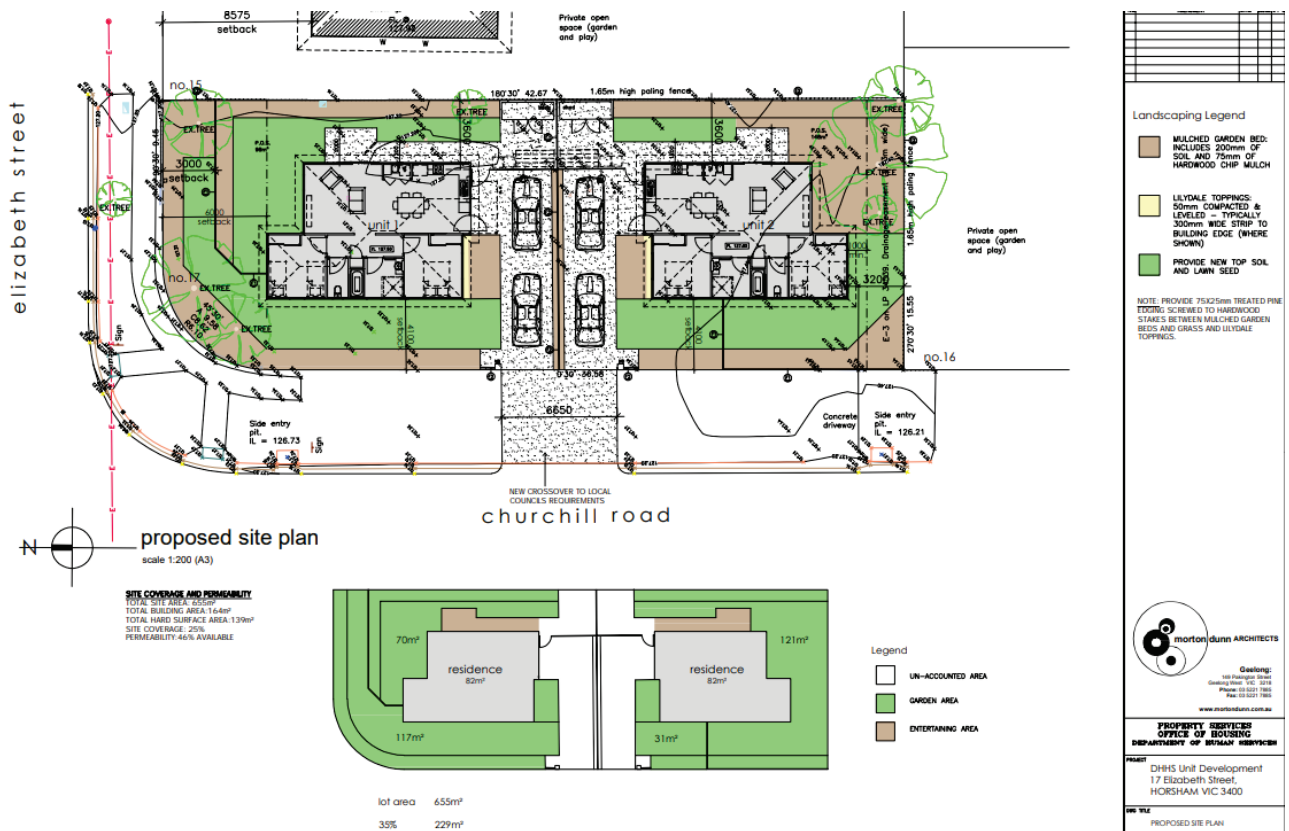
An Investment Attraction and Growth Report is tabled monthly at the Council meeting.

Discussion

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

STATUTORY PLANNING

The planning department has received a number of applications for social housing across the city over the past month which will bring much needed rental and affordable housing to the city. Most of the development is well designed and has involved extensive pre-application discussions and will be assessed against the requirements of the Horsham Planning Scheme. A planning permit has been recently issued for the application in Elizabeth Street as per below.



Planning Applications Determined

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

Type	APRIL 2021		APRIL 2020	
	No.	*Value \$	No.	*Value \$
Miscellaneous Domestic	44	11,555,718	41	10,727,616
Industrial/Commercial	42	21,787,713	30	5,580,243
Subdivisions	17		19	850,000
Other	7	105,000	3	15,000
Total	110	34,428,431	94	17,172,859

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

Total number of planning permits issued in the Horsham Rural City Council area from 1 July 2020 to 30 April 2021 is 110 compared to 94 in the same period in 2019-2020.

Planning permits issued for subdivision have created 49 new lots from 1 July 2020 to 30 April 2021 compared to 44 in the same period in 2019-2020.

BUILDING SERVICES

Building Permits Issued

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

Permits issued by Horsham Rural City Council for this Municipality

Type	APRIL 2021		APRIL 2020	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	-	-	-	-
Alterations to Dwellings	-	-	1	195,000
Dwelling resitting's	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	1	4742	5	165,582
Removal/Demolish	-	-	-	-
Industrial/Commercial	2	565,631	2	196,740
Signs	-	-	-	-
Total	3	570,373	8	557,322

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

Type	APRIL 2021		APRIL 2020	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	6	1,871,646	7	2,976,736
Alterations to Dwellings	2	259,500	6	211,236
Dwelling resitting's	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	5	177,901	9	376,567
Removal/Demolish	2	75,000	1	9,998
Industrial/Commercial	5	3,590,000	6	1,822,176
Signs	-	-	-	-
Total	20	5,974,047	29	7,917,145

A total of **50** Building Permits have been issued by the Horsham Rural City Council at a total value of **\$4,572,542** from **1 July 2020 to 30 April 2021** compared to **75** Building Permits at a total value of **\$4,936,880** in 2019-2020.

Private Building Surveyors have issued **232** Building Permits at a total value of **\$52,365,257** from **1 July 2020 to 30 April 2021** compared to **162** at a total value of **\$44,432,443** in 2019-2020.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Horsham CAD Revitalisation

The Strategic Planning Unit has urban design expertise and prior experience in streetscape plans and was invited to review and provide input into the Horsham CAD Revitalisation Request for Quote (RfQ) brief. This resulted in a slightly modified RfQ to reflect a best practice methodology. This will ensure the project proposes suitable and context responsive public realm, built form and streetscape interventions. Stage 1 of the project requires an in-depth **Urban Design Analysis** of the Horsham CAD that will examine broad components of the urban environment within Horsham, which include:

- Land use and activity patterns
- The public and open space network (the public realm)
- Access and movement networks (across the various modes)
- Streetscape infrastructure
- The built environment.

This analysis will inform Stage 2 of the CAD revitalisation project, a **CAD Framework and Streetscape Plan**. It will comprise detail plans specifying the location of proposed urban infrastructure improvements, including precedent images and diagrams/drawings to illustrate concepts in relation to:

- Public space design (either new or improved, as identified)
- Water sensitive urban design opportunities
- Active street corners / street frontages
- Street lighting and sign posting
- Street furniture
- Paving
- Street tree planting, greenery and landscaping opportunities
- Bicycle facilities (bicycle hoops/storage facilities)
- Wayfinding signage and interpretation
- Integrated technology / smart city (e.g. high speed wi-fi, e-charging points)
- Materials palette
- Solar/renewable energy
- Cultural interest, integration of public art and city branding
- Reinforcing local character.

Planning Scheme Flood Management Amendment

A Project Brief for the Flood Management Amendment has been finalised and will be released for tender on Thursday, 20 May 2021 for a period of three weeks. The Strategic Planning Unit is on track with the timeline for this project.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND EVENTS

Stronger Business Outdoor Dining - Proposals

The majority of projects have now signed their agreements and are set to commence works. Council should start to see some changes around the city in the coming weeks.

Permanent and non-permanent infrastructure such as tables, bench seats, wind barriers, umbrellas, planter boxes, heating and awnings will start to be installed both within the Central Activities District (CAD) and outlying hospitality businesses in the municipality.

Council's Building Services and project manager are continuing to work closely with businesses who require any permits to ensure this process is fast tracked.



Nourish'd Eatery owner Stewart Neighbour (as pictured) is looking forward to enhancing his existing outdoor eating area with the installation of a permanent barrier.

Stronger Business Grants Stream

Council have received a great response to the Stronger Business grant stream, with over 30 applications received and approved these businesses have commence work on updating their business fronts through signage, landscaping and beautification works, blinds and awnings and shop window merchandising displays. Council should start to see some improvements to the visual appeal of many businesses in the municipality in the coming weeks.

