

# AGENDA

MEETING OF THE  
**HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL**

To be held on

**22 July 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 22 July 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. 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 24 June 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**

**REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION ..... 6**

**9. OFFICERS REPORTS ..... 6**

9.1 BUDGET 2024-2025 AND UPDATED REVENUE AND RATING PLAN 2021-2024 .....6

9.2 2024 LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY ..... 12

9.4 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE BIENNIAL REPORT – 1 JANUARY TO 30 JUNE 2024 .....21

9.5 ADVOCACY PRIORITIES – 2024 REVIEW ..... 24

9.6 HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL ONSITE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2029 ..... 27

9.7 INTENTION TO SELL LAND AT THE WIMMERA AGRICULTURE LOGISTICS HUB..... 30

**REPORTS FOR INFORMATION ..... 35**

9.8 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND GROWTH DEPARTMENT REPORT ..... 35

9.9 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S OPERATIONAL REPORT ..... 44

**10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... 47**

**11. URGENT BUSINESS..... 57**

**12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS ..... 58**

**13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS..... 59**

13.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS..... 59

13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS..... 59

13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE ..... 59

13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES ..... 59

**14. NOTICE OF MOTION..... 60**

**15. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS .....**

15.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE UPDATES.....  
*Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(f) –Personal Information*

15.2 CITY OVAL NETBALL PAVILION CONSTRUCTION TENDER 24-012.....  
*Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(g) – Private Commercial Information*

15.3 BITUMINOUS SURFACING PROGRAM - CONTRACT 24-023 .....  
*Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(g) – Private Commercial Information*

15.4 MUNICIPAL BUILDING SURVEYOR SERVICES - CONTRACT 24-027 .....  
*Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(g) – Private Commercial Information*

**CLOSE**



SUNIL BHALLA  
 Chief Executive Officer

## REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

### 9. OFFICERS REPORTS

#### 9.1 BUDGET 2024-2025 AND UPDATED REVENUE AND RATING PLAN 2021-2024

<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/A14/000001

##### 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 Budget 2024-2025 (**Appendix 9.1A**)

Updated Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 (**Appendix 9.1B**)

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##### Purpose

To adopt the Horsham Rural City Council Budget 2024-2025 and note the updated Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024.

##### Summary

- The Budget 2024-2025 is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- The Budget 2024-2025 has been prepared through a process of consultation and discussion with Councillors and Council Officers.
- The Budget 2024-2025 aligns with objectives set out in the 2021-2025 Council Plan and has been prepared with reference to the Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 (Year 3).
- The Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 has been updated to reflect activation of the Trigger of Review of Differentials Policy, specifically that the difference in the valuation change (increase or decrease) between the general differential rate category and another differential rate category exceeds 3.5% following a general revaluation of properties.
- Members of the community were invited to inspect the Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 (Year 3) and the proposed initiatives for inclusion in the Budget 2024-2025 from 27 February to 26 March 2024.

## Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt Horsham Rural City Council Budget 2024-2025 and the subsequent 3 financial years, as attached in **Appendix 9.1A** pursuant to Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
2. Declare the following rates and charges for the 2024-2025 financial year:

- a. Amount Intended to be raised:

An amount of \$33.687m (or such other amount as is lawfully raised as a consequence of this resolution) be declared as the amount which Council intends to raise by general rates and the annual service charge, which is calculated as follows:

General Rates	\$26.106m
Municipal Charge	\$ 2.302M
Waste Management Charge	\$ 4.958m
Interest on Rates	\$ 0.020m and
Revenue in lieu of rates	\$ 0.301m

3. Rates Information:

- a. General Rates - A general rate be declared in respect of the 2024-2025 rating year, being the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

4. Declare that the general rate be raised by the application of differential rates for rateable land having the respective characteristics specified in 4.1.1(n) of the budget document.

5. Each differential rate will be determined by multiplying the Capital Improved Value of each rateable land by the relevant rate in the dollar as indicated as follows:

Residential	\$0.0038040
Commercial	\$0.0038040
Industrial	\$0.0038040
Cultural and Recreation	\$0.0019020
Farm	\$0.0019020

6. Municipal Charge - Declare a municipal charge for 2024-2025 of \$200.00 for each rateable land (or part) in respect of which a municipal charge may be levied.

7. Annual Bin Service Charge - Declare an annual service charge for the collection and disposal of refuse in respect of the 2024-2025 Financial Year and set out below:

Urban Bin Charge	\$527.00
Rural Bin Service	\$367.00
Additional General Waste Bin	\$149.00
Additional Recycling Bin	\$149.00
Additional Organics Bin	\$149.00
Additional Glass Bin	\$149.00
Commercial Bin Service (weekly general waste/fortnightly recycling)	\$509.00
Additional/Standalone Commercial General Waste Bin (weekly)	\$318.00
Additional/Standalone Commercial Recycling Bin	\$191.00
Additional Commercial Organics Bin	\$191.00
Additional Commercial Glass Bin	\$96.00

8. Setting of interest rate on unpaid rates and charges

The Council will charge interest for rates and charges which have not been paid by the due dates, as specified under Section 167 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

9. Payment of rates and charges

Declare that a person can pay a rate or charge (other than a special rate or charge) by:

Four (4) instalments which are due and payable on the dates fixed by the Minister by notice published in the Government Gazette; or paid in full on 15 February 2025.

10. Adopt the updated Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 (**Appendix 9.1B**)

## REPORT

### Background

This year's budget is the eighth year of budget preparation under the State Government's Fair Go Rates system with the rate cap set at 2.75 per cent by the Minister for Local Government on 22 December 2023. It is against that figure that the 2024-2025 budget has been framed.

Council has a range of both internal and external cost pressures to contend with, however still recognises the need to play an important role as the regional city for the western area of the state providing quality services to more than just our own residents. There continues to be growth and development within the community which puts pressure on service delivery costs such as the supply of parks and gardens, maintenance of roads and footpaths over time.

### Discussion

The Budget 2024-2025 has been developed in accordance with the 2024-2025 Local Government Model Budget published each year to assist councils in preparing their budget in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements. Each of the financial statements presented in the budget have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

### Key Statistics

- Total Revenue: \$ 64.946 million (2023-24 = \$62 million)
- Total Expenditure: \$ 63.082 million (2023-24 = \$56.1 million)
  
- Surplus/(Deficit)for the year: \$ 1.864 million surplus (2023-24 = \$5.9 million surplus)
- Underlying operating result: \$ 4.550 million deficit (2023-24 = \$3.9 million deficit)

### Budget Influences

In preparing the Budget 2024-2025, several internal and external influences have been taken into consideration as they impact significantly on the services delivered by the Council in the budget period and resulting budget position. Further budgetary pressure is felt as a result of the current inflationary environment, particularly where cost increases of materials and services far exceed the Rate Cap of 2.75 per cent.

### Capital Works

The proposed capital works budget is \$26.261 million, made up of \$10.430 million of new projects, \$14.823 million in renewal and \$1.008 million in upgrades. The capital works program will be funded by \$7.889 million of grant funding, \$17.841 million of Council cash from operations, reserves and investments and \$0.531 million of external contributions.

### Capex Summary

The roads and related infrastructure capital program has a budget provision of \$ 13.673 million, of which some \$11.215 million relates to renewal of existing assets. There is also budget provision of \$3.169 million for further progress on the City to River works, featuring the City Oval netball courts and netball pavilion, the events stage and initial works on the community centre/change room facility. The Wesley Performing Arts Centre refurbishment has a proposed budget \$2 million, dependent on significant grant funding of around \$1 million and community contributions of \$0.776m to enable these works to proceed.



### Rates and Charges

The 'Trigger of Review of Differentials' Policy in the Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 has been activated as a difference in the valuation change (increase or decrease) between the general differential rate category and another differential rate category exceeding 3.5% has been met. In this instance it is an increase greater than 3.5%. Consequently, all rating differentials have been reviewed with a removal of the commercial differential (previously 95%) however the farm rate will remain at 50% of the residential rate.

The flat fee provides horizontal equity to evenly spread the cost of services over the municipality and the differentials applied are now as follows:

RATING DIFFERENTIAL	RATING DIFFERENTIAL %
General/Residential	100%
Commercial	100%
Industrial	100%
Culture and Recreation	50%
Farm	50%

Council has retained its additional 'Council-funded' rebate to pensioners at \$50 which is rebate over and above the state government rebate. The Municipal Charge has also been retained at \$200. The Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 has therefore been updated to reflect the above changes.

### Centralised Annual Valuations

Since 2019, the Valuer-General Victoria (VGV) is the sole valuation authority to conduct annual valuations for rating purposes. The Budget 2024-2025 includes preliminary valuation data from the VGV with valuations as at 1 January 2024. All rating information contained within the budget, including rates in the dollar, is based on these updated valuations. Council has received a "Generally True and Correct" (GTC) assurance from the VGV, however, until the preliminary valuations are certified by the VGV they may be subject to change.

