

# AGENDA

## MEETING OF THE **HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL**

To be held on  
**25 November 2024**

**At 5.30pm**

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



**COUNCILLORS are respectfully requested to attend the Council Meeting  
of the Horsham Rural City Council to be held on 25 November 2024  
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm**

**Order of Business**

**PRESENT**

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

**1. PRAYER**

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

**2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY STATEMENT**

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

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

**3. OPENING AND WELCOME**

The Chairman will formally welcome those in attendance to the meeting. The Mayor to advise that the meeting will be recorded to maintain a video archive, which will be available on the Horsham Rural City Council website as soon as practicable.

**4. APOLOGIES**

**5. LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS**

**6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**Recommendation**

That the minutes emanating from the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm on 21 October 2024 be adopted.

## 7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

### Declarations of Interest

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

### Members of Staff

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

**8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

<b>REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>9. OFFICERS REPORTS .....</b>	<b>6</b>
9.1 MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE MOUNT ARAPILES-TOOAN STATE PARK (DYURRITE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE) DRAFT AMENDMENT, PARKS VICTORIA 2024 .....	6
9.2 COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL AND REGULATORY COMMITTEES .....	13
9.3 RECRUITMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER .....	17
<b>REPORTS FOR INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>21</b>
9.4 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND GROWTH DEPARTMENT REPORT .....	21
<b>10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>11. URGENT BUSINESS.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS.....</b>	<b>32</b>
13.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS.....	32
13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.....	32
13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE.....	32
13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES .....	32
<b>14. NOTICE OF MOTION.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>15. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS .....</b>	<b></b>
15.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE: ANNUAL APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR .....	
<i>Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(f) –Personal Information</i>	
15.2 CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF ALTERNATIVE DAILY COVER FOR DOOEN LANDFILL.....	
<i>Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(g) – Private Commercial Information</i>	

**CLOSE**


CRAIG NIEMANN  
Chief Executive Officer

## REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

### 9. OFFICERS REPORTS

#### 9.1 MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE MOUNT ARAPILES-TOOAN STATE PARK (DYURRITE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE) DRAFT AMENDMENT, PARKS VICTORIA 2024

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Fiona Gormann	<b>Director:</b>	Kevin O'Brien
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Manager Investment Attraction and Growth	<b>Directorate:</b>	Communities and Place
<b>Department:</b>	Investment Attraction and Growth	<b>File Number:</b>	F15/A15/000001

##### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

##### Status

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

##### Appendix

Management Plan for the Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape) Draft Amendment, Parks Victoria 2024 (**Appendix 9.1A**)

Summary of submissions received in response to the public release of the Management Plan for the Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape) Draft Amendment by Parks Victoria (**Appendix 9.1B**)

##### Purpose

To provide Council with an overview of the Community sentiment regarding the release of the Management Plan for the Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape) Draft Amendment, Parks Victoria 2024.

##### Summary

- Since Parks Victoria released the *Management Plan for the Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape) Draft Amendment*, Council has received over 130 submissions in response.
- The majority of the submissions are disappointed with the lack of consultation undertaken by Parks Victoria with key stakeholders, predominantly the rock-climbing community.
- The majority of submissions received, acknowledge that they respect and are sensitive to the cultural heritage significance and value of the site.
- The Natimuk Economic and Social Project Advisory Committee (PAC) at their meeting held 14 November raised a number of significant questions and concerns and proposed solutions
- Council has an opportunity to navigate a positive pathway forward through an advocacy role with all parties including Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) and State Government.

## **Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Write to the relevant Ministers and request that they meet with Council to discuss the Management Plan for the Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape) Draft Amendment.
2. Invite Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) to meet with Council to further understand the importance of the Dyurrite Cultural Landscape to Traditional Owners and the future preservation and promotion of cultural heritage and economic growth.
3. Write to the relevant Ministers, advocating to the State Government to request an extension of time of three months to ensure that effective engagement with the local community occurs, so that the community gains a full understanding of proposed changes to rock-climbing and other associated activities at Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape) and the cultural importance of the site.
4. Write to the relevant Ministers, advocating to the State Government that a reference group be established representing a diverse range of users that have strong associations with Dyurrite and the local Natimuk community. That this group work together to oversee the implementation of the amended Management Plan for the Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape) including any State Government investment.
5. Request that the State Government fund an economic and social impact assessment of this site as a destination, including the number of visitors and professional people who as a result of *Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park* (Dyurrite) chose to move here.

