

# AGENDA

MEETING OF THE  
**HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL**

To be held on  
**28 January 2025**  
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 Tuesday 28 January 2025 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 Ian Ross 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.

#### **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 16 December 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 COMMUNITY HALLS’ ASSET COMMITTEE .....6

9.2 SAFER LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS PROGRAM FUNDING APPLICATION.....12

9.3 WASTE SERVICES REVIEW – HAVEN 4-BIN EXTENSION SURVEY.....17

9.4 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE CHARTER AND ANNUAL WORK PLAN.....21

9.5 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE BIENNIAL REPORT – 1 JULY TO 31 DECEMBER 2024 .....26

9.6 COMMUNITY DONATIONS POLICY REVIEW .....29

9.7 COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY REVIEW .....32

**10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... 35**

**11. URGENT BUSINESS..... 37**

**12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS ..... 38**

**13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS..... 39**

13.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS.....39

13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.....39

13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE.....39

13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES .....39

**14. NOTICE OF MOTION..... 40**

**15. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS ..... 40**

15.1 SUPPLY OF ROAD MATERIALS, CONTRACT 25-009 .....  
*Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(g) – Private Commercial Information*

15.2 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MINUTES & ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT RESULTS .....  
*Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(f) –Personal Information*

**CLOSE**



CRAIG NIEMANN  
 Chief Executive Officer

## REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

### 9. OFFICERS REPORTS

#### 9.1 COMMUNITY HALLS' ASSET COMMITTEE

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Mandy Kirsopp	<b>Director:</b>	Kevin O'Brien
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Coordinator, Recreation and Open Space Planning	<b>Directorate:</b>	Communities and Place
<b>Department:</b>	Arts, Culture and Recreation	<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**

Endorsed Minutes of annual meeting held 23 November 2023 (**Appendix 9.1A**)

Draft Minutes of meeting held 20 November 2024 (**Appendix 9.1B**)

#### **Purpose**

To receive the endorsed Minutes of the Annual meeting of the Community Halls' Asset Committee held 23 November 2023, note the draft Minutes of the annual meeting, held 20 November 2024 and consider recommendations from the Committee.

#### **Summary**

- The Community Halls' Asset Committee (the 'Committee') was established 29 September 2021.
- The Committee meets in November each year for an annual meeting to receive reports, make recommendations re: hire fees for the community halls and transact other business as required.

## Recommendation

That Council:

1. Note the endorsed Minutes of the annual meeting held 23 November 2023 (**Appendix 9.1A**)
2. Note the draft Minutes of the annual meeting held 20 November 2024 (**Appendix 9.1B**)
3. Adopt fees and charges for use of Community Halls, as recommended by the Community Halls' Asset Committee for the 2025-2026 financial year as follows:

Bond \$100 - \$700

Hourly rate \$10 - \$50

Half day hire \$25 - \$100

Full day hire \$25 - \$150

Commercial activities – full day hire (large organisations) \$200 - \$500

and that, if approved by a Motion from the sub-committee (i.e.: individual hall) fees might be waived for the following events:

- Fund-raising for health groups or health-related equipment
- Health and well-being activities and fund-raising (physical, mental health)
- Emergency Service events and meetings (eg: CFA, SES) or when the hall is used as an Emergency Recovery Centre.

## **REPORT**

### **Background**

A Community Halls' Committee of Management was established 4 September 2017, under Section 86 of the Local Government Act (1989). An Instrument of Delegation authorised by Horsham Rural City Council, described the roles and responsibilities of both Council and the Committee of Management.

As a result of changes to the Local Government Act (2020) a review of the Committee governance structure occurred and on 24 August 2020, Council endorsed the establishment of a Community Asset Committee (the Committee) with a revised Instrument of Delegation. The revised Instrument delegates specific decision-making responsibilities from the Chief Executive Officer to the Committee.

The Committee is comprised of single representatives from ten Council owned community halls/ facilities across the HRCC municipality. The ten halls represented on the Committee are:

- Dadswell's Bridge Hall
- Hamilton lamb Memorial Hall
- Jung Hall
- Laharum Hall
- Mitre Hall
- Natimuk Community Centre (NC2)
- Natimuk Soldiers' Memorial Hall
- Sailors' Home Hall
- Taylor's Lake Hall
- Telangatuk East Hall

In November each year, representatives meet to discuss the operation of the halls, community usage, and operational and administrative matters. Facility hire fees are included in the HRCC budget process and at the annual meeting, Committee representatives recommend fees for the next financial year.

The meeting also provides an opportunity for hall representatives and Council officers to share information, identify and work through issues and concerns and to work collaboratively and in partnership to provide important community infrastructure across the municipality.

### **Discussion**

The Committee recognises the challenges associated with an ageing and declining volunteer base. This includes changes to the concentration and composition of rural populations and changing workforce patterns.

Annual reports and financial statements provided by the hall representatives mirror changes occurring in the various settlement areas of the municipality (decreasing levels of activity). Despite demographic changes, some halls groups have been able to positively respond to the changing needs of their communities and activity type, frequency and participation numbers have increased.

A representative from the HRCC Facilities' team attends the annual meeting and shares information re: completed and future maintenance planned for each of the halls. The maintenance review and update has contributed to a deeper understanding of budget constraints and the importance of working collaboratively to achieve shared goals.



The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has recently introduced new reporting requirements for entities with an Australian Business Number (ABN). Every hall committee represented on the Community Asset Committee holds an ABN and is subject to the reporting requirements.

Members of the HRCC Finance team attended the annual meeting and facilitated a discussion re: options to satisfy ATO requirements. Committees will continue to work independently to meet ATO reporting requirements and this will be monitored.

Committee members discussed annual fees and noted conditions confirmed in 2023 by HRCC re: possible waiving of fees. It was agreed that these conditions be continued.

## MOTION

The Community Halls' Asset Committee recommends:

1. The adoption of the suggested range of fees and charges for use of Community Halls for the 2025-26 year:

Bond	\$100 - \$700
Hourly rate	\$ 10 - \$ 50
Half day hire	\$ 25 - \$100
Full day hire	\$ 25 - \$150
Commercial activities – full day hire (large organisations)	\$200 - \$500

2. And that, if approved by a Motion from the sub-committee (ie: individual hall) fees might be waived for the following events:
  - Fund-raising for health groups or health-related equipment
  - Health and well-being activities and fund-raising (physical, mental health)
  - Emergency Service events and meetings (eg: CFA, SES) or when the hall is used as an Emergency Recovery Centre.