Movements in individual property valuations (CIV) will have an impact on individual rate notices and are difficult to communicate through the Budget 2024-2025 document. Individual property valuation movements will therefore not be advised until the 2024-2025 annual rates notices for each property are distributed.

### Targeted Performance Indicators

Section 5 of the Budget 2024-2025 documents Council's current and projected forecast across a number of prescribed indicators. These indicators are useful for analysing Council's financial position.

### Options to Consider

The budget is a key document for the good governance and operations of Council noting it is the role of a council to provide good governance in its municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community. To adhere to this good governance, Councils must prepare and adopt a budget for each financial year and the subsequent three financial years.

The Council Budget must be adopted by 30 June each year, or any other date fixed by the Minister. Council has not adopted the budget by that date so is in breach of the legislation. However, section 79(2) of the *Local Government Act 1989* is still in force and provides that a rate or charge is not invalid only by reason of it being declared after 30 June.

The budget is therefore presented for adoption by Councillors in order to provide good governance in the HRCC district for the benefit and wellbeing of the HRCC community.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Rate capping continues to place restrictions on Council's ability to raise its own source income and places an ever-increasing reliance on grants from other tiers of government, the availability of which can change over time. Council's share of the overall tax revenues of all tiers of government (approximately 3%) is also a factor as additional responsibilities and obligations are being given to council without adequate consideration of the taxation implications. These issues mean that Council must be mindful of its own financial sustainability and therefore take a more conservative approach to debt than other levels of government and/or the private sector may take.

### **Community Engagement**

Engagement was undertaken during February and March 2024 in relation to the Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 (Year 3) and proposed initiatives. It was noted at the time of engagement that significant commitments account for most of the budget through endorsed capital projects, operational costs and similar, and consequently there is only a small percentage of the overall budget available for discretionary spending. As the Annual Action Plan reflects those discretionary aspects of the budget it was used as the period of community consultation and engagement during the budget development process noting it is the only stage in budget development where there is any ability to inform and shape the budget.

### **Financial Implications**

All matters under consideration impact the Council Budget 2024-2025.

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

Fair Go Rates system.

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

The 2024-2025 Budget, and associated amendments to the Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024, have been prepared with reference to the Community Vision 2041, the 2021-2025 Council Plan, and the Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 (Year 3).

### **Risk Implications**

A Council, must in the performance of its role, give effect to the overarching governance principles including that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured (s9(2)(g)). In giving effect to the overarching governance principles, a Council must take into account a number of supporting principles— including the financial management principles (s9(3)(d) *Local Government Act 2020*).

Council must ensure that the budget gives effect to the Council Plan and contains financial statements in the form and containing the information required by the regulation; a general description of the services and initiatives to be funded in the budget; major initiatives identified by the Council as priorities in the Council Plan to be undertaken during the financial year; services to be funded in the budget, including prescribed indicators and measures of service performance that are required to be reported against; the total amount Council intends to raise by rates and charges; a statement as to whether the rates will be raised by the application of a uniform rate or a differential rate; a description of any fixed component of the rates, if applicable; plus any other information prescribed by the regulations. (s94(2) *Local Government Act 2020*).

While the budget has been prepared in accordance with the above requirements, there is a legislative requirement that the budget be adopted by 30 June each year. This requirement has not been met so Council are in breach of s94(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and in breach of s158 (1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* as Council has not declared rates and municipal charges by that date. Council has however met that legislative requirement in relation to service rates and charges as those were declared in May 2024 with additional charges declared in June 2024.

The reasons for the delay to the development of the budget have been articulated to the Council and also provided to the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Melissa Horne. The intention in doing so was to mitigate the risk to Council. Noting section 79(2) of the *Local Government Act 1989* is still in force the risk is further mitigated as that section provides that a rate or charge is not invalid only by reason of it being declared after 30 June.

**Conclusion**

Although not provided by the legislative timeframe, the Budget 2024-2025 has been developed in accordance with the 2024-2025 Local Government Model Budget published each year to assist councils in preparing their budget in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements. The budget is considered fiscally responsible whilst still providing a degree of important economic activity within the municipality. The Revenue and Rating Plan has been updated noting a policy trigger has been activated. Both the Budget 2024-2025 and revised Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024 are presented for adoption.

## 9.2 2024 LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY

<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/A13/000001

### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

### Status

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

### Appendix:

Horsham Rural City Council 2024 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey Report (**Appendix 9.2A**)

Horsham Rural City Council 2024 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey Tailored Question Report (**Appendix 9.2B**)

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### Purpose

To present the results of the 2024 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey.

### Summary

- The main objective of the survey is to assess the performance of Council across a range of measures, and to seek insight into ways to provide improved or more effective service delivery.
- The survey provides insight into the community's views on:
  - councils' overall performance, with benchmarking against State-wide and council group results
  - value for money in services and infrastructure
  - community consultation and engagement
  - decisions made in the interest of the community
  - customer service, local infrastructure, facilities, services and
  - overall council direction.
- Results have declined slightly since 2023 in line with the trend observed state-wide, however some improvements have been observed.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receive and note the Horsham Rural City Council 2024 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey results.
2. Note that an improvement plan to address the low scores will be presented to an upcoming meeting of Council.

## **REPORT**

### **Background**

Horsham Rural City Council has once again participated in the Local Government's annual community satisfaction survey conducted by JWS Research. The survey is now in its twenty-fifth year and is coordinated by the Department of Government Services (DGS) on behalf of Victorian Councils. The 2024 report represents the third year the HRCC survey has been conducted on a quarterly basis. A total of 400 residents and ratepayers were randomly selected for phone interview with 100 interviewed each quarter.

The survey is conducted by Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI), which is a representative random probability survey of residents aged 18+ years and seeks to target the surveys to the gender and age profile of the community. The survey is undertaken from publicly available phone records, including up to 40% mobile phone numbers, to cater to the diversity of residents in the Council, particularly young people.

The survey compiles community feedback on councils in five key performance areas and includes comparisons to Council's results in previous years. The involvement of the majority of other Councils within the State also provides meaningful comparison data between Councils. Horsham has been classified as a Regional Centre Council according to the classification list of Metropolitan, Interface, Regional Centres, Large Rural & Small Rural. The Regional Centres group includes Ballarat, Greater Bendigo, Greater Geelong, Horsham, Latrobe, Mildura, Wangaratta, Warrnambool and Wodonga.

The main objective of the survey is to assess the performance of Council across a range of measures, and to seek insight into ways to provide improved or more effective service delivery. Wherever appropriate, results for Horsham Rural City Council for the 2024 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey have been compared against other participating councils classified as a Regional Centre, and on a state-wide basis.

### **Discussion**

A summary of HRCC's performance when compared to the previous year's results, comparable councils (i.e. the Regional Centres) and State-wide averages, show that Council has experienced a decline since 2022 however the decline observed between 2023 and 2024 was less significant than the period 2022 to 2023. As outlined in the report 'Council continues to see some slippage in results, but not nearly to the same extent as in 2023. Perceptions of Council's overall performance stabilised, declining by a slight two index points in the past year after experiencing a much more precipitous decline in 2023. Waning overall performance reflects a pattern of decline across the Regional Centres group and State-wide. Performance in three of five service areas also stabilised, excepting a significant decline in the area of waste management.'

The state-wide report notes 'Perceptions of overall performance for councils' State-wide have declined for the third year in a row and are now at a decade-long low. However, there is some evidence of an end to this downward trend. Overall performance ratings for councils in the Metropolitan group have improved significantly this year, counter to the State-wide trend, while overall performance ratings for councils in the Interface group have stabilised (and are not significantly different to last year).' Specifically, the State-wide overall performance index score for all Victorian councils fell a statistically significant two points, from an index score of 56 in 2023 to 54 in 2024, continuing a downward trend from the 2022 CSS results. While the Metropolitan and Interface group councils halted the trend in 2024, it is still evident in Regional Centres as well as the Large and Small Rural group councils.

JWS Research note that reports for individual councils show demographic or geographic cohorts who are particularly dissatisfied with aspects of their council’s overall performance and performance on individual service areas and that this dissatisfaction on individual service areas can result in a decline in the overall performance score (note for example the ongoing decline in satisfaction with waste services). They also note that findings from the Survey are consistent with long-term independent research they have conducted which shows a consistent downward trend reported by Australians and Victorians since mid-2020 when they were asked to rate the current performance of local government. External factors have also been noted to contribute to the negative sentiment for individual councils and/or the local government sector more broadly. JWS Research indicate these may include (but are not limited to) ‘substantial rate increases (or other fees and charges), investigations and/or criminal charges against councillors or council staff, the appointment of a municipal monitor, commission of inquiry or dissolution of a council, major changes in delivery to council services, negatively viewed decisions and actions on infrastructure and development or perceived poor value for money for council services in the context of high and worsening cost of living pressures.’

In relation to HRCC specific results, the following figures capture the high-level summaries of the performance against core measures and performance against core measures since 2015. The full 2024 survey report provides analysis for each of the Core Measures, the demographics of participants, and articulates focus areas for the next 12 months (refer **Appendix 9.2A**).