## REPORT

### Background

Parks Victoria released the *Management Plan for the Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape) Draft Amendment* (MPA) with the aim to balance recreational use and the protection of cultural heritage and the environment.

Parks Victoria advised that the plan has been updated to reflect what was rediscovered in the recent cultural and environmental surveys and listed below:

- Tens of thousands of artefacts, scarred trees, rock art with evidence dating back at least 3000 years, and one of the largest indigenous stone quarry complexes found in Australia
- Threatened plants including the Skeleton Fork Fern (*Psilotum nudum*) and the Western Pellitory (*Parietaria australis*).

The MPA outlines where recreational activities, including rock-climbing, can take place to protect cultural heritage and the environment.

The MPA has not been well received from the local community and business operators, visitors to our region and the rock-climbing community this is evident by over 130 submissions Council received.

### Discussion

Since the release of the MPA, Council has received over 130 submissions (refer to summary of submissions received **Appendix (9.1B)**). Additionally, Council has closely monitored community reactions, including feedback from residents and stakeholders across the region. These insights have been gathered through meetings, local and national media coverage, Facebook discussions, as well as emails and phone calls. Council is concerned that if the community and key stakeholders are not given additional time to respond to the MPA, it could deepen the existing tensions and divisions within the community.

The Natimuk Economic and Social Project Advisory Committee (PAC) at their meeting held 14 November raised a number of significant questions and concerns and proposed solutions. They are predominantly concerned about the impact of the proposed changes to the local Natimuk community and economy and how this also may impact on the wider region.

A summary of key concerns and statements made in the submissions that Council received is as follows:

- There has not been meaningful consultation with rock-climbers and also peak climbing bodies
- Dyurrite is one of the most valued rock-climbing sites in the world
- There should be direct consultation between BGLC and rock-climbers
- Balance of usage rather than blanket bans
- Propose exploring more balanced approaches. Enhanced management strategies, increased education and awareness programs, and more stringent regulations on climbing practices could address environmental and cultural concerns without resorting to such significant closures
- There is strong commitment to and evidence of cultural values by rock climbing communities
- 'Gariwerd Wimmera Reconciliation Network (GWRN) provided a detailed 54-page report, from a rock-climbing perspective, to assist decision-makers', GWRN clearly state that 'We did not act on behalf of the climbing community or claim to act as 'consultation' with the climbing community. We have always been clear that our relationship as a reconciliation network is with the Traditional Owners.

- Call for a pause on the implementation of any new climbing closures until such a review can be conducted.

Regarding the MPA, Council's submission to the State Government aims to provide a balanced assessment, considering potential benefits, concerns and impacts, across our diverse community and acknowledge that there is a broad range of opinions not only within our municipality but further reaching to the broader region and global impact on rock-climbers who travel to Dyurrite from all parts of the world.

Council has established a strong partnership with Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC), and as we work through the various issues and concerns highlighted in the submissions received, as well as in our advocacy to the State Government, our goal is to further strengthen and uphold this partnership. We are committed to a collaborative approach, seeking shared opportunities to achieve positive outcomes

### **Options to Consider**

1. Should Council decide not to take an advocacy role, there is a risk that our diverse community may experience division, and the Cultural Heritage of the Dyurrite landscape may not be fully recognised or understood.
2. By engaging with Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC), Council can deepen its understanding of the cultural significance of the Dyurrite landscape, build stronger relationships, and demonstrate respect and commitment to preserving cultural heritage.
3. If Council does not engage with Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC), it risks missing vital insights into the cultural importance of the Dyurrite landscape, potentially leading to decisions that lack inclusivity and harm relationships with Traditional Owners.
4. By writing to the relevant Ministers and requesting a meeting to discuss the Management Plan for the Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape) Draft Amendment, Council can actively engage in shaping a well-informed approach, fostering collaboration, and advocating for outcomes that align with community interests.
5. If Council chooses not to write to the relevant Ministers and request a meeting to discuss the Management Plan for the Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape) Draft Amendment, there is a missed opportunity to influence decision-making, potentially leading to outcomes that do not fully address community needs or priorities.
6. By requesting that the State Government fund an economic and social assessment of Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park (Dyurrite) as a destination, including data on visitor numbers and individuals relocating to the area due to the site, Council can demonstrate the park's broader impact. This assessment would provide valuable insights to support planning, economic growth, and community development initiatives.
7. If Council does not request State Government funding for an economic and social assessment, critical opportunities to understand the site's visitor dynamics and professional impact may be lost. This could hinder informed decision-making and limit the potential to effectively advocate for the site's broader benefits to the community and economy.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Nil