**Moved:** Clare Dunn

**Seconded:** Keith Fischer

**CARRIED**

## Options to Consider

### Fees

There are three options to consider:

1. Accept the recommended fee structure as presented,
2. Apply the HRCC facility pricing schedule used for sporting facilities within the Horsham urban area
3. Develop and apply a different fee structure for the 10 community halls.

Option 1 is recommended.

The fees have been identified as being appropriate for the various rural local communities and fees collected are adequate to pay for hall expenses, (power, water).

Conditions where fees might be waived (part 2 of the Motion) were established by HRCC and the Motion includes a continuation of an established process.

Option 2 is not recommended.

The Facility Pricing schedule for sporting facilities is for time usage only. Although initial establishment of the fees included consideration of utility expenses, power, gas and water expenses are paid separately by HRCC (not by a community committee). The proposed fee structure provides adequate income for each of the halls to pay annual operating expenses.

Option 3 is not recommended

A review of all HRCC facility-managed fees and charges is linked to broader work being undertaken through the review of the Property Strategy. A review of fees and charges for Community Halls will be guided and informed by this work. In the interim, it is recommended that the 2025-26 fees and charges remain as suggested by the Committee.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Community halls provide an important opportunity for people living in rural areas to gather for family and community events. Social wellbeing and community connection are strengthened by the existence of community gathering places and safe, accessible facilities.

The on-going maintenance of community assets (community halls) with low utilisation rates creates budget pressure and is an area of future work, (facility review and recommendations).

### **Community Engagement**

Community engagement is not required for the annual meeting.

Each representative provides a summary of activity at the respective hall (year in review) and shares planning regarding future activities. The annual process of sharing information has contributed to the development of a positive working relationship between Council and the ten community groups.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

The model of a Committee of Management representing a collective of representatives from the different halls was developed in 2017 and was recognised as a Victorian state-wide initiative responding to the previous Local Government Act (1989).

In response to changes associated with the Local Government Act (2020), the model was modified to reflect requirements of Community Asset Committee. The model provides a process to share and receive information with community volunteers, and for volunteers and Council to work collaboratively in the provision of community assets.

### **Collaboration**

Collaboration with agencies who are not part of the ten-member Community Asset Committee was considered but was not required.

### **Financial Implications**

Volunteer committees assisting with the operation of community halls provide a valuable community service and support community cohesion and wellbeing, community pride and practical resources that improve local amenity.

There is a cost in the provision of maintenance of community facilities, but it could be argued the cost is off set by the health and well-being value of community gathering places being distributed throughout the municipality.

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

[Victorian Volunteer Strategy 2022-2027](#)

Goal 3 - Supporting volunteers to be resilient, supported and empowered

Priority outcomes:

- Volunteers have safe, effective and rewarding experiences. Their rights are understood and protected
- Volunteers have the right resources, tools and supports

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

2021-2025 HRCC Council Plan

#### Theme 2 – Liveability

Initiatives and Priorities

Create engaging spaces and places for social connection and wellbeing to build community resilience

#### Theme 5 – Leadership

Strategies:

Good governance, through leadership and connection with community

Initiatives and Priorities

Enable a customer/stakeholder-focused approach that delivers efficient and responsive service

### **HRCC Open Space Strategy 2019**

Goal 4 – Enhance Collaboration

4.1.2 Engage and partner with user groups on Council managed and Crown land to enhance community accessibility and multi-use of facilities.

### **Risk Implications**

Changes regarding facility maintenance have resulted in HRCC assuming greater responsibility for building maintenance. Changes recognise and mitigate risks associated with asset maintenance and provide increased opportunity for communities to focus on event planning for their community.

Declining rural population and changing age structures and the under-utilisation of community facilities create a long-term risk to the operation of community halls, and this is being monitored.

Because each of the ten halls is a member of a delegated committee of Council, compliance with ATO reporting requirements is a potential reputational risk to HRCC. This is being monitored and will be reviewed as required.

### **Conclusion**

The annual meeting of the Community Halls' Community Asset Committee provides an insight into the operation of ten community halls across the municipality. The annual meeting also provides an opportunity to share information and strengthen both the halls' network and the operational relationship between Council and our community.

Hall members are reporting changes and challenges to the operation of rural halls, but also recognise the important role of community halls, providing opportunities for community wellbeing and social connection.

Hall representatives are appreciative of the support provided by HRCC and the collaborative partnership that has developed.

## 9.2 SAFER LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS PROGRAM FUNDING APPLICATION

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Akshay Rajput / John Martin	<b>Director:</b>	John Martin
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Coordinator Engineering / Director Infrastructure	<b>Directorate:</b>	Infrastructure
<b>Department:</b>	Infrastructure	<b>File Number:</b>	F20/A02/000001

### 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

Safer Local Streets and Roads Program Fact Sheet (**Appendix 9.2A**)

Outline plans of each project (**Appendix 9.2B**)

### Purpose

To propose the application for \$2M of funding for a series of road and pedestrian safety works across the municipality.

### Summary

- The Victorian Government through the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) has made available \$2M to each Victorian Council to fund road, cycling and pedestrian safety program initiatives.
- This program is known as the Safer Local Roads and Streets Program (SLRSP)
- Existing strategies and community identified concerns were reviewed to identify a series of projects that may be eligible for this funding.
- A report to the previous Council at its briefing on 5 August 2024 led to the shortlisting of projects which have become the focus of the intended grant application.
- Planning and design has continued since then, to develop detailed project scopes that align with the objectives of the program, and which are likely to be supported by the TAC.
- It is now proposed to formally apply for funding for these projects.
- Further community consultation and education is also proposed for these projects.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Approve the submission of a grant application to the Safer Local Roads and Streets Program fund for the seven projects identified in this report.
2. Request a subsequent report on the outcomes of further consultation on these projects, including the improvements to specific designs that have been informed by the feedback received, prior to Council giving its approval to proceed with construction work on these projects.

## REPORT

### Background

The 9 December 2024 briefing to Councillors provided extensive background in relation to two rounds of State and Federal Government funding aiming to improve road safety on Council roads.