Figure 1: Summary of HRCC Performance against core measures










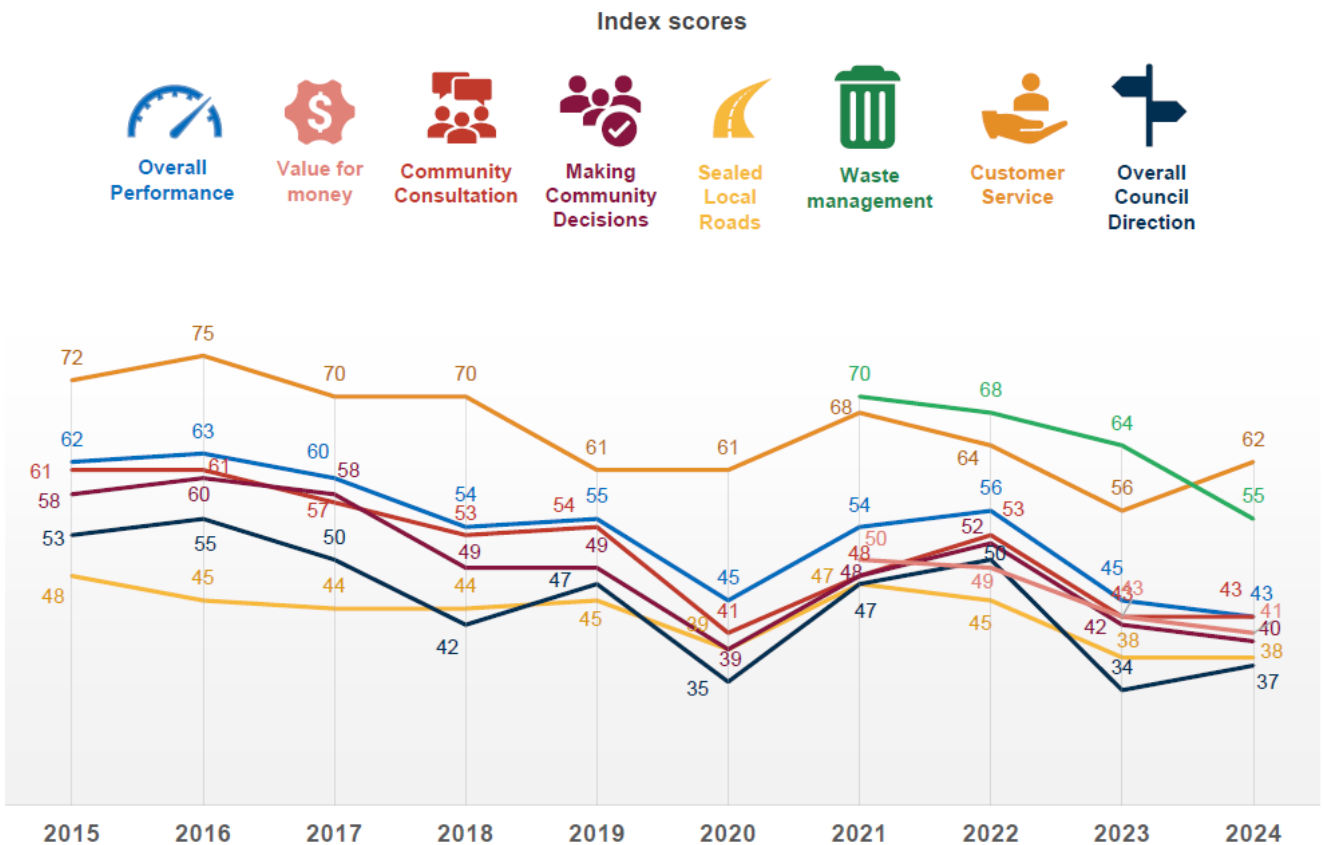
Services	Horsham 2024	Horsham 2023	Regional Centres 2024	State-wide 2024	Highest score	Lowest Score
 Overall performance	43	45	54	54	18-34 years	Rural Area residents
 Value for money	41	43	48	48	18-34 years	35-49 years
 Overall council direction	37	34	45	45	18-34 years	Rural Area residents
 Customer service	62	56	68	67	18-34 years	Rural Area residents
 Waste management	55	64	66	67	18-34 years, 65+ years	Rural Area residents
 Consultation & engagement	43	43	49	51	18-34 years	Rural Area residents
 Community decisions	40	42	48	50	18-34 years	Rural Area residents
 Sealed local roads	38	38	46	45	65+ years, Horsham Area residents	Rural Area residents
 Unsealed roads	33	-	40	36	Horsham Area residents	Rural Area residents

Figure 2: Summary of HRCC core measures over time



The summary of HRCC performance against core measures also includes community satisfaction measures in relation to both sealed and unsealed local roads, with the question about unsealed roads being a new addition to the 2024 survey. Index scores for unsealed roads state-wide were 36 in 2024, with regional centres at 40 and HRCC at 33 whereas sealed roads were 45, 46 and 38 respectively. As with previous years, respondents were asked to identify the sealed local roads of concern. Again, many of the sealed roads identified are managed by Regional Roads Victoria rather than the responsibility of Council.

The focus area summary provided in the HRCC report states:

*the condition of sealed and unsealed roads warrant extra attention in the coming 12 months, with performance in the area of sealed local roads specifically remaining at their lowest level recorded. Residents of the Rural Area rate Council performance lowest across service areas, including road conditions, and attention should be paid to this region in particular over the coming year.*

The HRCC report also indicates that Council performs best in the service area of waste management, however notes that ratings have declined significantly since 2023 (55 in 2024 compared to 64 in 2023). On a positive note, impressions of customer service interactions rebounded after experiencing a significant decline in 2023 (increasing from 56 in 2023 to 62 in 2024).

Officers have started the process of analysing survey the scores and other feedback, and will be developing an improvement plan which will be presented to a future Council meeting.

### **Options to Consider**

The majority of Victorian Councils participate in the Community Satisfaction Survey which enables meaningful comparisons to be made with other Regional Centres and state-wide trends and results more generally. In 2024, there were 62 of 79 Councils throughout Victoria who participated in the survey. Council could elect to do its own separate survey, however the value of being compared to other groups of councils within the standard questions would be lost.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Not applicable

### **Community Engagement**

The summary report is provided as an attachment to this report and will be placed on Council's website after Council has formally received it. The report represents feedback from some 400 community members who participated in the survey.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Council prepared an action plan to address the concerns raised by the community in the 2023 survey as part of its commitment to continuous improvement. A separate report will be provided on the outcome of those actions with recommend actions to address concerns raised in 2024 to be provided in due course.

### **Financial Implications**

The cost of participation in the survey forms part of the annual Council Budget.

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

The Community Satisfaction survey is a collaborative survey coordinated and conducted by JWS Research under the guidance of Local Government Victoria.

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

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 4– Strategies

4.1 Continuously improve communication and engagement with the community through effective consultation

4.4 Achieve high standards of organisational performance

### **Risk Implications**

The results indicate that there remains a risk to Council if the poor performance, as identified in the report, is not addressed.

### **Conclusion**

The Horsham Rural City Council 2024 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey has been completed and the survey report and response to the tailored question on sealed roads is presented to the Council for noting.



### 9.3 PROGRESS AGAINST THE 2023 COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY ACTION PLAN

<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/A13/000001

#### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

#### Status

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

#### Appendix

Progress against the 2023 Community Satisfaction Survey Action Plan (**Appendix 9.3A**)

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#### Purpose

To provide Council with the actions undertaken to address concerns raised in the 2023 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey noting the results are now available for the 2024 Survey.

#### Summary

- The results of the 2023 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey indicated a decline in ratepayer satisfaction compared to previous surveys.
- When the 2023 results were presented to Council it was confirmed that an action plan would be developed to address concerns raised by community.
- That action plan was adopted by Council on 25 September 2023 and an update against that workplan is now provided.

#### Recommendation

That Council receive and note the progress against the Action Plan to address community concerns captured in the 2023 Community Satisfaction survey results (**Appendix 9.3A**).

## REPORT

### Background

The Community Satisfaction Survey compiles community feedback on five key performance areas and includes comparisons to Council's results in previous years. The involvement of the majority of other Councils within the State also provides meaningful comparison data between Councils. Horsham has been classified as a Regional Centre according to the classification list with the group including Ballarat, Greater Bendigo, Greater Geelong, Horsham, Latrobe, Mildura, Wangaratta, Warrnambool and Wodonga.

The main objective of the survey is to assess the performance of Council across a range of measures, and to seek insight into ways to provide improved or more effective service delivery. Wherever appropriate, results for Horsham Rural City Council for the 2023 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey were compared against other participating councils classified as a Regional Centre, and on a state-wide basis.

A summary of HRCC's performance when compared to the previous year's results, comparable councils (i.e. the Regional Centres) and State-wide averages, show that Council had experienced a decline in all indicators since 2022.