Business Fronts / Shop Fronts Upgrade Grant Stream

Business Front Upgrades grant stream, is a new and exciting opportunity to assisting businesses from within the municipality by supporting their upgrade and improvement of visual appeal to their business front.

- First round allocation of \$35,000 from the previous councillors, saw recommendations for 15 business applications of which were approved in support of funding.
- Second round allocation of \$48,000 from a budget line carried forward for shop front improvements, has resulted in 11 business applications assessed and approved with a total of \$24,950 distributed so far.

Retail Horsham is Open for Business Strategy

To further inform the 'Retail Horsham is Open for Business Strategy' Council's Mayor, representatives from Wimmera Development Association, Business Horsham, Grampians Tourism, Business operators, and Council officers formed a Panel to discuss with Dr Kennedy and 18 students from Latrobe University the opportunities and barriers in regards to trading outside the traditional business hours within the Horsham CAD area. The students have undertaken eight weeks of a twelve week course and by the end of July they will be in position to report their findings recommendations back to Council.

Stronger Business – Love Your City



The 'Love Your City' banner project was developed in response to local photographer Rachel Deckert (Bella Madre) and her call out on social media to families, individuals, and pets to be photographed during the first stage of the pandemic lockdown.

In partnership with Rachel, Council sought permission to use these images for the Central Activity District. With solid enthusiasm and excitement, 38 flags were commissioned. The participants' demographic included local Wotjobaluk and culturally diverse families from six months to 80+ years. With the purpose to encourage the statement together, we are stronger; these flags are a reminder of our

community's resilience during 2020 and beyond.

Wimmera Business Centre

The Wimmera Business Centre was an initiative of the Horsham Rural City Council; overseen by a Committee of Management which commenced its operations in 1997.

Through capital grants received from local businesses and all levels of governments the basic infrastructure of the Centre was created. The Wimmera Business Centre is not-for-profit organisation. The Centre is a small business incubator which provides a premises, advice, services and support to new and growing businesses to assist them through the establishment phase; to grow and become a profitable sustainable business.

To achieve this, the Centre provides tenants with their own workspace and a supportive environment in which to grow. The Centre offers a nurturing environment in which a business can establish itself with a financial buffer provided through reduced rental, subsidised utility costs and mentoring services.

Tenants share the Centre's premises and have access to a range of support services. Tenants are encouraged to network both on a social and commercial level. Alliances and partnerships are encouraged as they are an effective way to stimulate market share and growth. Business Centre's foster a culture of entrepreneurship and provide opportunities for businesses to refer clients to one another and to participate in a range of learning and networking activities.

The ultimate goal of a Business Centre is to help develop sustainable businesses, which in turn can improve the wealth and prosperity of the wider community.

The Wimmera Business Centre offers a range of office spaces as well as three manufacturing spaces in which a small business can commence or grow its operations. Since its commencement, there has been a large number of businesses that have successfully moved on to a commercial residence to continue expanding their business.

As well as tenancy options, the Centre also offers two meeting rooms for hire. These are hired out on a casual basis and help to fund the daily operations of the Centre.

Business Newsletter

After the interruption caused due to Covid-19, Council are in the process of reinvigorating their Business Newsletter. The first edition will include information for businesses around the following topics:

Business Interruption Webinar

When Covid-19 forced thousands of Australian businesses to close, many naturally turned to their business interruption insurance as a lifeline. Thousands of Australian businesses may have had their business interruption claim rejected, however it's important to note that they may still have options.

Shine Lawyers, in partnership with Xcelerate, are running a free webinar for businesses to equip them with the information needed to ensure they see their full insurance benefit.

Small Business Energy Saver Program

Small Business Energy Saver Program

Resources to promote the Small Business Energy Saver Program.



Victoria's COVID Safe Check In Campaign

Businesses must now be using a digital record keeping system, like a QR code, that connects with the Department of Health's contact tracing system.

Business Competitiveness Program

The Business Competitiveness Program will assist small and medium manufacturers with an existing presence in Victoria to expand their manufacturing operations and implement new manufacturing technologies and processes that provide a critical foundation for generating sustainable new local jobs.

Number of Business Visits – Statistics

Operators	Jan	Feb	March	April	YTD
Retail / Accommodation	11	24	40	8	83
Hospitality	12	77	61	10	129
Events interactions	10	21	32	9	71

Events and Visitor Statistics

	Jan	Feb	March	April	YTD
Notice of intention to hold an event application	8	9	5	6	28
Google Analytics statistics for the Visit Horsham website. www.visithorsham.com.au	5,212	3,438 Site visitations between 1 Feb to 28 Feb 2021 Resulting in 12 per cent returning visitors and 3,329 new visitors to the site	5,290 Site visitations between 1 to 31 March Resulting in 12.5 per cent returning visitors and 87.5 per cent (5,154) new visitors to the site	4,971 Site visitations between 1 to 30 April Resulting in 14 per cent returning visitors and 88 per cent (4,755) new visitors to the site	18,911

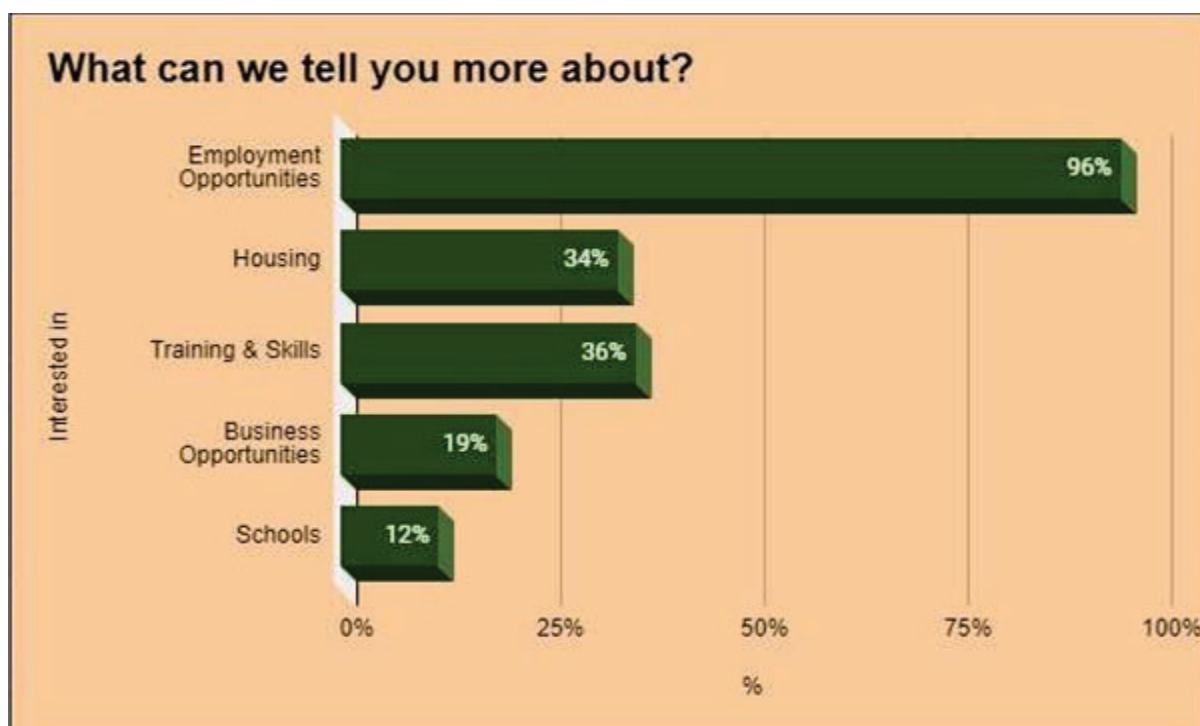
Shift Regional – Live the Grampians Way website: <https://grampianslife.com.au/>

Councils of the Grampians are working together to implement a coordinated and consistent marketing approach, known as the Live Regional campaign. Site is managed and maintained by Pepper Brand.

Pepper Brand corporation is working with local businesses to gain their participation and connection with the Live Regional Campaign.

Major employers such as Wimmera Health Care Group, Skillinvest, GWM Water and Horsham Rural City Council currently have 17 full time and 11 part time jobs in total on offer, along with 100 plus jobs listed on SEEK for Horsham.

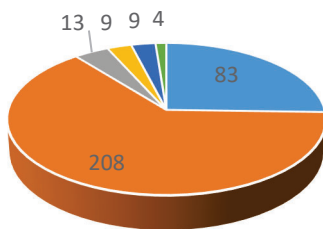
Below is a chart showing areas of interest from the candidates that are registering their interests. As expected focus is on employment opportunities followed by trade and skill work, housing, new business opportunity and schooling.