The first round of funding led to a program of safety works in Horsham’s CBD aiming to improve pedestrian safety, primarily including wombat crossings at a number of locations. The briefing also included preliminary information relating to the temporary pin-down crossings in Firebrace St, i.e. the mid-block location between Roberts Ave and McLachlan St, and the four crossings at the McLachlan / Firebrace roundabout. A report to a subsequent Council meeting is proposed to inform a decision on the future of those temporary works.

The second round of funding aims to continue the focus on reducing road fatalities and serious injuries. As stated in the Fact Sheet (**Appendix 9.2A**) “the target is to halve deaths on our roads by 2030 and put us on a strong path to eliminate all road deaths by 2050”. While the first round of (Federal) funding focussed on pedestrian safety in the CBD area, this round of State funding is aimed more broadly across the municipality, with projects identified based on several existing Council strategies and community identified concerns.

The table below lists the projects that are being advanced for this funding:

**Table 1**

Sl. No.	Location	Type	Total (\$)	Council Contribution
1	O’Callaghans Parade/Urquhart Street/Bolton Street: Double Roundabout & (south side) Shared Use Path	Double Intersection & SUP	\$848,000	
2	Albert Street, Bowden Street & Railway Ave, Horsham: Speed Treatments	Wombat & Speed Humps	\$116,100	
3	Noradjuha-Tooan East Road, Noradjuha: Speed Reduction, Curve Treatments, Culvert Protection, Intersection Realignment	Guard Rail treatment	\$152,438	\$76,219
4	Three Bridges Road, Horsham: Speed Reduction, Curve Treatments	Guard Rail treatment	\$450,400	
5	Elmes Street, Natimuk: Pedestrian Bridge over Creek	Pedestrian Bridge	\$136,137	
6	Bennett Road, Horsham – Shared Use Path on east side	Bike Path Design and construction	\$194,359	\$9,000
7	Wimmera Highway / Natimuk Road – On-road Bicycle Lane	Bike Path Design and construction	\$144,887	\$17,450
		<b>Total =</b>	<b>\$2,042,321</b>	<b>\$102,669</b>

**Appendix 9.2B** to this report provides further details about these projects including diagrams of the sites of the works.

The combined cost of these projects is about \$2.15 M (including consultant’s fee), which exceeds the nominal grant amount, however TAC has indicated there may be some flexibility in the amount available if other Councils don’t identify projects full their full \$2M allowance. Note that design costs for these works are also being funded through the TAC funding.

As part of this process, the TAC has been advocating for Council to consider further wombat crossing treatments at CBD intersections. The TAC considers wombat crossings, i.e. pedestrian crossings with a ramp approach for vehicle, and a flat crossing for pedestrians, to provide the highest crash reduction factor potential for pedestrian safety. Given the high level of complaints from the public about the pin-down Firebrace St wombat crossings, no further such treatments were selected for this round of TAC funding. The subsequent report to Council will explore this issue further.

### Discussion

The following notes are provided about each of the specific projects, in support of the general project outlines provided in **Appendix 9.2B**.

#### 1. O'Callaghans Parade Double Roundabout and Shared Use Path

O'Callaghans Parade is one of the busiest entrances to Horsham's CBD area, and provides a connection from the south of Horsham to Horsham's west. A high traffic volume creates the potential for safety risks, in particular at the acute intersections (45 degree angle) at Urquhart St and Baker St where visibility is poor, and for cyclists.

This project has been identified through Council's Horsham CBD Streetscape Plan and Horsham Bicycle and Shared Paths Infrastructure Plan. This project is part of a broader project to upgrade the full length of O'Callaghans Parade, part of the adjoining section of Firebrace St and Urquhart St for general safety and amenity benefits.

The double roundabout design significantly improves vehicle safety at the acute intersections, and the incorporation of a 2.5 m wide shared path on the south side of O'Callaghans Parade will improve cyclist safety, and provide a link to the proposed Urquhart St improvements.

Initial consultation has occurred with businesses along O'Callaghans Parade, and the design ensures continued access for trucks, up to semi-trailer size, which are required for deliveries to certain businesses in this area.

#### 2. Albert St, Bowden St and Railway Ave Speed Treatments

These sites have been included based on community requests for treatment to address concerns about speed and pedestrian safety, in particular at Albert St adjoining the primary school.

The works include a full pedestrian wombat crossing in Albert St, and speed humps in Bowden Street and Railway Avenue based on the requests from the community.

#### 3. Noradjuha – Tooan East Rd Culvert Protection

The priority for upgrading this road was identified in Council's Rural Road Network Plan. The general road widening is being funded through the Federal Government's Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program (HVSPP), with Council having recently awarded the contract for these works. This project includes a separate scope to widen the culverts and install guardrails for vehicle safety. These works are proposed to be funded jointly through the HVSP and SLRSP programs.

#### 4. Three Bridges Rd Curve Treatment

Council has identified this road as a concern due to poor delineation of curves and high traffic speeds. This location was identified as a priority in the Rural Road Network Plan.

Over the past 10 years there have been two crashes, including one serious injury crash reported in Three Bridges Rd. The sharp curves make this road unsafe for vehicles travelling at 100 km/h.

The treatments provided include a speed limit reduction, improved line marking and signage and guardrails to improve safety on these tight bends which experience significant levels of truck traffic accessing the Golf Course Rd industrial area.

#### **5. Natimuk Creek Pedestrian Bridge**

Historically a fallen log provided limited access over Natimuk Creek in the Elmes St area. In response to community concerns, it is proposed to install a pedestrian bridge over the creek to provide safe access for all users, including wheelchairs and mobility scooters. This will provide pedestrians an alternative to the Lake Ave bridge, enabling separation of pedestrians from vehicle traffic

#### **6. Bennett Rd Bicycle Lanes**

The 2024 Horsham Bicycle and Shared Paths Infrastructure Plan identified upgrades to this bicycle path as one of its priorities. Generally, the works are improvements to the existing path, with significant work required in the front of the West Side Tabaret building where there is currently no separate path.

#### **7. Natimuk Rd Bicycle Lane**

These works are also a priority from the 2024 Bicycle Plan, and involve upgrades on the existing sections of path, and installation of a new separated bicycle lane on the southern side of the service road section between Bennett Rd and Hillary St.

