

# AGENDA

MEETING OF THE  
**HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL**

To be held on  
**16 September 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 16 September 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**

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

**Chairman, Cr Robyn Gulline read the following statement:**

My role as Mayor is to ensure the Council meeting is conducted in accordance with the Council's Governance Rules (sub rule 69.2). Members of the public do not have a right to address Council and may only do so with the consent of the Chair or by prior arrangement (sub rule 69.1). It is important for a successful Council meeting that the members of the gallery respect the setting and do not disrupt the meeting, particularly during the debate and discussion on Council items (sub rule 69.3). If required, as Chair, I may order the removal of any person (other than a Councillor) who disrupts the meeting or fails to comply with sub rule 69.2 (rule 70).

**4. APOLOGIES**

## 5. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

### Declarations of Interest

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

### Members of Staff

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

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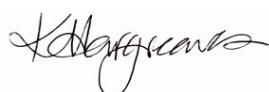
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*Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(g) – Private Commercial Information*

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*Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(g) – Private Commercial Information*

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*Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(g) – Private Commercial Information*

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*Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(f) –Personal Information*

**CLOSE**



**KIM HARGREAVES**  
Acting Chief Executive Officer

## REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

### 6. OFFICERS REPORTS

#### 6.1 DRAFT HORSHAM SOUTH STRUCTURE PLAN

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Jasmine Butler	<b>Director:</b>	Kevin O'Brien
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Coordinator Strategic Planning	<b>Directorate:</b>	Communities and Place
<b>Department:</b>	Investment Attraction and Growth	<b>File Number:</b>	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

##### Appendices

Draft Horsham South Structure Plan (**Appendix 6.1A**)

Engagement Summary Report (**Appendix 6.1B**)

##### Purpose

To present the Draft Horsham South Structure Plan for public consultation, following the Victorian Local Government election caretaker period.

##### Summary

- The *Draft Horsham South Structure Plan* (Draft HSSP) has been prepared to ensure coordinated development of the study area.
- The Draft HSSP and all background technical reports will be released in early November 2024 for further public consultation to inform the finalisation of the structure plan.
- An Engagement Summary Report has been prepared to provide responses to high level issues raised by submitters during the previous round of community engagement on the *Draft Future Urban Structure* and all submitters will also receive individual responses.

##### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorse the Draft Horsham South Structure Plan (**Appendix 6.1A**) for public consultation following the Victorian Local Government election caretaker period.
2. Note the Engagement Summary Report (**Appendix 6.1B**).

## REPORT

### Background

#### *Horsham South Structure Plan project*

The Horsham South Structure Plan project is being prepared to coordinate development and infrastructure delivery in Horsham South. This will:

1. Provide certainty to both industry and the community about how the area will develop;
2. Ensure efficient, timely and cost-effective infrastructure delivery; and
3. Reduce the potential for land use conflicts, interface and amenity issues.

#### *Study area*

The study area comprises approximately 4,540ha of land south of Horsham and the Wimmera River (Figure 1). The northern, eastern and western boundaries of the study area are defined by waterways and flooding extent. Clynes Road and Bungalally Creek were determined to be the southern boundary limit of the study area, as they formed a logical and natural boundary between potential residential areas and rural/farm areas. It is also the furthest extent to which changes to residential development would be.

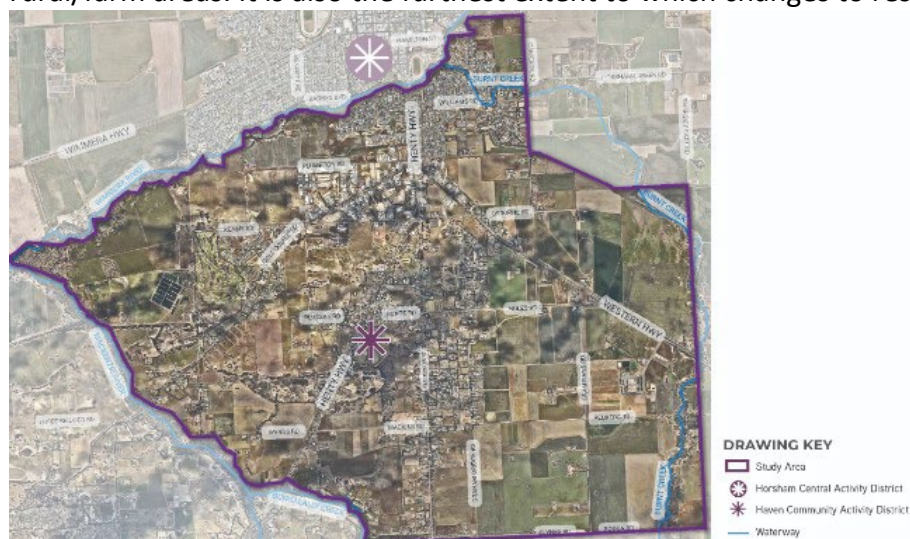


FIGURE 1: STUDY AREA

#### *Project status*

The project commenced in 2019 and has been developed and refined over a number of phases of technical work and community feedback. Once finalised and adopted, it will need to be implemented into the *Horsham Planning Scheme* through a formal planning scheme amendment process (Figure 2).