The key challenges identified in the 2023 report related to:

- *A declining perception of Council's overall performance*
  - Significant decline in community perception of the Council's overall performance in 2023, reverting to the low point recorded in 2020, losing the gains in community confidence achieved in 2021 and 2022.
  - Council's performance ratings were below group averages, indicating a sharper decline compared to regional and statewide results. Service area ratings also decreased significantly.
  - Council's top performing area of waste management was still lower than the group average. This relates to the State Government's 4-bin policy and associated increase in costs.
- *Concerns regarding sealed local roads condition*
  - The condition of sealed local roads was a key focus for the community with performance ratings at their lowest level recorded (indexed score of 38 out of 100).
- *Dissatisfaction among rural area and 50 to 64 year old residents*
  - Residents of the rural area and 50 to 64 year olds rated Council performance lowest on almost all service areas evaluated.
  - Rural area residents are mostly concerned about the condition of rural roads, as well as investment in the city of Horsham.
- *Decreased Customer Service Index Score*
  - HRCC customer service index score decreased by 8 points from 2022 and 12 points from 2021, reflecting increasing community dissatisfaction. The current rating is the lowest in a decade and is significantly below Statewide and Regional Centres group averages.
- *Comparison with regional centres and statewide average*
  - Council's performance ratings were significantly lower than regional and statewide group averages across most service areas evaluated.

- *Concerns about Council direction*
  - The 2023 results highlighted a significant decline in community approval and confidence, particularly regarding Council direction.
  - The perception of Council direction experienced a sharp drop, with an index score of 34, down 16 points compared to 2022. This decline raised important concerns about the community's trust in the decision-making processes and strategic direction of Council.

The Action Plan prepared was intended to confirm to the community that Council has listened to their concerns with the actions reflecting commitments made to address the dissatisfaction articulated in the survey results. Progress against those commitments is provided in **Appendix 9.3A**.

### **Options to Consider**

Council can opt not to receive the update against the Action Plan but the actions outlined have been identified to ensure Council responded to the community dissatisfaction articulated in the 2023 survey results. Further the progress against the current action plan, when noted against the 2024 Survey Results, may inform further actions to address the 2024 results as well as identify which actions may have been effective in addressing community perceptions and those which have not. This will help assist in the development of any workplan to address the 2024 results.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Not applicable

### **Community Engagement**

The summary report from the 2023 Community Satisfaction Survey report for Horsham Rural City Council was provided as an attachment to the July 2023 Council report and was placed on Council's website following the Council meeting. The action plan was presented to Council in September 2023.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Council prepared an action plan to address the concerns raised by the community in 2023 as per the commitment made when those results were presented. The action plan was demonstrated to confirm Council's commitment to continuous improvement. The actions undertaken against that plan, when reviewed in conjunction with the 2024 results, will enable Council to make informed decisions about the success or otherwise of actions undertaken. Further it should assist in the development of further action plans to address community concerns.

### **Financial Implications**

The cost of actions included in the action plan were incorporated into existing budget measures wherever possible with costs to Council intended to be kept minimal and within budget.

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

The Community Satisfaction survey is a collaborative survey conducted by JWS Research and coordinated by the Department of Government Services (DGS) on behalf of Victorian Councils.

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

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 4 – Strategies:

- 4.1. Continuously improve communication and engagement with the community through effective consultation.
- 4.4 Achieve high standards of organisational performance.

**Risk Implications**

The results from the 2023 Community Satisfaction Survey indicated that there is a risk to Council if the concerns identified in the survey report were not addressed. The action plan was developed as a means to mitigate that risk by seeking to address the concerns raised.

**Conclusion**

A progress report against the action plan adopted by Council to address community concerns raised in response to the 2023 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey has been completed and is presented to the Council for noting.

## 9.4 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE BIENNIAL REPORT – 1 JANUARY TO 30 JUNE 2024

<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 & Information	<b>File Number:</b>	F18/A13/000001

### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

### Status

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

### Appendix

Audit and Risk Committee's Biannual Report to Council (**Appendix 9.4A**)

### Purpose

To present the Audit and Risk Committee's Biannual Report for the period January to June 2024.

### Summary

- Audit and Risk Committee meetings – 90% attendance rate by independent members and Councillor Representatives.
- Two Committee meetings held during the reporting period – 21 March and 20 June 2024
- Six policies and procedures adopted or reviewed across the two meetings (three and three respectively).
- Council's overall progress in respect of a wide number of matters, indicating progress against outstanding audit actions.
- The report also highlights some of the key activities undertaken which are legislative or policy requirements of the Audit and Risk Committee.

### Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Biannual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee for the period January to June 2024 (**Appendix 9.4A**).

## REPORT

### Background

This report is prepared in accordance with the Horsham Rural City Council's Audit and Risk Committee Charter 2022 (section 3.15) and fulfils the obligations under Section 54(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act). The specific requirements at that section are that:

An Audit and Risk Committee must:

- a) prepare a biannual audit and risk report that describes the activities of the Audit and Risk Committee and includes its findings and recommendations; and
- b) provide a copy of the biannual audit and risk report to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council meeting.

The biannual report covers the period January to June 2024 and includes the Committee meetings held on 21 March and 20 June 2024. The minutes of the March meeting were tabled at the April 2024 Council Meeting with a separate report to be tabled for the June meeting minutes and presented to the July 2024 Council Meeting.

### Discussion

This report provides a summary of the work the Committee performed to discharge its responsibilities and includes a summary of Council's progress in addressing the results of internal and external audits.

For the topics covered in the period under review, the report includes an overall assessment of risks, controls, and compliance processes, including consideration of a wide range of reports that indicated Council's continued monitoring of developments.

### Options to Consider

There are no options to consider as the report is required by legislation (section 54(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*).

### Sustainability Implications

Not applicable

### Community Engagement

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

### Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Council applies the principles of continuous improvement in the operation of the Audit and Risk Committee with a strong process of regular review and evaluation of the committee's operations. From this regular review and evaluation, processes and practices are changed as required to deliver improved and effective outcomes.

### Collaboration

Not applicable

### **Financial Implications**

Operations of Council's Audit and Risk Committee is covered within the 2023-24 operational budget allocation.

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

Nil

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

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 5 – Leadership

1. Good governance, through leadership and connection with community
2. Good management for financial sustainability
4. Accountable and transparent decision making

### **Risk Implications**

An Audit and Risk Committee is required under the *Local Government Act 2020* so having a properly functioning or constituted committee ensures Council meets those obligations under the Act. The Committee has an important role in monitoring Council's financial governance and risks and therefore helps mitigate Council's risk of fraud and corruption.

### **Conclusion**

The Audit and Risk Committee is a legislated requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020*. Other obligations are placed on the Committee by the Audit and Risk Committee Charter 2022. This report meets our obligations to prepare a Biannual Audit and Risk Committee Report.

## 9.5 ADVOCACY PRIORITIES – 2024 REVIEW

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Susan Surridge	<b>Director:</b>	Kim Hargreaves
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Co-ordinator Community Relations and Advocacy	<b>Directorate:</b>	Corporate
<b>Department:</b>	Governance IM	<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

Advocacy Priorities (**Appendix 9.5A**)

Investment Ready Priorities (**Appendix 9.5B**)

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### Purpose

To present the Horsham Rural City Council's Advocacy Priorities following the completion of the 2024-2025 Budget process.

### Summary

This report details an updated Advocacy Priority prospectus that retains and updates current projects and includes a new priority as per the 2024-2025 Council Plan and Budget.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt the HRCC Advocacy Priorities as detailed in **Appendix 9.5A**.
2. Adopt the HRCC Investment Ready Priorities as detailed in **Appendix 9.5B**.



## REPORT

### Background

In May 2021, Council adopted an Advocacy Priority prospectus that highlighted current and aspirational projects considered high priorities for our community. This prospectus, and its sister document, Investment Ready Priorities, have been used consistently over the current Council term to advocate for State and Federal Governments for funding of major projects.

The Advocacy Priorities prospectus requires annual review and update with each annual planning cycle, noting that some original projects have now been funded and completed and new ones developed.

### Discussion

A review of the existing prospectus was undertaken to:

- Update current projects that remain unfunded;
- Include new projects that are now part of Council's future capital works program or future advocacy priorities

This is the final review of the Advocacy Strategy for the current Council.

The updated document is provided in **Appendix 9.5A**.

In addition, eight high priority projects have been extracted to form a shortened prospectus that focuses on projects that are investment ready, refer **Appendix 9.5B**.

The format of these two documents allows them to be updated on an ongoing basis when project updates become available. I.e. changes in project status or budget.

Changes made to the two documents were:

- Updated cost estimates received over the past 12 months
- Inclusion of the new Central Park Play Space project (currently Horsham Skate Park)
- Inclusion of the Horsham Destination Local Area Action Plan related projects – Golf Club Resort and Horsham Aerodrome master plan

### Options to Consider

Nil

### Sustainability Implications

Not applicable

### Community Engagement

This report was presented to the Executive Management Team on June 11 and at the Council Briefing on 16 July 2024.