HORSHAM VISITOR SERVICES

	April	Previous Month	YTD	Previous Year
Groups recorded	328	256		N/A
Total for individuals within groups	643	476		N/A
Visithorsham.com.au web visits	4971	5290		N/A
Emails	128	286		N/A
Produce Sales	\$1314.50	\$1033.65	\$4553.85	N/A

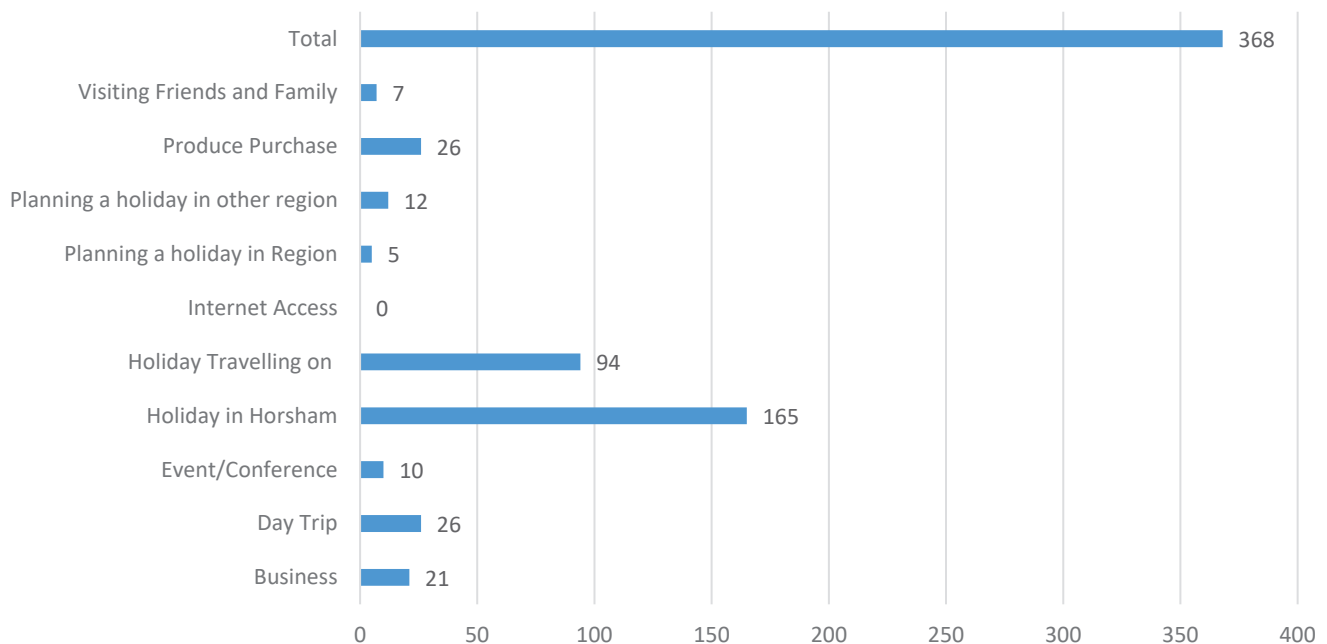
Number of People in Groups

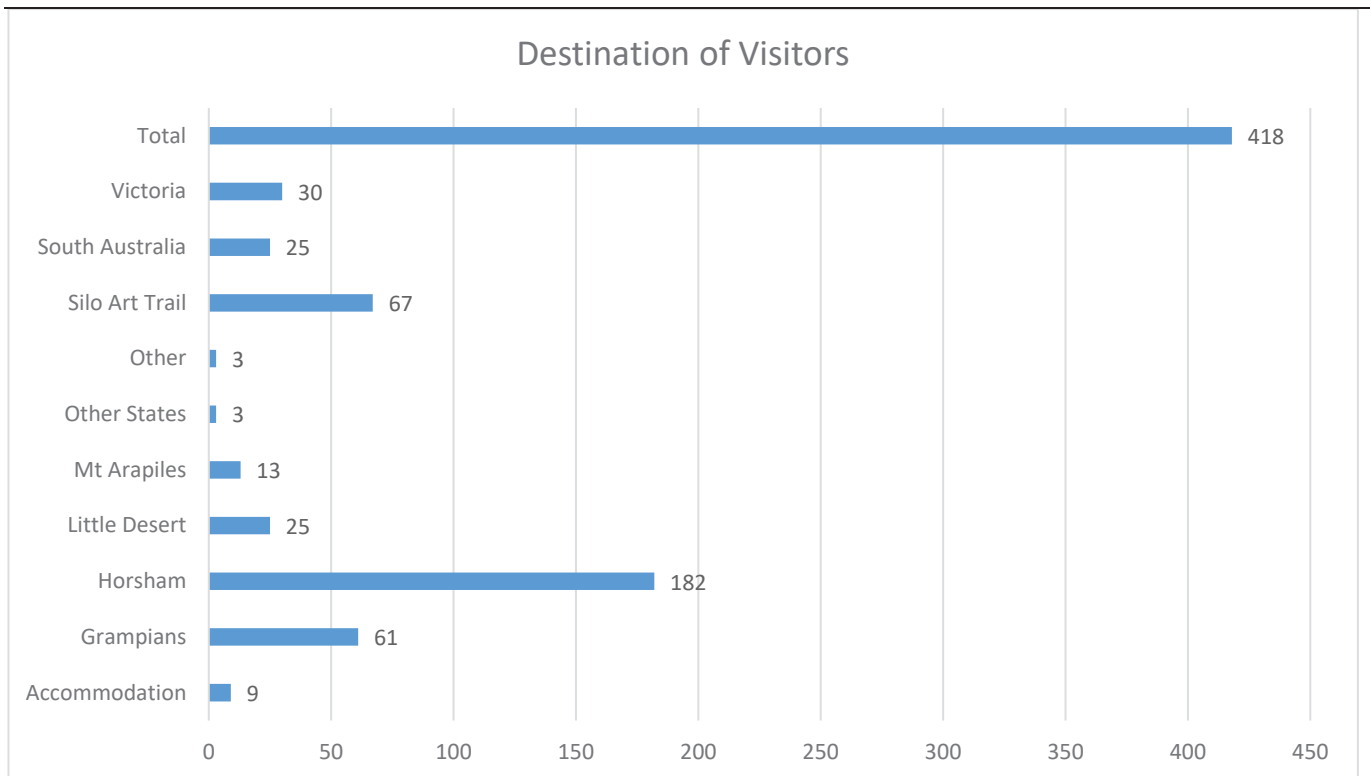


■ One ■ Two ■ Three
■ Four ■ Five ■ Six +

With the opening of state borders, Visitor Services saw an increase of 35 per cent walk-ins compared to the previous month of March. As usual the most popular group numbers were couples, of which, there were 208 couples compared 173 in March. Due to last years lock down there are no statistics to compare to. The majority of April's visitors chose to holiday in Horsham (165 visitors), followed by holidaying, travelling on (94 visitors). Council received 45 per cent less emails in April compared to March and there were 4971 visits to the visithorsham website compared to 5290 in March. This indicates people were planning their trips in March and travelling more in April. Horsham was the most popular destination to visit in the region with a total of 182 visitors. The Silo Art Trail was next popular with 67 visitors closely followed by the Grampians with 61, a similar pattern to March.

Purpose of Visit





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 WDA and on HRCC 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

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 Local Council's Outdoor Eating and Entertaining program for \$600,000. 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. This month local businesses have expressed their excitement to be moving closer to having permanent outdoor dining furniture.

9.6 PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

Author's Name:	Luke Mitton/Michael McCarthy	Director:	Kevin O'Brien
Author's Title:	Acting Manager Community Safety and Environment Health/Project Manager	Directorate:	Communities and Place
Department:	Community Safety and Environmental Health	File Number:	F25/A07/000003

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Parking Management Plan (**Appendix "9.6A"**)

Submissions summary and consultant's responses (**Appendix "9.6B"**)

Purpose

To adopt the Parking Management Plan.

Summary

- The Parking Management Plan has been based on Guiding Principles previously reviewed by Council and includes an annual review process, a Parking Permit Policy and maps showing the rationalisation of locations for parking time limits and specialised on-street car parking across the CAD.
- Rationalisation of existing parking controls includes:
 - Consolidating all one-hour (1P) car parks into two-hour parking within a prescribed 2P precinct (covering the CAD)
 - Consolidating all short-term parking (10, 15, 20 minutes) into a single 30-minute short term parking time frame
 - Adding an extra 22 Accessible car parks across the CAD in high traffic locations nominated by the PRC
 - Modifying unrestricted time limitations in Wilson Street (adjacent to Bunnings) to 2P
 - Removal of existing locations signed as Permit Parking (including Council parking)
 - Making minor modifications to the location of Loading Bays and taxi ranks and
 - Proposing directional signage for visitors to the City seeking long vehicle parking
 - Removal of on street fleet vehicle spaces (notably GWM and Council) to off street locations.