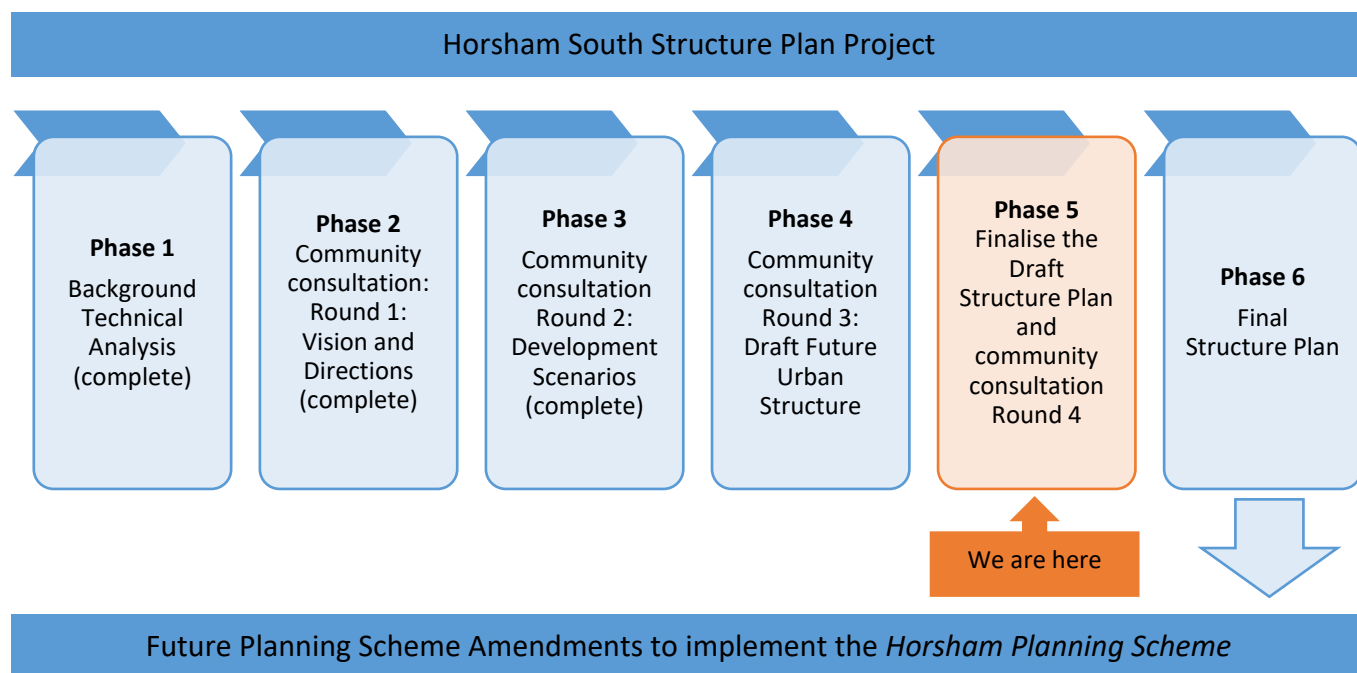


FIGURE 2: DEVELOPMENT OF THE HORSHAM SOUTH STRUCTURE PLAN

*Previous Council resolutions*

Date	Resolution
February 2021	Council received and noted the <i>Horsham South Emerging Option Webinar Summary</i> , that was to be made available to the public and resolved to continue with the preparation of the Horsham South Structure Plan - Phase 4.
June 2021	Council received and noted the finalised Horsham South Structure Plan Stage 2 Request for Quote.
November 2023	Council endorsed the <i>Draft Horsham South Future Urban Structure</i> for public release and feedback.

*Legislative context*

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act) is the head of power for the *Horsham Planning Scheme* which, along with other legislation such as the *Building Act 1993* and *Subdivision Act 1988*, regulates development in our region. When finalised, the *Horsham South Structure Plan* will provide guidance for development that will need to be included in the *Horsham Planning Scheme* through a formal Planning Scheme Amendment process under the Act.

**Discussion**

*Draft Horsham South Structure Plan*

A structure plan is a strategic planning document that defines a preferred direction for the future growth of an area and provides guidance on appropriate land uses. Structure plans identify the zoning and the high-level layout of roads and open space and determine likely future infrastructure requirements.

A structure plan provides for coordinated consideration of a range of land use planning issues and is intended to inform future changes to the *Horsham Planning Scheme* to give it effect (including updates to policies, zones, overlays, etc), as well as inform a Council’s investment decisions (particularly in relation to infrastructure provision and planning).

The Draft HSSP has been developed through background research and technical reports, including:

- Industrial Land Supply & Demand Assessment (Spatial Economics 2022)
- Potentially Contaminated Land Assessment (Meinhardt 2023)
- Ecology and Habitat Assessment (Ecology & Heritage Partners 2023)
- Preliminary Drainage Assessment (Stormy Water Solutions 2023)
- Catchment A Drainage Concept report (Stormy Water Solutions 2024)
- Servicing (Water & Sewer) Assessment (Tonkin 2022, updated 2024)
- Bushfire Risk Analysis (Kevin Hazell Bushfire Planning 2024); and
- Traffic and Transport Analysis (onemilegrid 2024).

The Draft HSSP is a report incorporating key plans that provides guidance for how areas should develop. It identified Comprehensive Development Areas that will require a coordinated development approach, as well as nuanced land use planning objectives and strategies. It also includes a suite of immediately required planning scheme amendments, as well as change areas that are supported but will require strategic justification through further strategic planning work.

The Draft HSSP identifies some trunk infrastructure, recommending a Development Contributions Plan as the mechanism for cost sharing.

An Implementation Plan in the Draft HSSP sets out actions and how they will be achieved.

#### *Community consultation*

Phase 4 (Figure 2) of the project involved community consultation on the *Draft Future Urban Structure* (FUS), which was a plan that presented a 'preview' of the structure plan. Community consultation was undertaken to:

- Enable the opportunity for community members to provide input and influence outcomes;
- Gain insight into the lived experience of residents;
- Provide an open and transparent process; and
- Gain diverse community input into a plan for future growth and change.

During the community engagement period Council received twenty-seven submissions that presented ideas for how the Draft FUS could be improved, outlined concerns/objections with the intent, or provided positive feedback.

The most common issues raised were those addressed in the *Engagement Summary Report (Appendix 6.1B)* and include:

- Availability of information;
- Amenity corridors/shared paths;
- Housing supply and proposed residential densities;
- Biodiversity areas; and
- Errors, anomalies, and other matters.

Now that the Draft HSSP has been prepared and technical reports have been completed, all outstanding issues raised by submitters can be addressed. The Engagement Summary Report will be sent to all submitters that made submissions during the Phase 4 consultation period. In addition, all submissions made during the consultation period will be provided with individual responses that outline how their issues have been considered and Council's response. Submitters will have the opportunity to read the technical background reports when the next round of public consultation commences and make further



submissions if they wish to do so. There will also be a formal Exhibition (advertising) period for changes to the *Horsham Planning Scheme* through the Planning Scheme Amendment process. Under the Act there are notice requirements as well as recourse opportunities through Planning Panels Victoria where submitter issues can be independently considered by a planning panel appointed by the Minister for Planning.

#### *Next steps*

- Tuesday 17 September to Sunday 27 October: Engagement planning / caretaker period
- Monday 28 October to Friday 13 December 2024 (7 weeks): Phase 5 Community consultation period
- Early 2025: Consideration of submitter issues and finalisation of the structure plan. Council will consider adoption of the final Horsham South Structure Plan.
- Early-mid 2025: A Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the Horsham South Structure Plan will be prepared and commenced.

#### **Options to Consider**

##### *Option 1 (as recommended by this report)*

That Council resolve to endorse the Draft HSSP (**Appendix 6.1A**) for public consultation and note the *Engagement Summary Report (Appendix 6.1B)*.

##### *Option 2*

Council could request that changes be made, or further work be undertaken prior to the release of the Draft HSSP.

This is not recommended because it will cause delays and financial implications associated with project management. Further, there will be another opportunity for revisions following community input as part of the next round of community consultation.

#### **Sustainability Implications**

There are no sustainability implications in endorsing the Draft HSSP for public consultation. The Draft HSSP will however provide the guidance for development outcomes that promote sustainable transport options, including shared paths and walking trails, as well as a coordinated approach to infrastructure provision across the study area which will result in extensive sustainability benefits.

#### **Community Engagement**

Council has made a strong commitment to deliver a genuine and thorough engagement process through four rounds of community engagement throughout the Horsham South Structure Plan project (Figure 2). The recent community engagement on the release of the Draft Future Urban Structure was the third time that Council has undertaken community engagement to inform the project and a final round of community engagement will be undertaken when the Draft Structure Plan is finalised.

The community engagement plan, activities and materials have been developed in consultation with Council's Project Control Group and the Community Relations, Advocacy and Team (CRAT).

#### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

The Horsham South Structure Plan is seeking to address land use planning issues that have resulted in uncoordinated and ad hoc development of the subject area. By undertaking this project, Council is demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement that will provide a level of certainty about how the area will develop which will assist the development industry and the community.

## **Collaboration**

### *Project Control Group*

An internal and interdisciplinary Project Control Group was established to oversee the development of this project and collaborate on key issues, as well as to ensure that other Council strategic projects and operations align with the outcomes of the structure plan.