### **Community Engagement**

As indicated in the project descriptions above, the projects have been identified in Council strategies that have undergone detailed engagement processes, or in response to specific community requests, hence they represent identified community needs.

Initial consultation has occurred in relation to the O'Callaghans Parade works, which has led to some refinement.

It is now planned that consultation will proceed on the basis of the recently completed detailed designs with stakeholders, nearby residents / businesses and the broader community for each of the projects. A report on the outcome of this consultation will be presented to Council for further consideration as a basis for its final approval for the works proceeding. Feedback from this consultation will be also used to fine tune the detailed designs to address any issues that may be raised.

This next phase of community engagement is also proposed to include an information / education program to explain to the broader community the intent behind each of the works, and how they would be used. Key aspects of this phase are:

- How the double roundabout planned for O'Callaghans Parade will work – how to navigate it as a driver, pedestrian or cyclist.
- How to safely share paths for the bike lane treatments in Bennett Rd and Natimuk Rd.
- And an explanation of the rationale for each of the projects.

### **Options to Consider**

The projects selected for the TAC SLRSP funding have been identified through consideration of a large number of potential projects recommended in a range of strategies, including:

- Horsham CBD Streetscape Plan
- Horsham Bicycle and Shared Paths Infrastructure Plan
- Horsham Urban Transport Plan
- Rural Road Network Plan

The potential projects also considered community requests.

All of these were then considered as options to feed into the recommended projects, based on their safety merit and alignment with the objectives of the funding program.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Nil

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Historically, road safety treatments were often proposed in response to crash or incident statistics. The current approach, based on the Safe System principles, is aimed at proactively identifying risks and applying proven techniques to situations where there is a likelihood of incidents, aiming to avoid incidents or reduce their impact.

### **Collaboration**

Council has been working with a consultant funded by TAC to develop designs for the nominated sites. These are being progressively reviewed by TAC and DTP officers to ensure they are aligned with modern design standards.

### **Financial Implications**

The projects identified in this report are proposed to be fully funded either through the TAC SLRSP funding or for one project partially with HVSPF funding. There are some minor exceptions where a co-contribution is required. The details of the co-contribution are provided in Table 1 in this report.

To secure the funding, an application is required to be made to TAC. Sufficient design work and costing has been completed to inform this grant application.

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

Funding for these will come from the Safer Local Roads and Streets Program as outlined in **Appendix 9.2A**.

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

Most of the projects identified have been sourced from the existing Council strategies as identified within the report.

### **Risk Implications**

Key risks with these works include:

- Ensuring a sound engagement process on the detailed designs.
- Construction risks. These are generally able to be managed. Interruptions to business or traffic will need to be considered for some sites.

### **Conclusion**

A package of road, cycling and pedestrian safety works has been developed based on existing strategies and community input. A grant application is now proposed to be submitted to secure funding for these projects.



### 9.3 WASTE SERVICES REVIEW – HAVEN 4-BIN EXTENSION SURVEY

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Luke Mitton	<b>Director:</b>	John Martin
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Manager Waste and Environment	<b>Directorate:</b>	Infrastructure
<b>Department:</b>	Waste Services	<b>File Number:</b>	F29/A11/000003

#### Officer Conflict of Interest

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

#### Status

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

Yes  No

**Reason:** Nil

#### Appendix

Nil

#### Purpose

To provide information on the outcome of the community survey conducted in August 2024 regarding the potential extension of 4-bin services to parts of Haven.

#### Summary

- The Victorian Government's 2020 Policy, Recycling Victoria – A New Economy, led to the requirement for introduction of a 4-bin kerbside waste collection system.
- The introduction of the 4-bin service in Horsham in April 2023 included parts of the Haven area.
- Feedback from some customers raised the prospect of whether the extent of this service should be extended further south in the Haven area.
- An initial survey led to a split result, but with limited response.
- A more detailed survey was subsequently undertaken aiming to get a larger response to more accurately understand the views of the Haven community.
- This report presents the result of the Haven Survey for extension of the 4-bin service
- The report also outlines key areas of the broader waste service review

#### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Not extend the 4-bin kerbside waste collection to additional parts of the Haven area.
2. Present the outcomes of the feedback to the community.

## REPORT

### Background

Council introduced the 4-bin waste collection service in April 2023 with the aim to promote segregation of waste streams and divert organic and recyclable materials from being disposed of in landfill.

The four waste streams are:

- General waste – disposed to landfill
- Commingled recyclables
- Food organic and garden organic (FOGO) waste
- Glass waste

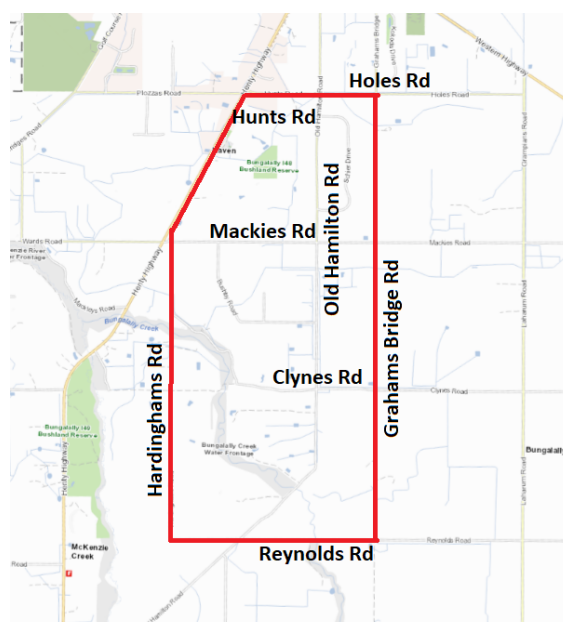
The 4-bin waste collection service is provided to households located in urban areas within the municipality. Households located in rural areas still receive a 2-bin service which includes general waste and commingled recyclables only.

The Haven community comprises a mixture of property sizes. The area is considered a rural living/semi rural area with lot sizes typically in the range of 4000 m<sup>2</sup> – 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>. These lots often attract residents from urban areas who desire slightly more space than a typical urban lot of 400 m<sup>2</sup> – 1200 m<sup>2</sup>. The initial boundary between urban and rural services for the introduction of the 4-bin service recognised that the larger lots in the Haven area may have the capacity to manage their own green waste.

