



Draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan

May 2024



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Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners

We acknowledge and respect Victoria’s Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria’s land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partnering and meaningfully engaging with Victoria’s Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.

Section A

Introduction

The Victorian Government is committed to providing greater transparency for local communities and creating positive outcomes for all Victorians as part of our transition to renewable energy.

1. Regional communities and the energy transition

Victoria's energy system is changing. Coal-fired power stations are becoming unreliable and retiring. We urgently need to modernise our power grid to keep the lights on and deliver cheaper, more reliable renewable energy to homes, businesses, hospitals, schools and other vital services across the state.

That's why we've created VicGrid, the new Victorian Government agency responsible for planning and developing the state's transmission infrastructure.

We want to build the right amount of energy infrastructure in the right places at the right time. And we want to ensure we are not building more than Victoria needs – so we can minimise impacts on communities, industries and the environment, and keep down costs to reduce impacts on power bills.

The transition will deliver unprecedented new investment in renewable energy generation, transmission and storage projects, providing economic growth opportunities for local businesses and industries in regional areas, where much of this development will occur. It will also create new jobs and new training pathways.

However, it is important that host communities are involved in decision-making from the outset and to ensure that they receive direct benefits from hosting this critical infrastructure.

VicGrid's approach incorporates community views from the start, to help make better decisions, minimise impacts and maximise tailored benefits for communities.

Through community engagement so far, we know more needs to be done to achieve better outcomes for hosting communities and deliver lasting benefits that are flexible, responsive, community-focused and shared fairly.

That's why the Victorian Government is introducing a Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) Community Benefits Plan, a framework for delivering direct benefits to communities hosting new transmission and renewable energy infrastructure, as it is developed across the state.

These benefits include initiatives to support landholders, significantly impacted neighbours and wider communities where new renewable energy and transmission infrastructure will be located. Dedicated benefits for Traditional Owners will also be developed in partnership with First Peoples through tailored engagement and opportunities for co-design.

We're seeking your input into the REZ Community Benefits Plan

This draft REZ Community Benefits Plan is exactly that – a draft only. The Victorian Government is seeking feedback from communities, landholders, First Peoples and stakeholders to make sure it incorporates your views and priorities, so the benefits truly address local needs and improve social and economic outcomes.

Questions appear throughout this draft plan to prompt your thinking and feedback on the proposed benefits. We are seeking your views about:

- what projects and groups should be eligible and ineligible for funding through these new benefits
- how decisions will be made about allocation of funding
- which individuals and organisations should be members of proposed decision-making groups
- the proposed approach to significantly impacted neighbour benefits.

You'll find more information about how to provide feedback about this draft plan at engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits

A final REZ Community Benefits Plan will be released in late 2024.



Section B

Introducing the new REZ Community Benefits Plan

The Victorian Government's new REZ Community Benefits Plan will provide meaningful financial and additional benefits to people in regions where new transmission and renewable energy infrastructure will be located.

This draft plan provides an overview of:

- who may be eligible to receive benefits
- what those benefits may be
- how those benefits could be managed and distributed
- what projects may be eligible
- what the obligations may be for industry, including transmission companies and generation and storage developers.

REZ Community Benefits Plan goals:

The draft REZ Community Benefits Plan aims to:

- achieve better outcomes for communities hosting new renewable energy infrastructure
- share benefits of the energy transition fairly with all Victorians
- deliver projects that make long-term positive contributions to host communities and are responsive to communities' needs and priorities
- identify opportunities for improving energy reliability, efficiency and affordability for host communities.

1. What is a community benefit?

The Victorian Government's draft REZ Community Benefits Plan proposes initiatives that allocate funds to communities in areas hosting major transmission and renewable energy infrastructure by coordinating financial contributions from transmission, storage and generation projects.

Community benefits are an acknowledgement by government that new infrastructure from renewable energy projects results in changes to communities and local amenity. Community benefits include delivering opportunities for sustained and inclusive social, economic or environmental improvements that are tailored to the needs of local communities.

Community benefits initiatives aim to establish and maintain positive long-term connections between new energy projects and local communities by contributing to the future vitality of the regions where projects are located.

2. What benefits are being proposed?

The draft REZ Community Benefits Plan proposes the creation of new benefits for:

Landholders

Landholders who host new electricity transmission infrastructure will receive payments of \$8,000 per kilometre of typical easement area per year for 25 years. These payments are over and above current compensation arrangements.

See page 9 for details.

Regional communities

Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) Community Energy Funds will fund projects that improve energy outcomes, or create benefits from the energy transition, for communities in regions hosting Renewable Energy Zones and new transmission infrastructure.

See page 12 for details.

Traditional Owners

The Victorian Government will work in partnership with First Peoples to co-design benefits for Traditional Owners of Renewable Energy Zone areas and related transmission corridors.

See page 17 for details.

Significantly impacted neighbours

Transmission companies will make benefits available to Victorians whose land is near and significantly impacted by new transmission infrastructure.

See page 18 for details.

How Victoria's Renewable Energy Zones are being planned

Victorian Government agency VicGrid is planning for Victoria's future energy needs through the Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP), a 15-year outlook for transmission infrastructure projects needed to meet the state's electricity system requirements and unlock Renewable Energy Zones.

The first VTP will be published by 31 July 2025. As part of the plan, we're aiming to keep the lights on; reduce impacts on First Peoples, landholders, communities and landscapes; share benefits more fairly; keep costs down for consumers and ensure Victoria is an attractive destination for renewable energy investment.

These Renewable Energy Zones will be areas in Victoria with the greatest potential for renewable energy generation, from sources such as wind and sunshine. To get energy from the wind or sun to where it's needed, Renewable Energy Zones may also house storage technologies, and transmission infrastructure such as high voltage power lines and substations.

VicGrid will identify study areas for further attention through strategic land use assessments, to help identify and declare Victoria's Renewable Energy Zones.

3. When will these community benefits be available?

Legislation to give effect to the REZ Community Energy Funds and Traditional Owner benefits is expected to be introduced into Victorian Parliament in early 2025. Funds are proposed to become available for hosting communities and Traditional Owners once their Renewable Energy Zone is declared. Renewable Energy Zones will start being declared after the first Victorian Transmission Plan is published in mid 2025.

Financial contributions to these community benefits by transmission companies building major new lines will commence after a transmission easement is created. Mandatory contributions from developers of new generation and storage projects in REZs are expected to commence after individual access arrangements for each Renewable Energy Zone, which governs the terms on which energy generators can gain access to the transmission network, have been implemented.

Similarly, landholder benefits are expected to apply when new easements for transmission infrastructure are created in the future.

Significantly impacted neighbour benefits are expected to apply once a company has been contracted to deliver a new major transmission project.

The final REZ Community Benefits Plan will include more detailed timelines, once key policy details are finalised.

4. Existing arrangements and initiatives

The benefits outlined in this draft plan are not a substitute for, and are in addition to, existing compensation arrangements, discretionary benefits provided by private project developers and individual community benefits arrangements.

The following existing arrangements will continue to apply:

- Compensation payments to landholders under the *Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986* (LACA), which makes available compensation for the acquisition of, or impact on, property due to infrastructure development. The LACA is designed to fully compensate landholders for the establishment of easements on their land, including the impact on farming and business operations.
- Compensation arrangements for Traditional Owners under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* and the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)* – both pieces of legislation are aimed at enabling Traditional Owners and government to make agreements to recognise Traditional Owners and their rights.
- The Victorian Government's existing Social Procurement Framework and Local Jobs First Policy Framework, which will deliver jobs, skills and local development opportunities through the construction and operation of new transmission infrastructure.
- Discretionary payments by energy generation, storage and transmission developers as part of their community benefit sharing initiatives. For more information and guidance on engagement and benefit sharing on renewable energy projects, please refer to DEECA's *Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing Renewable Energy Development in Victoria: A Guide for renewable energy developers*.

The benefits outlined in this draft plan will also be in addition to existing Victorian Government regional initiatives.

Section C

Designing the REZ Community Benefits Plan with the community

Since 2021, the Victorian Government has worked closely with First Peoples, local communities, landholders and regional stakeholders to understand how benefits can be delivered in their communities and to ensure a representative mix of viewpoints.

1. What we've heard so far

The approach to community and Traditional Owner benefits outlined in this draft plan has been informed by community and stakeholder engagement.

This included consultation on the Victorian Renewable Energy Zones Development Plan Directions Paper and the preliminary design of the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework – a new approach to developing major electricity transmission infrastructure and Renewable Energy Zones across the state.

As part of the consultation on the preliminary design of the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework, VicGrid considered feedback received through 100 written submissions, more than 600 responses to an online survey, community discussions at online information sessions, detailed input into technical planning proposals at industry workshops, and meetings held with key stakeholders across

Victoria. During this consultation there was strong interest in new ways to realise benefits with hosting communities and Traditional Owners, including through more strategic and regionally significant initiatives.

To read the full report on the outcomes of this engagement see the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework Preliminary Design Engagement Summary Report.

In August 2023, VicGrid also commissioned an independent consultant to interview community groups, industry representatives, and local and Commonwealth Government representatives about proposed reforms, including possible community benefits programs.

Now, we want to build on the engagement done to date and we need your help to refine our approach.

Through the process so far, we have heard:

- an overall positive response to the concept of a Renewable Energy Zone community benefits fund, with the capacity to support substantial, long-term transformative energy projects within Renewable Energy Zones and deliver tangible benefits to Renewable Energy Zone communities
- agreement that a fund should help deliver existing regional priorities but must not duplicate existing programs or fund projects with existing funding sources
- that industry representatives supported a mandatory fund, provided there was a well-defined governance model and transparent contribution rates from developers. They also expressed a desire for the rate to be established in a way that enabled the industry to continue making contributions to local communities, rather than channelling all funds into a centralised pool
- general support for a fund to support initiatives that deliver a direct energy benefit, particularly relating to reliability and affordability, for hosting energy infrastructure.

2. Your feedback is important – we want to hear from you

Help refine the REZ Community Benefits Plan by sharing feedback about:

- the proposed REZ Community Energy Fund approach, including what projects and groups should be eligible and ineligible for funding
- how decisions will be made about allocating funding from each REZ Community Energy Fund to local priorities
- the model of using regional community reference groups to guide decisions about each REZ Community Energy Fund, and which individuals and organisations should be members
- significantly impacted neighbour benefits, including the proposed approach and eligibility criteria.

Questions appear throughout this draft plan to prompt your thinking and feedback related to these proposals.

3. How to participate

From May to June 2024, we will visit communities across Victoria to discuss the draft REZ Community Benefits Plan through workshops and drop-in sessions.

At these sessions, we will discuss what we have heard through community engagement so far and find out more about what's important to your region.

All workshops will be facilitated in person, with an online session also available.

You will be able to complete a survey or provide a written submission in response to the questions in this draft REZ Community Benefits Plan via Engage Victoria.



Written submissions can also be sent to:

VicGrid, GPO Box 527, Melbourne VIC 3001.

Your feedback will be used to shape the final REZ Community Benefits Plan, including what types of projects will be eligible for funding, how decisions will be made relating to each REZ Community Energy Fund, how community reference groups will operate including membership and the eligibility criteria for significantly impacted neighbour benefits.

Consultation is open until Sunday 16 June 2024.

To provide feedback about the draft REZ Community Benefits Plan, and for locations and times of upcoming workshops, visit engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits

Section D

Community benefits – landholders

New landholder benefits were announced by the Victorian Government in 2023 in recognition of the important role host landholders play in Victoria's transition to renewable energy.

These benefits are included in legislation that will see landholders receive additional payments of \$200,000 per kilometre of a typical area of hosted transmission, paid in annual instalments of \$8,000 a year over 25 years, indexed to inflation.

These landholder benefits will be separate to the Renewable Energy Zone Community Energy Fund and are in addition to existing compensation arrangements covered under the *Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986* and the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (Vic)*.

1. Who will be eligible to receive landholder benefits?

Individuals and organisations will be eligible to receive landholder benefits when new transmission infrastructure is located on land where they are:

- a freehold landholder
- a Traditional Owner in relation to Crown Land
- a long-term lease or licence holder on Crown Land who is materially impacted.

Landholder benefits will only be available for private individuals and organisations. Public entities such as state government agencies, local councils or education facilities will not be eligible to receive these benefits.

Further details about eligibility and payment processes will be developed in 2024.

For long-term lease and licence holders on Crown Land, the following eligibility criteria is proposed:

- The lease must be 21 years or longer over land where new transmission infrastructure is developed.
- There is likely to be a material impact on commercial use, such as for forest plantations or long-term businesses with established facilities.
- The lease or licence holder will not be eligible if the land is used primarily for a public purpose or where the commercial impact will be minimal, such as grazing, unused roads, or easements for other types of infrastructure.



2. Landholder benefits payment rates

Landholder benefits payment rates reflect the crucial role landholders play in Victoria's transition to renewable energy. For freehold land, payment rates will be dependent on the width of the transmission easement:

- For standard easement areas, defined as up to 100 m wide, landholders will receive payments of \$8,000 per kilometre of hosted transmission per year, for 25 years.
- For larger easement areas, defined as wider than 100 m at the widest point, payments will be \$16,000 per kilometre of hosted transmission per year, for 25 years.

In exceptional circumstances, such as when multiple transmission lines converge within a 100 m wide easement, landholders may also be eligible to receive the larger easement rate of \$16,000 per kilometre per year.

For easement lengths of less than 1 km, to a minimum of 100 metres, payments will be at a pro-rata rate.

Payments will be indexed to inflation from the first year of payment.

Further details about payments on Crown Land and in exceptional circumstances will be developed in 2024.

For more information on these benefits and landholder compensation, please read VicGrid's Compensation and landholder payment factsheet.

3. Application and payment process

Landholders hosting new transmission infrastructure will receive application information before the construction of each new major transmission project.

VicGrid will assess applications in relation to land with freehold title, to approve landholders' eligibility.

Applications from Traditional Owners, and lessees and licence holders, in relation to Crown Land will be assessed by the Minister for Energy and Resources. Individuals and organisations applying for landholder benefits will need to demonstrate their eligibility and confirm rights or ownership of the land.

Once eligibility has been approved, the first annual payment will be paid either:

- within 3 months of the easement being registered by the transmission company on the Land Title Register, or
- within 3 months of the application being granted if the easement is already registered, or for Traditional Owners and eligible long-term lease and license holders.

After the first year, payments will be made in annual instalments, every year from the date of the first payment.



4. Changes in ownership or interests

Transfer of land

If the relevant land title is transferred during the 25-year payment period, the new landholder or landholders will be entitled to receive payments for the remainder of the period, subject to eligibility being approved.

Similarly, if an eligible lease or licence is transferred during this time, the new lessee or licence holder will be entitled to receive payments for the remaining period, subject to eligibility being approved. If an eligible long-term lease or licence expires and is returned to Crown management, payments will cease.