### *Community Engagement*

The approach to community engagement and engagement materials have been prepared in consultation with Council's CRAT team and the Project Control Group.

### *External collaboration*

An external workshop with representation from several key government agencies was undertaken in August 2023 prior to the public release of the Draft Future Urban Structure to incorporate feedback.

## **Financial Implications**

Funds for the costs of the project and a future Planning Scheme Amendment have been allocated within the 2024-2025 Strategic Planning operational budget.

Implementation of the structure plan will have significant long term financial implications in terms of the sequencing of infrastructure and a Development Contributions Plan approach to funding shared infrastructure is presented in the structure plan. This matter will be considered further when an Infrastructure Funding Options report is completed later this year.

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

- Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan 2014
- Victorian Housing Statement 2023

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

- 2021-2025 Council Plan prepared by HRCC, 2021
- Destination Horsham Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan 2022 onwards, prepared by HRCC 2022
- Horsham Framework for Managing Growth, October 2013, Prepared for HRCC by Meinhardt Infrastructure and Environment Pty Ltd
- Open Space Strategy 2019
- Social Infrastructure Framework 2020
- Urban Transport Plan 2020
- Draft Horsham Bicycle and Shared Paths Infrastructure Plan 2023 – 2033
- Municipal Bicycle and Shared Path Plan 2012 by Driscoll Engineering
- Community Engagement Policy, C04/095
- Onsite Wastewater Management Policy A04/147

## **Risk Implications**

It is important that Council acknowledges and provides a timely response to submitters and continues to provide opportunities for affected community members to provide input into the development of the structure plan.

**Conclusion**

Council has identified that clear strategic planning for Horsham South was needed to ensure the area grows and changes in a way that has positive outcomes for the Horsham South community and the municipality. The structure plan has now been prepared to address the issues Horsham South faces and to provide guidance on its future growth direction.

## 6.2 EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) TO DEVELOP LAND FOR HOUSING ON COUNCIL-OWNED SITE

<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 Places
<b>Department:</b>	Investment Attraction and Growth	<b>File Number:</b>	F06/A07/000001

### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes  No

Reason: Nil

### Status

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

Yes  No

Reason: Nil

### Appendix

Horsham City Urban Renewal Project – Redevelopment Options and Implementation Plan April 2024  
(Appendix 6.2A)

### Purpose

To present the initiation of an Expression of Interest (Eoi) process for the potential sale and development of Council-owned land for housing.

### Summary

This report outlines the opportunity for residential development on a strategically located Council-owned site near the Central Activity District. The council depot is planned to relocate to Plumpton Rd in late 2025 and the land has been identified as surplus to Council's needs. The Urban Renewal Project recommends development options for medium density housing and a mixed commercial and residential land in the broader precinct to develop Horsham as attractive place to live, work and invest.

The Horsham City Urban Renewal Project – Redevelopment Options and Implementation Plan (Urban Renewal Plan) recommends a number of development options with consideration of land constraints including drainage, traffic, sewerage connections, and the provision of open space.

The Eoi process will invite developers to submit an expression of interest for the potential purchase of the land and redevelopment with the aim of enhancing housing availability while aligning with Council's urban renewal objectives.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Approve the initiation of an Expression of Interest (Eoi) process for the development of the specified Council-owned site for residential purposes.
2. Request Council officers to report back to Council with outcomes and recommendations.

## REPORT

### Background

The Council-owned site was identified in the Urban Renewal Plan as a prime location for residential development, particularly due to its proximity to the CAD. The project highlights the need for housing diversity in Horsham and suggests medium density housing as an appropriate form of development. The site is currently underutilised industrial land and redevelopment presents a significant investment opportunity to contribute to the local housing supply with the relocation of the Council Depot off site to Plumpton Road in late 2025.

### Discussion

The proposed EoI process will be open to property developers with experience in residential projects of similar scale. Submissions will be required to address key considerations:

- Capacity to deliver land and property development projects
- Experience in the housing sector
- Incorporation of Urban Renewal Plan into a development model
- Infrastructure scoping and delivery approach
- Financial model for purchase and delivery
- Project timeline

### Options to Consider

1. Proceed with the EoI process as outlined, seeking proposals that align with the Urban Renewal Plan's recommendations.
2. Modify the EoI criteria to include additional requirements depending on Council priorities.
3. Delay the EoI process to allow for further community consultation or additional studies.
4. Do not proceed with the EoI

### Sustainability Implications

The potential sale and development of the site will incorporate sustainable design principles, including housing density close to services and active transport, and integration of green spaces and design to minimise environmental impact.

### Community Engagement

Community engagement has occurred as part of the Urban Renewal Plan. Stakeholders, including local residents and businesses, will be consulted as part of local government requirements for the sale of land and future planning approvals to ensure that the development meets community needs and expectations.

### Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The EoI process will encourage an integrated approach to the sale and development of land to deliver innovative solutions that enhance the quality and diversity of housing in Horsham. The Council will also use this process to refine its approach to investment attraction and future urban renewal projects.

### Collaboration

The EoI process will involve collaboration between Council departments, particularly Property, Infrastructure, Planning, Open Space and Recreation, to ensure that the project meets all regulatory and community requirements.

### **Financial Implications**

The EoI process will be funded through the existing Council budget. The financial implications of the preferred developer will be assessed in detail as part of the selection process, with consideration given to long-term economic benefits for the community.

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

The proposed development aligns with Regional Growth strategies and State Housing policies. The project will contribute to meeting broader housing affordability and diversity goals.

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

- Horsham City Urban Renewal Development Options and Implementation Plan 2024
- 2021-2025 Council Plan, prepared by HRCC, 2021
- Horsham and Natimuk Housing Diversity and Affordability Strategy 2024 (Draft)
- Destination Horsham Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan 2022 onwards, prepared by HRCC 2022
- Urban Transport Plan 2020

### **Risk Implications**

Key risks associated with the EOI include potential community opposition, financial viability concerns, and environmental impacts. These risks will be mitigated through careful considerations of potential developers experience and the requirements for future statutory property and planning requirements.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed EoI process represents a significant opportunity to facilitate the sale and development of Council-owned land in a way that aligns with Council's Investment Attraction and Growth aspirations and the Urban Renewal Development Options and Implementation Plan April 2024 and attracts Investment and Growth in Horsham. By approving this process, Council can facilitate the development of new housing close to the CBD, addressing community needs and contributing to the area's overall liveability and sustainability.

### 6.3 ONSITE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2029

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Jackson Hanlon	<b>Director:</b>	Kevin O'Brien
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Coordinator Environmental Health	<b>Directorate:</b>	Communities & Place
<b>Department:</b>	Environmental Health	<b>File Number:</b>	F30/A06/000001

#### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

#### Status

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

#### Appendix

Horsham Rural City Council: Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029 (**Appendix 6.3A**)  
Community Engagement Summary Table (**Appendix 6.3B**)

#### Purpose

To present the Horsham Rural City Council Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029 (HRCC: OWMP 2024-2029).

#### Summary

- Community consultation has been undertaken for a period of 4 weeks after approval was recently provided by Council.
- One response has been received from the community throughout the consultation period.
- Several minor changes have been made to the plan in response to the feedback, as well as changes to the consultation section of the document, clarifying that the Draft OWMP was put out for consultation.