The priority projects detailed in the prospectus reflect the Council's long term capital works priorities and the Annual Action Plan. Community engagement was undertaken for the Annual Action Plan 2024-2025.

### Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not applicable

**Collaboration**

Not applicable

**Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications of the Advocacy Priorities prospectus. Its purpose is to seek external funding for future projects.

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

Not applicable

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme 1 – Community

Communicate and engage effectively with our community to understand their needs and advocate on their behalf

Theme 2 – Liveability

2. A destination to live, work, explore and invest

Theme 3 – Sustainability

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

4. A region that attracts new investment, technologies and opportunities

Theme 4 – Accessibility

1. Improved and connected transport services and networks in and around the region

**Risk Implications**

Not applicable

**Conclusion**

The new Advocacy Priorities prospectus provides a mechanism by which Council can seek future investment in major projects and government support of key community priorities.

## 9.6 HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL 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

DRAFT Horsham Rural City Council Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029 (**Appendix 9.6A**)

### Purpose

To present the draft Horsham Rural City Council Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029 and make it available for public comment.

### Summary

The Onsite Wastewater Management Plan (OWMP):

- Is an important tool that is used in connection with the administration of Council's Planning Scheme, consideration of matters relevant to GWMWater (as another Regulator), and the issue of Onsite Wastewater Management System (OWMS) permits.
- Identifies risks of harm and impacts to human health and the environment.
- Informs Council on what actions to take to improve decision-making associated with the issue of OWMS permits.

### Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Draft Horsham Rural City Council Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029 (**Appendix 9.6A**) and make it available to the community for comment for a four-week period.

## REPORT

### Background

In rural areas it is sometimes not practical, or possible for a proposed dwelling to be connected to the existing sewerage system. Where this occurs, sewage is managed using a standalone on-site waste water management system. 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 (Regulations) and other guidance materials.

Councils throughout Victoria assess risks and identify strategies to manage these systems through the development and implementation of an OWMP. The OWMP is an important technical and risk management tool for Council 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.

Council 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 went out to the market. An independent consultant that was successful in their tender for the review and redevelopment of the OWMP and has subsequently provided HRCC with a Draft Horsham Rural City Council: Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029.

### 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 a Draft HRCC OWMP for community engagement. The Draft OWMP reflects the current legislative environment and provides 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**

The Draft Horsham Rural City Council: Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029 will be made available for community feedback through our standard community engagement methods as follows: Public Notices, Weekly Newsletters, social media and hard copies of the plan made available at the Civic Centre.

### **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 current 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 directly with the following agencies as part of this review:

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

### **Financial Implications**

Actions in the OWMP will require resources to enable the Plan to be implemented.

### **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).

### **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 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. Council's current DWMP was adopted in 2006 and has not been the subject of any review until this point in time. The review and redevelopment of this Plan will enable Council to better manage risk as well as the strategic and operational issues associated with onsite wastewater management.

## 9.7 INTENTION TO SELL LAND AT THE WIMMERA AGRICULTURE LOGISTICS HUB

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<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>	F06/A13/000001

### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

### Status

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

## Appendix

Submission (Redacted) **Appendix 9.7A**

### Purpose

To seek approval to proceed with the intention to sell land at the Wimmera Agriculture Logistics Hub (WAL Hub) by private treaty.

### Summary

One submission has been received as a result of Council resolving to give notice of its intention to sell the land known as Lots 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, Stage 2 and Lots 10 and 11, Stage 3, WAL Hub, Dooen.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Note the contents of the submission received (**Appendix 9.7A**).
2. Proceeds to sell Stage 2, lots 3 to 7 and Stage 3, lots 10 and 11 at the Wimmera Agriculture Logistics Hub (WAL Hub) through a private treaty.

## REPORT

### Background

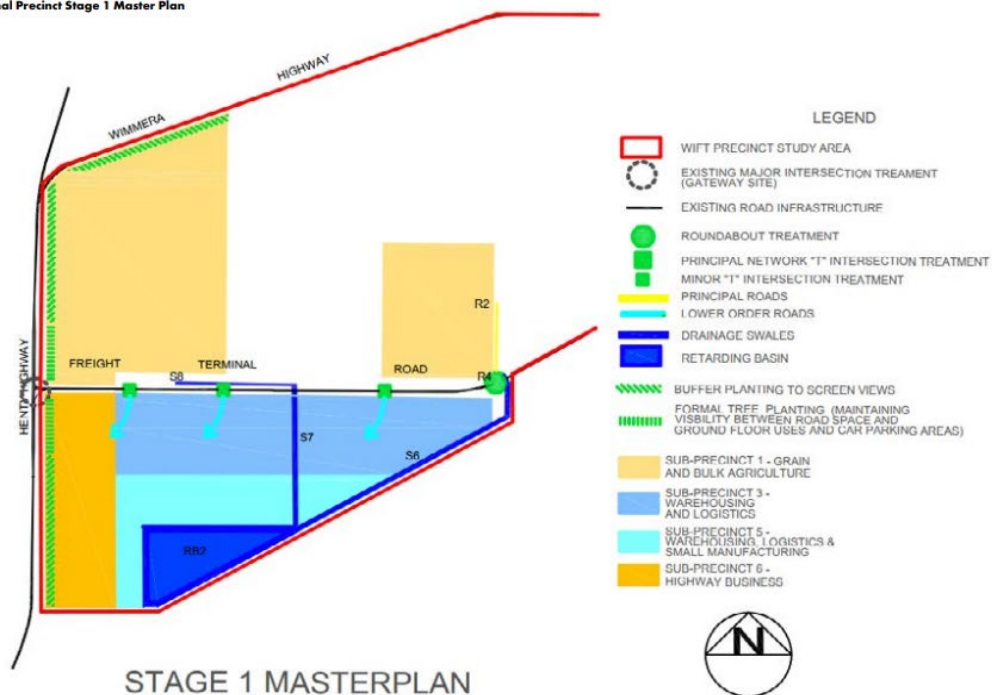
Council resolved at the May 2024 Council meeting to give notice of its intention to sell the land known as Lots 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, Stage 2 and Lots 10 and 11, Stage 3, WAL Hub, Dooen, on its website, having regard to the proposed key terms of sale identified in the report to Council and to undertake a community engagement process in accordance with its community engagement policy by seeking written submissions in relation to the proposal and providing an opportunity for submitters to appear in person or online to speak to their submissions if they so request.

Public notice was given of Councils intent to sell the land known as Lots 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, Stage 2 and Lots 10 and 11, Stage 3, WAL Hub, Dooen, and the community engagement process has been undertaken. During this process one submission was received by Council (see **Appendix 9.7A**) requesting that any land sold is used for the purpose of businesses related to agriculture and primary produce. The submitter was provided an opportunity to speak to their submission.



Figure 1 Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Precinct Stage 1 Development Master Plan, below, identifies the following elements of the development of the WIFT Precinct:

Figure 1:  
Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Precinct Stage 1 Master Plan



Stage 1 Development Plan | 5

## Discussion

It was noted in the public notice that the proposal is that Council sell the separate parcels as shown for purchase by private treaty including -

- Purchasers that are engaged in one or more of the following: manufacturing, processing, packing, storage, transport distribution and export of primary produce, raw materials or food products, service industries and ancillary uses.
- For market value and
- Inconsideration of commitments from the purchases for prompt development of relevant lots.

Development of the WAL Hub is restricted to uses identified in the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Precinct – Schedule 9 to Clause 37.01 Special Use Zone. There are 6 Sub-precincts which have the following purposes.

Sub-precinct 1 Grain and bulk agricultural produce - To provide for industry and warehousing involved in the collection, storage and transfer of grain and other bulk agricultural produce on land in sub precinct 1 having regard to Map 1 to Schedule 9 to Clause 37.01. To ensure appropriate separation between industry and warehousing involved in the storage and transfer of mineral sands and other earth resources from food related industries and warehousing.

Sub-precinct 2 Mineral sands - To provide for industry and warehousing involved in the storage and transfer of mineral sands and other earth resources on land generally in sub precinct 2 having regard to Map 1 to Schedule 9 to Clause 37.01 To ensure appropriate separation between industry and warehousing involved in the storage and transfer of mineral sands and other earth resources from food related industries and warehouses.



Sub-precinct 3 Warehousing and logistics - To provide for large scale warehousing and logistic industries and mineral sands processing and storage handling in close proximity to the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal generally on land in sub precinct 3 having regard to Map 1 to Schedule 9 to Clause 37.01. To provide opportunity for industries that benefit from a shared boundary with the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal. To ensure the primacy of freight movements adjacent to the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Mineral sands development shall be discouraged from abutting the northern side of the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal.

Sub-precinct 4 Large Manufacturing - To provide for large scale manufacturing and general industries and mineral sands processing and storage handling with adverse amenity potential that require large separation distances from sensitive land uses (e.g. dwellings) generally on land in sub-precinct 4 having regard to Map 1 to Schedule 9 to Clause 37.01. To provide for export orientated food manufacturing, food packaging and other manufacturing related industries. To encourage manufacturing industries that support the expansion of reticulated gas, potable water and sewerage infrastructure. To discourage small-scale manufacturing in this sub-precinct.