Subdivision of land

If the relevant land is subdivided during the 25-year payment period, each new landholder may be able to receive payments. Each new eligible landholder will be entitled to payments that correspond to the revised size of the transmission easement on their land for the remainder of the 25-year period, subject to eligibility being approved.



We want your feedback on eligibility for landholder benefits

- 1 Benefits will be paid to private landholders, including individuals and companies or organisations that are not primarily owned by government or public sector entities. Are there other types of land ownership that should be eligible for landholder benefits?
- 2 In relation to Crown Land, what types of long-term (for 21 years or more) leases or licences should be eligible for landholder benefits?
- 3 Under what exceptional circumstances should higher payment rates apply?

For more information about how you can provide feedback to these questions, visit engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits

Section E

Community benefits – regional communities

A new REZ Community Energy Fund model is being proposed to share the benefits of the renewable energy transition with regional communities hosting new transmission and renewable energy infrastructure.

The Victorian Government will establish a REZ Community Energy Fund for each region hosting a Victorian Renewable Energy Zone.

These funds will coordinate financial contributions from the energy industry, and support communities to identify and design projects that will benefit them.

Importantly, the funds will not replace activities funded through existing sources and programs.

1. Who will benefit from the REZ Community Energy Funds?

The REZ Community Energy Funds will provide direct financial investment to support the delivery of significant initiatives and projects in regions hosting Renewable Energy Zones and communities impacted by new transmission developments.

The funds will support projects that improve energy supply, reliability, efficiency and affordability for businesses, communities and households. They will also support initiatives that create benefits from the energy transition, for example projects that build renewable energy supply chains, create jobs in the energy sector, promote renewable energy research and innovation, or help attract renewable energy investment.

The design of the funds will also be flexible and responsive to the unique needs and interests of communities in each region hosting a Renewable Energy Zone.

2. Who will contribute to the REZ Community Energy Funds?

The REZ Community Energy Funds will be financed by mandatory financial contributions from transmission companies and generation and storage developers who develop projects within Renewable Energy Zones. Payments into the funds are expected to commence after Renewable Energy Zones have been declared after the first Victorian Transmission Plan is published in mid 2025. These contributions will be over and above any discretionary payments that energy infrastructure developers may make.

VicGrid has discussed considerations about contribution rates and how they may be calculated with government agencies, community interest groups, industry, local government and local community members.

VicGrid heard that contributions should be sufficient to fund legacy projects that would deliver long-term benefits to the communities supporting Renewable Energy Zones across Victoria.

VicGrid also heard from energy industry stakeholders that contribution rates needed to be set at rates that encouraged ongoing capital investment in Victoria's energy infrastructure. Rates should also leave room for discretionary contributions by industry to local communities.



Euroa Microgrid project (case study page 14)

The draft REZ Community Benefits Plan proposes that transmission companies will contribute \$8,000 per kilometre of new transmission easement per year for 25 years to the REZ Community Energy Funds in relation to the full length of the infrastructure, both in and out of Renewable Energy Zones. These contributions are proposed to come out of transmission companies' existing Easement Land Tax payments.

It is also proposed that generation, storage and hybrid (combined generation and storage) projects will pay access fees to connect to the transmission network in Renewable Energy Zones, which will

contribute to the REZ Community Energy Funds. The details of these contributions are being finalised and will be included in the final REZ Community Benefits Plan later in 2024.

Engagement with community and industry on the draft REZ Community Benefits Plan will help inform the total financial contributions towards community benefits over the next 25 years. Further details on the expected timeframes and payment processes for the REZ Community Energy Funds will be provided in the final plan later in 2024.



Case studies

A community microgrid project in Euroa and a heat pump water heater bulk-buy program in Hepburn Shire are examples of the types of projects that could seek funding.

Case study

Euroa microgrid

Euroa is a town of about 3,500 residents in the Shire of Strathbogie, south of Shepparton, where unreliable electricity supply prompted a community microgrid project.

The project involved installing 135 kilowatts (kW) of solar panels across 6 local businesses and 128 kilowatt hours of battery storage. This infrastructure, combined with 35 energy management systems installed across 15 businesses and 20 residential addresses in Euroa, aggregated the battery storage potential to provide network support for the town.

The project also included a 16.2 kW solar panel pergola in the town, to deliver cost-free, renewable energy to 6 low-income tenants, supporting them to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The microgrid has improved energy supply reliability in Euroa and delivered estimated savings of 30 to 40% on power bills for the businesses involved.

It has also achieved reduction of 138 tonnes of CO₂ emissions in the first year of operation, equivalent to taking 30 passenger vehicles off the road for a year.

The \$1.6 million project was awarded \$669,575.50 of funding under the Victorian Government's Microgrid Demonstration Initiative.

Case study

Hepburn Z-NET heat pump bulk-buy

Hepburn Energy is a community co-operative that is supporting Hepburn Shire to reach net-zero emissions by 2030 through a community partnership called Hepburn Z-NET. Their aim is to decarbonise while delivering social, economic and environmental benefits to the community.

The co-operative runs 'bulk-buy' programs, which have helped pool funds to make it more affordable for local residents to switch to more energy-efficient products and services, including heat pump hot water systems, electric vehicles and solar-battery systems.

Hepburn Energy ran its second bulk-buy for heat pump water heaters in 2023, open to residents of Hepburn Shire and surrounding regions. Heat pump water heaters use electricity to move heat from the air to water in a storage tank, and are more energy-efficient than conventional electric, gas or wood systems.

The bulk-buy program offered quality systems that were eligible for Victorian Government rebates, reducing the cost to individuals. The co-operative also provided webinars and support to help residents improve their energy efficiency and lower emissions.

In total, 78 heat pump water heater systems were supplied and installed across central Victoria, with a value of \$528,159. As part of the program, free systems were provided to the Daylesford Neighbourhood Centre and Creswick Neighbourhood House, which supported installation of a homeless shower and laundry at one of the sites.

The installations resulted in an estimated reduction of 407 tonnes of CO₂ emissions.

3. What types of projects will be eligible to apply for funding?

Projects eligible for funding under the REZ Community Energy Funds are proposed to be regionally significant initiatives that:

- improve energy supply, reliability, efficiency and affordability for businesses, communities and households; or
- create benefits from the energy transition through projects that build renewable energy supply chains, create jobs in the energy sector, promote renewable energy research and innovation, or help attract renewable energy investment.

Examples include providing funding to build local community batteries or invest in improving the local energy distribution network, programs that improve the energy efficiency of local homes and businesses, or projects that help host communities capture the economic development opportunities of the transition to renewable energy.

Eligible projects must occur in regions hosting Victorian Renewable Energy Zones.

4. What types of projects will not be funded?

Projects are proposed to be ineligible for funding if they are:

- part of local councils' core business
- projects where construction has already started or is complete
- ongoing operating costs or salary subsidies
- being undertaken because of a government contract
- likely to cause negative environmental impacts
- typically funded by other state, Commonwealth or local government sources.

5. What types of organisations will be eligible?

Organisations will be required to meet eligibility criteria to apply for funding from a REZ Community Energy Fund.

It is proposed that eligible organisations will:

- have a presence in a Victorian Renewable Energy Zone (or be actively working and delivering services within Victorian Renewable Energy Zones)
- be an eligible entity (listed below).

Eligible entities are proposed to include:

- local businesses and industry groups, such as industry peak bodies, business associations, or chambers of commerce
- incorporated not-for-profit and community groups
- volunteer emergency services
- schools and other educational institutions
- community enterprises
- other organisations with a local presence, such as local tourism organisations or representative agriculture organisations.

Individuals would not be eligible to apply for funding under a REZ Community Energy Fund.

We want your feedback on the proposed uses of the REZ Community Energy Funds



- 1 What types of energy initiatives would you like to see supported by REZ Community Energy Funds?
- 2 What do you think about the proposed project eligibility criteria?
- 3 What types of initiatives and projects should not be eligible for funding?
- 4 Do you have further suggestions for the eligibility criteria of the REZ Community Energy Funds?

For more information about how you can provide feedback to these questions, visit engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits

6. How will funding decisions be made?

It is proposed VicGrid will have overall responsibility for each REZ Community Energy Fund and will work with regional and local stakeholders to coordinate decision-making, facilitate project funding approvals, and monitor, evaluate and report to the Minister for Energy and Resources regarding the funds' operation.

Funding decisions that respond to local needs will be the cornerstone of the REZ Community Energy Fund model. The following governance structure is proposed:

- **Community reference groups** with broad community and industry representation will identify, review and recommend appropriate funding opportunities from REZ Community Energy Funds. Relevant Regional Partnerships – already-established committees of community and local government representatives who provide feedback about regional priorities directly to government – are proposed to form the core of community reference groups for each REZ Community Energy Fund. These groups will be supplemented where needed with members from sector-specific organisations such as agricultural peak bodies, community-based organisations, environment groups, marine users and local chambers of commerce to ensure appropriate local representation and capabilities for each reference group.
- **A cross-government reference group**, consisting of senior regional and central public service executives, will provide decision-making guidance to the regional community reference groups, while VicGrid will provide overall statewide accountability.

We want your feedback on how funding decisions will be made

- 1 To what extent do you agree or disagree that local communities should have a say in the use of REZ Community Energy Funds?
- 2 What types of regional and/or community-based groups and representative bodies do you think should be part of the community reference groups?
- 3 What factors should be considered as part of the funding allocation process?

For more information about how you can provide feedback to these questions, visit engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits



Section F

Community benefits – Traditional Owners

The Victorian Government acknowledges that Traditional Owners and First Peoples' communities have historically not had a seat at the table in the formation of the state's energy infrastructure and technology development. Country, Sea Country, and communities have been negatively impacted and disempowered by a lack of a voice or not receiving long-term and sustainable benefits from energy projects.

The Victorian Government is committed to work in partnership with Traditional Owners as distinct rights holders to Country and Sea Country. They are our partners who have rights that must be upheld as laid out under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (Vic)*, *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Vic)* and *Native Title Act 1993*. Victorian Government agency VicGrid acknowledges that Traditional Owners have legal rights and cultural responsibility that will be recognised and supported.

VicGrid acknowledges the Victorian Government's ongoing commitment to Treaty with First Peoples. VicGrid is committed to ensuring Traditional Owner partnership and engagement remains aligned to the legislatively enshrined elements of Treaty as laid out under the *Advancing the Treaty Process with Aboriginal Victorians Act 2018 (Vic)*.

VicGrid is committed to Pupangarli Marnmarnepu 'Owning Our Future' Aboriginal Self-Determination

Reform Strategy and will work with First Peoples in the regions to identify key considerations and concerns, and benefits and opportunities that may be of interest. Partnerships with Traditional Owners will provide the basis for co-designing models of dedicated benefits for Traditional Owners. This will support the protection of Country, maintain spiritual and cultural heritage and practices, and acknowledge broader aspirations if First Peoples are impacted by new critical energy infrastructure.

The co-design process aims to go beyond inclusion, to give First Peoples control over how the funds are spent to ensure they deliver economic empowerment and support self determination.

Benefits for Traditional Owners are expected to be funded by mandatory contributions from transmission, generation and storage companies. They will be in addition to any discretionary payments by energy companies to Traditional Owners. More information on these benefits will be provided later in 2024.

Section G

Community benefits – significantly impacted neighbours

Significantly impacted neighbour benefits are intended to recognise that sometimes measures such as screening or vegetation cannot adequately address the visual amenity impact of new or upgraded transmission infrastructure, such as a transmission line or substation, on properties next to the land where the new development is located.

Payments to significantly impacted neighbours will be made directly by transmission companies to landowners based on guidance developed by VicGrid. The proposed guidance would set expectations and provide consistency across the state.

It's proposed transmission companies would make significantly impacted neighbour benefits available along the full length of the infrastructure, both in and out of Renewable Energy Zones, as part of project contracts with VicGrid.

Transmission companies would be responsible for making payments to significantly impacted neighbours in accordance with the proposed guidance. Once the relevant transmission project development begins, the transmission company responsible for the project would contact landholders of significantly impacted properties.

Stakeholder feedback is sought on the draft guidance.



1. Who will be eligible to receive these benefits?

Under the proposed guidance, individuals may be eligible to receive significantly impacted neighbour benefits if they own a rural property or an urban property that is significantly impacted by transmission infrastructure located next to their property.

Eligibility would depend on all the following being met:

- **Ownership:** Of a dwelling, home or site of other sensitive land use (for example a tourism or hospitality business) that predates the transmission route being approved and the property is not on a transmission easement.
- **Proximity:** The dwelling, home or site of other sensitive land use is within 400 m of the new transmission infrastructure in rural settings and within 200 m in urban settings.
- **Visual amenity:** The neighbour property has a demonstrated significant loss of visual amenity, including surrounding natural landscape. Infrastructure would need to be clearly visible from the point of the dwelling, home occupation or other site of sensitive land use.
- **Efficacy of mitigation measures:** Measures to address the impact on visual amenity, such as screening or vegetation, are not reasonable or are insufficient to adequately reduce the impacts of the new transmission infrastructure.

Proposed definitions

Rural settings are proposed to be based on planning zones including low density residential, rural living, green wedge A, farming and rural activity zones, where there are generally lower density or sparse populations and less built facilities and infrastructure.

Urban settings are proposed to be based on planning zones including industrial, commercial, residential (other than low density residential), and urban growth zones, where there are generally denser populations and a higher level of built facilities and infrastructure.

As with arrangements for landholder benefits, eligibility for significantly impacted neighbour benefits is proposed to only be for private individuals or organisations, not government entities.

For new major transmission infrastructure on Crown Land, eligibility for significantly impacted neighbour benefits is proposed to also apply to Traditional Owner Corporations formally recognised under relevant legislation including the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*, *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, and the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)*, as well as to long-term lease or licence holders who are materially impacted.

This benefit is proposed to apply to all new transmission projects approved under the Victorian Transmission Plan, as well as any approved future Renewable Energy Zone and Integrated System Plan major transmission projects. Projects covered include the Western Renewables Link, Victoria to NSW Interconnector West (VNI West), and transmission for proposed offshore wind projects.

Significantly impacted neighbour benefits are expected to apply once a company has been contracted to deliver a new major transmission project.

Section G

Community benefits
– significantly impacted
neighbours

2. How will impact on visual amenity of neighbouring properties be determined?

Transmission companies may assess the impact of infrastructure on visual amenity in the first instance by modelling the infrastructure height, distance from the dwelling or sensitive land use, and surrounding topography and vegetation. The assessment may also be informed by on-site assessments.

Fit for purpose dispute resolution procedures will be implemented where there are disagreements between transmission companies and significantly impacted neighbouring property owners regarding the extent of impact of infrastructure on visual amenity.

3. Proposed payment rates

It is proposed that transmission companies make a one-off maximum payment of up to \$40,000 to eligible landholders, with the amount scaled in proportion to the distance of the dwelling or sensitive land use to the nearest new transmission infrastructure.