#### Recommendation

That Council endorse the Horsham Rural City Council: Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029 (**Appendix 6.3A**).

## REPORT

### Background

In rural areas it is sometimes not practical, or possible, for a proposed dwelling to be connected to an existing sewerage system. Where this occurs, sewage is managed using a standalone on-site waste water management system (OWMS). These systems can create public health and environmental issues if not appropriately designed, correctly installed or maintained.

Council has a statutory responsibility to administer Environment Protection Authority legislation related to onsite waste water management for systems generating up to 5000 litres per day in accordance with the *Environment Protection Act 2017* (the Act), the Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (the Regulations) and other guidance materials.

Councils throughout Victoria assess risks and identify strategies to manage these systems through the development and implementation of an Onsite Waste Water Management Plan (OWMP). The OWMP is an important technical and risk management tool for Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) that is used in connection with administration of the Planning Scheme, including decisions about planning permits, referrals to GWMWater, activities associated with new residential developments, and the issue of Permits. Council's current OWMP was adopted in 2006.

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) is endeavouring to support Local Government Authorities in Victoria to improve onsite wastewater management and planning practices. OWMPs are considered a pivotal tool to assist Councils, other Regulators and the community in relation to safe and effective onsite waste water management.

HRCC has been successful in obtaining a \$20,000 grant from the DEECA to support the review and redevelopment of its OWMP. The grant represents a significant opportunity to update Council's existing OWMP and ensure risks from Onsite Wastewater Management Systems continue to be managed appropriately.

Given the specialist nature of the OWMP, the review and redevelopment of Council's OWMP has been put out to tender. The independent consultant that was successful in their tender for the review and redevelopment of the OWMP has subsequently provided HRCC with a *Horsham Rural City Council: Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029* (refer to **Appendix 6.3A**).

### Discussion

Council's current OWMP which was adopted in 2006 is due for review and redevelopment. The independent Consultant assisting Council with the review and redevelopment process has provided an updated HRCC OWMP to reflect the current legislative environment, and provide a better foundation to enable the assessment and understanding of risks, and the identification of strategies directed at discharging Council's responsibilities.

### Options to Consider

Nil

### Sustainability Implications

The identification and assessment of risks in this OWMP supports the development and implementation of actions to protect human health and the environment. The OWMP also assists in preventing potential adverse off-site impacts on the environment.



## Community Engagement

### Engagement from Community Consultation Period:

After Council approved a four-week community consultation period Council received one submission (refer to Community Engagement Summary Table in **Appendix 6.3B**).

A draft of this OWMP was made available for public exhibition for four weeks. It was on display at the Civic Centre office, available on the website, and listed in the local newspapers' public notices for the duration of the four-week period of consultation. It was also discussed in the August 2024 Horsham Rural City Talks Expo and widely promoted on the Council's media channels.

All feedback on the draft was acknowledged, and the final OWMP has been updated to reflect valued feedback.

## Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Draft Horsham Rural City Council: Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029 has come about from a review and redevelopment of the HRCC OWMP that had been adopted by Council in 2006. The revised Plan reflects improvements with respect to risk management associated with Onsite Wastewater Management Systems.

## Collaboration

Council has consulted the plans and policies established by the following agencies in developing this OWMP:

- Environment Protection Authority
- Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water
- Wimmera Catchment Management Authority
- Neighbouring Councils

## Financial Implications

The implementation and establishment of several actions in the OWMP will be constrained by the accessibility of resources throughout the lifetime of the OWMP. The availability of these resources may depend on future additional funding when/if it becomes available, from Council or external government agencies.

## Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

In Victoria, the State Environment Protection Policy (SEPP - Waters of Victoria) required Councils to develop a Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP). Following the introduction of the new *Environment Protection Act 2017* and the establishment of a new framework for environment protection, this position remained as an Environment Protection Authority policy statement and a requirement under transitional regulations regarding Councils' role in environmental protection. The Horsham Rural City Council: Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029 is intended to meet this policy position and continues to provide a part of the state of knowledge on risks of harm related to Onsite Wastewater Management Systems pertinent to the municipality. The Plan is to be used to identify any unsewered township that represents risk either due to the number of unsewered properties, or where there is risk posed by properties unable to contain their wastewater onsite. The Plan depicts an assessment of risks from properties unable to contain their wastewater on site, identifies strategies to manage them, and where necessary enable referral of high-risk unsewered townships to the relevant Water Authority so they can be connected to either a sewer system, or an alternative service. The DWMP is also used in connection with the administration of the Planning Scheme, particularly in relation to decisions about planning permits and referrals to Water Authorities.

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

2021-2025 Council Plan: Theme 2 – Liveability: The identification and assessment of risks in this OWMP aid in decision making to protect human health and the environment.

### **Risk Implications**

Failure to complete a review and redevelopment of Council's OWMP to acquire a more contemporary document, will result in the need for the existing document to be continued to be used in connection with planning and other operational aspects related to onsite wastewater management. As such, continued reliance upon the existing OWMP represents potential operational, legal, financial and reputational risks to Council.

### **Conclusion**

An updated OWMP will aid Council to more effectively discharge its legislative responsibilities and effectively manage the use of Onsite Wastewater Management Systems within its municipality. Horsham Rural City Council's current OWMP was adopted in 2006 and has not been the subject of any review until this point in time. The endorsement of the redeveloped Plan will enable Council to better discharge its responsibilities, manage risk and the strategic and operational issues associated with onsite wastewater management.

## 6.4 PLOZZAS ROAD SPEED LIMIT

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Akshay Rajput	<b>Director:</b>	John Martin
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Co-ordinator Engineering	<b>Directorate:</b>	Infrastructure
<b>Department:</b>	Asset and Engineering	<b>File Number:</b>	F02/A08/000001

### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

### Status

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

### Appendix

Nil

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### Purpose

To present the proposal to reduce the speed limit on Plozzas Road, Haven to 60 km/h.

### Summary

- Multiple concerns have been expressed by the local community about the 80 km/h speed limit around Plozzas Road given the growing number of households on both sides of the road.
- Traffic count data has showed that even at the higher 80 km/h speed limit, 17% of vehicles were observed speeding.
- This is a key road connecting Haven Community to the Golf Club and children are using this road to access swim school. The absence of a bike/shared path increases the potential risk for pedestrian and bike users in this vicinity.
- At its August 2024 Council meeting, Council resolved to seek broader community feedback on the proposal.
- This report presents the outcomes of that feedback and proposes proceeding with the speed limit reduction.

### Recommendation

That Council approve the speed limit change from 80 km/h to 60 km/h in Plozzas Road Haven.

## REPORT

### Background

This report is an update on a report presented to the 26 August 2024 Council meeting on this subject.

Council has received multiple requests from members of community regarding road safety risks for the growing population along Plozzas Rd, this population includes many children. These requests have been received since 2021 and the latest request was received in November 2023.

The adjoining section of Henty Highway is an 80 km/h speed zone.

A traffic count was conducted which found that 17.4% of vehicles were observed to have been travelling at speeds of more than 80 km/h. The heavy vehicle percentage on Plozzas road is 28.4%. It was noted that during the two-week monitoring period, 16 B-doubles accessed the road, despite the road not being approved for B-double use.

At the 26 August 2024 meeting, Council resolved to seek broader community feedback on the proposal to reduce the speed limit to 60 km/h and consider that feedback at the 16 September 2024 Council meeting.