### **Community Engagement**

Feedback received through submissions to date has clearly highlighted concerns about the lack of community engagement in the development of the Management Plan for the Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape) Draft Amendment. Council recognises an opportunity to advocate for an extended consultation period to ensure meaningful and inclusive engagement. This approach aims to enhance outcomes for all stakeholders, fostering a more collaborative and informed process.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Not applicable

### **Collaboration**

Not applicable

### **Financial Implications**

Not applicable

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

#### *Tourism Destination Local Area Action Plans*

Section 2.1 Natimuk: Natimuk is a small town located approximately 30 kilometres northwest of Horsham. It is known for its artistic community and is a popular destination for rock climbers due to its proximity to the nearby Mount Arapiles, a renowned climbing area.

Tourism: Horsham Rural City has several attractions that draw tourists to the region. The Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park, located nearby, offers stunning natural landscapes, hiking trails, waterfalls, and wildlife. Mount Arapiles, renowned among rock climbers, is another popular destination. The region also hosts events and festivals, such as the Art Is... Festival, which showcases local arts and culture. Tourism-related businesses, including accommodation, restaurants, cafes, and tour operators, benefit from visitor spending and contribute to the local economy.

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

#### *Horsham 2041 Community Vision*

What do people love about living in the Horsham Region? What we heard from 937 people.

Rock climbing – 10.8% of comments highlighted the world-class climbing venues within the region, and the climbing community, to be what they love most about the Horsham region. “As a rock climber and lover of nature, living near Mt Arapiles and the Grampians has been a lifelong dream.”

What are the things that people are less happy about? What we heard from 418 people

Rock climbing restrictions – 21.8% of comments admitted their despair over the rock climbing restrictions in the Grampians and at Mount Arapiles, also mentioning the negative impact this will have on tourism to the region. “Now that Parks Victoria have severely restricted rock-climbing there is no reason I, or other international climbers, will visit.”

What is one thing people would change to make the municipality better? What we heard from 539 people  
No climbing restrictions – 12.6% of comments expressed their desire for rock climbing restrictions to be removed at Mt Arapiles and the Grampians, highlighting the economic benefits of climbing and the importance of paying traditional respect. “Recognise the importance and value of rock climbing and rock climbers to the region.”

What gives people a sense of belonging, or makes them feel connected to the community? What we heard from 418 people.

Rock climbing – 13.9% of comments mentioned that the experience of rock climbing, and notably, the rock climbing community (especially in Natimuk), gave them a strong sense of belonging and connection to the community. “The rock climbing community. It is my family.”

#### *2021-2025 Council Plan*

Theme 2 Liveability: Horsham Rural City Council will actively work to create a healthy and connected community that is a great place to live, work invest and explore for all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

Initiatives and Priorities:

- Develop range of recreational opportunities with a focus on our natural environment and recreational waterways
- Promote recreational opportunities in our natural environment and recreational waterways to increase visitation

Theme 3 Sustainability: Horsham Rural City Council will actively lead in sustainable growth and development of the community and the economy.

- Plan for sustainable development which balances economic, environmental and social considerations
- Advocate for protection, conservation and management of our natural environment to sustain biodiversity and habitats.
- Promote recreational and social environments for people to enjoy (open spaces, waterways etc)

#### *2022 Natimuk Economic and Social Plan*

Priority area 2: Tourism attraction

2.1 Work in partnership with Parks Victoria to identify opportunities to improve the campground at Mount Arapiles and consider other infrastructure options that could increase visitation around Natimuk, e.g., improved river access or camping sites.

Priority area 11: Barengi Gadjin Land Council

11.1 Seek funding to facilitate dialogue between the group proposed in 8.1 and the Barengi Gadjin Land Council to:

- discuss the future use and restrictions at Mount Arapiles (Dyurrite)
- seek feedback on priorities that Traditional Owners and the community could collaborate on, e.g. cultural heritage and history promotion.

#### *Destination Horsham- Investment Attraction Strategy 2022 onwards*

The region possesses more than 40 parks and natural areas and has more than 50km of trails for cycling, walking or running including through the Little Desert National Park, Mount Arapiles and the Wartook Valley (page 6)

The Arapiles Big Sky Bicycle Trail - this bicycle trail offers visitors a 35km ride through Natimuk to Mount Arapiles (Dyurrite). The trail follows a loop which explores the highlights of the local landscape including large red gum forests and salt lakes which accommodate a variety of birdlife.