This amount was benchmarked against similar, international schemes, such as the EirGrid model in Ireland, and other local land use schemes, with the maximum amount increased to reflect the larger anticipated height of transmission lines in Victoria.

It is also proposed that transmission companies can choose to:

- scale payments on a proportional basis, or set tiers proportional to distance, for example up to 100 m, 200 m, 300 m and 400 m away from transmission infrastructure, and/or
- make payments in instalments, for example with an up-front payment upon agreement and the remainder after construction.

Except in exceptional circumstances (see below), it's proposed only one overall payment (or series of payments) is made per property, regardless of the number of dwellings or sensitive uses.

4. Proposed exceptional circumstances

VicGrid is seeking feedback on potential exceptional circumstances when payments above the proposed maximum of \$40,000 should apply to significantly impacted neighbour benefits.

Examples of exceptional circumstances might include impacts to culturally significant sites or practices, or the loss of income for hospitality and tourism businesses due to significant amenity impact and where the value proposition of the business is materially linked to amenity.

We want your feedback on the proposed significantly impacted neighbour benefits

- 1 Do you support the eligibility criteria for significantly impacted neighbour benefits? Why or why not?
- 2 Are the guidelines designed to advise the transmission industry on significantly impacted neighbour benefits suitable and sufficient? If not, what would you change?
- 3 Under what exceptional circumstances should transmission companies consider significantly impacted neighbour benefits above the proposed maximum rate of \$40,000?

For more information about how you can provide feedback to these questions, visit engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits



Section H

Next steps

1. Consultation on the draft REZ Community Benefits Plan

Your feedback on this draft plan will be used to shape the final REZ Community Benefits Plan, including what types of projects will be eligible for funding, how decisions will be made relating to REZ Community Energy Funds, how the funds' community reference groups will operate including membership and the proposed approach to significantly impacted neighbour benefits.

2. Final REZ Community Benefits Plan release

The Victorian Government will consider all feedback received during the consultation process, to inform decisions about the final REZ Community Benefits Plan. We will also co-design the Traditional Owner benefits with First Peoples and finalise the details of contributions from generation and storage companies.

The final plan will be published in late 2024.



Your feedback is important – have your say

The Victorian Government is committed to giving local communities, First Peoples, landholders and regional stakeholders a real voice in planning Victoria's energy infrastructure.

To have your say about community benefits and this draft plan:

- attend a workshop in your area
- visit Engage Victoria to complete a survey or make a submission

- send a written submission to:
VicGrid, GPO Box 527, Melbourne VIC 3001.

Consultation is open until Sunday 16 June 2024.

To provide feedback about the draft REZ Community Benefits Plan, and for locations and times of upcoming workshops, visit engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits

Contact us



Phone: 1800 418 341

Email: vicgrid@deeca.vic.gov.au

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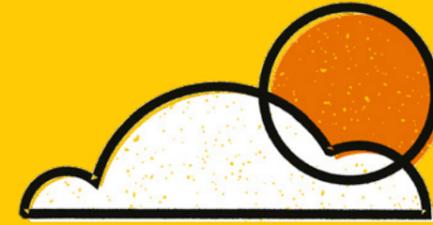
AGE FRIENDLY PLAN

2024-2027



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the five traditional owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, and the Jupagulk, people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community. We pay our respects to 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.





Members of the Older Persons Advisory Committee: June Liddy, Cherie Ladlow, Wes Hazelden, Beryl Moloney, Shayne Keenan, Elaine Cooper, Rick Walker, Laureen Sherriff. Members not pictured: Kola Kennedy, Janet Hall, Pamela Baker, Faye Smith.

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

The Horsham Rural City Council Age Friendly Plan 2024-2027 demonstrates Council’s commitment to building a community that improves the liveability and access for the Seniors in our community.

This Plan aligns with Horsham Rural City Council’s vision for the community to be a vibrant, liveable hub that thrives on strong economic growth and social connectedness. We want everyone to feel valued and able to participate within the community.

A detailed action plan covering the six themes of accessible outdoor spaces and buildings, transport, housing, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and communication and information, aims to deliver tangible benefits and connectedness for our Seniors.

The Council Executive has overall responsibility for the delivery of the Plan. However, we see access and inclusion as an area all members of our community can contribute to. We appreciate the valuable input and insight of the Older Persons Advisory Committee and thank everyone who participated in the engagement and development of this plan.



Cr Robyn Gulline
Mayor
Horsham Rural City Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Development of the Age Friendly Plan (the Plan) took place between August 2023 and February 2024.

Horsham Council staff managed the project and developed the plan.

The Older Persons Advisory Committee provided support and advice at various stages of planning and development.

The Plan identifies:

- the priorities for older people living in Horsham Rural City
- how Council will plan and develop a municipality that is age friendly
- what Council can do to improve access, provide social opportunities and provide civic opportunities for older people
- how Council will communicate and engage with older people and promote them as integral members of our community.

Why develop a plan?

The Plan has been developed to improve livability and access for older people in our community. The goal of this plan is to highlight how Horsham Council can continue developing a community that is age friendly.

People may have changing needs and preferences for the way they access the community, and how they socially and economically participate as they age. It is important that Horsham Council understands these diverse needs of older people in our community.

The Plan will help to keep track of priorities and actions that can develop and support an age friendly community.

Context

Horsham Rural City has a total population of approximately 20,500 people. A total of 5,746 people are over the age of 60, which is 28% of the overall population.

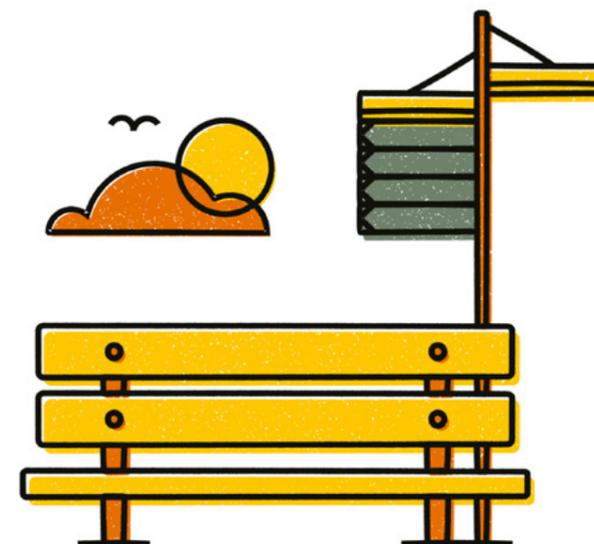
Since 2016 there are 180 more residents between the ages of 60 and 69, there are 297 more residents between the ages of 70 and 84 and there are 43 more residents over the age of 85.

Since 2016 there have been 229 people over the age of 65 move to Horsham Rural City, and 300 people over the age of 65 move away from Horsham Rural City. This indicates a net migration loss of 71 people over the age of 65.

These statistics indicate that we have an aging population, highlighted by the 520 more residents over the age of 60, even with a net migration loss of 71 of people over the age of 65.

This data indicates the importance of developing an age friendly community with resources and facilities that improve access and livability for older people.

profile.id.com.au/horsham



PLAN DEVELOPMENT

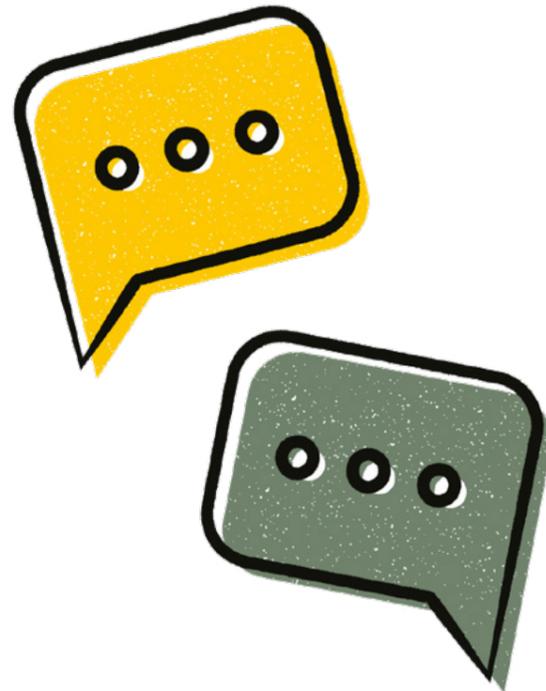
Plan development and engagement was facilitated by Horsham Rural City staff between August 2023 and February 2024.

197 people participated in engagement activities including online surveys, workshops with community groups, discussions with the Older Persons Advisory Committee (OPAC) and staff focus groups.

The OPAC provides expert advice to Horsham Council, and represent needs and priorities of all older people in the municipality.

Throughout the process of developing the Plan, the OPAC helped to identify appropriate engagement activities and community groups to engage with. The OPAC also analysed feedback from the broader community and shared their priorities for what could be included in the Plan.

To gain feedback on the draft plan that was presented to Council, a community consultation period was held after the March Council meeting.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement activities that informed the Plan occurred between August and November 2023.

Questions included in the engagement activities were based on the World Health Organization Age Friendly Checklist (WHO Checklist).

The aim of the engagement activities was to get feedback from community members to better understand how Horsham Rural City Council can develop an Age Friendly Community.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Activity	Date	Participants
An online survey that community members could complete, asking agree / disagree questions and open-ended questions. Some surveys were completed in person at the Horsham Talks Expo.	21 August – 4 November, 2023	62
Horsham Probus workshop - included group discussion prompted by WHO Checklist.	26 September, 2023	52
Upper Class Horsham workshop - included group discussion prompted by WHO Checklist.	28 September, 2023	33
Horsham and District U3A workshop, included group discussion prompted by WHO Checklist.	6 October, 2023	28
Older Persons Advisory Committee (OPAC) meeting – considered engagement feedback and discussed possible priorities to be included in the Age Friendly Plan.	6 December, 2023	12
HRCC Staff Focus Group – Consideration of suggestions made by OPAC, and additional suggestions for priorities. Some individual meetings with staff that didn't attend the focus group session.	7 December, 2023	10
Total		197





VISION

Horsham Rural City is an age friendly community where older people are respected and included, and their diverse and changing needs and interests are catered for.

THEMES

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Transport
- Civic Participation
- Housing
- Communications and Information



AGE FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN

Outdoor spaces and buildings

Priorities	Actions	Link to other strategies	Responsible
Older people can confidently and safely access outdoor spaces and buildings.	Staff involved in planning public places attend at least one training each year that enhances their capacity to understand the diverse access needs of community members.		→ People and Culture
	Provide input into the development of Landscape Design Guidelines to support planning and design of accessible outdoor spaces and buildings.	Landscape Design Guidelines will be developed and will provide standards for new developments, accessibility will be one of the considerations.	→ Arts Culture and Recreation → Assets and Engineering
	Develop new crossings and implement other strategies within the Horsham CAD Revitalisation Streetscape Plan to enhance pedestrian safety.	There are a range of improvement strategies within the Horsham CAD Revitalisation Streetscape Plan that will enhance pedestrian safety.	→ Assets and Engineering
	Improve the accessibility of Council owned facilities to ensure user groups can participate in their chosen activities.		→ Assets and Engineering
	Continue to maintain existing outdoor spaces to ensure continued opportunities for meeting, gathering and socialising.		→ Waste and Environment

Older people can confidently and safely move between places, spaces and facilities.	Improve connecting infrastructure between places, spaces and facilities by completing the Bicycle and Shared Path Plan.	The Draft Horsham Bicycle and Shared Path Plan advocates for a network of priority paths for both cyclists and pedestrians which links key public infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Arts Culture and Recreation → Assets and Engineering
	Upgrade all accessible car parking spaces to ensure they comply with Australian Access Standards.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Assets and Engineering → Roads and Facilities
	Continue to upgrade and develop new footpaths around the municipality, as guided by community feedback and access standards.	Whilst upgrades are occurring across the municipality, many of the footpath upgrades are identified in the Horsham North Local Area Plan.	→ Assets and Engineering
Business owners understand the barriers people experience when visiting businesses.	Support four businesses to participate in the Inclusive Business Horsham Project each year.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Investment Attraction and Growth → Governance and Information
	Continue to support businesses to understand their responsibilities around the use of displays, signs and outdoor dining.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Investment Attraction and Growth → Community Services and Safety

Transport

Priorities	Actions	Link to other strategies	Responsible
Improved transport options to support access to services and community life.	Advocate for the return of passenger rail.	Council has committed to advocate for the return of the passenger rail through the adoption of the Rail Corridor Landscape Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Executive Management Team → Investment Attraction and Growth
	Advocate for more regular bus service between Horsham and surrounding towns.		→ Executive Management Team
Older people can choose active transport as a safe mode of transport.	Progress the development of the alternate truck route to reduce heavy vehicles traffic in central Horsham and improve safety for other road users.	Council has committed to advocate for an alternative truck route around Horsham through the adoption of Advocacy Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Executive Management Team → Investment Attraction and Growth
	Provide suitable locations to safely park and/or charge mobility devices as part of future works to upgrade the CAD and other public spaces.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Arts Culture and Recreation → Assets and Engineering
	Establish riding and walking pathways that are safe and provide connectivity.	Relevant actions within the Horsham Bicycle and Shared Paths Infrastructure Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Arts Culture and Recreation → Assets and Engineering
	Complete a feasibility study on the Wimmera Discover Trail Stage Two between Horsham and Dimboola.		→ Investment Attraction and Growth
Public transport is easy and safe to use.	Ensure all public bus stops have suitable footpath connection, parking, lighting and seating.		→ Assets and Engineering
	Consider an alternate location for the V-line bus stop that includes improved parking options and a ticket office.		→ Assets and Engineering

Housing

Priorities	Actions	Link to other strategies	Responsible
Develop suitable housing options for people with changing lifestyle needs, in locations that provide easy access to services and transport.	Ensure the housing needs of Senior residents are identified in the Horsham and Natimuk Housing Diversity and Affordability Strategy.	Development of the Horsham and Natimuk Housing Diversity and Affordability Strategy will be developed in 2024.	→ Investment Attraction and Growth

Respect and Social Inclusion

Priorities	Actions	Link to other strategies	Responsible
Events and activities that encourage social participation and celebrate the contribution seniors make to our community.	Deliver the annual Seniors Festival across the municipality.		→ Governance and Information → Investment Attraction and Growth
	Support event organisers to deliver a diverse range of community events by offering the Community Events Grants Program.	The new Community Events Grants Program is beginning in 2024 and will be offered twice a year.	→ Investment Attraction and Growth → Governance and Information
The diversity of our ageing community is acknowledged and barriers to social participation are addressed.	Encourage the delivery of events and activities in locations that can be attended via public transport.	The HRCC Accessible Events Guide identifies changes that event organisers can make to improve the accessibility of their event.	→ Investment Attraction and Growth
	Deliver Council events at locations that are accessible for attendees.		→ Investment Attraction and Growth
	Promote accessible features of all Council events.		→ Investment Attraction and Growth → Governance and Information
	Encourage the diverse promotion of activities and events that accommodates for the different ways in which Seniors access information.		→ Investment Attraction and Growth → Governance and Information

Planning for the specific needs people may have as they age is a focus.	Community emergency planning considers the needs of older people, and the capabilities of some people as they age	→ Community Services and Safety
	Refer to the World Health Organisation Age Friendly Checklist to support inclusive project planning.	The World Health Organisation Age Friendly Checklist is an external document, but can assist with planning well for an aging community.