### Discussion

Factors relevant to the review of the speed limit in Plozzas Road include:

- Plozzas road has seen increasing development in recent years, with around 17 new lots directly facing Plozzas Road, and many more linked to it through new roads, such as Lock Road, and adjoining developments.
- Many of the new houses on these lots have young families.
- Plozzas Road is a key service road linking to the Golf Course, Haven Primary School and the Recreation Reserve which hosts many activities including the regular Haven Market and Tennis Club.
- There is a relatively high percentage of heavy vehicle traffic on this road, as it provides a link from Three Bridges Rd through to the Henty Highway.

The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) has established Speed Zoning Technical Guidelines which enable assessment of a range of factors, including housing density and the presence of other facilities, to determine the appropriate speed limit for a road segment. These guidelines have been used to assess the appropriate speed limit in Plozzas Road, resulting in a recommendation for a change to 60 km/h.

This information was used as a basis to discuss options for improved road safety in Plozzas Rd with the local community. They have indicated their support for the speed limit change.

Liaison with DTP has also occurred, and they have indicated their approval-in-principle for a change of speed limit.

Broader community feedback has now been sought.

### Options to Consider

The risk of excessive speed to the Plozzas Rd community can be reduced with the following options: -

- 1) Using speed calming devices – this is effective but involves higher cost. Treatments could include widening the road and installation of a separated bicycle/pedestrian path.
- 2) Changing speed Limit – this is a relatively cheaper option.

Option 2 is proposed.

Further investigations will proceed on additional measures, including road widening and a separated path.

### Sustainability Implications

Nil

### Community Engagement

Initial local community engagement with the residents of Plozzas Rd was carried out on Sunday 2 June 2024 at Haven Hall by the Engineering Coordinator. About 15 residents of Plozzas Road attended this meeting. The local community welcomed the proposed speed change and is in support of Council to expedite the change.

Information about the proposed speed limit change was provided in Council's public notices, email newsletter and on a dedicated page on Council's website. Feedback on the website was open until 3 pm on 9 September 2024. During that period, the website recorded 199 visits to the page from 176 different visitors. There were 11 responses to the proposal provided, with seven supporting the speed limit reduction, three supporting retention of the current speed limit, and one proposing an alternative of 70 km/h. The comments were as follows:

In support of the 60 km/h speed limit:

- Sounds like a sensible decision. Kenny Road between Golf Course Road and the back of the Golf Club should have an investigation into its speed limit with consideration of reduction to 60 km/h from 70 km/h. My observation is that cars drive too quickly for the environment.
- Needs to be 60 asap, road is not designed or wide enough to have 2 vehicles passing at 80 without flicking rocks etc, plus with heaps of families along that road facing an 80 zone is not exactly a feasible thing. I don't know one resident who doesn't want the speed limit changed.
- Fully supportive of reducing the speed limit to 60 km/h. As a resident of Haven, Plozzas Road is a key pedestrian route to connect the Haven Recreation Reserve, golf club, walking track to river and swimming lessons. As there are no footpaths on this road, we are often forced to walk on the road or side of road which is sometimes unsuitable for a pram.
- Plozzas Road as it currently is is a death waiting to happen! Road too narrow and falling apart on the edges, drivers speed along at all hours and unfortunately if a car crash were to happen, a vehicle involved could end up in the front of one of the many houses along there. Reduce the speed ASAP and make sure Police and mobile cameras monitor it.
- As a resident of Plozzas Road, I support the proposed reduction in speed limit to 60 km/h. The recent development has significantly increased the number of access points to properties, with some new houses being built as close as 10 metres from the boundary with the road reserve.
- The speed limit should be 60 km/h asap. Many families and children walk and ride bikes and with no walking path they have to traverse a table drain while vehicles travel past at high speed and with little to no thought of the pedestrians. The road is not HV suitable. Unless a resident of Plozzas Rd, Semis and B-Doubles should not be allowed to travel the road unless it is widened and a walking path installed.
- Definitely time for 60 km/h zone. Safety first.

In support of the 80 km/h speed limit:

- Keep it at 80 km/h. Widen the road to make it safer for trucks and cars.
- As a driver, I think maintaining the existing limit of 80 km/h is appropriate as the road isn't that busy from my personal observations. I see no reason for such a significant decrease. However, I would like to see an off-road footpath created for the safety of my family and others, to provide a link to key amenities in the area and create balance between driver and pedestrian / child safety needs.
- The road needs to be made wider, like all other similar roads in the area, which are 80 km/h.

In support of a 70 km/h speed limit:

- 70 seems about right.

The following points are made in consideration of the comments:

- The majority of feedback supported the speed limit reduction.
- A common theme of several comments related to the potential to widen the road and install a separate bicycle/pedestrian path. This would require significant change, as the road is bounded by power lines on the south, and for at least one-third of its length, some significant trees on the northern side. There may be room to install a path or widen the road, but probably not both. It is noted that there are proposals for a shared path in the draft Horsham South planning documents.
- The adjoining section of Three Bridges Rd, which has an 80 km/h speed limit has a seal width of approx. 7.5 m, while Plozzas Rd has a seal width of about 5.6 – 6.2 m.

Subsequently, a further email submission was received, with the following key points:

- The submitter sought the speed limit to be retained at 80 km/h citing amongst other reasons that they don't consider the area to be built up sufficiently yet.
- They cited that the road should be maintained, and that a lower speed limit should not be a substitute for a lack of road maintenance.
- They sought a reduced speed limit during school bus times.

On balance, it is considered that the feedback supports the proposed speed limit reduction in Plozzas Road.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Not applicable

### **Collaboration**

Council has collaborated with DTP in assessing the appropriate speed limit for Plozzas Rd.

### **Financial Implications**

The cost of signage is estimated to be less than \$2000. Funding for this is available within the current signage budget.

There is no funding currently available for other measures, such as road widening or a shared path.

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

The proposed speed limit change has been assessed in accordance with DTP guidelines.

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

The reduced speed is consistent with strategies in the Horsham Urban Transport Plan.

### **Risk Implications**

The proposed reduction in speed limit is aimed at reducing community risk associated with vehicle traffic on a road that is seeing increased residential development.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed change of speed limit is one more step towards making our community safer for vulnerable road users.

## 6.5 PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY POLICY

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Andrea Coxon	<b>Director:</b>	Kim Hargreaves
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Governance Officer	<b>Directorate:</b>	Corporate Services
<b>Department:</b>	Governance & Community Relations	<b>File Number:</b>	F19/A10/000001

### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

### Status

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

## Appendix

Public Transparency Policy (**Appendix 6.5A**)

### Purpose

To provide Council with an updated Public Transparency Policy.

### Summary

- The Public Transparency Policy was initially adopted by Council in August 2020 and last updated in March 2023 with no material changes made at that time.
- The current review has been undertaken as per the policy review cycle and informed by an examination of related legislation and in consideration of recommendations made for improvement.
- The review has resulted in substantial changes to the policy to enhance clarity, accountability, and consistency in decision-making while maintaining transparency with the public.

### Recommendation

That Council adopt the revised Public Transparency Policy (**Appendix 6.5A**).



## REPORT

### Background

One of the overarching principles of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) is that ‘the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured’ (s. 9(2)(i)). To facilitate this, the Act requires Councils to adopt and maintain a public transparency policy (s57).