Sub-precinct 5 Warehousing, logistics and small manufacturing to provide for a mix of small-scale manufacturing, warehousing, logistics and industries generally on land in sub precinct 5 having regard to Map 1 to Schedule 9 to Clause 37.01

Sub-precinct 6 Highway business to provide for a range of service industries and ancillary uses along the Henty Highway frontage that support the Precinct on land in sub precinct 6 as shown in Map 1 to Schedule 9 to Clause 37.01.

Although predominantly the WAL Hub supports developments which relate to agriculture and primary produce which was the key recommendation in the submission received, there are other permitted uses such as logistics and the storage and transfer of mineral sands processing.

### **Options to Consider**

1. Council may choose to proceed with its intention to sell land within the WAL Hub Stage 2 and Stage 3 located at Dooen.
2. Council may choose not to proceed with its intention to sell land based on the submission received.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Nil

### **Community Engagement**

It is a legislative requirement of section 114(2)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020* that Council must undertake a community engagement process in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy. This process was undertaken and resulted in one submission.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Nil

### **Collaboration**

Not applicable

**Financial Implications**

Nil

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

Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) - Regional Victoria is a driving force behind our State's economic growth and prosperity. The Victoria's Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) identify strategic directions to further drive growth and prosperity in regional Victoria.

**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

**Conclusion**

Council has undertaken a community engagement process regarding its intent to sell land at the WAL Hub after considering this submission it is recommended that the sale of land proceeds as per Councils original intent in relation to the proposed use of this land.

## REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

### 9.8 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND GROWTH DEPARTMENT REPORT

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Joel Hastings	<b>Director:</b>	Kevin O'Brien
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Acting 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 May 2024 (data is from bank card transactions and may not capture all Ag Industry)

#### Appendix 9.8A

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#### Purpose

To receive and note the Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report for May 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 May 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 May 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. 5/10 meetings held to date in 2024.
(2 years)	Prepare and implement the recommendations from the Aerodrome Masterplan	Aerodrome Masterplan development	The Airport Masterplan is undergoing community consultation during May and June.

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured By	Progress
2.7.1 (ongoing)	Identify and seek out commercial opportunities to activate the riverfront	Commercial opportunities reported on in the Investment Attraction	The Riverfront Pop Up Café site is now being utilised by mobile food traders with at least one food truck occupying the space seven days a week.

		and Growth monthly Council Report	
3.2.1 (ongoing)	Work with local business leaders throughout the municipality to develop business confidence and growth	Two business forums held annually	Council collaborated with Westvic Business in May to deliver a Precinct Planning Forum. Presenters included representatives from Business Victoria and Mainstreet Australia.
(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 1,068 business contacts on 23 May 24 with 755 opens and 1 clicks.

**SPENDMAPP**

Please see below summary of spending for the month of May.

The biggest spending night of the month of May 2024 was Saturday 18 May with Total Local Spend of \$0.3M. This was made up of \$0.2M in Dining and Entertainment spending and \$0.1M spending in all other categories. Throughout the Summer months the biggest spending night generally occurs on a Friday, however due to the football/netball season in the Winter months there is a lot more night time activity on Saturday nights.

M = Million	May 2024	April 2024	% Change Previous Month	% Change Previous Year
<b>Total Local Spend</b>	\$36.70 M	\$36.80	0.3% decrease	1.86% increase
<b>Resident Local Spend</b>	\$24.30 M	\$22.50 M	7.8% increase	2.2% increase
<b>Visitor Local Spend</b>	\$14.20 M	\$11.60 M	13.8% decrease	1.15% increase
<b>Resident Escape Spend</b>	\$11.00 M	\$9.78 M	4.9% decrease	6.03% increase
<b>Resident Online Spend</b>	\$12.20 M	\$11.90 M	12.2% increase	8.35% increase

**TOURISM & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**



**2024 Grape Escape Event**

Grampians Grape Escape is a not-for-profit festival designed to showcase the talents of our region and support small businesses, as well as shine a light on the amazing food and wineries the region has to offer.

The event was attended by representatives from Northern Grampians and Horsham Rural City Council with Officers engaging with attendees from across regional Victoria, Melbourne and South Australia. Whilst promoting the Grampians wider region as a place to “Live and Invest The Grampians Way”. The event attracted over 8,000 attendees.

**Fulham Homestead – Business Visit**



Fulham Homestead is a large complex of early farming buildings, built between 1848 and 1861 for George Armytage.

The Business Team and Visitor Services visited David Hubble owner of the Fulham Homestead. David was appreciative to have been given the opportunity to meet directly with council staff that are prepared to assist with his enquires.

Discussion related around providing additional exposure to his business. For example, greater presence on the [www.visithorsham.com.au](http://www.visithorsham.com.au) website, new promotional signage to enhance the entry into the property, advice relating to business grants and business newsletters, including a future visit by Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism marketing officer accompanied by HRCC Business Team.



Fulham Homestead has great potential for future enhancement of a Farm Stay business over time.

On the right is an image of an outer buildings for future redevelopment.

Below two image shows a restored building currently used as a yoga facility.



**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	34
February	20	13	18	51
March	23	16	7	46
April	10	14	4	28
May	30	10	20	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>219</b>

**Occupied Businesses:**

Street and Number of Businesses	April 2024 Businesses Occupied	May 2024 Businesses Occupied	May 2024 Businesses Vacant	May 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>	90	92	7	90%
<b>Hamilton St - 17</b>	17	17	0	100%
<b>Wilson St – 34</b>	27	27	7	79%
<b>Pynsent St – 28</b> Cinema included	26	26	2	92%
<b>Roberts Ave – 27</b> Coles included	25	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>251/272</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 May 2024 and a comparison with the same period last year.

Type	MAY 2024		MAY 2023	
	No.	*Value \$	No.	*Value \$
Miscellaneous Domestic	-		1	250,000
Industrial/Commercial	1	2000	3	6,197,200
Subdivisions	2 (6 lots)	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2000</b>		<b>6,447,200</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 2023 to 31 May 2024 is 71 compared to 122 in the same period in 2022-2023.

Planning permits issued for subdivision have permitted 79 new lots from 1 July 2023 to 31 May 2024 compared to 85 in the same period in 2022-2023.

**Building Services**

Below are the number of building permits issued for the month of **May 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	779,200
Alterations to Dwellings	-	-	-	-
Dwelling resittings	-	-	-	-
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	2	38,275	2	42,983
Removal/Demolish	-	-	1	18,601
Industrial/Commercial	1	13,800	1	26,125
Signs	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>52,075</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>866,909</b>

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

Type	2024		2023	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	4	2,318,607	6	2,729,701
Alterations to Dwellings	3	657,970	5	680,160
Dwelling resittings	1	71,830	-	-
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	8	281,110	5	169,007
Removal/Demolish	-	-	-	-
Industrial/Commercial	3	1,122,939	5	628,661
Signs	-	-	-	-
<b>_Sub Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4,452,456</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>4,207,529</b>

A total of **28** Building Permits have been issued by the Horsham Rural City Council at a total value of **\$4,032,863** from **1 July 2023 to 31 May 2024** compared to **39** Building Permits at a total value of **\$3,693,597** in 2022-2023.

Private Building Surveyors have issued **198** Building Permits at a total value of **\$90,746,294** from **1 July 2023 to 31 May 2024** compared to **218** at a total value of **\$48,871,065** in 2022-2023.



**STRATEGIC PLANNING**

<b>Council Priorities</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Goal Measured By</b>	<b>Progress</b>
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 Project Control Group has reviewed the Draft Open Space Strategy Review report and the project consultant is now finalising the report. The findings will be considered and integrated into the Horsham and Natimuk Housing Diversity and Affordability Strategy.
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 in order to proceed with a Planning Scheme Amendment. Council officers have submitted a funding application to assist with the additional work that required from a specialist heritage advisor.
(4 years)	Prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the Horsham Cinema	Management plan endorsed by Council	The Final Conservation Management Plan was reviewed by the Project Control Group. Feedback is now being prepared for the project consultant to finalise the report.
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	Community consultation on the Discussion Paper commenced on 23 April and will continue until 21 June. Community drop-in sessions have taken place and a webinar was recorded and put onto the project webpage.
2.10.3 (2 years)	Prepare and implement the Horsham South Structure Plan (Stage 2)	Plan adopted by Council	Final versions of transport and bushfire risk reports have been provided to the Project Control Group for review. The project consultants