Note – this report does not consider the issue of parking fees or upgrading of parking related infrastructure.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the Parking Management Plan (**Appendix "9.6A"**) and commence implementation.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr David Bowe

That Council adopt the Parking Management Plan (**Appendix "9.6A"**) and commence implementation.

Amendment

MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded Cr Di Bell

That Council adopt the Parking Management Plan (**Appendix "9.6A"**) and commence implementation and to review as necessary.

When the amendment was PUT it was CARRIED. The amendment then became the substantive motion and when it was PUT it was CARRIED.

REPORT

Background

Horsham Rural City Council has an existing and current Municipal Parking Strategy that was reviewed and endorsed in 2017 and re-endorsed as per the adoption of the Horsham Urban Integrated Transport Strategy in 2020. In 2019-2020, it budgeted for the development of a Parking Management Plan to build on the policy direction of that strategy and ensure that the objectives of the strategy were implemented 'on the ground'.

Tonkin Consulting was engaged to facilitate the development of the Parking Management Plan.

The project to develop the Parking Management Plan was broken into two stages:

1. Business case/cost benefit of parking fee and collection methodologies
2. Development of guiding principles for parking management and assessment of car parking time limitations and locations across the study area and development of a Parking Management Plan.

This report focuses on the second stage of the project. The first stage (a business case and proposal to replace the obsolete meters) will be considered as part of the 2021-2022 budget deliberations.

A review by Tonkin Consulting of the current parking regime within the Horsham CAD concluded that:

- On street parking restrictions are unnecessarily complex and should be simplified. For example, there are 19 different types of parking zones and six different types of restriction applying for 30 minutes or less
 - This array of parking zones appears confusing and is difficult to enforce. There is clear opportunity to rationalise the parking zone framework throughout the city to improve customer satisfaction, support business and for parking to be easier to monitor and enforce.
- Accessible car parking comprises 2% of all bays in the city centre. This is a minimum standard per Australian Standard AS289.5 (April 2020) that acknowledges that higher numbers are appropriate depending on the proportion of older and less mobile persons in the community
 - There is an opportunity to increase the number of accessible car parking spaces, particularly in high frequented areas, and better locate accessible car parking spaces relative to the specific building and land use
- At its peak, more than 20 organisations have enjoyed special on-street parking arrangements in Horsham, these organisations are exempt from most of the sign-posted parking regulations applicable to other stakeholders, there is little documentation or consistency in the various permit arrangements which appear to have accumulated in an ad hoc fashion over a long period of time outside any policy or guidelines
- Policy is needed to support the general principles proposed by Tonkin to ensure that the parking regime:
 - Supports retail trade
 - Provides ease of access to all types of users
 - Recognises the role of Horsham as a regional centre for business, commerce and recreation
 - Optimises available street space in an equitable, fair and transparent manner
 - Maintains access to local businesses, services and amenities
 - Balances the needs of residents, local workers, businesses, shoppers and commuters.
 - Supports business activity by encouraging the turn-over (churn) of on street parking spaces, while providing a simplified zone arrangement that enables shoppers time to walk the street rather than move their cars
 - Overall, the aim is to provide a better customer experience with parking in Horsham.

A representative community-based Project Reference Committee (PRC) was established to provide initial input into the guiding principles and general outline of the Plan, to focus test the findings and recommendations of the consultant and to support the broader community engagement processes once released for comment.

A draft Parking Management Plan including the guiding principles, a Permit Policy and maps showing the locations of the various time restrictions, accessible car parking, loading bays, taxi ranks and directional signage for long vehicles was exhibited for a five-week period from late March to early May. The submissions were considered by the PRC and the consultant and modifications made in response to those submissions.

Discussion

The issues raised were discussed extensively with the community-based representative PRC. Revised parking locations and time limits were developed based on the consultation and further reviewed and agreed to by the PRC. Meetings were initially held via video conferencing and once Covid restrictions were lifted held in person with the latter meetings being more efficient and collaborative.

Key considerations of the PRC included:

- The extensive number and scattered nature of parking restrictions were confusing, particularly to visitors to Horsham
- One hour car parking did not give sufficient time for the full range of activities one could expect to undertake whilst visiting the CAD, e.g.: shopping, commerce, meals and coffee, causing inconvenience to those parked in such bays
- Consolidating 1P and 2P into one time limit (two hours) will reduce public confusion and provide sufficient time for all activities to be completed without having to return to the meter or to move the car. Any longer than two hours will adversely affect parking turnover
- A designated area signposted as a two-hour parking (2P) precinct would also reduce the cause of confusion to visitors and locals (noting that paid / unpaid parks will need to be signposted separately)
- The large number of short-term parking time restrictions was confusing and rationalising these to a single 30-minute time slot would provide the opportunity for short-term parkers to undertake any one of the full range of activities such as going to the Post Office, a dry cleaner, a bottle shop, the Library or to quickly pay a bill
- Visitors to Horsham have difficulty locating long-vehicle car spaces and signage was needed to support these visitors. Council had recently implemented an additional long vehicle spaces as part of the relocation of the VIC
- The ad hoc nature of the business and community permit system was inequitable and did not support the aim of creating churn to help maximise the number of people having access to the parking bays in the CAD
- Employee and fleet vehicles should be managed off street where possible
- There were many extra locations that would benefit from accessible parking bays in highly frequented locations
- Accessible car parking should where appropriate be time limited to two hours to support churn and maximise access
- Some accessible car parking spaces were non-compliant and a full audit of existing and proposed spaces is needed
- The long-term parking spaces (unrestricted) were generally appropriately located
- 4P time limits in some could be replaced by either 2P or All-Day parking
- No additions or other changes to the location of metered spaces are recommended in the short term

- Parking restrictions up to 5pm (not 5.30pm) is more appropriate because demand reduces at that time of day.

The PRC also endorsed the objectives:

- To support the Municipal Parking Strategy and achieve a better customer experience with parking in Horsham by:
- Supporting local business activity by encouraging the turn-over (churn) of on street parking spaces, while providing a simplified zone arrangement that enables shoppers time to complete their visit to the CAD without having to continuously return to their car to top up meters or move to another location
- Providing ease of access to all types of users
- Recognising the role of Horsham as a regional centre for business, commerce and recreation
- Optimising available street space in an equitable, fair and transparent manner
- Maintaining community access to local businesses, services and amenities, and
- Balancing the needs of residents, local workers, businesses, shoppers and commuter.

Council endorsed the release of a draft Parking Management Plan which included the following proposed changes to Parking controls in the CAD:

- A designated 2P precinct from Darlot Street in the west to inside the western edge of Urquhart Street as the eastern edge and from McLachlan Street in the north to Hamilton Street in the south be established and signposted with all parking bays to have two-hourly time limits unless otherwise marked
- Parking bays signposted for employees or fleet vehicles be reverted to 2P spaces and alternative off-street spaces be identified
- Parking restrictions to apply 9am-5pm Monday to Friday and 9am-12pm Saturday
- The extension of 2P parking outside Bunnings in Wilson Street, replacing unrestricted parking
- An extension of 2P in the northern end on both sides of Madden Street replacing unrestricted parking
- The replacement of All Day parking in McLachlan Street with 2P between Firebrace and Urquhart Streets
- Long-vehicle parking directional signage be established in strategic locations to help point visitors to these without having to do a U-turn
- An extra 17 accessible car parking spaces be established across the CAD
- The infrastructure associated with all accessible car parking spaces to be reviewed and installed in compliance with Australian Standards. All accessible spaces to be limited to 2P to facilitate access for all
- Community group reserved bays (Legacy and senior citizens) be converted to 2P and/or accessible parking spaces
- All short-term car parking be 30 minutes.

Principles used to guide the development of this proposed Plan and future management of parking issues in Horsham's CAD and a permit policy proposing the elimination of the ad hoc business and community group parking permits are also included in the proposed Parking Management Plan.

The guiding principles include:

- On-street car parking is managed under time-restrictions that encourage use and turnover, while ensuring members of the community and visitors have enough time to fulfil their visit to the Central Activities District (CAD) of Horsham and encourage on-street pedestrian activity
- Paid parking for on-street parking in Horsham is correctly priced to encourage regular turnover and efficient use of parking bays
- Paid parking is applied in areas with high demand for kerb space while unpriced parking is located in more peripheral locations. This ensures that users pay an appropriate price for parking in convenient high-value locations
- On-street parking supports all abilities access, local business and adjacent land uses.