Natimuk Rock Climbing - to the West of Horsham is the picturesque township of Natimuk and the world-famous rock- climbing mecca of Mount Arapiles. Despite a few climbing routes closing due to cultural heritage protection, Mount Arapiles still boasts world class climbing routes. Natimuk has become a base for adventurers heading to the mountain and those inspired to explore their creative side within the towns many eccentric events.

Why Horsham is better suited for investment into nature-based tourism than other regions - Horsham has significant assets both within the region and nearby to leverage off. This includes Budj Bim World Heritage area, the Grampians National Park, Mount Arapiles, and Little Desert National Park. These areas attract hundreds of thousands of visitors each year and put Horsham in a strong position to further develop tourist amenities to grow the sector.

#### *2019 Open Space Strategy*

Recommendation 4 - Enhance collaboration - The primary focus of this section of the strategy was working with BGLC and Parks Victoria to ensure a collaborative approach to planning and respect for cultural considerations in everything we do.

#### **Risk Implications**

There is a reputational risk for Council if it does not advocate on behalf of the community to the State Government regarding concerns raised in the submissions received.

#### **Conclusion**

Council is committed to its advocacy role, ensuring that all voices within our diverse community can provide input and be heard in a climate of collaboration and respect.

## 9.2 COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL AND REGULATORY COMMITTEES

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Kim Hargreaves	<b>Director:</b>	Kim Hargreaves
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Director Corporate Services	<b>Directorate:</b>	Corporate Services
<b>Department:</b>	Corporate Services	<b>File Number:</b>	F06/A12/000001

### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

### Status

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

### Appendix

Nil

### Purpose

To specifically nominate Councillor representatives to the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA), the Audit and Risk Committee, and Wimmera Southern Mallee Development noting the pending meeting commitments for these committees.

### Summary

- The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) require formal advice of the Councillors appointed following a resolution of Council. Noting the upcoming Annual General Meeting for the VLGA in November, Council is required to confirm representation prior to that meeting.
- Council has one Regulatory Committee, the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), that requires annual appointments to be made for representation by the Mayor plus one other Councillor. Noting the next ARC meeting precedes the December Council meeting, confirmation of Councillor representation is required in advance of the ARC meeting.
- Wimmera Southern Mallee Development also has an upcoming Board meeting and requires confirmation of Council representation for that meeting.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Nominate Cr Dean O'Loughlin as Council's representative for 2025 to the Victorian Local Governance Association.
2. Receive and note Committee appointments for the following Committees:
  - Audit and Risk Committee – The Mayor and Cr Angela Munn
  - Wimmera Southern Mallee Development– Cr Cam McDonald

## REPORT

### Background

There are various Committees that require representation or involvement by Councillors. While some Committees require the Mayor to be the representative there are other Committee responsibilities that can be undertaken by other Councillors.

Some of these Committees require confirmation of representatives following a resolution of Council. In particular, formal notification of Councillors appointed to represent Horsham Rural City Council at the Municipal Association of Victoria and Victorian Local Governance Association is required. The appointment for VLGA will be confirmed if the nomination is accepted by Council resolution with the nomination for MAV to be confirmed at the December council meeting.

### Discussion

For consideration by Councillors in this instance are representatives for the following committees:

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

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

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

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

- *Wimmera Southern Mallee Development*
  - Wimmera Southern Mallee Development (WSMD) is the peak economic development organisation for the Wimmera Southern-Mallee region supporting existing local businesses and promoting economic development opportunities to investors.

- WSMD is a vital link between industry and government, lobbying for improved regional infrastructure, and advocating for regional priority issues.
- Membership comprises of representative from local government, commerce and industry, education and training, environment and sustainability, health and wellbeing, manufacturing, recreation and tourism, sustainable agriculture, Wimmera Sustainability Alliance.
- Council representatives (Municipal Members) are Member Directors of the Board.
- More information is available at <https://wsm.org.au/>

Council has proposed the appointment of Cr McDonald to the WSMD.

### **Options to Consider**

Council can opt to change the nomination should they choose to however this report reflects the Councillor discussion of respective representation for the committees outlined in this report at a briefing on 19 November 2024.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Nil

### **Community Engagement**

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

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

The involvement of Councillors on external committees provides opportunities to inform innovation and continuous improvement.

### **Collaboration**

Collaboration with other Councils occurs by virtue of membership on these Committees. For example, the Wimmera Southern Mallee Development is a collaboration between five regional Councils - Hindmarsh Shire Council, Horsham Rural City Council, Northern Grampians Shire Council, West Wimmera Shire Council and Yarriambiack Shire Council.