In the initial Kerbside Services Review, conducted in October 2023, 32 responses were received to the question asking if the urban (4-bins) service boundary should be extended from Hunts Road / Holes Road generally along Old Hamilton Rd and Grahams Bridge Rd as far south as Clynes Rd with a 50:50 split between yes and no responses – 16 responses each. Given this equal response no change was made initially and it was decided to ask this question again later, when the service had been in place longer.

### Discussion

Surveys were sent out to residents located in Haven in the area shown in the map below with online and hardcopy options available for completion of the survey. The survey included an additional question requesting residents to provide comments on their preference.



Council received 63 completed surveys by the due date of 23 August 2024.

The results of this survey were:

- 54 (86%) respondents indicated that they **did not** want the 4-bin waste collection service
- 9 (14%) respondents indicated that they **did** want the 4-bin waste collection service

The main reasons for not wanting the 4-bin service included:

- Residents would not use the extra bins and service
- They already have measures in place to manage FOGO waste, including:
  - Feeding waste to chickens
  - Using onsite compost bins for use in gardens
  - Ability to store and manage larger amounts of garden waste onsite
- The extra cost of the service
- Residents would end up with too many bins to manage.

Some comments were received that a glass collection service would be useful and that residents would use this bin for the collection of glass waste. Haven residents are relatively close to the Kenny Rd transfer station which provides for no-cost glass waste disposal.

It is clear from the survey results that the Haven residents do not want a 4-bin waste collection service to their households

It is proposed that Council will periodically review the level of interest in the 4-bin waste collection service in the Haven area as the area develops.

The extension of the 4-bin service is one component of a current review of Council's waste services. The following areas are also being reviewed to improve and refine the delivery of this service to the community:

- Developing a master plan for the Dooen Landfill
- Investigating the reopening the Hard Waste Cell at Dooen Landfill – Ladlow's Site (south)
- Redesign of the Horsham Transfer Station
- Operating hours of rural transfer stations
- Changes to waste collection routes aiming to reduce the number of trucks required to perform this function
- The glass collection service following introduction of the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS)
- Council's waste education program, including periodic bin audits.

### **Options to Consider**

The option of obtaining a 4-bin waste service was presented to the Haven community for their consideration. The survey results indicate that they do not wish it extended further.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Introduction of the 4-bin waste collection system with wastes being separated results in less waste being disposed of in landfill and recyclable/green wastes being recycled into other products.

This extends the usable life of current landfill cells and a reduction in green waste reduces the amount of landfill gases generated.

### **Community Engagement**

The Haven 4-bin survey engaged residents in the Haven area. Surveys were posted to each household giving the option for completion of the hard copy survey or an online version of the survey. The survey was open for 4 weeks and closed on 23 August 2024.

In addition to questions asked in the previous survey, Council also requested that respondents provide a reason for their response. This was included to understand their response and to assist in planning waste services into the future. This question was optional.

The presentation of the results to Council was delayed as the report was not ready prior to the election caretaker period in September 2024.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Council is committed to improving our waste services and continuing to meet the community's needs. The purpose of the broader review is to ensure that Council continues to be compliant with the Circular Economy and Environment Protection legislation as well as meeting the waste needs of the community and improving overall waste operations.

### **Collaboration**

Council's Waste Infrastructure and Communications teams worked together to conduct this survey, ensuring that it was consistent with Council's communication policies and procedures.

### **Financial Implications**

Changing customers over to the 4-bin service would have led to changes in garbage charges for those residents.

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

The 4-bin kerbside collection system is a key part of the Victorian Government's 2020 Recycling Victoria – A New Economy policy and subsequent legislation.

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

Council's Solid Waste Code was developed to provide the framework for the 4-bin service in urban areas and the 2-bin service in rural areas.

### **Risk Implications**

There are no immediate risks of not introducing the 4-bin system to parts of Haven. However, in the longer term, further separation of wastes may be required with the imminent introduction of Recycling Victoria's Regulations and Service Standards. Future bin audits will aim to identify opportunities to improve recycling rates.

### **Conclusion**

The recent survey of households in Haven indicates that, on balance, residents do not want the 4-bin waste collection system in this area.

Council will continue to promote the 4-bin waste collection system within the municipality and consider other areas where this system can be rolled out. Further operational improvements to waste services will be introduced as part of the broader review of waste services.

## 9.4 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE CHARTER AND ANNUAL WORK PLAN

<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	<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

Revised Audit and Risk Committee Charter (**Appendix 9.4A**)

Annual Work Plan (**Appendix 9.4B**)

### Purpose

To seek Council's adoption of the updated Audit and Risk Committee Charter upon recommendation by the Audit and Risk Committee that it be approved and note the Annual Work Plan endorsed by the Committee.

### Summary

- The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed and endorsed the updated Audit and Risk Committee Charter and Annual Work Plan at their meeting on 5 December 2024.
- The Charter has been updated to align more closely with best practice sector template provided to Councils as a reference guide for meeting the requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020* - as suggested by the previous Municipal Monitor, Jude Holt.
- The Annual Work Program has been updated to reflect:
  - The best practice sector template provided to Councils as a reference guide for meeting the requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020*
  - The updates made to the Charter
  - Recommendations from the Victorian Auditor-General's Office *Results of 2022–23 Audits: Local Government* report
  - Key elements of the recently adopted Accounting for Assets Policy

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt the revised Audit and Risk Committee Charter (**Appendix 9.4A**)
2. Note the updated Annual Work Plan endorsed by the Audit and Risk Committee at their meeting on 5 December 2025 (**Appendix 9.4B**).

## REPORT

### Background

The Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) Audit and Risk Committee is an advisory committee of Council. Its objective is to provide appropriate advice and recommendations to Council on matters listed in its Charter, to facilitate decision-making by Council regarding the discharge of its accountability requirements.

The *Local Government Act 2020* at s54(1) requires that the Audit and Risk Committee must prepare and approve an Audit and Risk Committee Charter. The Audit and Risk Committee Charter must specify the functions and responsibilities of the Audit and Risk Committee including the following as outlined in s54(2):

- (a) monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with—
  - (i) the overarching governance principles; and
  - (ii) this Act and the regulations and any Ministerial directions;
- (b) monitor Council financial and performance reporting;
- (c) monitor and provide advice on risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls;
- (d) oversee internal and external audit functions.