Once the submissions were received, they were reviewed by Tonkin (consulting), staff and the PRC. Following this review it was agreed that changes be made to what was exhibited as described above including:

- All day parking in McLachlan Street be retained rather than changed to 2P, subject to ongoing monitoring of demand to determine whether there is justification to introduce additional 2P spaces
- 4P parking in Urquhart Street be changed to 2P on the west side of Urquhart Street and all-day parking on the east side of Urquhart Street
- An extra 5 accessible car parking spaces be added to the proposed provision
- Existing accessible parking be retained as unrestricted, while all new accessible car parking be 2P (9am-5pm Monday to Friday and 9am – noon Saturday).

A consolidated summary of all submissions and the consultant's itemised response to each submission as agreed by staff and the PRC gives reasons for the changes made to the exhibited draft (see **Appendix "9.6B"**).

Ongoing monitoring and an inbuilt annual review process are designed to ensure that any issues or changes are identified and responded to effectively in accordance with the guiding principles described above.

Options to Consider

Not applicable

Sustainability Implications

Not applicable

Community Engagement

Extensive efforts have been made to ensure effective and thorough community engagement including:

- A detailed stakeholder mapping exercise was undertaken to identify all parties that might be impacted
- A representative community Project Reference Committee was established to support the development of this Plan. Representatives of retailers, landowners, business groups, ratepayers, mobility groups, aged persons, and sporting groups were invited, regular meetings were held to help develop the Plan and review the recommendations
- Once a draft was endorsed for public exhibition by Council, identified stakeholders were notified by writing and/or telephone in accordance with the Council-endorsed Engagement Plan
- The draft Plan was exhibited for a 5-week period including a permanent display in the Council Chambers foyer, a 3-day pop display and regular social media and press promotion
- All submissions were reviewed by staff, the consultant (Tonkin) and the Project Reference Group.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not applicable

Collaboration

The community-based PRC comprised representatives from retail, the ratepayers, and aged and disability groups. A Business Horsham representative was invited but declined but requested that it be informed when the draft final product was exhibited, which occurred via telephone contact. Whilst not everyone was able to attend all meetings, invitees were provided with the minutes and given the opportunity to contact the Project Manager with any comments or concerns. The contribution from members, particularly when meeting face to face was constructive and useful.

Financial Implications

There will be financial implications regarding the installation of new signage. This has been factored into the 2021-2022 operations budget.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

HRCC Municipal Parking Strategy 2017

2020-2024 Council Plan

Goal 2 – Sustaining the Economy Four-Year Priority – Review Municipal Parking Strategy

Risk Implications

There is often a potential reputational risk to Council relating to the engagement process. This risk has been mitigated through the extensive Engagement Plan and comprehensive exhibition process which included a 5-week exhibition period, permanent display in the Council Chambers foyer, a 3-day pop display and regular social media and press promotion including a video discussion with the Mayor shown on Council's web site and Facebook page.

Conclusion

The development of the Parking Management Plan has been a detailed and comprehensive process supported by an extensive engagement program. The final product has responded to all of the community submissions and accepted many of them. There is an inbuilt annual review process to ensure the ongoing currency of the Plan. It is ready for adoption and implementation.

9.7 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT – JANUARY TO MARCH 2021 (INCLUDING FINANCIAL REPORT)

Author's Name:	Graeme Harrison	Director:	Not applicable
Author's Title:	Director Corporate Services	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Governance and Information	File Number:	F18/A10/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Quarterly Performance Report – January to March 2021 (**Appendix “9.7A”**)

Purpose

To receive and note the Finance and Performance Report for the three month period ended 31 March 2021, included as an appendix to the Quarterly Performance Report – January to March 2021 (**Appendix “9.7A”**).

Summary

- The Quarterly Performance Report for the period ended 31 March 2021 was adopted by Council on 26 April 2021.
- The Quarterly Budget Report for the period ended 31 March 2021 is now presented to Council. It was not included in the previous report presented to the 26 April 2021 Council Meeting.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Quarterly Performance report and quarterly financial report for the three month period ended 31 March 2021 (**Appendix “9.7A”**).

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr David Bowe

That Council receive and note the Quarterly Performance report and quarterly financial report for the three month period ended 31 March 2021 (**Appendix “9.7A”**).

CARRIED

Cr Les Power called for division of Council

For the motion:

Cr Di Bell

Cr David Bowe

Cr Penny Flynn

Cr Les Power

Cr Ian Ross

Cr Robyn Gulline

Against the motion:

Cr Claudia Haenel

REPORT**Background**

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

The Quarterly Performance Report each period also includes the quarterly financial summary. This component was mistakenly not included in the March report and has now been attached for the information of Council and the community. This revised version will also be placed on Council's website. The monthly financial reports have continued to be presented to Council at their regular briefings.

Options to Consider

Not applicable

Sustainability Implications

Not applicable

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 intention of the Quarterly Performance Report 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 provides a regular and succinct quarterly report to Council and the community to assess how Council is performing financially and against its key objectives.

9.8 RATES POLICY REVIEW

Author's Name:	Graeme Harrison	Director:	Graeme Harrison
Author's Title:	Director Corporate Services	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Corporate Services	File Number:	F20/A05/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy (**Appendix "9.8A"**)

Rates and Charges Debt Collection Policy (**Appendix "9.8B"**)

Financial Hardship Application Form (**Appendix "9.8C"**)

Purpose

To present the revised Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy and the Rates and Charges Debt Collection Policy for adoption.

Summary

- As part of Councils normal processes officers have undertaken a review of the policies and forms relating to the issue of financial hardship for ratepayers
- The Ombudsman has recently completed a review of how councils across the state deal with financial hardship experienced by ratepayers. Recommendations from this report have been incorporated in to the revised polices.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt the revised Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy (**Appendix "9.8A"**).
2. Adopt the revised Rates and Charges Debt Collection Policy (**Appendix "9.8B"**).

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn

That Council:

1. Adopt the revised Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy (**Appendix "9.8A"**).
2. Adopt the revised Rates and Charges Debt Collection Policy (**Appendix "9.8B"**).

CARRIED

REPORT**Background**

The Financial Hardship and Debt Collection policies are important for Council with respect to how outstanding rates are managed in a sensitive and respectful with those in the community that are experiencing financial hardship. These policies are Council policies that must be approved by Council.

The Ombudsman has recently completed a review across the state into how Councils deal with financial hardship. Horsham Rural City Council was cited in that report for the positive way that it acknowledges the need for sensitivity and awareness when dealing with ratepayers experiencing financial hardship.

Discussion

The changes to the Policies are summarised as follows:

Document	General Statement	Specific Amendments to note
Rates and Charges Financial Hardship policy (Appendix "9.8A")	Last reviewed in August 2019, and is now being reviewed in order to reflect recommendations from the Ombudsman's review in to how councils manage financial hardship across the state and to generally improve and update the policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added reference to reflect current practice of withdrawing debt collection action when hardship is identified • Added option to waive rates in full or partially • Interest will not accrue whilst a payment plan has been put in place • Added to reflect current practise that payment plans can be entered in to at any time • Change from interest reduction to interest waiver • Deferring payments requires the completion of the hardship form • Waiving of rates section has been reworded to remove that we "generally do not waive rates" and improved the process around any approval of the waiving of rates. • Toning down the 12 month sunset clause from a definite end to a preferred end. • Updated contact details
Rates and Charges Debt Collection Policy (Appendix "9.8B")	Last updated in December 2015 and has been reviewed and updated to improve its operation and to adjust for the new Local Government Act 2020.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Softened the wording in general principles around financial hardship • Added reference to waiving of interest in cases of hardship • Added methods of how rates staff will make all efforts to contact the ratepayer (to reflect our current practises) • Expanded negotiated payment arrangement section to capture current practises re doing this at any time, how interest will be dealt with and methods that will be used to make contact • Added reference for debt collection agencies must comply with ACCC and ASIC guidelines for debt collection • Added the current approach that a ratepayers principle place of residence will never be sold to recover unpaid rates
Document	General Statement	Specific Amendments to note
Financial Hardship Application Form (Appendix "9.8C")	Last reviewed in 2018 there is no formal requirement for this form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note has been added upfront of the form to urge ratepayers in financial hardship to contact council to enter in to flexible payment plan and get an interest waiver before they go to the trouble of completing the form • Other minor changes to the order and format of the information • Simplified the sign-off so no longer requires a Justice of the Peace to witness

Options to Consider

Nil

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

There has been no specific community engagement around the amendment of these policies nor is any considered to be required. During the Rates Review panel process in 2018 the panel provided input a recommendations to the existing policy.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Victorian Ombudsman's review of Councils approaches to financial hardship has made a number of recommendations. This report provides an opportunity for Council to respond to these and thereby improve the quality and approach to its management of financial hardship within the community.