Civic Participation

Priorities	Actions	Link to other strategies	Responsible
Volunteering opportunities that align with interests and provide adequate training for volunteering roles.	Introduce a 'Friends of the Library' program and promote associated volunteering opportunities.		→ Community Services and Safety
	Continue to offer existing volunteering opportunities and regularly seek feedback from volunteers to understand if programs can be enhanced.		→ Arts Culture and Recreation → Community Services and Safety
	Recognise and acknowledge the efforts of volunteers via recognition events such as National Volunteers Week.		→ Governance and Information
	Develop partnerships with external agencies such as Centre for Participation to support the further development of Council's volunteering program and volunteer training.		→ Arts Culture and Recreation → Community Services and Safety
	There are diverse opportunities for community members to engage with Council.	Continue to deliver the annual engagement Expo / or other appropriate forms of direct engagement for people to provide feedback on Council projects.	→ Governance and Information

	Ensure there is an ongoing staff presence at community group meetings to share information and build relationships.		→ Governance and Information
	Facilitate four community conversations each year between community members, Councillors and staff.		→ Governance and Information
	Facilitate four Older Persons Advisory Committee meetings each year.		→ Governance and Information
Seniors can participate in lifelong learning and employment opportunities.	Promote learning programs at the Horsham Neighbourhood House, Centre for Participation and U3A.		→ Governance and Information
	Continue to develop our understanding of the barriers older adults experience when seeking employment and promote the benefits of a diverse workforce.	The HRCC Workforce Plan 2021 outlines a commitment to workforce diversity and inclusive employment.	→ People and Culture

Communication and Information

Priorities	Actions	Link to other strategies	Responsible	
People can access information and communicate with Council in their preferred way.	Continue to promote Council information via the public notices in the Weekly Advertiser and the weekly e-newsletter.		→ Governance and Information	
	Promote the weekly e-newsletter when conducting engagement or communicating with the community to increase subscription.		→ Governance and Information	
	Continue to develop our understanding of the different and preferred ways in which older people communicate and access information.	Actions within the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan highlight alternate ways of providing information.		→ Governance and Information
	Staff involved in planning events, promotion of services or communications participate in at least one professional development activity each year to enhance their understanding of how people access information in different ways.			→ Governance and Information
	Seniors can easily access information about the local community that is easy to find and understand.	Ensure the Seniors webpage on the Council website remains up to date and has relevant information.		→ Governance and Information



Council Offices

Horsham

Civic Centre, 18 Roberts Avenue,
Horsham 3400

P: (03) 5382 9777

F: (03) 5382 1111

E: council@hrcc.vic.gov.au

W: www.hrcc.vic.gov.au

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8.30am to 5pm

Postal Address:

PO Box 511, Horsham 3402

Depot

Selkirk Drive,
Horsham 3400

P: (03) 5382 9600

F: (03) 5382 5358

Monday to Friday
7.30am to 4.30pm

Kalkee Road Children's and Community HuB

28 Kalkee Road,
Horsham 3400

P: (03) 5382 9531

DRAFT AGE-FRIENDLY PLAN CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

A public engagement phase was held over a four-week period in April 2024 to seek community feedback on the draft Age Friendly Plan 2024-2027. This report summarises the feedback received.

COMMENTS MADE BY RESPONDENTS

Comment received	HRCC Action	Changes to Plan required	Rationale
Older Persons Advisory Committee. What an oversight to not include their names and the groups they represented! It would have been an extra acknowledgment of their time spent and input into the plan.	Reference to group photo and names. Reference existing picture	Edit graphics and name Older Person Advisory Committee Members under photo.	Recognition Older Persons Advisory Committee appropriate.
We believe that U3A should be included in this section where the centre for participation and neighbourhood house is already included.	Comment referred to Community Inclusion Officer	Add U3A to learning opportunity for promotion.	Recognition of U3A organisation is appropriate.
Yearly Staff Training. Would this include outdoor experiences and where possible with aged persons to understand their needs?	Evidence based training sourced through People and Safety.	No changes to the plan required	Staff training is an ongoing operational activity. This currently includes training opportunities that support the built environment and customer interaction.
Suggest regular inspections of footpaths and using coloured markings for hazards while waiting to be repaired. E.g. East side of and south end of Culliver Street has a dangerous crack in the concrete. Improved corner crossings with more accessible grading and a reduction in the build up of bitumen where it meets the kerbing. Safety access to street letter boxes. Could concrete slabs be used where nature strips are a hazard for those using wheelie walkers or sticks? Regular upgrading of public toilets e.g. Roberts Avenue with modern conveniences for those with mobility concerns. How many public toilets are fitted with rails to help the aged and are they identified?	Comment referred to Co-ordinator Civil Works Comment referred to Community Inclusion Officer	No changes to the plan required	Complaints and reports are all responded to. Regular program of inspections are conducted. F1 classification – every 6 months F2 classification – every 12 months F3 classification – every 2 years. Community reports are important to identifying where intervention is necessary. Intervention level is 25ml. Regular advocacy with civil works and projects office team around accessibility of all Council infrastructure.

I urge council to speed up the commitment to make a decision on an alternative truck route around Horsham.	Comment referred to Coordinator Community Relations & Advocacy	No changes to the plan required	This project is a high priority in Council's Advocacy Strategy. Currently awaiting Transport Victoria Feasibility Study. Funding of the road upgrade project will be the responsibility of Federal/ State Governments. Current advocacy project noted in the plan
Civic Participation. Volunteering opportunities needs to be better known. The "Friends of the Library" program is excellent but is it to transport the aged to and from the library or to deliver books to their homes?	Comment referred to Community Services and Safety	No changes to the plan required	The plan aims to address this with communication, education and promotion of volunteering opportunities.
Communication and Information. It is pleasing that Council understands the need to provide information in many different ways. We are in a state of change with many aged not capable of not accessing e-information while the "new ageing" e.g. Baby Boomers are familiar with such devices. I see the council needs to be aware of this situation for quite some time.	Comment referred to Coordinator Community Relations & Advocacy	No changes to the plan required	Positive Feedback – no action required. Council will continue to explore all possible means of communication.
I suggest Councillors and staff each take an older person for a walk, shopping or to a community event. Don't tell the person what you think they want, instead listen to them. They may not have your special training, but they have lived, and they know 'stuff'. By 'older person' I do not mean one who has recently retired and is reasonably fit and healthy, but one in the 70s, 80s or older who may be losing mobility, hearing, or sight, but is living independently.	Comment referred to Community Inclusion Officer	No changes to the plan required	Feedback from Older Persons Advisory Committee provides a mechanism for Council to understand the lived experience of older people.
Drive Horsham at night. Identify the street signs that are impossible to read at night. Replace these with signs that can be read with headlights and do not require the driver to vacate the car and use a torch. Replace missing signs.	Comment referred to Co-ordinator Civil Works	No changes to the plan required	Complaints and reports are responded to. Council require ongoing reporting from the community for problematic signage.
Council instruct staff that footpaths be made safe. Inspect Regularly, follow up complaints, and remove tripping hazards	Comment referred to Co-ordinator Civil Works Comment referred to Community Inclusion Officer	No changes to the plan required	Complaints and reports are all responded to. Regular program of inspections are conducted. F1 classification – every 6 months F2 classification – every 12 months F3 classification – every 2 years. Community reports are important of identifying where necessary. Intervention level is 25ml.

			Regular advocacy with civil works and projects office team around accessibility of all Council infrastructure.
Council instruct staff that parking meters are to be rationalised. For example, a two hour zone outside a cinema does not give a older patron time to walk to the meter, return, buy a ticket. Visit restroom, buy a snack, and watch a film. With previews, many programs run longer than two hours.	Comment referred to Co-ordinator Community Safety	No changes to the plan required	Decisions and implementation of parking meter zones sit within Council's Parking Management Plan. Older Persons were considered in the development of that plan. Community can raise issues through our Customer Service system and Older Persons Advisory Committee for consideration.
Civic Participation. Council suggests older people could volunteer more. Do not make this financial burden – institute free parking for ALL volunteers who donate their time, experience, and skills to the community.	Comment referred to Co-ordinator Community Safety	No changes to the plan required	Decisions and implementation of parking meter zones sit within Council's Parking Management Plan. Older Persons were considered in the development of that plan. Community can raise issues through our Customer Service system and Older Persons Advisory Committee for consideration.
Communication with residents is not satisfactory at present. Not all residents have a computer or smart phone, and, of those who do, not all use Facebook. Facebook is useful, but the facebook algorithm is unreliable as a means of disseminating news. A more easily accessible and reliable reference would be a print version. Horsham now has three newspapers. To advertise in these is of course costly, but perhaps more detailed and frequent press releases could be offered, and in-depth interviews with Councillors on timely topics would be welcome before the last-minute window dressing for elections. The 'Weekly Advertiser' is delivered to all houses in the urban area. A series of articles, using the same size font as other news items, in a prominent position, in more than one edition, would perhaps be a more efficient way of informing residents about Council plans than the current means of distributing information, and might well be more cost-effective than the recent 16 page production. A further problem with electronic distribution of information is the unreliable internet reception in some council areas.	Comment referred to Co-ordinator Community Relations & Advocacy	No changes to the plan required	Council's has an ongoing and resource constrained commitment to print media. This is a weekly page in The Weekly Advertiser which is delivered to all households making it accessible and free.
Reinstate the Wimmera Information Network Community Directory, by having this booklet delivered to every household. This is a simple way to	Comment referred to Co-ordinator Communications	No changes to the plan required	Council is currently reviewing Community Directory options. Print options severely limit regular updates of information and contacts and would require additional resourcing.

inform residents and new comers about what is available in the town and surrounds	Relations & Advocacy		
Continue with the 'Expo'. This is a concise way of informing the community, and getting people to meet each other. But PROMOTE/ADVERTISE it more effectively	Comment referred to Co-ordinator Community Relations & Advocacy	No changes to the plan required	Positive feedback. Council has committed to a 2024 Expo.
Outdoor spaces and buildings. On page 7 we are told. 'There (is) a range of improvement strategies That will enhance pedestrian safety'. What are these, precisely? Do these 'strategies' include the latest concrete kerbing in Wilson street opposite Town Hall?	Comment referred to Co-ordinator Investment and Attraction	No changes to the plan required	Central Activity District (CAD) Revitalisation plan highlights the need for enhanced pedestrian safety. This will include future design of CAD redevelopment projects. Community can raise issues through the Horsham City Centre Central Activity District Reference Group.
I note five groups were directly targeted for responses to the survey, and Council staff compromised one of these groups. Have I misunderstood this list? Were the Council staff selected within the target age for this plan?	Comment referred to Co-ordinator Community Relations & Advocacy	No changes to the plan required	It is Council process to have internal consultation to collate all feedback within teams who have responsibility in improving accessibility for older persons. Everyone has a responsibility to support Horsham as an age friendly community. As such engaging with staff of all ages is appropriate.
Which for business (see page 8) will be supported in the Inclusive Business Horsham Project each year? How will they be selected?	Comment referred to Co-ordinator Investment and Attraction	No changes to the plan required	Businesses self-nominate for this project. Council processes for selection are equitable.
Could Council look carefully at making more opportunities for residents to meet with Councillors and staff? The 'Expo' was excellent for this, but with some co-operation and planning, I am sure more opportunities could be made. Advertise when and where staff and Councillors would be available. Many people will chat over coffee but are intimidated by a formal setting.	Refer comment to Executive Management Team and Councillor Group	No changes to plan required	Councillors are available and all contact details are posted on website. Older Persons Advisory Committee attend a Council briefing each year as representatives of our older community. Specific project-based engagement may provide opportunities for targeted interaction with Councillors and Senior management on an ongoing basis.
Herewith protest the questions used are not included in the report 2024.The former 2019 - 2023 report included all WHO questions. The 19 to 2023 report was comprehensive unlike the new report. Herewith	Comment referred to Community Inclusion Officer	No changes to plan required	The WHO checklist was considered and referenced in the design and development of the new plan, to create an easy to read and accessible document.



protest the important questions in the original WHO review i.e. sufficient burial sites and emergency plan accounting for seniors were not included to the survey 2023.			
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HRCC Community Event Grants 2024/2025

Name of the community organisation undertaking the project	Project title	GRANT AMOUNT
Wimmera Filipino Australian Club Inc.	Traditional Filipino Christmas Celebration - Barrio Fiesta Theme & Traditional costume	3,100.00
HORSHAM ROCKERS INCORPORATED	Rockin' At The Races	3,500.00
Combined Probus Club of Horsham	Managing the Twilight Years	500.00
Wimmera Committee Against Family Violence	Shine the Light 2025	2,000.00
The Mother's Day Classic - Horsham	The Mother's Day Classic - Horsham	1,000.00
Natimuk & District Gymnastics Club	Women's Gymnastics West Regional Championships	5,000.00
Natimuk Agricultural & Pastoral Society Inc	133rd Natimuk Show	3,000.00
Beyond Community Inclusion Inc.	Sensory Information and Activities Program - co locating with Kanamaroo Festival	900.00
Horsham Motor Sports Club	Horsham Truck Show 2024	5,000.00
Gariwerd Artists Inc	NATURE'S INSPIRATION	800.00
Arapiles Cycling Event Committee	Arapiles Cycling Event	3,000.00
Dooen Public Hall Committee of Management	Get Together Because We Can	1,500.00
North West Grampians Lions Club	Bushwackers Band Community Concert	4,500.00
Old Skool Hotrod & Custom club	Hot Summer Nights Rod Run	4,000.00
Wimmera Music Eisteddfod	Wimmera Music Eisteddfod 2024	4,500.00
Taylors Lake Hall	The Sulli - Vans Concert	1,000.00
Kannamaroo Festival	Kannamaroo Festival	8,000.00
Natimuk Farmers Market Plus	Natimuk Farmers Market Plus	660.00
Wimmera Pride Project Incorporated	Wimmera Pride Project-Pride Night 2025	3,500.00
Horsham & District Orchid Society	Horsham & District Orchid Society Annual Spring Show	1,000.00
Horsham Agricultural Society Inc	HORSHAM AGRICULTURAL SHOW	3,000.00
Wimmera Rockers Danceworld Inc.	Rock and roll festival - Gals & Gangsters	2,500.00
Horsham Spring Garden Festival Inc	Horsham Spring Garden Festival	5,000.00
Art is... festival Inc	Art is Festival	3,000.00
TOTAL EVENT GRANTS 2024/2025		69,960.00

HRCC COMMUNITY GRANTS 2024/2025 – CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS FOR COMMUNITY GRANT ASSESSMENT TEAM – 4/6/2024**

Team Member	Conflict of Interest Declared
Kerrie Bell	NIL
Gloria McRae	Nil
Olivia Morris	NIL
Caroline Price (non-voting member)	Nil

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS FOR EMT – 11/6/2024

EMT Member	
Sunil Bhalla	NIL
Kim Hargreaves	NIL
John Martin	NIL
Kevin O'Brien	NIL

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS FOR COUNCILLORS – 17/6/2024

Councillor	Conflict of Interest Declared
Robyn Gulline (Mayor)	Wimmera Machinery Field Days
Bob Redden	NIL
David Bowe	NIL
Penny Flynn	NIL
Claudia Haenel	NIL
Les Power	Blue Ribbon Foundation
Ian Ross	NIL

Community Events Grant Applications 2024-25

Applicant details

Name of the community organisation undertaking the event Required

Postal address of the organisation undertaking the event Required

Contact person for the organisation Required

Phone Required

Email Required

If your organisation is not incorporated you will require a not-for-profit auspice organisation to manage your grant

Do you require an auspice organisation? Required

- Yes
- No

If successful payment of Grant to be deposited into the following bank account (auspice if applicable)

Account name Required

BSB No. Required

Account No. Required

Does your organisation (or auspice organisation) have an Australian Business Number (ABN)? Required

- Yes
- No

Please identify your GST Tax status Required

- Registered for GST
- Not registered for GST

If your organisation (or auspice) is registered for GST, your project budget and funding will exclude GST

Confirm that your organisation (or auspice) has Public Liability Insurance
Organisations or auspices must have Public Liability Insurance to be eligible for Council grants.