The HRCC Public Transparency Policy was developed to promote openness, accountability and transparency in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*. It was initially adopted by Council in August 2020 and reviewed in March 2023. No material changes were made at that time noting that, while the Municipal Monitor Jude Holt had made suggestions for consideration during and subsequent to her engagement with Council from July 2022 to January 2023, a full review was dependent on proposed legislative changes to the *Local Government Act 2020* announced by the Minister.

### Discussion

In addition to the legislative requirement, a public transparency policy is essential for the following reasons:

1. **Accountability:** Transparency ensures that Horsham Rural City Council is held accountable to the public. When decisions, actions, and expenditures are openly communicated, it reduces the chances of corruption, misconduct, or mismanagement.
2. **Public Trust:** A transparent Council builds trust with the community. Citizens are more likely to have confidence in their Council if they can see how decisions are made, and resources are allocated. This fosters a stronger relationship between Council and the municipality.
3. **Informed Community:** Transparency allows residents to stay informed about local activities, policies, and initiatives. An informed public is better equipped to participate in civic matters, which is essential for a healthy democracy.
4. **Compliance and Regulation:** Council is required to adhere to legislative frameworks such as the *Local Government Act 2020*, which emphasises transparency as a core principle. Public transparency policies help ensure compliance with these laws.
5. **Enhanced Participation:** When local governments are transparent, they encourage greater public participation in decision-making processes. People are more likely to engage with Council when they have access to information, which leads to more inclusive and representative governance.

With these reasons in mind, the Policy has now been reviewed as per the review cycle noted in the policy and has considered the suggestions provided by the Municipal Monitor and the requirements of relevant legislation. The review has identified the need for clearer guidelines on public transparency, accountability in relation to the management of confidential information, clear explanation as to what constitutes confidential information, and articulates how transparency can be upheld without compromising sensitive matters.

Specifically, the review has sought to address the suggestions made by the Monitor which focused on three main areas:

1. **Public Transparency Principles:** The current policy was written in complex, technical language, making it difficult for some individuals to understand. It lacked clarity and simplicity, which may have hindered its accessibility to a broader audience.
2. **Confidential Information Handling:** The current policy lacked specificity on Council Officer and Councillor accountability. The policy includes detailed definitions and clear criteria for determining confidentiality, ensuring consistency across Council operations. This is crucial for protecting legal, commercial, and personal information while ensuring transparency where possible.

3. **Public Transparency:** The revised policy emphasises the need for transparency in decision-making, ensuring that any information withheld from the public is justifiable. A more robust framework for documenting and explaining why certain decisions or information are confidential, promoting accountability and clarity for the community.

### Options to Consider

Council may consider the following options:

1. Adopt the revised policy which will ensure Council's policy is in line with best practice for public transparency principles and addresses the suggestions made by the Monitor.
2. Retain the existing policy noting this will maintain the status quo, does not address the suggestions for improvement made by the Monitor and may result in further scrutiny and potential governance issues.

### Sustainability Implications

The revised Public Transparency Policy promotes long-term governance sustainability by ensuring that transparency and confidentiality are appropriately balanced.

### Community Engagement

Not applicable

### Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The revised Public Transparency Policy reflects continuous improvement in Council's governance practices. By adopting clearer guidelines and accountability measures, the Council is taking a proactive approach to governance, enhancing both innovation and transparency.

### Collaboration

The review process incorporated feedback from the Municipal Monitor and considered current and (at the time) proposed legislation as well as examples of best practice policy provided by the Local Government Inspectorate.

### Financial Implications

Not applicable

### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government Amendment (Governance and Integrity) Act 2024

### Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

This report aligns with the:

- 2021-2025 Council Plan: Theme 5 – Leadership, which emphasises good governance, accountability, and the importance of community engagement.
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct

### Risk Implications

Failure to adopt the revised policy could expose the Council to governance risks, including reduced public trust and potential breaches of confidentiality. The revised policy mitigates these risks by enhancing clarity and compliance with transparency standards.

**Conclusion**

The major review of the Public Transparency Policy addresses critical governance issues identified by the Municipal Monitor, Jude Holt, noting the impending legislative review deferred the revision of the policy until such time as that new legislation was provided. The revised policy strengthens the handling of confidential information while reinforcing public transparency principles, thereby enhancing the Council's overall accountability and governance practices.

## 6.6 BUDGET 2025-2026 –TIMEFRAMES

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Belinda Johnson	<b>Director:</b>	Kim Hargreaves
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Chief Financial Officer	<b>Directorate:</b>	Corporate Services
<b>Department:</b>	Finance	<b>File Number:</b>	F18/A07/000017

### 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 inform Council of the proposed timeframes for the completion of the preparation of the 2025-2026 Budget.

### Summary

- Following the adoption of the 2024-2025 Budget on 22 July 2024, Council were referred to the Local Government Inspectorate.
- The Local Government Inspectorate investigation outcome was provided to Council at the 26 August 2024 meeting where Council also noted 'a further report on the proposed approach will be provided at the 16 September 2024 Council meeting to ensure 2025-2026 Budget is adopted within the statutory timeframe'.
- The information and indicative timelines in this report outline the proposed preparation and adoption of the 2025-2026 Budget in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (i.e. 30 June 2025) as per that Council resolution.
- One of the key considerations of the approach is to consider bringing forward the deliberative engagement, review and adoption of key plans and documents following the general election of the new Council later this calendar year to inform the budget development.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorse "in principle" bringing forward the preparation and adoption of key legislative documents outlined in the *Local Government Act 2020*, required to be prepared following a general election, to enable a more collective approach to deliberative engagement with the community to inform the next 4 years of budget preparation, and
2. Endorse the indicative timeframes for the preparation of the 2025-2026 Budget.

## REPORT

### Background

Council has undertaken a substantial review of its financial systems and supporting processes over the past 12 months as a result of the long-term participation in the Regional Councils Corporate Collaboration (RCCC) Project. The work has included a substantial review into the elements which contribute to the development of the budget as well as the key component of the RCCC which was the physical implementation of the new core financial accounting system. Whilst this work is continuing, foundational components of budget preparation have been reviewed.

Components reviewed included:

- Realignment of service descriptions and groupings to Council Plan Themes resulting in the preparation, look and feel of both quarterly and annual reporting in a consistent format,
- Revised mapping of accounting cost codes and reports to match Local Government Victoria's Model Guidance documents,
- Development of a Fees & Charges Register (as a separate document rather than a schedule)
- Detailed examination and review of all current projects (both capital and operational) and services to ensure all commitments for revenues and expenses are recorded in the new corporate system.

This work has provided a strong foundation for the coming review of the key legislative plans and documents as well as the budget preparation.

### Discussion

Following a general election, Council is required to review and renew several key plans and documents. These documents are required to be prepared undertaking a "deliberative engagement" process with the community. The Annual Budget is a culmination or "output" of these key documents.

The key documents involved include:

1. Council Vision – Long term – 10+ years
2. Council Plan – Medium term – 4+ years
3. Long Term Financial Plan – Long term – 10+ years
4. Asset Plan– Long term – 10+ years
5. Revenue and Rating Plan – Medium term – 4+ years

*Note* - there are other documents required, however these do not have a significant an impact on budget preparation.