There is also the requirement for the Audit and Risk Committee to adopt an annual work program as per the requirements of s54(3).

### Discussion

The current Charter was last updated in September 2022 and endorsed by Council on 24 October 2022. The updates included minor revisions to address strategic risk reviews and amended wording. As part of the biennial review process specified in the Charter, a comprehensive update has now been undertaken. The review assessed the current Charter against the best practice sector template provided to Councils as a reference guide for meeting the requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020*, as per the suggestion by the previous Municipal Monitor. The updated Charter was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee for consideration at their meeting on 5 December 2024

The updating of the Charter to align with these sector templates will enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of the Committee's activities. It will also ensure that our practices are aligned with industry standards and best practice, ultimately strengthening Council's governance and risk management capabilities.

### Charter Updates:

- **Sections 1 to 3:** Revised for alignment with the sector template.
- **Sections 3.4.10 and 3.4.11:** New clauses to ensure a Committee representative (independent member) is included on the Tender Evaluation Panel for appointment of an Internal Auditor and is granted voting rights. Designates the Director Corporate Services as the Chair of the Tender Evaluation Panel.
- **Section 3.6:** Inclusion of a Compliance Management section to align with the sector template.
- **Section 5 - Committee Governance:** Updated with the addition of a new clause in Section 5.2.12 relating to the provision of notice for any period of extended leave.
- **Section 4:** Committee Operations remains unchanged.

### Annual Work Plan Updates

In line with the requirements of s54(3), the Annual Work Plan has also been updated as part of the annual update. The review of and updates to the Annual Work Plan also align with the sector template.

#### Finance and Performance Reporting Section – Items 2,3 &5

Additional items added in line with recommendations from the Victorian Auditor-General's Office *Results of 2022–23 Audits: Local Government* report and to incorporate key elements of the Accounting for Assets Policy relating to revaluations, anticipated end of year values and final end of year values.

#### Removed from Annual Work Plan

1. Review the Strategic Risk Register twice a year to provide a level of assurance that these risks are being managed appropriately
  - a. This item is now monitored under the ICE Plan and Risk Management Framework KPI's
2. Report annually through Council's Annual Report
  - a. Council views this as a function of Council and not a responsibility that sits with the Committee
3. Effectiveness of secretariat support
  - a. This is monitored in the self-assessment survey
4. Confirm annually that all responsibilities outlined in this charter have been carried out
  - a. This is now being monitored through the ICE Plan under the "Scheduled Reports" section, with additional quarterly out-of-session monitoring conducted by Secretariat support. Real-time updates will also be available to the Committee via the Committee portal.
5. Appointment and selection of Councillor members by Council (following a Council election or meetings to elect the Mayor)
  - a. This is a requirement of Council and not of the Committee

The specific benefits of updating the Charter and Annual Work Plan (AWP) based on the sector templates will assist as follows:

1. Alignment with Best Practice:
  - o By endorsing the updated Charter and AWP, the Committee will align its functions with widely recognised standards, improving the overall quality of key governance documents for the Committee.
2. Regulatory Compliance:
  - o Updating the Charter ensures that all requirements of the Act are satisfied while updating the AWP ensures that the requirements of the Charter are met while minimising the risk that the Committee do not satisfy the requirements of the Act over the course of the year.
3. Enhanced Clarity and Transparency:
  - o The revised Charter provides clearer definitions of roles, responsibilities, and processes. This clarity will improve transparency, accountability, and communication within the Committee and with other stakeholders.
4. Strengthened Oversight:
  - o The revised Charter will enhance the Committee's oversight capabilities by providing a more structured approach to monitoring financial reporting, internal controls, and risk management systems.

### **Options to Consider**

Council can opt not to approve the updated Charter and Annual Work Plan however should note the legislative obligations outlined in the report. It should also be noted that the changes made have been done to ensure Council better aligns with the best practice sector templates provided to ensure Councils are compliant with these obligations.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Nil

### **Community Engagement**

Not applicable

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Council applies the principles of continuous improvement in the operation of the Audit and Risk Committee. The review and update to both the Charter and Annual Work Plan reflect this commitment to continuous improvement by aligning Council practices with sector standards, enhancing Committee operations and governance.

### **Collaboration**

Council's Audit and Risk Committee consists of five members: three independent members and two Councillors. Consultation and communication are undertaken with Internal Auditors and external (Victorian Auditor-General's Office – VAGO) Auditors.

### **Financial Implications**

The effective functioning of the Audit and Risk Committee contributes to the financial integrity and risk management of Council. While there are no direct financial implications associated with the adoption of the revised Charter, there are costs associated with some of activity within the Annual Work Plan however this work forms part of the annual adopted budget.

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

Not applicable

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

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme 5 – Leadership

Strategies 1. Good governance, through leadership and connection with community

2. Good management for financial sustainability

4. Accountable and transparent decision making

### **Risk Implications**

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to have both an Audit and Risk Committee Charter and an Annual Work Plan. The revised Charter ensures that Council has adequately specified the functions and responsibilities of the Audit and Risk Committee in line with sector best practice guidelines. The updated Annual Work Program also more clearly articulates the timing of reporting against those responsibilities. Both updates further mitigate the risk for Council to ensure completion of obligations and compliance with the Act.



**Conclusion**

The proposed amendments to the Audit and Risk Committee Charter and Annual Work Plan have been undertaken with the intention to better align Council's documents with best practice guidance to meet our regulatory obligations. By adopting these changes, the Council and the Audit and Risk Committee demonstrate a commitment to robust governance and effective oversight.

## 9.5 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE BIENNIAL REPORT – 1 JULY TO 31 DECEMBER 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 9.5A**)

### Purpose

To present the Audit and Risk Committee's Biannual Report for the period July to December 2024 to Council.

### Summary

The report outlines key

- Audit and Risk Committee meetings – 100% attendance rate by independent members and Councillor Representatives.
- Two Committee meetings held during the reporting period – 23 September 2024 and 5 December 2024
- Fifteen policies and procedures adopted or reviewed across the two meetings (nine and six respectively).
- Progress noted against outstanding audit actions.

### Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Biannual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee for the period July to December 2024 (**Appendix 9.5A**).