Yes Public Liability Insurance is in place Required

Attach copy of Public Liability Insurance Required

Max file size: 50 MB

Max number of files: 20 files

Powered by [OpenForms](#)

Community Events

Grants Program

2024/2025

Funding Guidelines



HORSHAM
Rural City Council

Events for our community

Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) Community Events Grants help not-for-profit groups in the municipality to create events for more engaged and healthy communities.

Funding guidelines

GENERAL INFORMATION

The HRCC Community Events Grants Program allocates funding to local not-for-profit organisations and groups every year.

The maximum allocation per organisation is \$10,000 although most successful applications range between \$500 and \$5,000. Applications seeking a grant of \$5,000 or more will require additional documentation.

GRANT TIMING

There are two funding rounds each year to seek Community Events grants:

Assessment Round	One	Two
Application round opens	1 May 2024	1 November 2024
Application round closes	31 May 2024	30 November 2024
Application assessment date	Mid-June	Mid-December
Grant notification date	30 Jun 2024	31 January 2025
Event completion date	31 Dec 2025	31 July 2026

(Noting that if all grant funds are allocated in Assessment Round One, there will be no second round)

Successful projects must take place within eighteen months of the grant notification date. This provides a longer time-frame to support planning of events.

For more information, please contact Council's Events Team on 5382 9777 or email events@hrcc.vic.gov.au or visit [Council's website](#).

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Events must align with the [Horsham Rural City Council Plan](#)
- Increase the range of diverse, inclusive and vibrant events
- Demonstrate social benefits that support our community
- Increase economic stimulus through event attendance
- Deliver participation opportunities for our community

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Program objectives – 20%

- How well does the event align with the program objectives?

Community outcomes – 40%

- How does the event support/benefit the community?
- How many people do you expect to attend the event?
- Is the event accessible and inclusive to all?
- Does the event support culturally significant aspects of our community?
- Does the event provide opportunities for volunteerism, collaboration and sharing of skills and resources?

Economic outcomes – 20%

- Will the event generate increased expenditure through event attendance?
- Will the event attract attendances from the wider Wimmera-Southern Mallee region?
- Will the event attract attendees from across Victoria and other states?
- Are there be opportunities for local service clubs or businesses to be involved?

Planning and management – 20%

- Does the organisation have the experience, skills and resources to manage the project?
- Is the project budget realistic and supported by quotations for any items over \$1,000?
- Have event risks been identified and mitigated?
- Has the event received Council grant assistance in previous years?
- What strategies does the organisation have to support the financial sustainability of the event without ongoing Council funding?

Handy tip:
If you include a single expense over \$1000 in your budget, make sure you attach a quote

Handy tip:
Check if you need Crown Land approval before submitting your application

Details of the program

WHO CAN APPLY?

- ✓ You must be a not-for-profit group.
- ✓ Be incorporated or have an auspice body.
- ✓ Have public liability insurance covering your proposed event.
- ✓ The event must be held within the Horsham municipality.

WHO CANNOT APPLY?

- × You are an individual or seeking funding for a for-profit event.
- × You are a group who has not reported back on any previous event grant allocation.
- × Your event is the responsibility of other sector/s of government.
- × Your project is seeking funding for a religious event that may exclude some members of our community.
- × Events that are a clear duplication of an existing event.

INELIGIBLE GRANT EXPENDITURE

- × Council grant funds cannot cover event expenses incurred prior to the Grant Notification date.
- × Council grant funds cannot cover expenses not directly related to the event.
- × Council grant funds cannot cover volunteer labour costs.

ALL APPLICATIONS MUST INCLUDE:

- Project Budget ([Council template](#))
- Including quotes for any budget items over \$1,000.
- Public Liability Insurance Certificate.
- A completed [Intention to hold an event form](#) if the event is being held on Crown Land managed by Council or Council owned land.
- Crown Land approval for events held on Crown Land managed by any other body.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS > \$5,000

- A copy of the applicant's most recent audited financial statements.

OTHER INFORMATION

- An offer of a grant by Council does not mean any ongoing funding commitment or obligation by Council.
- HRCC assistance should be acknowledged on any promotional material or media coverage relating to the event.
- Council may only allocate part funding for the event.
- Your event budget has to balance, but can include showing that you plan to make a surplus, a loss or a break-even result.

Submitting an Application

The application form must be completed [ONLINE](#)

If you require assistance to complete the on-line form, our Events Team can help, please contact Customer Service to make an appointment by calling 53829777 or email events@hrcc.vic.gov.au .

Grant payment and reporting back

Payment of grants will be made upon completion of events. Organisations must:

- Lodge an on-line [Completion Report](#).
- Attach invoices or evidence of event payments.
- Attach invoice from your organisation to Council requesting grant payment.
- Attach 2-3 photographs of your event, which may be used in Council publications or social media.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For more information, please contact the Events Team at events@hrcc.vic.gov.au or 5382 9777.



Handy tip:
Ensure your project budget is realistic and supported by quotations as required



Handy tip:
Chat to the Events team before submitting your application

1. PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance on the effective and responsible utilisation of Council's surplus cash in accordance with the legislative framework. Particular emphasis is placed with the objective to optimise return on investment earnings within approved risk guidelines and ensure the security of funds.

2. INTRODUCTION

Council is committed to ensuring their investments are managed in an appropriate, transparent and ethical manner.

Council's objective is to undertake the conservative investment of working capital and other available funds with respect to the time horizon required for use of these funds. Whilst exercising the power to invest or manage cash, consideration will be given to preserving capital liquidity and return on investment as follows:

- (i) **Safety:** Preservation of capital and protection of principal is the principal objective of the Council's investment portfolio. Investment is to be performed in a manner that ensures security and safeguards the investment portfolio including managing credit and interest rate risks within identified thresholds and parameters.
- (ii) **Maintenance of Liquidity:** The investment portfolio will ensure there is sufficient liquidity to meet all reasonably anticipated cash flow requirements as and when they fall due without incurring significant cost due to the unanticipated sale of an investment.
- (iii) **Ethical Investment:** Investment must conform to accepted business practices and Council's wider operational sustainability goals, which are included in the Council Plan.
- (iv) **Performance:** The investment (net funds invested) is expected to be maximised within the parameters of this policy which takes into account Council's risk tolerance. Any additional return target set by Council will also consider the risk limitation and prudent investment principles.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all investments and cash management activities undertaken by Council.

Legislative requirements

Council will comply with the following in relation to investments.

- Section 103 of the *Local Government Act 2020* with investments limited to those identified in that section and/or authorised investments as advised by the Minister for Local Government.
- *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Accounting Standards

Council will comply with all applicable Australian Accounting Standards (AASB) including:

- AASB 7 Financial Instruments Disclosure;
- AASB 9 Financial Instruments;
- AASB13 Fair Value Measurement;
- AASB132 Financial Instruments Presentation; and
- AASB136 Impairment of Assets.

4. PRINCIPLES

Surplus funds will be invested in a manner which provides the highest investment return with the maximum security, while meeting the daily cash flow demands. This policy will conform to legislation governing the investment of local government funds.

4.1 Investment

- (i) Diversification will be pursued within the following guidelines with the purpose to reduce overall portfolio risk whilst attaining a maximum rate of return. Investments will be diversified by institution. In selecting authorised investments, consideration will be given to credit rating on the Counter Party.
- (ii) The selection and acceptance of an investment offer will have regard not only to the highest rate of interest quoted, but also to the need to 'spread' investments.
- (iii) Investments must be made in Australian dollars.
- (iv) The term to maturity of any Council investment may range from "at call" to one year, taking into account anticipated cash requirements and prevailing market conditions at the time of the investment.
- (v) Exposure to risk will be minimised by investing in a range of low-risk investment products within the constraints of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

4.2 Diversification by Financial Institution

- (i) To control the credit quality on the entire portfolio, the following credit framework limits the percentage of the portfolio exposed to any particular credit rating category.

Credit rating	Investment as a % of Portfolio
AAA	Minimum 75%
AA, A or BBB	Maximum 25%

- (ii) Investments will be managed in accordance with the Investment Procedure.

4.3 Risk Tolerance

- (i) In order to protect the principal amount of investments, funds will, ideally, only be invested with institutions and products with a minimum Standard and Poor's credit rating of BBB or better. A maximum of 25% of the portfolio can be invested with an institution rated between BBB to AA.
- (ii) Investments are generally not invested for a period longer than one year, however, they may be when considering future cash flows

4.4 Return Objectives

The return on funds invested will be optimised within the parameters of this policy.

When considering the return on investment, indirect costs including administration and transfer fees should be taken into account.

4.5 Authorised Investment Products

It is the responsibility of the delegated officer to manage the investment by using these products to the best advantage while operating in the context of this policy:

- (i) *Professional Fund — Short term Instrument*. Cash funds surplus to immediate needs are invested on overnight deposit each business day with Councils main banking institution. Withdrawal of funds to be made to meet on-going cash needs.
- (ii) *Term Deposit* — One of the most common types of investments, term deposits are offered by all banks and are competitive.
- (iii) *Government Securities*. Long dated maturities with a sovereign debt rating. These are considered to be the most resilient in regards to adverse market movements. As a result of the extremely high credit ratings, these bonds have a low return in terms of yield.

4.6 Prohibited Investments

- (i) Investing for speculative purposes is prohibited.

- (ii) The following investments are also prohibited:
- a) Derivative based investments (excluding floating rates notes);
 - b) Principal only investment or securities that provide nil or negative cash flows;
 - c) Stand-alone securities issued that have underlying futures, options, forward contracts and swaps of any kind; and
 - d) Any security issued in non- Australian currencies.

The Director Corporate Services may develop an additional list of prohibited investments.

4.7 Cash Management:

The following will apply to cash management practices:

- (i) Cash flow and cash balances will be reviewed weekly. The balance of surplus cash funds will be invested in accordance with this policy.
- (ii) All investments will be recorded in Council's investment register.
- (iii) The investment register will record and track movement of investments, interest rates, interest received and maturity dates.
- (iv) The investment register will be reconciled, at the end of each month, with the general ledger and the cash position statement.
- (v) Certificates must be obtained from the Counter Party confirming the amount of investment held on behalf of Council.
- (vi) A report will be submitted quarterly to Council giving the details of current investments and the return on investments for the financial year to date.

4.8 Internal Controls:

Internal controls and processes are to be maintained to ensure investment objectives are met and that the investment portfolios are protected from loss, fraud or inappropriate use.

The Revenue Officer is responsible for investigating and undertaking the appropriate investments in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer.

5. COMMUNICATION

This policy will be available on the Horsham Rural City Council website and staff intranet. Specific training and awareness will be provided to key personnel with responsibilities under this policy.

6. RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner: Chief Financial Officer

This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier as required by changed circumstances including changes to legislation and plans, strategies or policies of HRCC.

7. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Counter Party	A legal and financial term which refers to the other individual or institution to an agreement or contract
Interest Rate Risk	The risk that the fair value or future cash flows of an investment will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates
Investment	The risk that the fair value or future cash flows of an investment will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates
Investment Portfolio	A collection of investments
Preservation of Capital	An investment strategy with the primary goal of preventing losses in an investment portfolio's total value
Speculative	Involves deliberately taking a higher risk in the hope of making an extraordinary gain
Surplus Cash	Funds that are deemed surplus to operations for the time being
Yield	The annual rate of return on an investment

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Document	Location
Australian Accounting Standards	Internet
Local Government Act 2020	Internet
Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014	Internet

9. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version Number	Approval Date	Approval By	Amendment	Review Date
01	20 July 2009	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">New Policy	20 July 2014
02	June 2024	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Significant revision of existing policy	

It is recognised that from time-to-time circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to Council and Administrative Policies. Where an update does not materially alter a Policy, such a change may be made administratively, without the need for formal adoption by EMT or Council. Examples include a change to the name of a Council Department/Position Title, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government Department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, all changes will be noted in the document control section and version number updated.

1. PURPOSE

This policy identifies the applicable rules to determine the eligibility of an organisation to a rate concession on the basis of being a cultural, recreational or charitable organisation.

2. INTRODUCTION

Under the *Culture and Recreational Lands Act 1963* Section 4(1), Council is able to set a separate rating structure for cultural and recreational lands, after having reasonable regard to the services provided and having regard to the benefit derived from such recreational lands.

Additionally, some cultural and recreational organisations may also be exempt from rates on the basis of being a charity under Section 154(2)(c) of the *Local Government Act 1989*, where “any part of land is not rateable land, if that part is used exclusively for charitable purposes”. There are four heads of charity that can be identified:

1. The relief of poverty
2. The advancement of education
3. The advancement of religion
4. Other purposes beneficial to the community

It is this last head of charity that may be applied to cultural and recreational organisations.

All charities are entitled to be considered for an exemption under Section 154 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all cultural, recreational and charitable organisations within the municipality.