### **Financial Implications**

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

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

Not applicable

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

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 5 – Leadership

### **Risk Implications**

Several of the committees require formal notification of the Councillors appointed to represent Horsham Rural City Council following a resolution of Council. There is consequently a risk to Council associated with a failure to nominate councillor representation. The *Local Government Act 2020* (s53) also requires that Council establish and Audit and Risk Committee which includes members who are Councillors of the Council. This report prioritises those committees where there is an imminent meeting date thereby ensuring Councillor representatives are available to attend these meetings.

**Conclusion**

The 2025 Councillor appointments and nominations to certain Committees have been prepared for consideration and endorsement by Council. Following endorsement, the respective Committees will be notified of their 2025 Councillor representatives.

### 9.3 RECRUITMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Craig Niemann	<b>Director:</b>	N/A
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Chief Executive Officer	<b>Directorate:</b>	N/A
<b>Department:</b>	Chief Executive Office	<b>File Number:</b>	F19/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

CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy (**Appendix 9.3A**)

#### Purpose

To outline and seek Council endorsement for a structured process to recruit a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the Horsham Rural City Council. This significant decision is aimed at securing leadership that will support the Council's long-term vision, including the Council Plan and the 2025-2026 Budget.

#### Summary

- A new CEO recruitment is necessary to lead the Council and deliver on the Council's strategic priorities.
- A qualified consultant will be engaged to facilitate the recruitment and provide a robust candidate selection process.
- The recruitment process will be guided by the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy, with oversight from an independent expert.
- The timeline for the recruitment process aims for the CEO's commencement by May to align with strategic milestones.
- Council involvement and timely decision-making are crucial to maintaining the proposed schedule.

#### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt the project brief and proceed to invite proposals from qualified consultants for the recruitment of a CEO.
2. Appoint the Mayor and Interim CEO to evaluate submissions and recommend a consultant for Council's appointment.
3. Support the involvement of the Independent Member of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee, Margaret Devlin, and the Local Government Monitor, Mr. Steven Kingshott, in supporting the recruitment process.

## REPORT

### Background

Appointing a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is one of the most significant decisions Councillors undertake. Under sections 44 and 45 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is responsible for appointing, managing, and reviewing the performance of the CEO. The CEO must be employed under a contract with a maximum term of five years.

A key priority for the newly elected Council is to appoint a new Chief Executive Officer. This decision will play an instrumental role in supporting the Councillors, managing the Council operations, implementing the Council Plan, and leading the organisation effectively. This recruitment aligns with the development of the Council Plan and the upcoming 2025-2026 Council Budget, both of which would benefit from the CEO's involvement and familiarity with Council's strategic direction.

The recruitment process will adhere to Council's CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy, ensuring an equitable and thorough approach. An Independent Member, Ms. Margaret Devlin, an experienced HR consultant, will support the process, offering valuable insights from her extensive experience in similar roles.

### Discussion

The Horsham Rural City Council is preparing to initiate a vital process to recruit a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). This decision will have lasting significance, as the chosen CEO will guide the Council through the strategic direction and day-to-day management of the organisation. With the 2025-2026 Council Plan and Budget underway, it is crucial that the appointed CEO possesses the vision and skills necessary to support these initiatives and continue strengthening Council's relationship with the community.

### Recruitment Process Overview

The Council will engage an experienced consultant to ensure a robust, competitive, and transparent recruitment process that attracts top-quality candidates suited to Horsham Rural City Council's needs. This recruitment process will adhere to our CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy, which outlines the roles, responsibilities, and interactions between the Council and the CEO, both during recruitment and employment.

Council has appointed Margaret Devlin, a highly regarded HR consultant with extensive experience in CEO recruitment, as our independent advisor. Ms. Devlin has reviewed the project brief and is in alignment with our approach. At a suitable time, Ms. Devlin will be introduced to the Council.

The proposed timeline and key milestones for the CEO recruitment process are as follows:

1. **Request for Quote for Consultant** – November 26 to December 6
2. **Evaluation of Quotes** – December 9 to 13
3. **Council Report to Appoint Consultant** – December 16
4. **Consultant Engagement** – December 17
5. **Council Discussion on CEO Attributes & Search Commencement** – December/January
6. **Long List of Candidates Presented** – Early February
7. **Shortlist Presentation** – Late February
8. **First-Round Interviews** – Early March
9. **Final Interviews and Selection** – Mid-March
10. **Council Appointment of CEO** – End of March
11. **CEO Commencement** – May

Meeting these timelines will require Councillors' active participation and prompt decision-making.