## 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 the *Local Government Act 2020* (s 54(5)).

The specific requirements of that section are that:

(5) 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 July to December 2024 and includes the Committee meetings held on 23 September and 5 December 2024. The minutes of the September meeting were tabled at the October 2024 Council Meeting and the minutes of the December meeting have been tabled as a separate report to this 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 audit reports.

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 other than 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 practises are changed as required to deliver improved and effective outcomes. The biannual report represents one such mechanism of evaluation of operations.

### Collaboration

Not applicable

### **Financial Implications**

Costs associated with Council's Audit and Risk Committee are within the 2024-25 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 its legislative obligations and is well placed to mitigate risk noting the Committee's responsibilities. These include monitoring compliance with Council policies and procedures, Council's financials and performance, risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls, and overseeing internal and external audit functions.

### **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. This report meets our obligations under the Act that requires the Audit and Risk Committee to prepare a biannual audit and risk report that describes the activities of the Audit and Risk Committee and includes its findings and recommendations; and provide a copy of that report to the next Council meeting.

## 9.6 COMMUNITY DONATIONS POLICY REVIEW

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Susan Surridge	<b>Director:</b>	Kim Hargreaves
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Coordinator Community Relations and Advocacy	<b>Directorate:</b>	Corporate Services
<b>Department:</b>	Community Relations and Advocacy	<b>File Number:</b>	F20/A01/000016

### 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

Community Donations Policy (**Appendix 9.6A**)

### Purpose

To recommend to Council the continuation of the current Community Donations Policy following the recent annual review.

### Summary

- A review of the Community Donations Policy is undertaken annually.
- Following the recent review, there are no changes to the policy recommended this year.

### Recommendation

That Council adopt the Community Donations Policy (**Appendix 9.6A**) for another year.

## REPORT

### Background

The Community Donations Policy provides the framework for the delivery of Council's annual community donations program. It outlines the eligibility criteria, application and payment process. The Policy also provides for the option for Council to consider corporate donations and sponsorship to support Council's Grants programs on a case-by-case basis.

The Donations Policy is reviewed and updated annually as part of the budget process. In late 2023 there was a major review of the Policy following Council's resolution to develop a Sponsorship Policy to facilitate future corporate sponsorship and co-funding of the Community Development Grants Program and other possible Council/Community projects.

Corporate sponsorship or donations is a strategy currently used in local government as a way of leveraging Council funds with corporate support to provide greater benefits for our community. The proposed partnership with ESCO provided the first opportunity for Council to partner with private industry to increase funding of community projects or enhance Council projects for the community.

### Discussion

The amendments to the Donations policy adopted by Council at the meeting on 29 January 2024 provided the option for Council to consider future donations or corporate sponsorship on a case-by-case basis, thereby replacing the need for a separate, standalone sponsorship policy.

Section 5 of the adopted policy outlines the principles for this case-by-case assessment noting that the primary principle is that any donation must support Theme 1 of the Council Plan to "Develop the municipality as a diverse, inclusive and vibrant community". Any actual or perceived Conflict of Interest will be considered as part of the recommendation to approve or reject a corporate donation/sponsorship.

As per the provisions of the current policy, any donations/sponsorship must not compromise Council's reputation, image, probity or ability to fulfil its functions and responsibilities. Council retains the right to decline a donation or sponsorship agreement with any external party, in respect to products/services for which Council considers inappropriate, inopportune or where any costs outweigh the benefits.

Council confirmed by the adoption of the current policy that it will not, under any circumstances, enter into a donation/sponsorship agreement with external parties who:

- Conflict with Council's principles of equity, access, participation, rights and accessibility for all community groups.
- Pose a conflict with the broader policies and practices of Council or may be perceived in conflict.
- Undertakes any illegal or unethical activity that negatively impacts the community and/or natural environment.

Where Council has considered and accepted offers of corporate donations/sponsorship to support Council's programs, there is a requirement for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be established for use of the funds.

As per the review requirements outlined in the Community Donations Policy, the policy is reviewed and updated annually as part of the budget development process. The current Policy has recently been reviewed as part of this process and there are no recommendations for any changes to be made to the policy this year. Council is therefore asked to adopt the Policy for a further year.

**Options to Consider**

Council can choose to adopt the current policy for a further 12 months or request revisions to the policy.

**Sustainability Implications**

Nil

**Community Engagement**

Community donations are included in Council's Annual Budget and provided on the HRCC website.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

The annual review of the policy ensures that Council's approach to Community Donations remains contemporary. Noting the significant review and revision to the policy last year it is considered that no further changes are required this year.

**Collaboration**

Not applicable

**Financial Implications**

The current policy provides an avenue to enable Council to accept external funds from corporate entities that support the Community Development Grants Program and other possible Council/Community projects. Community Donations are also considered for adoption as part of the annual budget.

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

Not applicable

**Council Plans, Strategies and Policies**

2021-2025 Council Plan (including the Health and Wellbeing Plan)

**Risk Implications**

Having formal structures in place to manage the offer and receipt of corporate donations/sponsorship ensure that Council can address any risks related to such an offer and address issues relating to conflict of interest process and broader risk mitigation. Where an actual or perceived risk is identified as part of the review process, the donation/sponsorship will not proceed. Further having a clearly articulated Community Donations Policy, where donations form part of the approved annual budget, ensure transparency in the recording of these donations.

**Conclusion**

The annual review of the current Community Donations Policy has identified that no further changes are required to the policy and the policy is therefore recommended to be adopted for the coming year.

## 9.7 COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY REVIEW

<b>Author's Name:</b>	Susan SurrIDGE	<b>Director:</b>	Kim Hargreaves
<b>Author's Title:</b>	Coordinator Community Relations and Advocacy	<b>Directorate:</b>	Corporate Services
<b>Department:</b>	Community Relations and Advocacy	<b>File Number:</b>	F20/A01/000016

### 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

Revised Community Grants Policy (**Appendix 9.7A**)

### Purpose

To provide Council with an amended Community Grants Policy for adoption.

### Summary

- A review of the Community Grants Policy is undertaken annually
- Last year's review included a peer review of grant-making processes across other Victorian Councils. That review resulted in additional grant streams.
- The review undertaken this year focuses on any changes required as a result of the introduction of new grant programs.
- The review indicates only minor changes are required to the policy so an updated policy is provided to Council for adoption.