4. PRINCIPLES

4.1 General Eligibility

- 4.1.1 Charities specifically will be considered for exemption first under the provisions of Section 154(2)(c) and Section 154(4) of the *Local Government Act 1989*. They must be used predominantly for charitable purposes and any component of their business that is undertaken for profit must be incidental to the charitable purpose.
- 4.1.2 A charity operating in a commercial competitive environment will be required to provide full and complete financial information to enable the assessment of whether the revenues are incidental or otherwise to its operations.
- 4.1.3 For any concession to apply, the organisation must be a cultural, recreational or charitable organisation under one of the four heads of charity.
- 4.1.4 All profits derived by the organisation must be applied in the promotion of its objectives and must not be used in any way for the payment of any dividend or disbursement to its members.

- 4.1.5 The *Culture and Recreational Lands Act 1963* Section 2(b) to (f), specifically lists some lands that are to be defined as recreational lands and this includes lands which are used primarily as agricultural showgrounds, and states that land must be used for outdoor activities.
- 4.1.6 To be considered under the *Culture and Recreational Lands Act 1963*, the land must be held in the name of the organisation or leased from council or the crown. It cannot be leased from a third party.
- 4.1.7 Indoor cultural and recreational organisations are not eligible under the *Culture and Recreational Lands Act 1963* and as such may only be considered for exemption under Section 154 of the *Local Government Act 1989* and under the head of charity 4. Other purposes beneficial to the community.
- 4.1.8 An organisations capacity to raise significant income will also be considered in determining whether cultural and recreational organisations receive a 100% rate concession or a 50% concession. To assist in determining whether significant income can be raised, organisations will be required to provide full and complete financial information.

4.2 Other principles

- 4.2.1 A charitable organisation with operations in a commercial and competitive environment will be separately rated for that commercial component wherever it is practical to do so.
- 4.2.2 All cultural, recreational and charities will be exempt from paying the municipal charge.
- 4.2.3 All cultural, recreational and charitable organisations would continue to pay their Fire Services Property Levy.
- 4.2.4 All cultural, recreational and charitable organisations would continue to pay for [waste](#) charges as and when they utilise this service.

4.3 Decision Process – Flow Chart

A flow chart has been developed to assist in the application of this policy for Culture & Recreational Organisations. It should be read in-conjunction with the above eligibility criteria and definitions. Refer **Attachment 1**.

5. COMMUNICATION

This policy will be posted on the Horsham Rural City Council website and intranet, and will be specifically provided to relevant cultural, recreational and charitable organisations as applicable.

6. RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner: Director Corporate Services

This Policy will be reviewed every 2 years or earlier as required by changed circumstances including changes to legislation and plans, strategies or policies of HRCC.

7. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Capacity to raise significant income	An organisation will be considered to have a capacity to raise significant income if it has some additional revenue raising capacity that is secondary to the cultural and recreational activity that it is engaged within. This may, for example, be from the provision of a commercial bar and kitchen, gambling activities or commercial facility hire that involves more than just renting out the space.
Cultural and Recreational Organisations	A cultural or recreational organisation must be established for the expressed purpose of promoting or advancing spiritual, cultural, or recreational objectives within the community.
Charitable Organisations	There are four heads of charity that can be identified: 1. The relief of poverty 2. The advancement of education, 3. The advancement of religion, 4. Other purposes beneficial to the community
General community benefit	An organisation can be seen as having a “general community benefit” when it provides an activity or service that has a positive spiritual, cultural or recreational outcome for the community without any negative consequences of the activity. (Negative consequences may be from the impact of the activity itself or from related associated activities). Another consideration may be whether the facility is open to the public to utilise most of the facilities without being a member of the organisation. This access may be granted for free or for a very small consideration for compliance purposes or to cover some direct operational costs. e.g. so that a key if given is returned, or to cover direct usage costs such as electricity etc.
Recreational Lands	Recreational lands are defined within the <i>Culture and Recreational Lands Act 1963</i> , to be lands which are vested in or occupied by any body corporate or unincorporated which exists for the purpose of providing or promoting “outdoor” cultural, sporting, recreational or similar facilities.

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Document	Location
Horsham Rural City Council Rates Strategy	Website/Intranet
<i>Local Government Act 1989 (section 154)</i>	Internet
<i>Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963</i>	Internet

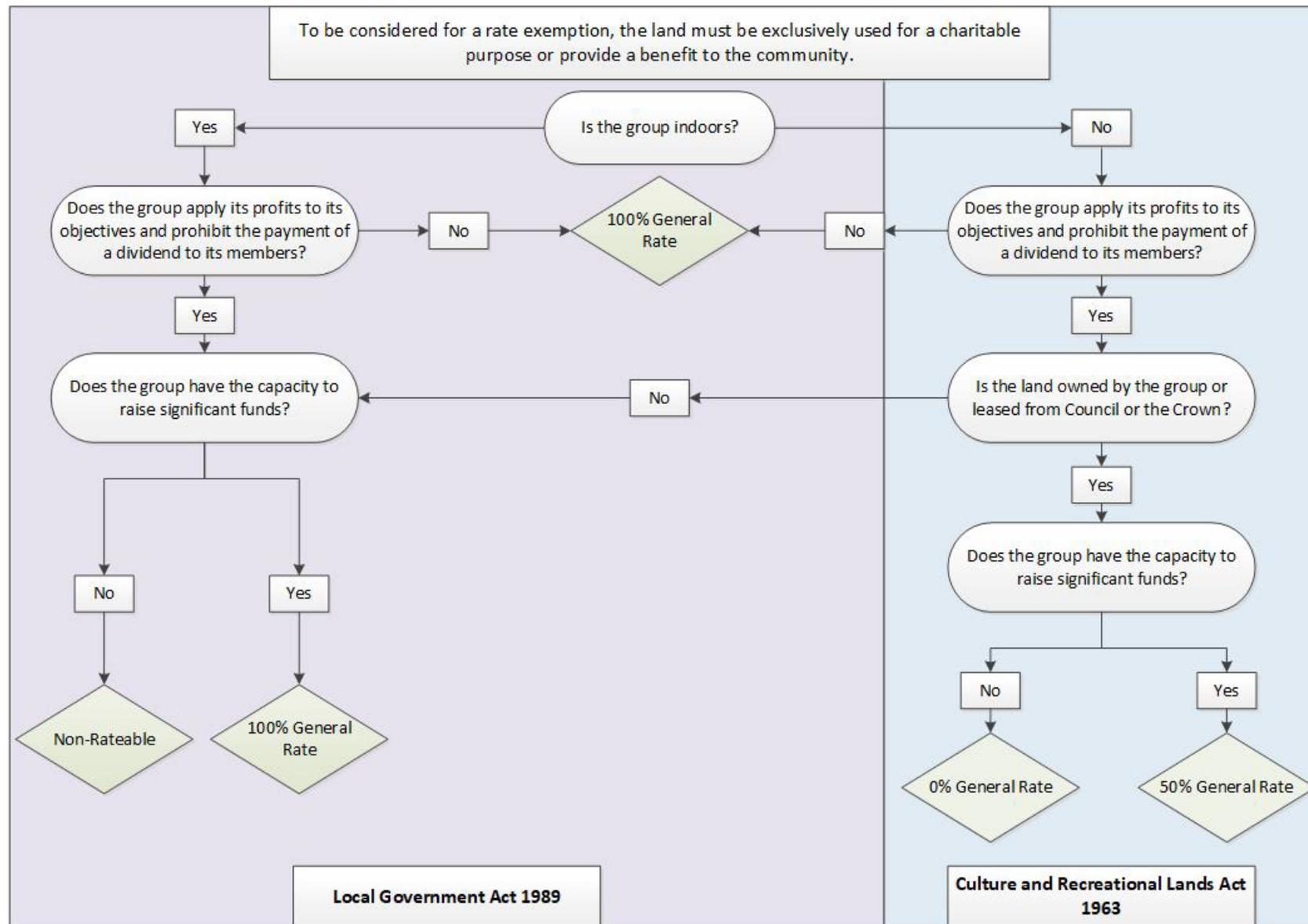
9. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version Number	Approval Date	Approval By	Amendment	Review Date
01	1 June 2015	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New policy 	
02	23 April 2019	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed 	23 April 2022
03	June 2024	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed – minor administrative updates 	June 2026

It is recognised that from time-to-time circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to Council and Administrative Policies. Where an update does not materially alter a Policy, such a change may be made administratively, without the need for formal adoption by EMT or Council. Examples include a change to the name of a Council Department/Position Title, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government Department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, all changes will be noted in the document control section and version number updated.

Rate Concessions for Cultural, Recreational and Charitable Organisations (Council)

This Flow Chart is for decision making for Cultural and Recreational Organisations not all Charities.





Schedule of Fees & Charges 2024-25

Fee Id	Fee Name	Basis of fee	GST Applicable	Unit of Measure	2023-24	2024-25	% increase	Additional Notes
Rates and Property Management								
1000	Municipal Charge	Non-Statutory	N	Per Property	200.00	200.00	0.00%	
1001	Urban Bin Service	Non-Statutory	N	Per Property	497.00	527.00	6.04%	
1002	Rural Bin Service	Non-Statutory	N	Per Property	348.00	367.00	5.46%	
1003	Additional General Waste Bin	Non-Statutory	N	Per bin	140.00	149.00	6.43%	
1004	Additional Recycling Bin	Non-Statutory	N	Per bin	140.00	149.00	6.43%	
1005	Additional Organics Bin	Non-Statutory	N	Per bin	140.00	149.00	6.43%	
1006	Additional Glass Bin	Non-Statutory	N	Per bin	80.00	85.00	6.25%	Approximately 6% increase
1007	Commercial Bin Service (weekly general waste/fortnightly recycling)	Non-Statutory	N	Per Property	480.00	509.00	6.04%	
1008	Additional/Standalone Commercial General Waste Bin (weekly)	Non-Statutory	N	Per bin	300.00	318.00	6.00%	
1009	Additional/Standalone Commercial Recycling Bin	Non-Statutory	N	Per bin	180.00	191.00	6.11%	
1010	Additional Commercial Organics Bin	Non-Statutory	N	Per bin	180.00	191.00	6.11%	
1011	Additional Commercial Glass Bin	Non-Statutory	N	Per bin	90.00	96.00	6.67%	
1012	Land Information Certificates	Statutory	N	Fee Unit	28.90	30.00	3.81%	
1013	Urgent Land Information Certificates	Non-Statutory	N	Each	60.00	60.00	0.00%	
Waste Management Fees - Dooen Landfill								
1418	All Loads (Minimum 3 tonne)	Non-statutory	Y	Per 3 tonnes	697.00	739.00	6.03%	
1419	Excess above 3 tonnes	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	232.00	246.00	6.03%	
1420	Hard Waste - Builders Rubble etc.	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	232.00	246.00	6.03%	
1421	Power Pole Surcharge in Addition to Hard Waste Charge	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	207.00	220.00	6.28%	
1422	Grain Tarp Surcharge in Addition to Hard Waste Charge	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	672.00	713.00	6.10%	
1423	Approved Commercial Waste Operators	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	232.00	246.00	6.03%	
1424	Sheepskins	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	224.50	238.00	6.01%	
1425	Animal Carcass (Larger than Sheep)	Non-statutory	Y	Per Carcass	224.50	238.00	6.01%	
1426	Clean Concrete (Suitable for crushing)	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	5.00	5.00	0.00%	
1427	Asbestos (With EPA Approval)	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	350.00	371.00	6.00%	Approximately 6% increase
1428	Low Level Contaminated Soil (Cat. C & Cat. D)	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	350.00	371.00	6.00%	
1429	Reportable Priority Waste & Priority Waste	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	350.00	371.00	6.00%	
1430	Grain Waste (GMO Waste requires DJPR Approval)	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	232.00	246.00	6.03%	
1431	Sale of Crushed Concrete (subject to availability)	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	16.00	17.00	6.25%	
1432	Putrescible Waste - Municipal - other Councils within waste group area	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	172.00	183.00	6.40%	
1433	Putrescible Waste - Municipal - other Councils outside waste group area	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	232.00	246.00	6.03%	
1434	Putrescible Waste - HRCC	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	157.00	167.00	6.37%	
1435	Fill - Suitable for Landfill Cover	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	232.00	246.00	6.03%	
1436	Fill - Suitable for Capping	Non-statutory	Y	Per Tonne	46.00	49.00	6.52%	

Spendmapp Monthly Report

Local Government Area: Horsham Rural City Council

Spendmapp cleans and analyses bank transaction data by time, geography, Expenditure Category and Type allowing continuous monitoring and analysis of local economic activity.

For the month of April 2024:

- Resident Local Spend was \$23.0M. This is a 1.41% increase from the same time last year.
- Visitor Local Spend was \$13.8M. This is a 7.51% increase from the same time last year.
- Total Local Spend was \$36.8M. This is a 3.62% increase from the same time last year.
- Resident Escape Spend was \$10.3M. This is a 6.71% increase from the same time last year.
- Resident Online Spend was \$11.5M. This is a 0.38% increase from the same time last year.

The 7.51 % increase in Visitor Local Spend suggests a relatively healthy growth in visitor economy activity.

Expenditure by Expenditure Type

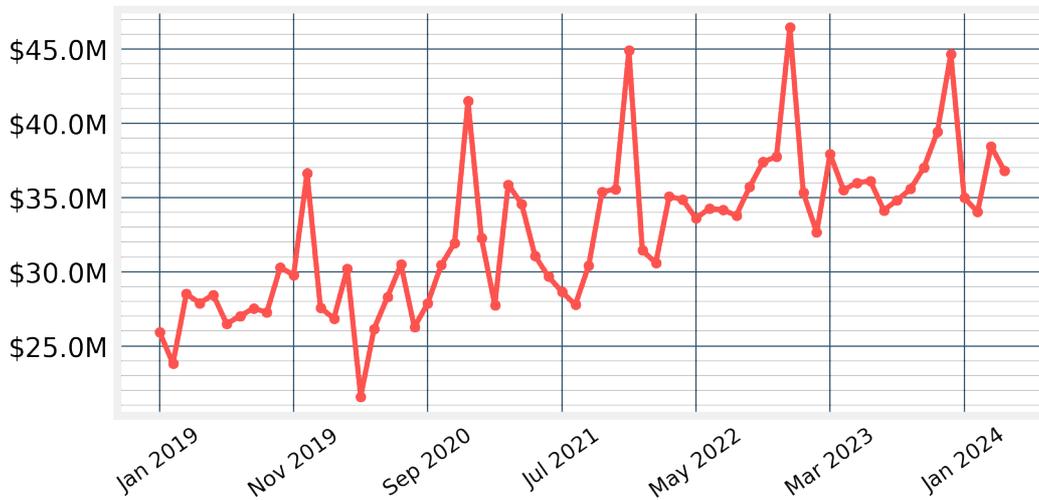
These expenditure charts show the long-term pattern of expenditure activity by Expenditure Type across the Horsham Rural City Council LGA. Typically, we see spending spikes at Easter and Christmas; dips in the post-Christmas period; and a steady climb through winter.

By way of a benchmark, the mean ratio of Resident Online Spend to all resident spending is 0.22. That is, for every dollar spent by resident cardholders anywhere, 22c goes online. Another 34c is in Escape Expenditure and the rest is spent locally.