Collaboration

Nil

Financial Implications

Managing the waiving of any rate payments is an important matter for Council and one that is not entered in to except in cases of extreme hardship but to grant waivers without adequate due diligence has the potential to impact on Councils rate revenue and hence potentially its economic sustainability.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Local Government Act 1989 and the Ombudsman's review "Investigation in to how local Councils respond to Ratepayers in financial hardship"

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

These policies should all align to the principles and direction provided in Council's Draft Revenue and Rating Plan that has recently been updated and developed for the 2021-2022 Budget process and has recently been out for the community to review and comment upon.

Risk Implications

There is the risk of reputational damage if Council does not manage financial hardship in a responsible and sensitive manner. There is also the potential for financial loss if Council is too lenient in how it manages financial hardship. There is a fine line to balance on between these two objectives.

Conclusion

Management of Council's rates collection can be challenging, but the policies in place ensure that Council meets its own needs to collect revenue but at the same time ensuring that ratepayers in the community experiencing financial stress are considered in a sensitive and considerate way and are afforded with opportunities to meet their financial obligations without imposing extra unnecessary costs in the process.

9.9 BUDGET 2021-2022 AND REVENUE AND RATING PLAN 2021-2024

Author's Name:	Graeme Harrison	Director:	Graeme Harrison
Author's Title:	Director Corporate Services	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Corporate Services	File Number:	F18/A10/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Submissions received for the 2021-2022 Draft Budget (**Appendix "9.9A"**)

Budget 2021-2022 (**Appendix "9.9B"**)

Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 (**Appendix "9.9C"**)

Purpose

To adopt the Horsham Rural City Council Budget 2021-2022 plus the 3 year forward budget, rates and charges for 2021-2022 and the Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024.

Summary

- The budget has been prepared using the model budget format provided by Local Government Victoria.
- The Draft Budget 2021-2022 and the Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 have been out for community submissions using the principles of Section 223 of the former *Local Government Act 1989*.
- Ten submissions were received of which there are no proposed changes as a result to the draft budget document as presented.
- There are some changes identified from the submissions and additional grants that have been received that will not be adjusted in the budget document but will be adjusted early in 2021-2022 financial year when carry-forward works are incorporated into the budget. A subsequent report will be provided to Council at that time.
- The budget is balanced on a cash basis and ready to be adopted.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receive and note the submissions to the draft budget attached as **Appendix "9.9A"**.
2. Adopt Horsham Rural City Council Budget 2021-2022 and the subsequent 3 financial years, as attached in **Appendix "9.9B"**, pursuant to Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
3. Adopt the Horsham Rural City Council Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 as attached in **Appendix "9.9C"**, pursuant to Section 93 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
4. Adopt the Horsham Rural City Council rates and charges as depicted in section 4 of the attached budget document **Appendix "9.9B"**, pursuant to Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
5. Note the following changes to the draft budget in response to the submissions and also note that these changes are immaterial in nature so have not been incorporated in to the budget document at this point of time. They will be added in to Council's budget when carry-forward projects are brought to account in early 2021-2022:
 - a) \$10,000 to assist with planning costs re a serenity garden for women impacted by family violence
 - b) \$20,000 to assist with community planning at Natimuk with respect to Economic Development and the impact of changes at Mount Arapiles
 - c) \$66,000 to improve the train station garden and surrounds and open space.
6. Note the following items have become known subsequent to the development of the draft budget and will be revised together with carry-forward projects when they are brought to account early in 2021-2022, none of these will impact on the rate determination budget:
 - Grants Commission will pay 50% of the General purpose allocation in advance.
 - Additional Government Grants of \$3.3 million have been announced for capital
 - Revenue estimates of approximately \$1.3 million from industrial land sales
 - Industrial land development costs of \$0.8 million
 - Works are required at the landfill for \$90,000 re Audit findings.

Council Resolution**MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr David Bowe**

That Council:

1. Receive and note the submissions to the draft budget attached as **Appendix "9.9A"**.
2. Adopt Horsham Rural City Council Budget 2021-2022 and the subsequent 3 financial years, as attached in **Appendix "9.9B"**, pursuant to Section 94 of the Local Government Act 2020.
3. Adopt the Horsham Rural City Council Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 as attached in **Appendix "9.9C"**, pursuant to Section 93 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
4. Adopt the Horsham Rural City Council rates and charges as depicted in section 4 of the attached budget document **Appendix "9.9B"**, pursuant to Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
5. Note the following changes to the draft budget in response to the submissions and also note that these changes are immaterial in nature so have not been incorporated in to the budget document at this point of time. They will be added in to Council's budget when carry-forward projects are brought to account in early 2021-2022:
 - (a) \$10,000 to assist with planning costs re a serenity garden for women impacted by family violence
 - (b) \$20,000 to assist with community planning at Natimuk with respect to Economic Development and the impact of changes at Mount Arapiles
 - (c) \$66,000 to improve the train station garden and surrounds and open space.
6. Note the following items have become known subsequent to the development of the draft budget and will be revised together with carry-forward projects when they are brought to account early in 2021-2022, none of these will impact on the rate determination budget:
 - Grants Commission will pay 50% of the General purpose allocation in advance.
 - Additional Government Grants of \$3.3 million have been announced for capital
 - Revenue estimates of approximately \$1.3 million from industrial land sales
 - Industrial land development costs of \$0.8 million
 - Works are required at the landfill for \$90,000 re Audit findings.

MOTION LOST

Cr Les Power called for a division of Council**SUSPEND STANDING ORDERS****MOVED Cr Di Bell, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn**

That Standing Orders be suspended.

CARRIED

The time being 7.09pm, the Council meeting was suspended.

RESUME STANDING ORDERS**MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr Les Power**

That Standing Orders resume.

CARRIED

The time being 7.19pm, the Council meeting resumed.

For the motion:

Cr Di Bell

Cr David Bowe

Cr Penny Flynn

Cr Les Power

Cr Robyn Gulline

Against the motion:

Cr Claudia Haenel

Cr Ian Ross

The motion was then carried. A copy of the motion is below:

That Council:

1. Receive and note the submissions to the draft budget attached as **Appendix "9.9A"**.
2. Adopt Horsham Rural City Council Budget 2021-2022 and the subsequent 3 financial years, as attached in **Appendix "9.9B"**, pursuant to Section 94 of the Local Government Act 2020.
3. Adopt the Horsham Rural City Council Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 as attached in **Appendix "9.9C"**, pursuant to Section 93 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
4. Adopt the Horsham Rural City Council rates and charges as depicted in section 4 of the attached budget document **Appendix "9.9B"**, pursuant to Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
5. Note the following changes to the draft budget in response to the submissions and also note that these changes are immaterial in nature so have not been incorporated in to the budget document at this point of time. They will be added in to Council's budget when carry-forward projects are brought to account in early 2021-2022:
 - a. \$10,000 to assist with planning costs re a serenity garden for women impacted by family violence
 - b. \$20,000 to assist with community planning at Natimuk with respect to Economic Development and the impact of changes at Mount Arapiles
 - c. \$66,000 to improve the train station garden and surrounds and open space.
6. Note the following items have become known subsequent to the development of the draft budget and will be revised together with carry-forward projects when they are brought to account early in 2021-2022, none of these will impact on the rate determination budget:
 - Grants Commission will pay 50% of the General purpose allocation in advance.
 - Additional Government Grants of \$3.3 million have been announced for capital
 - Revenue estimates of approximately \$1.3 million from industrial land sales
 - Industrial land development costs of \$0.8 million
 - Works are required at the landfill for \$90,000 re Audit findings.

CARRIED

SUSPEND STANDING ORDERS

MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr David Bowe

That Standing Orders be suspended.

CARRIED

The time being 7.21pm, the Council meeting was suspended.

RESUME STANDING ORDERS

MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr David Bowe

That Standing Orders resumed.

CARRIED

The time being 7.22pm, the Council meeting resumed.

REPORT

Background

Council has prepared a budget for 2021-2022 and the subsequent 3 financial years, and has prepared the Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024, in accordance with Sections 93 and 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. Council chose to place these on public exhibition from 27 April to 7 June 2021 (42 days) and invited the community to make submissions. These documents were also made available for review at the Civic Centre Horsham, and on Council's website.