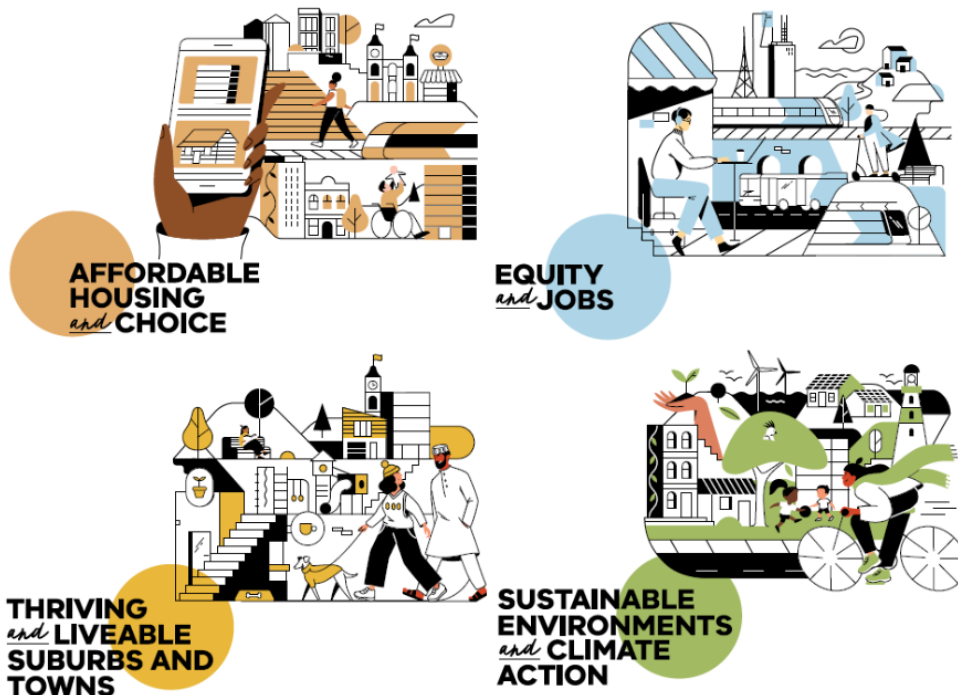
		<p>are also preparing an assessment of land supply implications, to ensure the structure plan aligns with the findings of the Horsham and Natimuk Housing Diversity and Affordability Strategy.</p>
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**Plan for Victoria**

The State Government is developing a plan for Victoria intended to provide a blueprint to guide how Victoria grows and develops.

They have started community consultation and want to make a plan for Victoria that reflects the voices, ideas and diversity of all Victorians. <https://engage.vic.gov.au/shape-our-victoria>

**There are four pillars that will guide our conversations with you**



Council officers have had initial workshops with the Department for Transport and Planning and other Wimmera Southern Mallee Councils and Plan for Victorian will be open for submissions from July to August 2024.

**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.

## 9.9 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S OPERATIONAL REPORT

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

### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes  No

Reason: Nil

### Status

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

Yes  No

Reason: Nil

### Appendix

Nil

### Purpose

To present the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for July 2024.

### Summary

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

### Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for July 2024.

## REPORT

### Background

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

### Discussion

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

#### **A. Advocacy/Funding Announcements**

**Regional Cities Victoria (RCV) CEO Meeting:** The RCV CEOs attended a meeting with VPA CEO Stuart Moseley on Thursday 27 June 2024. Mr Moseley presented on the VPA's regional program and potential future directions.

**Quarterly Wimmera Regional CEO Meeting:** The CEOs from Horsham, Yarriambiack, West Wimmera, Buloke, Northern Grampians and Hindmarsh had their monthly meeting on Thursday 11 July. The group discussed renewable energy, mineral sands and the MAV standing for council session in Nhill on 14 August.

**Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) CEO Forum:** The CEO attended the MAV CEO forum on 15 July 2024. Topics of discussion included Local Government Refrom, Financial Sustainability submission, Waste Guidelines and Housing Taskforce update.

**Regional Cities Victoria CEO Meeting:** The CEO attended the Regional Cities Victoria meeting on 18 July (virtually). Discussions included Plan Victoria submissions, Local Government election and induction preparations, and local roads funding.

#### **Funding Opportunities:**

Nil

#### **B. Community Engagement**

**Community Conversations:** Councillors and Senior Officers met with the Clear Lake community at the Clear Lake former primary school on Monday 15 July 2024. The meeting was an opportunity for the community to raise local issues and questions for Council.

**Dadswells Bridge Community Visit:** The CEO met with the Dadswells Bridge community and Emergency Recovery Victoria CEO Mariela Diaz and staff on Thursday 11 July following the bushfire impact and to see how they are feeling six months post bushfire. Following the request from the Dadswell Bridge community during Councillors visit to Dadswell Bridge in May, a Defibrillator has been installed at the Dadswell Bridge Hall.

#### **C. Projects and Events**

**National General Assembly (NGA):** The Mayor, Councillor Flynn, Haenel, Power and the CEO attended the NGA conference in Canberra from 1 to 5 July 2024.

**Postcards TV Show:** The Business Development Team in partnership with Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism, welcomed Madeline Spark and her team from Postcards TV Show 9Now. Filming took place across the Grampians and Wimmera Mallee region last week. The filming occurred at Grampians Olive Co with owner Greg Matthews. The olive plantation was home to the historic Toscana Olives first established in 1943. Postcards then filmed Meringa Springs speaking to owner Bea Sykes of the Small Luxury Lodge, Restaurant and Bar. This beautiful resort located on the sunny side of the mountains in Wartook Valley area is a perfect getaway to the Grampians National Park. Filming included the Murtoa Stick Shed, Silo Art trail and Dimboola Imaginarium. Postcards will feature five segments overall with airtime expected in late July early August.

#### **D. Staff Matters**

Wendy Davies who started her career as the youngest City of Horsham employee in 1976 retired earlier this month from her role after 48 years of dedicated service to the Horsham community. Wendy's positive attitude and willingness to adapt to change have allowed her to thrive in Local Government. As she retires to spend more time with her family and enjoy the city she has served for nearly half a century, Wendy leaves behind a legacy of dedication, adaptability, and a deep knowledge of the area and its people. Her journey from junior typist to council veteran is a testament to her commitment to the Horsham municipality and its residents.

#### **Financial Implications**

Not applicable

#### **Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies**

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 5 - Leadership

#### **Consultation/Communication**

Not applicable

#### **Risk Implications**

Not applicable

#### **Environmental Implications**

Not applicable

#### **Human Rights Implications**

This report complies with the rights listed in the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

#### **Conclusion**

That Council receive and note the Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report for July 2024.

## 10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cr Robyn Gulline, Mayor

<b>Committee Representation</b>	
3-4/07/24	Voting delegate at Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) 2024 National General Assembly (NGA), Canberra
05/07/24	Attended the 2024 Australian Council of Local Government (ACLG), Canberra
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
25/06/24	Chaired Wesley Fundraising Committee meeting
26/06/24	ABC Wimmera Radio interview
28/06/24	Triple H radio interview with Di Trotter
28/06/24	VLGA Members Only - Lunch & Learn: Election Period Considerations for Councillors (virtual)
28/06/24	Attended the Rotary Club of Horsham Changeover Dinner
02/07/24	Attended the Cross Border Commissioners Breakfast, Canberra
02/07/24	Attended the Rural and Regional Forum, Canberra
02/07/24	Attended the National Press Club for address by ALGA President, Linda Scott
02/07/24	Attended Question Time in Speakers Gallery, Parliament House
02/07/24	Attended the ALGA Welcome Reception and Exhibition Opening
03/07/24	Attended the Mallee LGA event hosted by Dr Anne Webster in National Party Room, Parliament House
04/07/24	Attended the ACLG Gala Dinner, Canberra
16/07/24	Chaired Wesley Fundraising Committee meeting
17/07/24	Attended the Murra Warra Wind Farm Community Fund 2024 announcement
17/07/24	Attended the Wesley Raffle Draw and Opera at Horsham Town Hall

**Cr Penny Flynn**



<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>
27/06/24	Women's Health Grampians – Tell Your Story Report Launch – Federation Uni
28/6/24	VLGA – Lunch & Learn: Election Period Consideration – Online
02/07/24	ALGA – 2024 Regional Forum – Canberra
02/07/24	ALGA President Linda Scott National Press Club Address – Canberra
3-4/06/24	ALGA – 2024 National General Assembly – Canberra
05/07/24	2024 Australian Council of Local Government – Caberra
06/07/24	Rotary Club of Horsham East – Changeover Dinner – Glen Logan
09/07/24	Eskimo Joe – Horsham Town Hall
17/07/24	The Wesley Fundraiser Raffle Draw – Horsham Town Hall

**Cr David Bowe**

<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
27/06/24	Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) & Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) Global Executive Panel -- Resetting relationships between levels of government – online
28/06/24	Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) - Election Period Considerations for Councillors – online
08/07/24	Council Briefing meeting – Council Chambers
15/07/24	Community Conversations at Clear Lake – Clear Lake Former Primary School
16/07/24	Council Briefing meeting – Council Chambers



Cr Claudia Haenel

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
1-5/07/24	<p>Cr. Claudia Haenel Report July 2024 - 30th National Gallery Assembly 2024</p>   <p><b>30th National General Assembly 2024</b></p> <p><b>AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION</b></p> <p>July 2nd – 5th 2024 National Convention Centre Canberra</p> <p><small>Images: ALGA, 2024; Government, 2024</small></p>

Cr. Claudia Haenel Report July 2024 - 30th National Gallery Assembly 2024



"I was delighted to be in Canberra representing Horsham community on a memorable week with the official swearing-in of our Governor-General (Vale, 2024), Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC and her first official address at the NGA (Skatsoo, 2024), where over 1,200 local government leaders gathered for a week of Australian Local Government Association forums and speakers (Association, 2024d). The program commenced with the Regional Forum (Association, 2024b, 2024c) and finished with 2024 Australian Council of Local Government (ACLG) and an address from Prime Minister Hon Anthony Albanese (Albanese MP, 2024).