Over the last few years across most of Australia, total expenditure has been relatively flat, even in fast growing municipalities. The exception to this has often been in Resident Online Spend, which continues to grow relative to Total Local Spend.

Total Local Spend

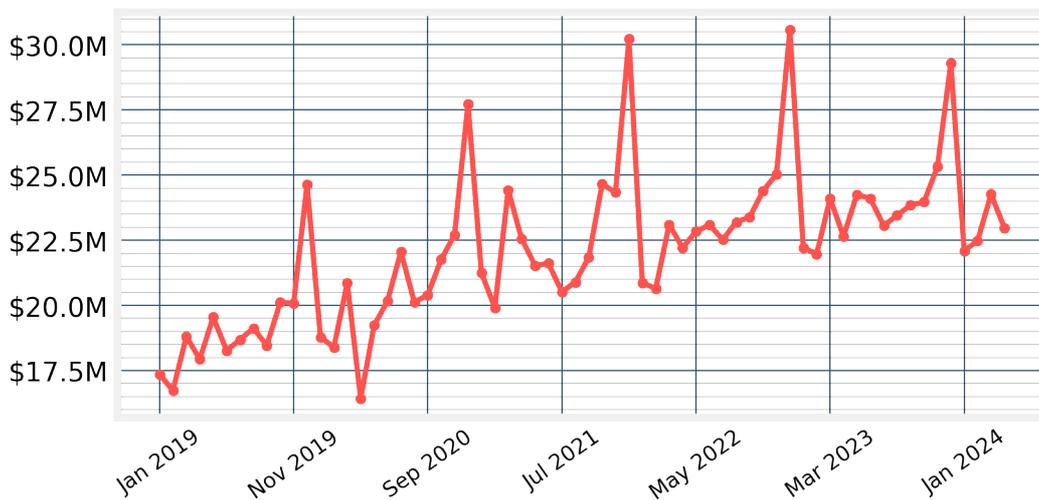
The total amount spent with merchants within the Horsham Rural City Council LGA.



Over the last 64 months, the spending trend (as shown by the trendline in the Spendmapp app) for Total Local Spend has been upwards.

Resident Local Spend

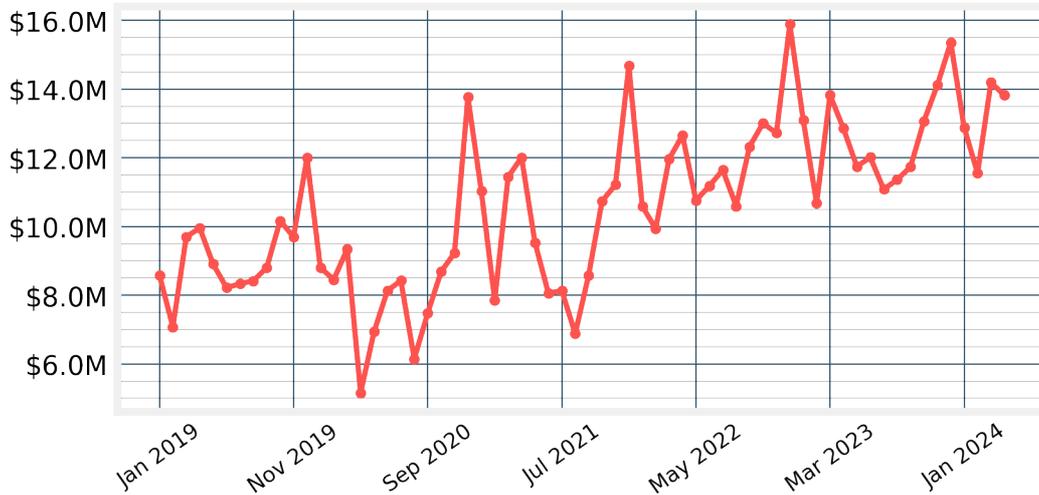
The amount spent by residents and local businesses with merchants inside the Horsham Rural City Council LGA.



Over the last 64 months, the spending trend (as shown by the trendline in the Spendmapp app) for Resident Local Spend has been upwards.

Visitor Local Spend

The amount spent by non-residents and non-local businesses with merchants inside the Horsham Rural City Council LGA.



Over the last 64 months, the spending trend (as shown by the trendline in the Spendmapp app) for Visitor Local Spend has been upwards.

Resident Escape Spend

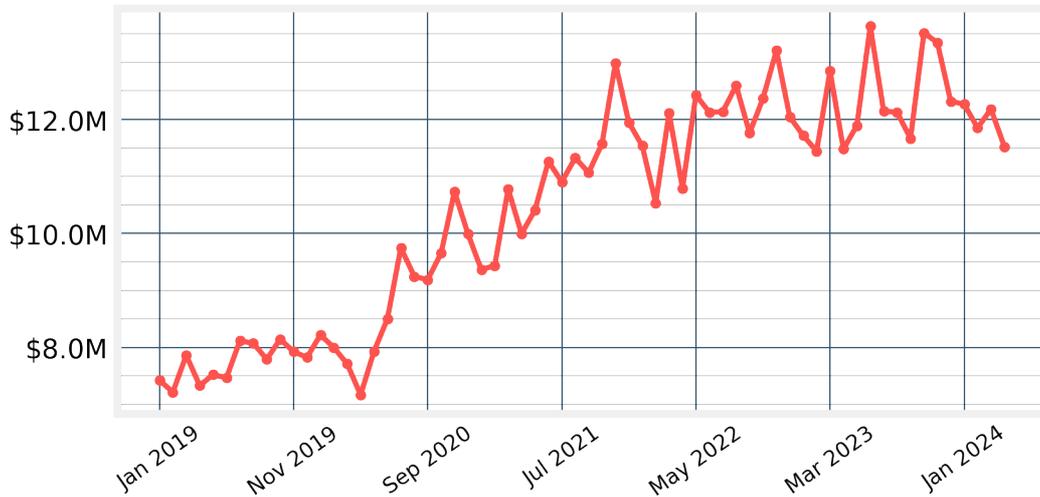
The amount spent by residents and local businesses outside the Horsham Rural City Council LGA.



Over the last 64 months, the spending trend (as shown by the trendline in the Spendmapp app) for Resident Escape Spend has been upwards.

Resident Online Spend

The amount spent by Horsham Rural City Council LGA residents and local businesses with online merchants.

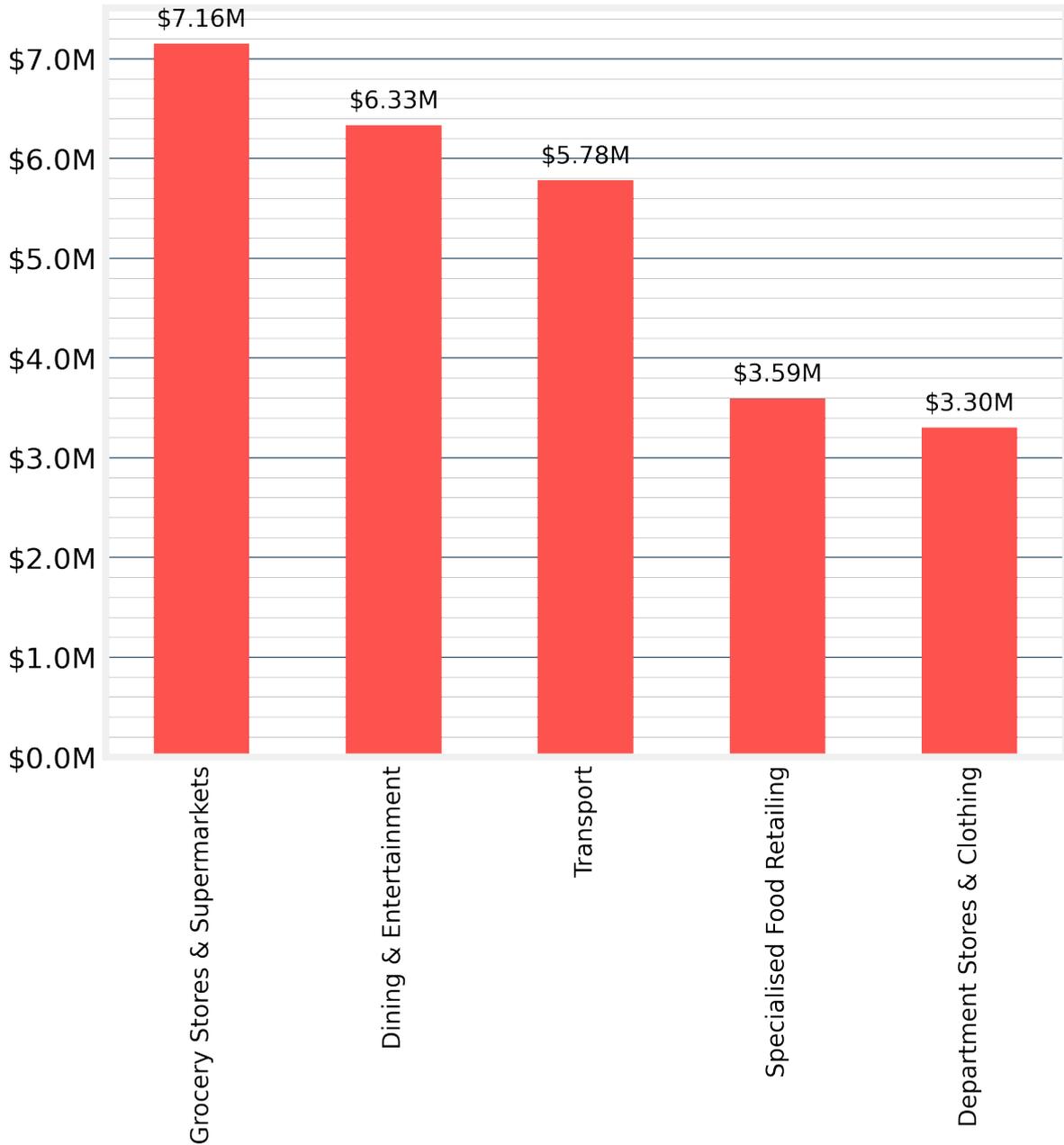


Over the last 64 months, the spending trend (as shown by the trendline in the Spendmapp app) for Resident Online Spend has been upwards.

Expenditure by Expenditure Category

The Top 5 Spending Categories for April 2024

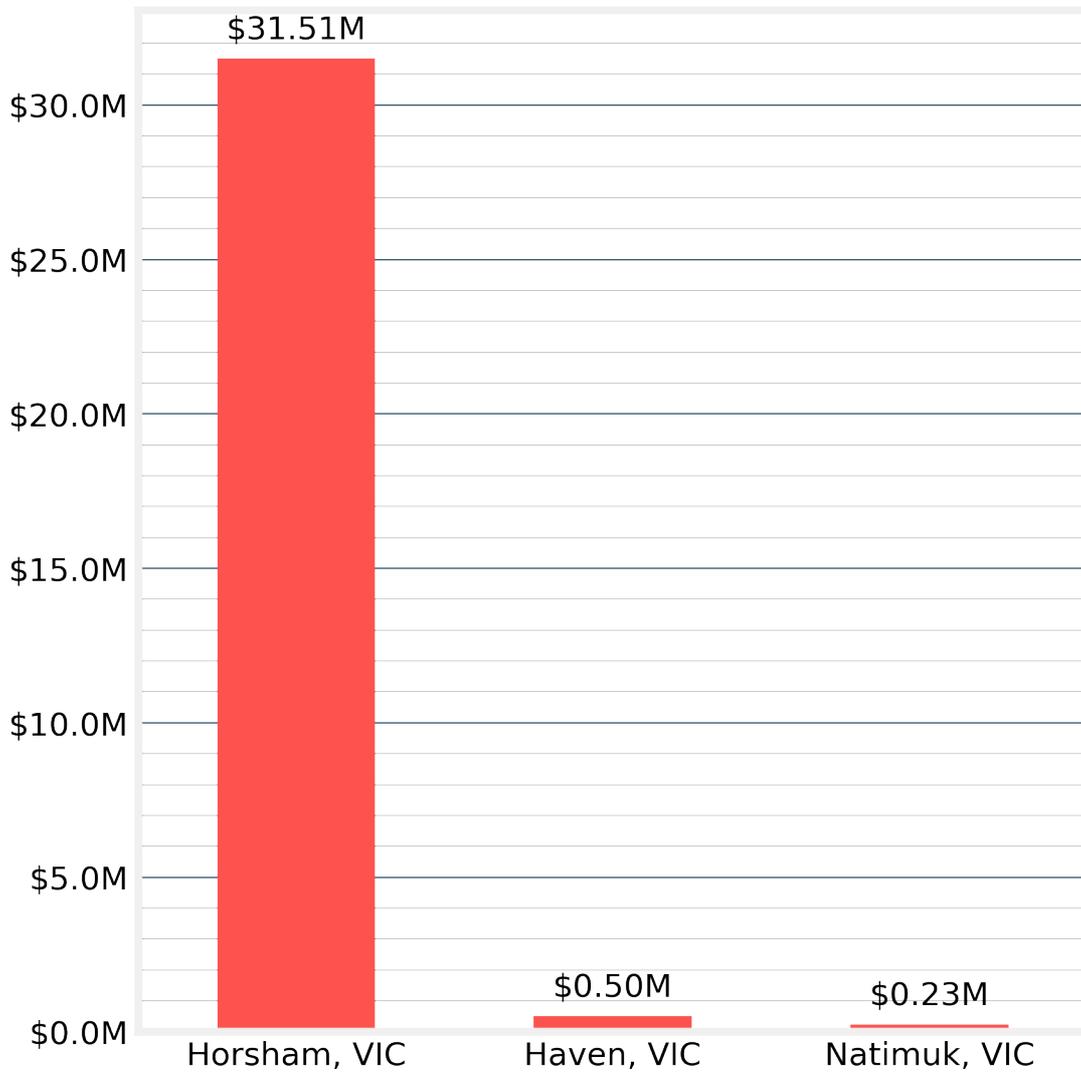
Total Local Spend split by the top 5 Expenditure Categories.