The draft budget document (**Appendix "9.9B"**), is in an easy to read format made up of the following three sections:

i. Mayor's Introduction and Executive Summary (Pages 3 to 15)

This provides a very high level "snapshot" view of the budget and is intended to be readable by members of the community that do not have any financial background. If only this section is read it will give the reader an understanding of the key elements and issues within the budget.

ii. Budget Reports (Pages 16 to 75)

This section includes all statutory disclosures of information and detailed budget numbers. It includes:

- Explanation of the linkages with the Council Plan
- Service summaries and indicators for Council's 40 service groups and 92 separate services including comparisons with last year's figures
- Service performance outcome indicators
- Financial statements (including the 2021-2022 Budget plus the subsequent 3 financial years), grants, borrowings, capital work and rates information.
- Notes to further expand on individual lines within the financial statements
- Financial performance indicators

iii. Appendices (Pages 76 to 117)

This section provides additional supporting information on community grants, operational initiatives, fees and charges and a document highlighting key capital works.

Whilst the budget document presents Council's budget on an accrual basis, the goal is to bring to balance the budget on a cash basis. This means considering the operating cash revenues and expenditures as well as the capital cash revenues and expenditure. On a cash basis the budget has been balanced.

2020-2021 was a year of unprecedented uncertainty for both Council and the community as a result of Covid-19. 2021-2022 meanwhile has a little more certainty as we have begun to live with Covid-19 and its impacts have now been better understood. There are still however many challenges for Council and the broader community moving forward.

Council is mindful of the role that it needs to play in the local economic situation, but that it must also attempt to support the parts of the community that have been impacted most by the continuing Covid-19 crisis and any financial hardship that this may place on members of the community.

The Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 has also been developed in accordance with Section 93 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and sets out how the rates are to be applied across sectors and the different rating principles that will be applied, as well as how other charges will be set and determined. This document is largely a combination of Council's previous Rating Policy and Rating Strategy.

Discussion

Rates have been increased by the 1.5% Ministerial Rate Cap, Farm Differentials have been reduced from 67% to 59% and the Municipal Charge has been decreased from \$274 to \$240.

Net service delivery has increased by 2.8% from the 20-21 Budget which on the surface seems reasonable but there are many factors at play, particularly in relation to Covid-19 responses and the discontinuance of the Home Care Services.

Spending on Rural Roads and infrastructure is increasing in a significant way. With a rate cap of 1.5%, the program is increasing overall by \$1.56 million or 27% as follows:

- Grading program \$64,000 or 10.4%
- Drainage program \$25,000 or 11.1%
- Vegetation Management \$48,000 or 17.6%
- General Maintenance \$20,000 or 2.9%
- Road Construction and Rehabilitation \$572,000 or 17.2%
- Gravel Re-sheeting program by \$364,000 or 67.9%
- Bridges and Culverts \$455,000

Capital spending from general revenues has increased by \$0.34 million or 6.8% on the 2020-2021 Budget but this was cut by \$0.51 million under Covid, so expenditure has not been returned to pre-Covid levels, which is a reflection of the tightening situation under the rate capping environment.

Initiatives have stayed reasonably constant at \$0.48 million.

Financing costs have also stayed reasonably constant but they have shifted from external loans to internal loans (loans funded from Council's own cash reserves).

The Mayor's introduction and Executive summary sections provide further key highlights from this year's budget.

Council has contributed to the development of the budget in 6 separate briefing meetings started back on 2 December 2020. The community has been consulted over that time (see below for detailed activities).

During the community consultation period commencing 27 April when Council adopted the draft budget, to 7 June (42 days), Council received 10 submissions in total, and 2 of the submitters were heard by Council at a Briefing Meeting on 9 June. Council subsequently discussed the submissions and what had been heard, at the same briefing session and other budget changes that had been otherwise identified.

All submissions are provided in the **Appendix "9.9A"** together with Council's responses to those submissions. Letters will be written to submitters detailing Council's responses following the adoption of Council's budget.

The following specific items will be actioned in response to the submission process, these items collectively are immaterial to the overall \$59 million budget, and they will be incorporated into the Council budget when the carry-forward projects are finalised early in 2021-2022. Funding for these items will be covered from expected additional dollars from the Federal Financial Assistance Grants allocation from the Victorian Grants Commission which are expected to be higher than our initial estimates in the budget papers:

- a) \$10,000 to assist with planning costs re a possible serenity garden for women impacted by family violence.
- b) \$20,000 to assist with community planning at Natimuk with respect to Economic Development and the impact of changes at Mount Arapiles.
- c) \$66,000 to improve the train station garden and surrounds and open space.

Options to Consider

The Council Budget is a statutory requirement and must be adopted each financial year by the 30 June.

Sustainability Implications

Rate capping continues to place restrictions on Council's ability to raise its own source income and places and ever increasing reliance on grants from other tiers of government which may be turned on and off over time. Council's share of the overall tax revenues of all tiers of government as approximately 3% but additional responsibilities and obligations are being given to Council without adequate consideration of the taxation implications. These issues mean that Council must be forever mindful of its own financial sustainability and as a result take a more conservative approach to debt than may be taken by other levels of government and the private sector.

The budget touches all aspects of Council's operations which in turn impact in a range of ways on society, the environment, climate change and the economic prosperity for Council and the community alike.

Community Engagement

Budget engagement activities were partially influenced by Covid-19 restrictions but included the following:

- Website information
- Online submission forms (5 received)
- Other written submissions (5 received via letter/e-mail)
- An info graphic was produced on Council spending by service area
- Budget interactive online Q&A session - total reach (people who watched) was 696, 10 questions were received
- Information boards in shop front and at the Civic Centre
- April 29 - email newsletter sent to 4,000 subscribers promoting the release of the draft budget for community feedback
- Social media - Posts: 10 were published via Facebook and also selectively replicated across Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube. Total combined Facebook reach was: 9,123 views
- 4 Media releases were made:
 - Budget 2021-2022: The rural roads to be upgraded this year
 - Online Budget Q&A this Wednesday night
 - Budget 2021-2022: Online Budget Q&A this Wednesday night
 - Proposed budget released
- Budget listening post in Roberts Avenue.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Budget 2021-2022 contains a number of innovative initiatives that will seek to improve Council's operations and provide efficiencies.

Collaboration

There are many collaborative activities that Council will be undertaking within 2021-2022 Budget, however a significant project is the Rural Council's Corporate Collaboration (RCCC) project that is seeking to procure and implement a common financial, rating, and payroll system across a group of 4 Councils in the region. The implementation of a common software system for these critical functions is expected to facilitate greater sharing of resources and lead to efficiencies over time. It is an innovative project funded by the State Government.

Financial Implications

All matters under discussion impact on the 2021-2022 Council Budget.

Subsequent to the development of the Draft Budget there have been some items relating to revenue where the exact amounts have become more clearly known. None of these items are considered material to Council's overall \$59 million budget and will be factored into a revised forecast early in the 2021-2022 financial year when carry-forward projects are brought to account.

The items are summarised as follows, none of which will impact on the rate budget:

- Grants Commission paid 50% of the General purpose allocation in advance prior to 30 June 2021, and advised that we will potentially receive more funding than originally estimate.
- Government Grants of \$3.3 million have been announced for capital works with the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program and other programs, this is additional funding that was not known about at the time of the initial draft budget.
- Revenue estimates from property sales of Council's industrial land have not been included of approximately \$1.3 million which will need to fund additional property development costs of \$0.8 million to assist with the further release of industrial land on to the market (\$0.4 million may also be available from government grants to assist with these development costs).
- In response to the matter arising from the Audit of the Landfill, works are required at the landfill at an approximate cost of \$90,000 to be funded from the Waste Reserve.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The state policy with the most significance for Council's budget is the Fair go rates system that sees the capping of Council's rate increases at the level set by the Minister each year.

Environmental Implications

The Council budget contains allocations for addressing climate change issues for Council and specifically has \$100,000 allocated to support the implementation of the Zero Carbon Plan that was adopted by Council during 2020-2021.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

The Budget and Revenue and Rating Plan have been prepared with reference to the 2020-2024 Council Plan. Preparation of the budget is a statutory requirement. Future budgets past this one, will be influenced by the Community Vision and new Council Plan which are due to be finalised by 31 October 2021 under the Local Government Act 2020.

Risk Implications

Sound financial management is cornerstone for Council sustainability. A comprehensive budget process that integrates with Council's other planning activities reduces the risk of financial miss-management. The budget is a key document for the good governance and operations of Council and, as such, needs to be adopted by the 30 June each year.