### **Supporting the Recruitment Process**

To meet the timeline outlined, Councillors will need to commit the necessary time to participate actively in the process, including interviews and making timely decisions. It will be essential to issue the Request for Quote promptly to enable Council to appoint a consultant by the upcoming December 16 Council Meeting. This timeline will allow the consultant to conduct a thorough candidate search throughout January, aiming to provide a shortlist by early February.

Councillors are encouraged to communicate their perspectives on the key attributes required for a successful CEO, ensuring the selection aligns with Council's goals. This process is unique, as the Interim CEO will be able to contribute independently throughout, providing valuable insights. Additionally, Local Government Monitor Steven Kingshott, a Human Resources expert, will be available to offer guidance, further strengthening the thoroughness of the process.

With the dedication of all involved, Council is well-positioned to identify a CEO who is not only highly qualified but also an ideal fit for Council's vision and the community's future needs.

### **Options to Consider**

To ensure a successful CEO recruitment, it is essential that Council prioritise the timelines outlined in this report. It is therefore recommended that Council endorse the proposed recommendation.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Nil

### **Community Engagement**

Not applicable

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

This recruitment process emphasises best practices in executive hiring, leveraging expert consultation and ensuring transparency and fairness in Council leadership appointments.

### **Collaboration**

The recruitment will be supported by collaboration with the Local Government Monitor and an independent HR consultant to ensure an unbiased, expert-guided process.

### **Financial Implications**

The recruitment process will incur consultancy fees, which are accounted for in the current budget allocations.

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

Not applicable

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

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 5 – Leadership, by prioritising an effective CEO recruitment process.

**Risk Implications**

Timely recruitment is essential to avoid delays in strategic planning processes and ensure continuity in Council leadership.

**Conclusion**

Council's endorsement of this structured recruitment process is crucial to appointing a capable CEO who can lead the Council with integrity, expertise, and alignment with Council's strategic goals.

## **REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

### **9.4 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND GROWTH DEPARTMENT REPORT**

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

#### **Officer Conflict of Interest**

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

#### **Status**

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Reason:** Nil

#### **Appendix**

Spendmapp Report September 2024 (data is from bank card transactions and may not capture all Ag Industry) **Appendix 9.4A**

#### **Purpose**

To receive and note the Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report for September 2024.

#### **Summary**

The Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report provides the progress and outcomes achieved through the delivery of the Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan during the reporting period.

#### **Recommendation**

That Council receive and note the Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report for September 2024.

## REPORT

### Background

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

### Discussion

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

The Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan progress and key achievements for the month of September are articulated in the information and tables, as follow.

Actions are measured by goals and set timelines. The timelines are indicated by years which relate to financial years.

Year 1 - 2022-2023

Year 2 - 2023-2024

Year 3 - 2024-2025

Year 4 - 2024-2025

Year 5+ 2025+

Ongoing – life of plan

The teams will focus on delivering actions with in the current financial year whilst carrying out the necessary planning to ensure targets are meet in sequential years.

## INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured by	Progress
2.10 (Ongoing)	Undertake regular meetings between Wimmera Southern Mallee Development and Investment Attraction Department to inform and discuss economic development opportunities	10 forums held per year	Meetings held on a regular basis. Outcomes relate to business development opportunities that benefit the region overall. 8/10 meetings held to date in 2024.

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured By	Progress
2.6.1 (ongoing)	Promote recreational activities in our natural environment to increase destination tourism and visitation	Activities reported on in the Investment Attraction and Growth monthly Council Report	The Business Team and Visitor Services attended the VTIC Visitor Servicing Summit in September which provided an opportunity to gather information and ideas to increase destination tourism and visitation.
3.2.1 (ongoing)	Work with local business leaders throughout the municipality to	Two business forums held annually	The Business Team attended a Westvic Business event 'Spring

	develop business confidence and growth		Clean Your Business' in September which was very well received and provided informative information to businesses looking to refresh and enhance their business operations.
(ongoing)	Ensure constant communication through e-mails and business newsletters with tourism operators and local businesses regarding what is happening in the region	A minimum of 10 business newsletters distributed annually 4 business forums are held annually	Monthly newsletter was sent to 1,037 business contacts on 16 September with 414 opens and 43 clicks.
(ongoing)	Attract businesses to lease vacant shops in the Horsham city centre through the Wimmera Business Centre	Vacant shops reduced from 24 shops to 20 in the first year and maintained at or below 18 shops for the succeeding years	See table below

### **Tourism and Business Development**



Image Left - David Hubble and Ian Gumela, Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism Partnership Manager inside the old horse stables.

Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism (GWMT) and HRCC Business Development visited David Hubble owner of Fulham Homestead located in the Kanagulk area. Visitation related to partner membership with GWMT. Emphasizing the opportunities of the prospects by further expose Fulham Homestead as a farm stay facility through a wider audience base. Fulham Homestead has a huge potential to further expand with the already well-established accommodation facility as farm stay and yoga studio. David Hubble signed up as gold member with GWMT knowing very well that his membership will enhance his marketing reach to new potential visitors.

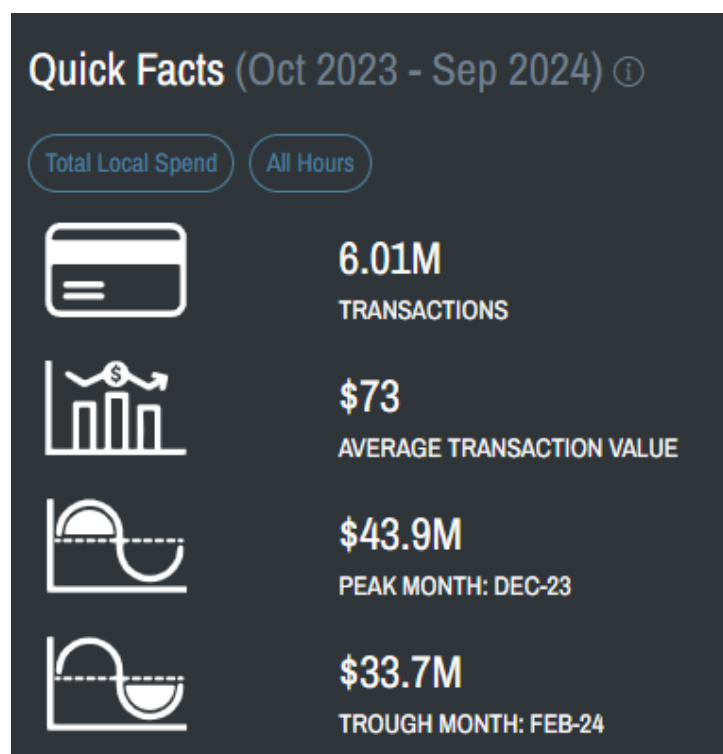
### **Industry Forum event in the Wimmera Mallee**

GWMT is excited to bring the first Industry Forum to Dimboola on Friday 18 October from 2pm, where attendees will be treated to Industry guest speakers, networking, and even a cruise afterwards on the Dimboola River provided by As time goes by in Dimboola.

## Monthly Tourism and Business Visitations for 2024

Month Visitation	Retail Services	Hospitality / Accommodation & General Tourism visits	Event contacts	Over all contacts for the month
January	8	6	20	34
February	20	13	18	51
March	23	16	7	46
April	10	14	4	28
May	30	10	20	60
June	20	15	10	45
July	15	30	5	50
August	12	8	4	24
September	20	15	6	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>379</b>

## SPENDMAPP



Further detailed analysis included in the report **(Appendix 9.4A)**

## Occupied Businesses:

Street and Number of Businesses	August 2024 Businesses Occupied	September 2024 Businesses Occupied	September 2024 Businesses Vacant	September 2024 Percentage Businesses Occupied
<b>Darlot St – 43</b> car wash and businesses operating from a house included	42	43	0	100%
<b>Firebrace St - 99</b>	91	91	8	91%
<b>Hamilton St - 17</b>	17	17	0	100%
<b>Wilson St – 34</b>	28	29	5	85%
<b>Pynsent St – 28</b> Cinema included	26	27	1	96%
<b>Roberts Ave – 27</b> Coles included	24	24	3	92%
<b>McLachlan St – 24</b> CFA & GWM included	24	24	0	100%
<b>Total 272</b> Post February 2022 there were 262 shops identified in the study area	<b>252/272</b>	<b>255/272</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>93%</b>

(Businesses are determined by whether they are 1. A premises, 2. Have customers 3. Exchange money; i.e Centre Link and the Cinema are included, and the Public Library is excluded). There are four known shops that are not suitable for occupancy as they require major renovations or are being used as a secondary business not requiring a retail front. These shops are reflected in the vacant shop numbers and unfortunately reduce the percentage of occupied businesses.