These documents are inextricably linked to one another and are required to be adopted by Council by 31 October 2025. However, it is proposed to bring forward the engagement, preparation and adoption of all the documents to 30 June 2025 to enable Council to use these documents to inform the 2025-2026 Budget. This approach would ostensibly involve reshaping the way Council engages with the community on the review and development of these plans to enable this commitment to be met.

The approach would be to engage with the community by "theme" or "area of interest", engaging on all the documents relevant to that theme rather than engaging on the individual documents with engagement across many themes. This revised approach means that members of the community can participate in targeted and themed conversations on as few or as many topics of interest. Consideration of the areas of interest will also involve examining various time horizons at the same time (i.e. short, medium and long-term aspirations). It also means that development of the multiple plans and documents can be formulated at the same time, substantially compressing timeframes.

Indicative timeframes are in the below table. These would be further refined following the induction of the new Council.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Key Documents Preparation</b>		<b>2025-26 Budget Preparation</b>
Nov -Dec 2024	Councillor Induction - includes high level review of existing key documents and the data supporting them.	Staff prepare information for the engagement process.	Staff commence the formulation of the operating budget based on the assumption of existing service levels.
Jan - Feb 2025	Deliberative engagement sessions on key documents collectively based on “themed” engagement model.	Staff prepare supplementary information on engagement feedback and new ideas as they arise.	Staff prepare capital budget in accordance with pre-existing long-term priorities.
Mar 2025	Outcomes of engagement workshopped, and supplementary information provided	Outcomes of engagement incorporated into draft documents	
Early April 2025	Draft Documents workshopped	Outputs from revised document preparation fed through to Budget	
Late April 2025	Draft Documents “showcased” to the public		Draft Budget workshopped with Councillors
Early May 2025	Documents presented for review and any amendment		Budget document finalised
May - Jun 2025	Documents presented for adoption		

### **Options to Consider**

Council could consider a more traditional approach to developing the key legislative documents using the individual documents as “deliberative” engagement drivers and take the additional time allowed to prepare the documents to 31 October 2025, however this would mean those documents would not inform the 2025-2026 Budget.

### **Sustainability Implications**

The development of the key legislative documents in accordance with the Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework provides the future direction of all Council activity. The key deliverables (along with a number of other key documents) address the economic, social and environmental framework in which the Horsham Rural City Council will base its decisions into the long, medium and short terms.

### **Community Engagement**

Past years have seen an emphasis on engaging with the community around the annual budget. This process is somewhat flawed, as the budget provides only a “snapshot” of the result of the key legislative documents.

If Council can have authentic and meaningful engagement with the community about the development of the key documents and the direction of Council in the medium-long term (4+ years) through these documents, the budget becomes a statement of intention for achievement in one year towards the longer-term aspirations.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Council is seeking to consistently improve the presentation, linkage and understanding of the Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework through increased opportunities for community engagement across the development of the key documents.

**Collaboration**

Whilst specific collaboration with other councils or levels of government is not part of the development of the 2025-2026 Budget, staff across the organisation consistently collaborate with peers in the sector to investigate ways to improve underlying systems and processes which underpins this work. The model guidance provided by Local Government Victoria (including the Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework) is a collaboration of work between Local Government Victoria, peak sector bodies and staff from councils to provide best practice solutions, consistent information to the public, reduce work effort whilst still providing individuality of presentation.

**Financial Implications**

This work will shape the future financial sustainability of Horsham Rural City Council in the short, medium and long-term environments. Budget allocation has been provided in the 2024-2025 Budget to assist with work surrounding the specific methods of community engagement and facilitation to achieve the desired increase in public participation.

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

The work identified is clearly articulated in the Local Government Act 2020, associated regulations and model documents provided by Local Government Victoria.

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

The work identified is to provide guidance and direction to the formulation of the next iteration of the Council Plan and other key legislative documents previously mentioned. These documents assist in providing overall guidance to other Plans, Strategies and Policies prepared by Council.

**Risk Implications**

Council has multiple options for the preparation of the Budget and other key documents, all with various levels of risk. The following risks have been identified and discussed:

<b>Identified Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation Activity</b>
Failure to engage with the Community to provide direction for document preparation	Changing engagement opportunities to themed sessions to encourage in depth discussion of specific topics
Loss of community confidence in engagement processes and outcomes of activities	Early work by staff to ensure material used in engagement activities provides information relating to existing and planned work to avoid need for re-capture of known information and provide community assurance around existing priorities.
Failure to complete work within the required timeframes	Implementation of the new system is almost complete with key reports for budget development established in 2024-2025 cycle.

**Conclusion**

Council has a clear plan to develop the 2025-2026 Budget having developed mitigating strategies to address the delays experienced in preparation of the 2024-2025 Budget.



## REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

### 6.7 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 July 2024 (data is from bank card transactions and may not capture all Ag Industry)  
**(Appendix 6.7A)**

#### **Purpose**

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

**REPORT**

**Background**

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

**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 July are articulated in the information and tables, as follows.

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.