Conclusion

The Budget 2021-2022 and Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 have been developed through a sound process of consultation and review. The budget is balanced on a cash basis and is considered fiscally responsible whilst still providing a degree of important economic activity within the municipality. The Budget and Revenue and Rating Plans are ready for adoption.

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 June 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 June 2021.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr David Bowe, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn

That Council receive and note the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for June 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

National General Assembly: The Mayor, Cr Robyn Gulline, Cr Les Power and Chief Executive Officer attended the 27th National General Assembly (NGA) organised by the Australian Local Government Association held at the National Convention Centre in Canberra from 20 to 23 June 2021. The Assembly is an annual gathering of Councils from across the Country, with this year's theme being "Working together for our communities".

Joint State and Local Government CEO Forum: The Chief Executive Officer attended a virtual meeting on 2 June 2021 with Municipal Association of Victoria, Local Government and Suburban Development (Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions) and senior executives from State Government to receive an update on key sectoral issues.

Local Government CEO's Forum: The Chief Executive Officer attended a virtual Local Government CEO Forum on 3 June 2021 regarding Covid-19 restrictions.

Audit and Risk Committee Meeting: The Chief Executive Officer attended an Audit and Risk Committee Meeting on 10 June 2021.

Wimmera Regional CEO Meeting: The Chief Executive Officer met with the Chief Executive Officers of Buloke, West Wimmera, Hindmarsh, Northern Grampians and Yarriambiack on 10 June 2021. The group discussed the WDA transformation project with the consultant assisting with the process.

Department of Transport: The Mayor, Director Infrastructure and the Chief Executive Officer met with the Regional Director of Department of Transport on 10 June 2021 as part of the bi-annual meetings. Number of topics including the funding announcement for the new roundabout at the Horsham Junction and alternative truck route, concept design for CBD revitalisation, recent accident on Horsham Noradjuha Road, and other arterial road safety issues were discussed.

B. Community Engagement

Grampians Central West Waste and Resource Recovery Group: The Director Infrastructure, Coordinator Waste Management and the Chief Executive Officer attended a workshop at the Horsham Golf Club on 16 June 2021 to discuss collaboration opportunities with Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water for the recovery and reuse of organics waste in the Horsham region.

Regional Cities Victoria (RCV): The Mayor and Chief Executive Officer attended a Regional Cities Victoria meeting on 17 June 2021 via zoom. Guest speakers included the Hon Martin Pakula, Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events; Industry Support and Recovery; Trade and Business Precincts and the Hon Shaun Leane, Minister for Local Government; suburban Development; Veterans.

C. Projects and Events

Coronavirus Information Webinar: The Mayor, Cr Robyn Gulline hosted a Coronavirus information webinar on Thursday 10 June at 7.00pm with esteemed health physician and former Wimmera General Practitioner Dr Rob Grenfell. Dr Grenfell provided an overview of Covid, vaccines and pandemics, before responding to questions from attendees.

Quantong Community Centre: Energy savings are on the way for the Quantong Community Centre thanks to the installation of solar panels and new LED lights. Council allocated \$25,000 from the Commonwealth Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program to have a 10kw solar energy system installed on the centre's roof and all internal and external lighting upgraded to energy efficient LEDs. Repairs were also made to the roof after it was discovered that corellas had extracted screws from the galvanised iron sheets. The installation of solar power and LED lights will reduce costs to the local community who pay for services to the centre. On top of cricket, tennis and football and netball functions, the Community Centre regularly hosts birthdays, funerals and weddings, so it's fair to say that the energy savings will accumulate substantially over the coming years.

Haven Car Park Upgrade: Following resurfacing, the car park at Haven has received new line markings. Designed to make the school drop off easier, quicker and safer, the car park is now one way with pedestrian crossings and drop off zones. Based off site observations of traffic flows, the initial plan by Laimiga Designs was updated with consultation from the local community. The result is one the community and school is very positive about, with plans already being made for students to add colour to the car park in creative ways.

Botanic Gardens: The main walking path within the Botanic Gardens has been sealed from the front gate to the playground area. This project was made possible through two government grants – Growing Victoria's Botanic Gardens grant and the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (LRCI) funding. This will improve access for all users of the Botanic Gardens as well as improving the general maintenance of the paths.

Weir Park Nature Walk: In conjunction with the local landcare group, the Parks and Gardens team installed six nest boxes around the nature walk near Weir Park. In addition to providing homes for native fauna, the boxes will be a part of future school excursion programs.

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 June 2021.

10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cr Robyn Gulline, Mayor

- 25 May 2021 - ABC Wimmera radio interview
- 27 May 2021 - Launch National Reconciliation Week at May Park
- 28 May 2021 - Triple H radio with Di Trotter
- 3 June 2021 - MAV Managing CEO Employment Cycle introduction (zoom)
- 7 June 2021 - Aboriginal Advisory Committee (zoom)
- 9 June 2021 - MAV Managing CEO Employment Cycle Workshop part 1 (Zoom)
- 10 June 2021
 - Audit and Risk Committee
 - Liaison meeting with Department of Transport with CEO and Director of Infrastructure
 - HRCC Health Agencies Network Meeting – COVID and Vaccines (Zoom)
 - Live Q&A – COVID and Vaccines with Dr Rob Grenfell
- 16 June 2021
 - ABC Wimmera radio interview
 - North West Municipal Association – AGM and meeting
 - Federation University Foundation Scholarships
- 17 June 2021
 - Regional Cities Meeting with CEO (Zoom)
 - Met with Federation University Vice Chancellor, Duncan Bentley and Head of Horsham Campus, Geoff Lord
- 18 June 2021 - MAV Managing CEO Employment Cycle Workshop part 2 (Zoom)
- 20 June 2021 - Welcome to Community Deliberative Panel
- 21 - 23 June 2021 - Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly in Canberra with Cr Les Power and CEO
- 25 June 2021
 - Met with Tidy Towns Committee representatives
 - Rotary Club of Horsham Changeover Dinner

Cr Penny Flynn

- 2 June 2021 - Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment workshop
- 17 June 2021 – ALGWA Vic – Facilitated Networking
- 18 June 2021 – Governance and Councillor Advisory Network
- 20 June 2021 – Community Panel Welcome

Cr David Bowe

- 27 May 2021- Reconciliation Takes Action 2021: National Reconciliation Week Opening
- 7 June 2021- Council Briefing Meeting
- 9 June 2021- Council Briefing meeting to hear Budget Submissions
- 11 June 2021- Wimmera Regional Library Corporation Board meeting
- 15 June 2021- Council Briefing meeting
- 20 June 2021- Community Vision Deliberative panel meeting (only attended Opening of the meeting)
- 22 June 2021- Lions Club of the City of Horsham changeover dinner
- 23 June 2021 - MAV – Sexual Harassment Prevention workshop (virtual via zoom)

SUSPEND STANDING ORDERS

MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr Ian Ross

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

CARRIED

The time being 7.25pm, the Council meeting was suspended.

RESUME STANDING ORDERS

MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr David Bowe

That Standing Orders resume.

CARRIED

The time being 7.42pm, the Council meeting resumed.

MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, 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 – RECORD OF MEETINGS

- Council Budget Briefing held on Monday 7 June 2021 at 5.00pm
- Council Briefing held on Wednesday 9 June 2021 at 5.00pm
- Council Briefing held on Tuesday 15 June 2021 at 5.25pm

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 18 May 2021 at 12.30pm

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 Di Bell

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 189

Given by Cr Ian Ross

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 28 June 2021.

“That the City to River Internal Audit confidential status be removed.”

Rationale

My understanding is that this is a public document and is not considered a confidential document under the LGA 2020.

Under the Act and Council’s policy of openness and transparency, I believe this document should be released to the community. It is important that the light of day needs to shine on this, so that if there is nothing wrong, the community suspicions can be allayed. And likewise, if there are any significant issues they can be addressed by Council.

Currently, I understand Council has appealed to VCAT to not have this document released, I believe this is a waste of resources, time, legal fees and ratepayers money.

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

Refer to Item No. 15.1 in the confidential section of the agenda for a copy of Audit and Risk Committee Minutes – Governance Review City to River Project.

Cr Ian Ross

CIVIC CENTRE
HORSHAM 3400

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded Cr Di Bell

That the City to River Internal Audit confidential status be removed.

MOTION LOST

15. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr Les Power

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

CARRIED

The time being 7.53pm, the meeting closed to the public.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr Di Bell

That the meeting open to the public.

CARRIED

CLOSE

After dealing with Confidential Matters, the meeting closed at 7.59pm



The Mayor, Cr Robyn Gulline
Chairperson