A highlight was an invitation from Hon Dr. Anne Webster MP to the Nationals' Party Room at Parliament House and meeting the leader of the National Party Hon. David Littleproud MP. I also met Governor-General, Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC and invited her to visit our Horsham community. I look forward to hearing from the Governor-General to discuss further the details about my invitation to Her Excellency". Cr. Claudia Haenel, July 2024.



Cr. Claudia Haenel Report July 2024 - 30th National Gallery Assembly 2024

# PRESIDENT'S WELCOME



Friends,

I'm delighted to welcome you to the 30th National General Assembly (NGA) of Local Government.

We have been now gathering in Canberra for thirty years, and I'm thrilled that this year's conference is our largest turnout yet!

Our 2024 NGA theme is "building community trust".

Sadly, trust in public institutions is in decline in many parts of the world – including right here in Australia. We all know that if we are going to continue to deliver in the face of ongoing natural disasters, skills shortages and cost of living pressures, then trust in government, between governments, our institutions and our citizens is fundamentally important.

This week we will also discuss your council motions, which will help shape ALGA's future policy and advocacy platforms to be determined by your ALGA Board.

Over the past 12 months, we have continued to advocate on your behalf for more federal funding for our communities.

As a result, this year's Federal Budget included an additional \$330 million for councils, including a \$150 million increase in Roads to Recovery funding, and \$155 million in Financial Assistance Grants indexation.

Other Budget funding that will support councils includes \$21 million for a new National Road Safety Hub, \$102 million to upgrade regional airports and remote airstrips, \$200 million for the Disaster Ready Fund, and \$265 million for apprentices and trainees in priority occupations.

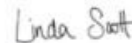
Unfortunately, the Government missed its chance to follow through on its pre-election promise of "fair increases" to Financial Assistance Grants, and this year's NGA is an opportunity for us to come together and send a clear message that we need immediate action.

We are once again partnering with the Government this year to bring you the Australian Council of Local Government (ACLG), to be held immediately after our NGA on Friday 5 July.

The ACLG will once again be informed by the discussions at our conference, and allow us to engage directly with key federal ministers ahead of the next federal election.

In a personal note, in my final year as your President, I want to thank you for the honour of serving Australian local governments. I am so proud to have advocated for more than \$4 billion in Federal funding for councils across my term and look forward to seeing you and your communities thrive into the future as a result.

I trust you will enjoy our 30th National General Assembly, and I look forward to a great week together in Canberra.



Cr Linda Scott  
ALGA President

(Association, 2024b; N. P. C. o. Australia, 2024)



(Stock, 2024)

Cr. Claudia Haenel Report July 2024 - 30th National Gallery Assembly 2024

As promised, I took concerns from Horsham community members to Canberra and advocated wherever possible. We heard from many speakers over the 4 days. This report aims to respond to questions from the community in the order they were received, and based on the event speakers and information presented, as follows:

1. **“Mining on prime agricultural land...** Agriculture is the backbone to our region and our local council need to protect and support it and the other industries that rely on the agricultural sector...”

While there was no specific opportunity to mention proposed mining in Horsham municipality, there were many references to the cost-of-living crisis, agricultural land for food production and the importance of jobs. Mentions came from elsewhere on Western Australia where over 1,600 jobs will be lost due to the closure of nickel mining operations (French, 2024; Rabe, 2024).

Demographer Simon Kuestenmacher spoke on the importance of jobs in the Horsham municipality. The vital jobs growth the demographers tell us is necessary for Horsham municipality, could come from the local government sector itself (Kuestenmacher, 2024).

Federal funding for infrastructure was also mentioned during the week. More information on mining and agriculture can be found here: (Association, 2024e; Australian Government - The Department of Infrastructure, 2024b, 2024c; Group, 2024).

2. **“Western Highway planning** and works from Ararat to the SA Border for safer streets in Horsham community.”

A bypass is being advocated for Mildura by our Federal MP, but no mention of one for Horsham (T. N. f. R. Australia, 2024). More information on roads is available here: (Association, 2024a, 2024d, 2024e; Australian Government - The Department of Infrastructure, 2024b, 2024c; Group, 2024).

3. **“What consultation will happen with councils, if nuclear comes to Victoria?”**

Energy from nuclear is currently banned in Australia (Campbell, 2024). More may have been heard on this topic from Hon Peter Dutton MP who has been advocating for nuclear energy, however, he was unable to attend. Hon Chris Bowen MP spoke on *Future Made In Australia* and energy from renewables. More information can be found here: (Association, 2024c; Australian Government - The Department of Infrastructure, 2024b, 2024c; Group, 2024).

Cr. Claudia Haenel Report July 2024 - 30th National Gallery Assembly 2024

4. “Without a doubt the largest crisis facing federal and state governments is **the chronic housing shortage across all sectors – availability, rental and purchase affordability.**

In our **rural sector this is exacerbated by high cost of living, barriers to transport and health services.** As a community counsellor/welfare worker, I meet daily with clients experiencing homelessness, living in tenous, unsafe situations, without hope in sight of **affordable secure accommodation.** I would like to know why government at all levels are taking so long to respond to this crisis. Surely much more can be done to jump start housing construction, unlock developable land, reform zoning and planning and first and foremost, change the historic notion that houses are income generating commodities rather than a basic human right”.

Cost of living was front and centre of all conversation. Housing shortage and inability to access health care were all spoken about. More funding is required in housing and health care. Also, I spoke about additional childcare places (especially inhouse for government employees to free up childcare places in the community) so that all genders can enter the building trade to address the shortage of building tradespeople, especially women on tools. I am delighted to see this is already being taken up locally in community projects and initiatives. More information on all these issues can be found here: (Association, 2024c, 2024d, 2024e; Australian Government - The Department of Infrastructure, 2024a, 2024b, 2024c; Citygreen, 2024; Group, 2024; King, 2024; Planning, 2024).

5. “Why has Rural Victoria and Rural Australia been ‘Dudded’. Roads, Health Care, Hospitals, services including **RAIL.** Both Passenger rail and rail goods”.

There was a rationale for more infrastructure to produce more locally, therefore keeping freight costs on end products down and jobs growth high, but infrastructure will require funding. Overall, what is happening in the regions for our transport, infrastructure and services can be found here: (Association, 2024a, 2024c, 2024d, 2024e, 2024f; N. P. C. o. Australia, 2024; T. N. f. R. Australia, 2024; Australian Government - The Department of Infrastructure, 2024b, 2024c; Cook, 2024; Group, 2024; Media, 2024; Scott, 2024).

6. “Bring back the *Community Strength Training and Community Low Intensity Program* approx. \$25,000/annum.”

I was briefly able to ask our Federal MP if there was a way this may be able to be funded Federally. I have emailed and am waiting for a response.

Cr. Claudia Haenel Report July 2024 - 30th National Gallery Assembly 2024



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17/7/24	Local Government Working Group On Gambling – July 2024 meeting
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
10/07/24	Coffee with Cr. Claudia
10/07/24	Institute Managers & Leaders Au & NZ – Lead the Way: Leadership Burnout
16/07/24	MBA Mini Masterclass Griffith University – Can people-focused leadership give you an edge?

**Councillor Reports and Acknowledgements**

17/07/24	Coffee with Cr. Claudia
17/07/24	Wesley Raffle Draw at the Horsham Town Hall
18/07/24	Institute Managers & Leaders Au & NZ – Leadership Change
19/07/24	Institute Managers & Leaders Au & NZ – Internship Orientation Day
20/07/24	Youth Council Tree Planting Day for the pledge of Councillor Charlie to plant 617 trees (one for every vote received by the Youth Council). The Youth Council have decided to double this target and are aiming to plant 1300 native trees at the Horsham Cemetery paddock thanks to The Cemetery Trust, Youth Council funding with all plants native to the area and sourced locally from Dalki Garringa Nursery (formerly known as Wail Nursery), Landcare facilitator Annie Hobby and volunteers.
22/07/24	July 2024 Council meeting



**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 8 July 2024
- Community Conversations held at Clear Lake on Monday 15 July 2024
- Council Briefing meeting held on Tuesday 16 July 2024

Refer to **Appendix 13.1A**

### **13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

Nil

### **13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE**

Nil

### **13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- Disability Advisory Committee meeting held on Thursday 20 June 2024
- Older Persons Advisory Committee meeting held on Wednesday 26 June 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**