## STATUTORY PLANNING

### Planning Applications Determined

Below are the number of Planning Permits issued for the month of **September 2024** and a comparison with the same period last year.

Type	SEPTEMBER 2024		SEPTEMBER 2023	
	No.	*Value \$	No.	*Value \$
Miscellaneous Domestic	1	11,491	3	2,270,000
Industrial/Commercial	4	4,930,000	-	-
Subdivisions	2 (2 Lots)	-	-	-
Other	-	-	--	-
Total	7	4,941,491	3	2,270,000

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

Total number of planning permits issued in the Horsham Rural City Council area from 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024 is 16 compared to 13 in the same period in 2023-2024.

Planning permits issued for subdivision have permitted 14 new lots from 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024 compared to 38 in the same period in 2023-2024.

## Building Services

Below are the number of building permits issued for the month of **September 2024** and a comparison with the same period last year.

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

Type	2024		2023	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	-	-	1	2,520,407
Alterations to Dwellings	-	-	-	-
Dwelling resittings	-	-	-	-
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	-	-	2	55,670
Removal/Demolish	2	49,555	-	-
Industrial/Commercial	-	-	-	-
Signs	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>49,555</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2,576,077</b>

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

Type	2024		2023	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	4	2,752,842	5	2,513,757
Alterations to Dwellings	5	871,902	2	41,760
Dwelling resittings	-	-	1	87,615
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	9	455,994	7	195,875
Removal/Demolish	2	40,900	-	-
Industrial/Commercial	2	156,065	9	8,106,446
Signs	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>4,277,703</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>10,945,453</b>

(\*)

A total of 11 Building Permits have been issued by the Horsham Rural City Council at a total value of \$300,791 from 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024 compared to 11 Building Permits at a total value of \$2,855,098 for the same period in 2023-2024.

Private Building Surveyors have issued 57 Building Permits at a total value of \$13,183,088 from 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024 compared to 53 at a total value of \$22,749,558 For the same period in 2023-2024.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured By	Progress
1.3.4	Develop an open space contribution rate(s) and a new local Public Open Space Contribution Policy.	Policy adopted by Council and Horsham Planning Scheme amended.	Internal consultation and benchmarking completed and drafting of a Council Policy to commence.
(4 years)	Prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the Horsham Cinema	Management plan endorsed by Council	Work has commenced on developing a Concept Plan for the theatre.
2.10.2 (2 to 3 years)	Develop and implement a Housing Affordability and Diversity Strategy and complete an amendment to the planning scheme	Strategy developed and implemented through a planning scheme amendment	An Engagement Summary Report for the consultation undertaken for the Discussion Paper has been completed and will be released after the caretaker period. Further investigation of development capacity continues in order to prepared an updated Background Report.
2.10.3 (2 years)	Prepare and implement the Horsham South Structure Plan (Stage 2)	Plan adopted by Council	Council endorsed going to public consultation on the Draft Horsham South Structure Plan. Engagement planning underway.
(2 years)	Complete a Planning Scheme Review as a vehicle for specifying desired outcomes across the municipality	Planning Scheme Review Completed and suggested changes implemented	Amendment documents for a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the Planning Scheme Review are being prepared by the Department of Transport and Planning through a successful application made for support from the Regional Planning partnerships team.

### Options to Consider

Not applicable – no decision required

### Sustainability Implications

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

**Community Engagement**

Report has been prepared in consultation with range of agencies and will be made publicly available to Wimmera Southern Mallee Development (WSM), West Vic Business, and Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism and on Council's 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 Development and Tourism Support.

**Financial Implications**

Nil

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

Not applicable – no direct relationship or requirements

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 3 - Sustainability - Horsham Rural City Council will actively lead in sustainable growth and development of the community and the economy.

Strategy 2: A sustainable economy where local business, agriculture, tourism and other diverse industries thrive.

Destination Horsham Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan 2022 onwards

**Risk Implications**

Not applicable – no decision required

**Conclusion**

The monthly Investment Attraction and Growth Department report provides the opportunity to give Council and the community an insight into the projects being undertaken to grow our municipality and Horsham as a regional city.

## **10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

---

**11. URGENT BUSINESS**

## 12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

## **13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

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

- Council Briefing Meeting held on Monday 18 November 2024 at 5.30pm

Refer to **Appendix 13.1A**

### **13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

Nil

### **13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE**

Nil

### **13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Advisory Committee meeting held on 15 May 2024

Refer to **Appendix 13.4A**

#### **Recommendation**

That Council receive and note agenda items:

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

**14. NOTICE OF MOTION**