### Recommendation

That Council adopt the amended Community Grants Policy (**Appendix 9.7A**).



## REPORT

### Background

The Community Grants Policy provides the framework for the delivery of Council's annual Community Grants Program. It outlines the funding priorities, eligibility, application process, assessment criteria and process, timelines and reporting. Guidelines and application forms are also produced to assist community groups in completing applications. The guidelines and application forms align with the policy.

### Discussion

The Community Grants Policy is reviewed and updated annually as part of the budget development process. Following an extensive review in 2023, which resulted in significant changes to the policy, this year's review focused on consideration of any further revision necessitated by the introduction of the Events, Quick Response and Youth Grants noting they have now been in place for twelve months.

A summary of the proposed changes to the policy are outlined below:

1. *Minor amendment to document titles*

Correction to the titles of key strategic documents referred to within the document

2. *Change in naming convention of Quick Response Small Grants (section 4.1.3)*

The objective of this small grants program was to provide a framework for the approval of grants to support ad-hoc urgent or time pressured projects, as clearly stated in the guidelines. Several applications received did not meet the funding criteria as the applicant was seeking a quick response outcome for a project that would more appropriately have been funded by the Community Grants or Community Events programs. To make the objectives of this grants program clearer, it is recommended that the Quick Response Small Grants be renamed as Urgent Need Small Grants.

3. *Support Council Plan Priorities (section 4.1.3)*

The Urgent Need Small Grants program is designed as a quick and easy grant application process. Applicants are merely asked to confirm that their project supports priorities in the Council Plan but are not asked to identify which specific priorities are supported. It is recommended that the Policy be amended to reflect this requirement.

4. *Assessment process for Youth Grants (section 4.6.3)*

As the maximum youth grant amount for each grant is only \$2,500, it is recommended that the approver for these grants be changed from Council to the Chief Executive Officer. It is also recommended that one rather than two representatives of the Youth Team are on the assessment panel noting the Youth Officer position is dependent on grant funding.

5. *Timelines for Community Events Grants (section 4.7)*

While there are two funding rounds intended for the events grants, in May and November each year, it is recommended that the policy reflect that the November round will only proceed if funds are not exhausted following the funding round in May.

### Options to Consider

Council may choose to accept all, part, or none of the recommended changes. It is recommended that the proposed changes are accepted noting they have been informed by a review following the first year of delivery of the new Events, Quick Response and Youth Grants.

### Sustainability Implications

Nil

### **Community Engagement**

Community education sessions will be provided to the community in February 2025, to coincide with the annual opening round of the Community Development Grants Stream. There will be communications across all available media platforms around the Community Development Grants programs.

The guidelines and application forms will also be updated to reflect these proposed changes to the Policy upon adoption and will form part of the community education undertaken.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

The changes represent a commitment to continuous improvement to the administration and delivery of the community grants program.

### **Collaboration**

Not applicable

### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications relating to the recommended changes to the Community Grants Policy. The financial allocation proposed for inclusion in the 2025-2026 budget will be presented to Council as part of the budget development process.

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

Not applicable

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

- 2021-2025 Council Plan (including the Health and Wellbeing Plan)
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Youth Strategy
- Age-Friendly Plan

### **Risk Implications**

The annual review of the policy and associated processes by which these funds are allocated ensures Council can address any issues identified and do so in a timely manner. This improves both the administration and delivery of the community grants program thereby further reducing any risks associated with the funding allocated.

### **Conclusion**

The annual review of the Community Grants Policy has been completed and makes recommendation to Council for improvements to that Policy. The revised Policy incorporating those changes is now presented to Council for adoption.

## 10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cr Ian Ross (Mayor)

<b>Committee Representation</b>	
Date	Description
	Nil
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
16.12.24	Attended Council Meeting
18.12.24	Attended HRCC Staff Christmas Party at the Showgrounds
29.12.24	Prime Minister and Premier's Visit- Grampians Bushfire
29.12.24	Laharum Community Meeting – Grampians Bushfire
20.01.25	Tour and meeting at the WIM Resource Community hub
20.01.25	Attended Council Briefing
21.01.25	Attended Council Briefing

Cr Bec Sluggett

<b>Committee Representation</b>	
Date	Description
	Nil
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
20.1.25 & 21.1.25	Council Briefings

Cr Cam McDonald

<b>Committee Representation</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
17.12.24	WSMDA Online meeting; Apology due to other commitments.
<b>Other Council Activities</b>	
2.12.24	Met with John Martin Re Horsham West School Crossing parking plan. Council Briefing 5.30pm – 8pm
3.12.24	Meeting with Horsham West Primary School Principal and School Council re parking plan. Councillor training 5.30pm-8.30pm Revenue and rating plan
5.12.24	Attended Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism conference at Moyston 2pm – 6pm
6.12.24	Meeting with Horsham Historical Society re new licence. Met with Anne Webster council chambers re local issues. Attended Horsham Art Gallery opening with Cr Wilson and Cr Klowss.
9.12.24	Meeting with Steven Kingshott 3.00pm Council Briefing 5pm-8pm
10.12.24	Council training 5.30pm – 8.30pm
12.12.24	Attended HRCC Depot Breakfast
16.12.24	Council Meeting, moved Notice of Motion to suspend parking meter operations, carried.
18.12.24	12pm CEO Recruitment meeting council chambers 3.00pm HRCC Christmas Party at Maydale Pavilion 6.00pm HRCC Executive Christmas Dinner at Natimuk
29.12.24	10.00am – 4.00pm Met individually with Wartook Tourism operators re fire situation. 7.30pm Attended a CFA community briefing session including HRCC Exec at Laharum Hall re; Grampians Bushfires. Lobbied Glen Rudolph DEECA for firebreaks around Wartook.

**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 20 and 21 January 2025 at 5:30pm

Refer to **Appendix 13.1A**

### **13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

Nil

### **13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE**

Nil

### **13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal Advisory Committee meeting held on 21 August 2024
- Natimuk Economic & Social Plan Project Advisory Committee meeting held on 11 December 2024
- Disability Advisory Committee Meeting held on 12 December 2024
- Horsham Regional Livestock Association meeting held on 12 December 2024
- Natimuk Economic & Social Plan Project Advisory Committee meeting held on 9 January 2025

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**