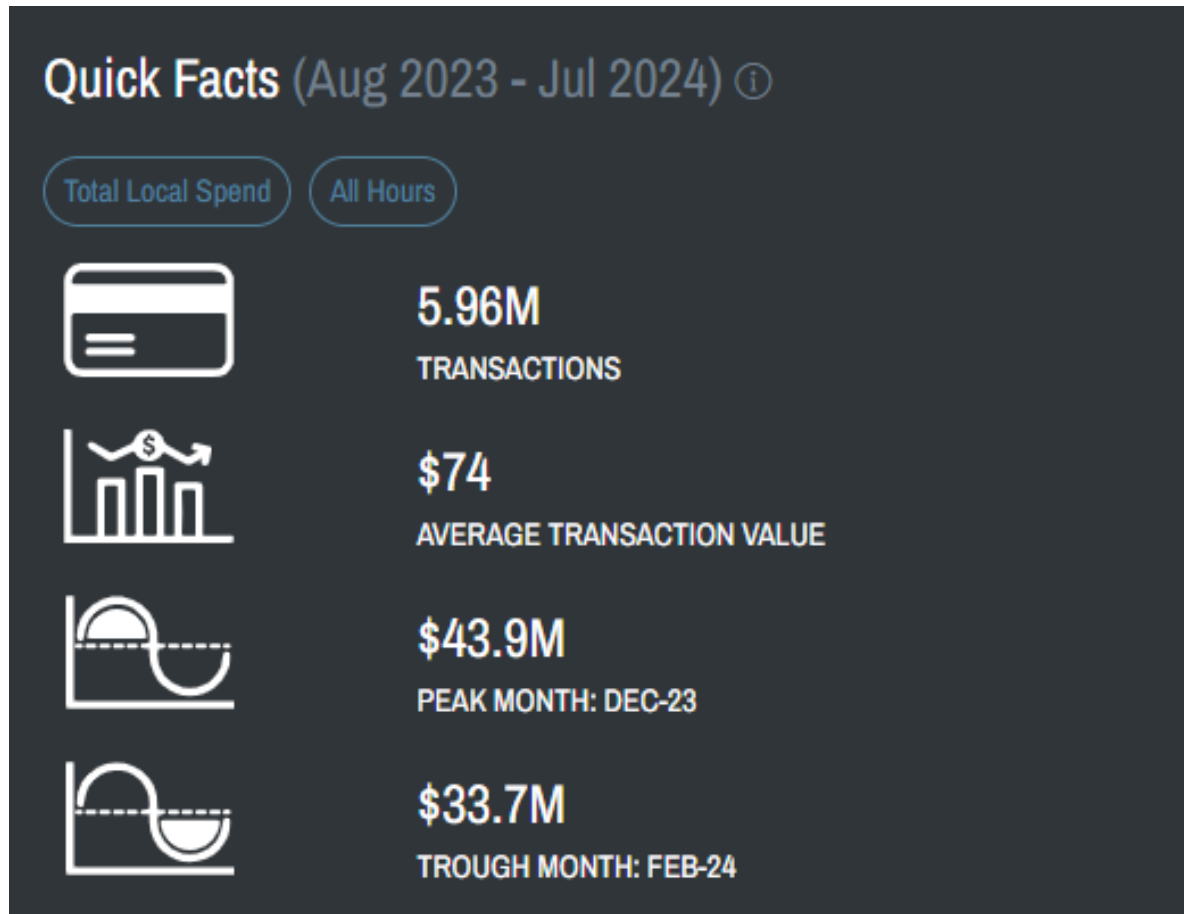
**INVESTMENT ATTRACTION**

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. 6/10 meetings held to date in 2024.
(1-2 years)	Provide specific marketing information adaptable to Council’s Website to encourage and support renewable energy developments	Website updated and investment prospectus developed	A page on the website is under development to promote the various renewable energy and mining projects.

**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	Our stunning regions featured on Sunday 14 July with highlights of Laharum and Wartook. There was a focus on Meringa Springs and Grampians Olive Co.
(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	2 monthly newsletters were sent in July. 10/07 received 802 opens and 265 clicks 30/7 received 745 opens and 177 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

**SPENDMAPP**



Further detailed analysis included in the report (**Appendix 6.7A**)

**Tourism and Business Development - July Report**



The Tourism and Business Development Team, visited a number of tourism based operators with Ian Gumela Partnership Manager of Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism.

Visitation was undertaken as part of the health check of our operators with the understanding of improving the resilience of their business and identify areas where further development and planning for future growth is vital.

- Image taken at Sylvania Park.

**Business Enhancement Support Grant Allocation**

The Enhancement Support Grants of \$20,000 was established to provide support to existing businesses across both retail and tourism. Applicants were able to apply for grants up to \$1,000. Funding directed towards business innovation, operational improvement, marketing strategies, accessibility, inclusiveness, and growth. Strong interest was received from various businesses across all sectors.

**Postcards Production – Channel 9**

Our stunning regions featured on Sunday 14 July with highlights of Laharum and Wartook with a focus on Meringa Springs and Grampians Olive Co, along with Dunkeld Royal Mail, Izzy’s Café, and Absolute Outdoors.

Sunday 21st July – featured Dimboola Imaginarium, Murtoa Stick Shed, Mount Langhi Ghiran, Seppelt Great Western, Mount William Station.

If you wish to view the episodes check out Season 2024 episode 24 & 25 online (9now.com.au).

**Monthly 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	<b>34</b>
February	20	13	18	<b>51</b>
March	23	16	7	<b>46</b>
April	10	14	4	<b>28</b>
May	30	10	20	<b>60</b>
June	20	15	10	<b>45</b>
July	15	30	5	<b>50</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>314</b>

**Occupied Businesses:**

Street and Number of Businesses	June 2024 Businesses Occupied	July 2024 Businesses Occupied	July 2024 Businesses Vacant	July 2024 Percentage Businesses Occupied
<b>Darlot St – 43</b> car wash and businesses operating from a house included	42	42	1	97%
<b>Firebrace St - 99</b>	92	91	8	91%
<b>Hamilton St - 17</b>	17	17	0	100%
<b>Wilson St – 34</b>	28	28	6	80%
<b>Pynsent St – 28</b> Cinema included	26	26	2	92%
<b>Roberts Ave – 27</b> Coles included	24	25	2	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>253/272</b>	<b>253/272</b>	<b>19</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 July 2024 and a comparison with the same period last year.

Type	JULY 2024		JUNE 2023	
	No.	*Value \$	No.	*Value \$
Miscellaneous Domestic	0	-	1	40,000
Industrial/Commercial	4	5,320,000	2	2,025,000
Subdivisions	2 (8 lots)	850,000	1 (2 lots)	
Other	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6,170,000</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2,065,000</b>

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

Total number of planning permits issued in the Horsham Rural City Council area from 1 July 2024 to 31 July 2024 is 6 compared to 5 in the same period in 2023-2024.

Planning permits issued for subdivision have permitted 8 new lots from 1 July 2024 to 31 July 2024 compared to 2 in the same period in 2023-2024.

**Building Services**

Below are the number of building permits issued for the month of **July 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	-	-	-	-
Alterations to Dwellings	-	-	-	-
Dwelling resitings	-	-	-	-
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	2	31,000	2	30,689
Removal/Demolish	1	9,680	1	27,808
Industrial/Commercial	1	120,000	-	-
Signs	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>160,680</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>58,497</b>

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

Type	2024		2023	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	1	623,327	2	824,701
Alterations to Dwellings	1	39,160	1	42,460
Dwelling resitings	1	41,470	-	-
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	8	276,529	3	126,584
Removal/Demolish	1	5,000	-	-
Industrial/Commercial	6	1,750,911	6	2,458,831
Signs	-	-	-	-
<b>_Sub Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2,736,397</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3,452,576</b>

A total of **4** Building Permits has been issued by the Horsham Rural City Council at a total value of **\$160,680** from **1 July 2024 to 31 July 2024** compared to **3** Building Permits at a total value of **\$58,497** for the same period in 2023-2024.

Private Building Surveyors have issued **18** Building Permits at a total value of **\$2,736,397** from **1 July 2024 to 31 July 2024** compared to **12** at a total value of **\$3,452,576** 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.	The Open Space Strategy Review report is finalised and findings will be integrated into the Horsham and Natimuk Housing Diversity and Affordability Strategy. A Council development contributions policy will also be developed.
1.6.4 (2 years)	Implement the Horsham Heritage Study to protect buildings and places of historic cultural heritage to reinforce a 'sense of place' and celebrate Horsham's character and distinctiveness	Horsham Planning Scheme amended	Officers are working through a further information request that was made by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) in order to proceed with a Planning Scheme Amendment and will engage the services of a heritage advisor to assist with funding received from DTP.
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	Submissions received during the public consultation for the Discussion Paper are being reviewed with the feedback and ideas considered.
2.10.3 (2 years)	Prepare and implement the Horsham South Structure Plan (Stage 2)	Plan adopted by Council	The project consultants are finalising the Draft Structure Plan and the Project Control Group have been assisting to resolve outstanding issues and provide specialist technical inputs.
3.1.1 (2 to 4 years)	Prepare and implement a Commercial & Industrial Land and include in the Planning Scheme	Plan developed & Strategy adopted by Council	Community consultation is being undertaken with key stakeholders.
(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	The Planning Scheme Review report was adopted and Council successfully applied for Department of Transport and Planning assistance to prepare the Planning Scheme Amendment.

### **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**

The report has been prepared in consultation with a 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**

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

### **Collaboration**

The 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.