Spend by Origin and Destination

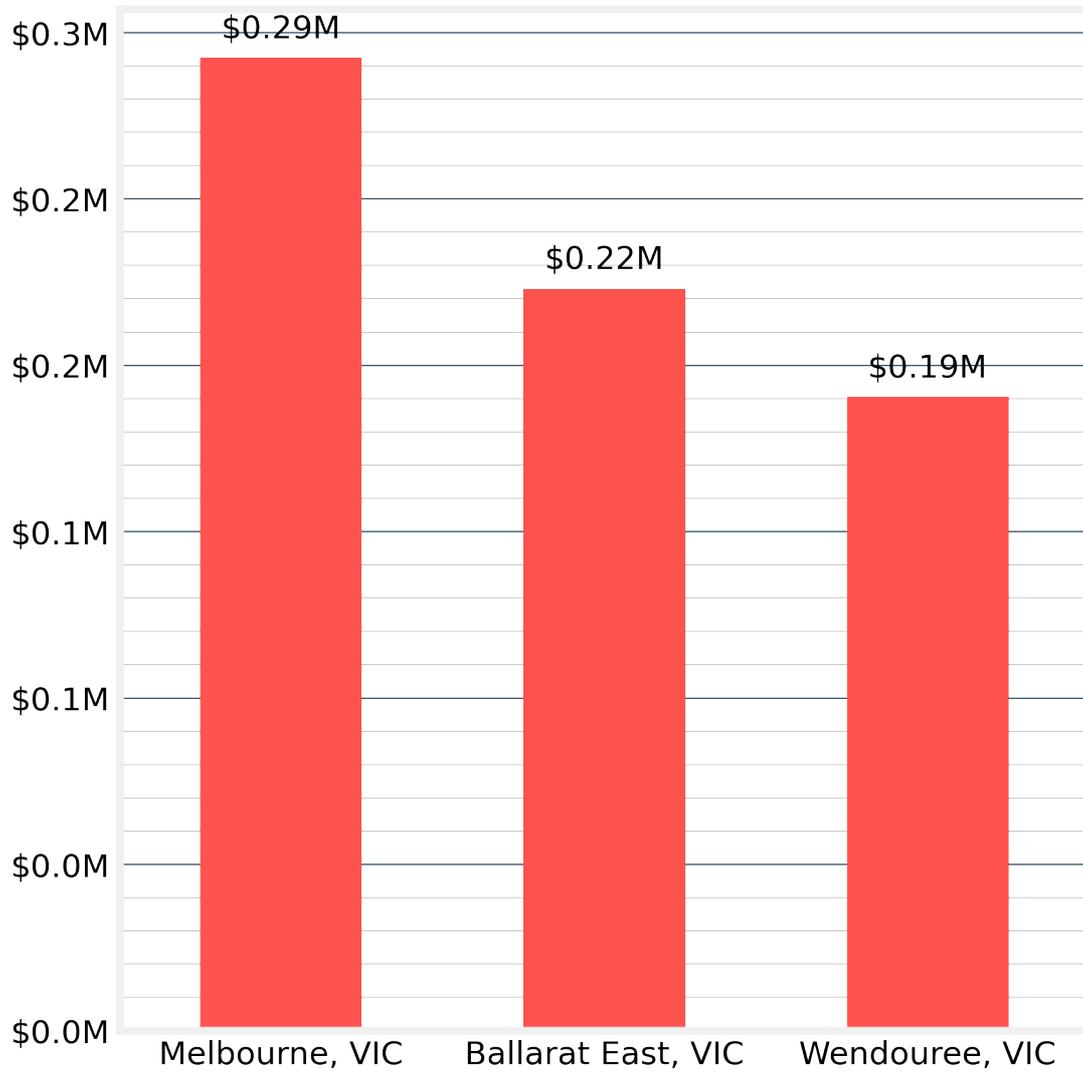
The Top 3 Suburbs by Total Local Spend for April 2024

Total Local Spend by Suburbs of destination (i.e. where the spending occurs)



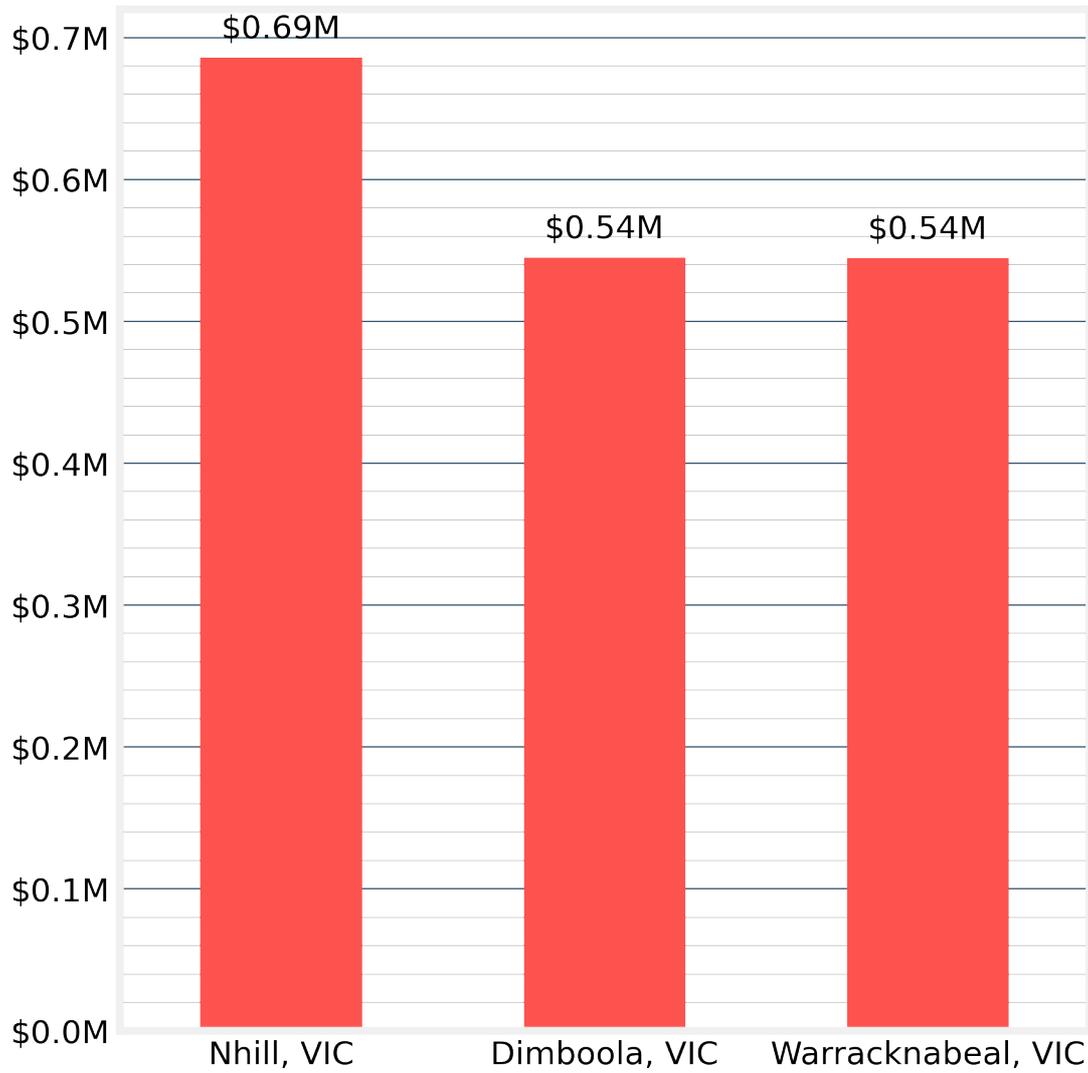
The Top 3 Suburbs by Resident Escape Spend for April 2024

Resident Escape Spend by destination Suburbs (i.e. where the spending goes to).



The Top 3 Suburbs by Visitor Local Spend for April 2024

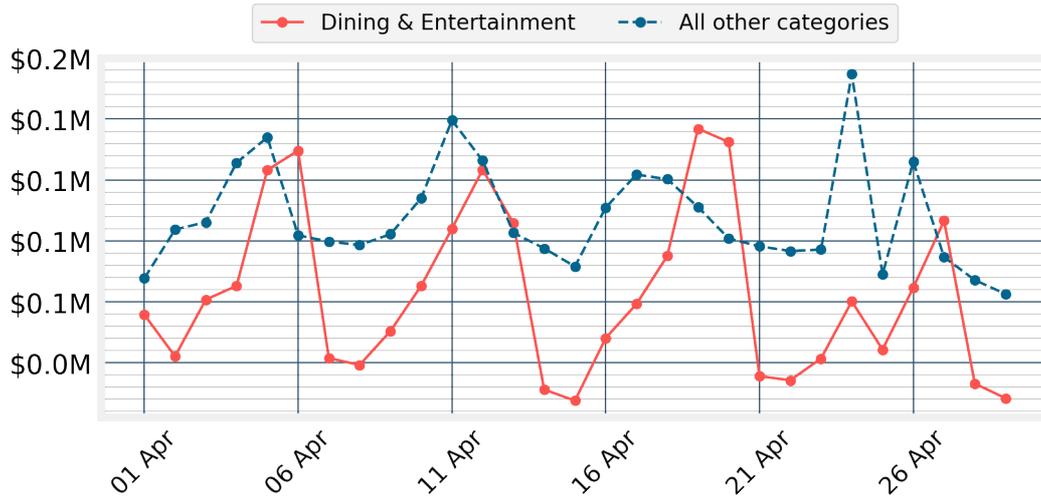
Visitor Local Spend by Suburbs of origin (i.e. where the visitors originate).



Night Time Economy

Night Time Economy for April 2024

The biggest spending night of the month of April 2024 was Friday 05 April with Total Local Spend of \$0.3M. This was made up of \$0.1M in Dining and Entertainment spending and \$0.1M spending in all other categories.



Disclaimer

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**MINUTES OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS
COUNCIL BRIEFING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MONDAY 3 JUNE 2024 AT 5:00PM**

TO ATTEND: Cr Robyn Gulline, Mayor; Cr David Bowe, Cr Penny Flynn Cr Claudia Haenel, Cr Les Power, Cr Bob Redden, Cr Ian Ross, Sunil Bhalla, Chief Executive Officer; Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services; Kevin O'Brien, Director Communities and Place; John Martin, Director Infrastructure

ATTENDED BY: Cr Robyn Gulline, Mayor; Cr David Bowe, Cr Penny Flynn Cr Les Power, Cr Bob Redden, Sunil Bhalla, Chief Executive Officer; Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services; Kevin O'Brien, Director Communities and Place; John Martin, Director Infrastructure

APOLOGIES: Cr Ian Ross

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

2. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST SEC 130 and 131, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020 AND HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL GOVERNANCE RULES

Nil

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Migration Settlement Update **5:00pm – 5:30pm**
Attending: Chris Sounness (CEO Wimmera Southern Mallee Development)

3.2 2024-2025 Budget (Kim) **5:30pm – 6:15pm**
Attending: Belinda Johnson

4. COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION

4.1 Street Name Woodhart (Kim) **Appendix 4.1** **6:15pm – 6:30pm**

5. GENERAL DISCUSSION (Sunil Bhalla) **15mins**

DINNER

6. CLOSE

The meeting closed at 6:57pm

SUNIL BHALLA
Chief Executive Officer

**MINUTES OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS
COUNCIL BRIEFING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MONDAY 11 JUNE 2024 AT 5:00PM**

TO ATTEND: Cr Robyn Gulline, Mayor; Cr David Bowe, Cr Penny Flynn, Cr Les Power, Cr Bob Redden, Cr Ian Ross, Sunil Bhalla, Chief Executive Officer; Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services; Kevin O’Brien, Director Communities and Place; John Martin, Director Infrastructure

ATTENDED BY: Cr Robyn Gulline, Mayor; Cr David Bowe, Cr Penny Flynn, Cr Les Power, Cr Bob Redden, Sunil Bhalla, Chief Executive Officer; Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services; Kevin O’Brien, Director Communities and Place; John Martin, Director Infrastructure

APOLOGIES: Cr Ian Ross

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

2. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST SEC 130 and 131, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020 AND HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL GOVERNANCE RULES

Item 5.2 – Mayor Cr Robyn Gulline has been chairing the Wesley fundraising committee but doesn’t believe has any conflict of interest – Section 129(d) LG Act 2020

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Natimuk Advisory Committee (Kevin) **5:00pm – 5:30pm**

Attending: Bill Lovel, Brian Klowss, Annie Mintern

3.2 2024-2025 Budget (Kim) **5:30pm – 6:30pm**

Attending: Belinda Johnson

3.3 CCTV Update (Kim) **6:30pm – 6:40pm**

4. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

4.1 NE Wonwondah Construction Contract (John) **Appendix 4.1** **6:40pm – 6:45pm**

5. COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION

5.1 Age Friendly Plan (Kim) **Appendix 5.1** **6:45pm – 6:55pm**

5.2 The Wesley Redevelopment Project (Kevin) **6:55pm – 7:10pm**

6. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

6.1 Investment Attraction & Growth Report (Kevin) **Appendix 6.1** **7:10pm – 7:20pm**

Attending: Fiona Gormann

6.2 VCAT/Planning/Building Update (Kevin) **Appendix 6.2**

Attending: Fiona Gormann

7. GENERAL DISCUSSION (Sunil Bhalla) 15mins

DINNER

8. CLOSE

The meeting closed at 7:20pm

SUNIL BHALLA
Chief Executive Officer

**MINUTES OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS
COUNCIL BRIEFING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MONDAY 17 JUNE 2024 AT 5:00PM**

TO ATTEND: Cr Robyn Gulline, Mayor; Cr David Bowe, Cr Penny Flynn Cr Claudia Haenel, Cr Les Power, Cr Bob Redden, Cr Ian Ross, Sunil Bhalla, Chief Executive Officer; Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services; Kevin O'Brien, Director Communities and Place; John Martin, Director Infrastructure

ATTENDED BY: Cr Robyn Gulline, Mayor; Cr David Bowe, Cr Penny Flynn, Cr Claudia Haenel, Cr Les Power, Cr Bob Redden, Cr Ian Ross (arrived at 5:35pm), Sunil Bhalla, Chief Executive Officer; Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services; Kevin O'Brien, Director Communities and Place; John Martin, Director Infrastructure

APOLOGIES: Nil

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

2. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST SEC 130 and 131, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020 AND HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL GOVERNANCE RULES

Item 3.4 - Cr Robyn Gulline declared conflict in relation to application by the Machinery Field Days Committee.

Item 3.4 - Cr Les Power declared conflict in relation to application by the Blue Ribbon Foundation.

3. COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION

3.1 Revenue and Rating Plan (Kim) **Appendix 3.1** **5:00pm – 5:10pm**

Attending: Belinda Johnson

3.2 Rates Concession Policy (Kim) **Appendix 3.2** **5:10pm – 5:15pm**

Attending: Belinda Johnson

3.3 Investment Policy (Kim) **Appendix 3.3** **5:15pm – 5:25pm**

Attending: Belinda Johnson

3.4 Events Grants 2024 (Kim) **Appendix 3.4** **5:25pm – 5:40pm**

4. VERBAL REPORTS

4.1 Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Scheme (Kevin) **5:40pm – 5:50pm**

5. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

5.1 Real Estate Panel Review (Kim) **(Verbal)** **5:50pm – 6:05pm**

5.2 Community Grants (Kim) **Appendix 5.2** **6:05pm – 6:15pm**

5.3 Building Services Contract (Kevin) **Appendix 5.3** **6:15pm – 6:25pm**

6. GENERAL DISCUSSION (Sunil Bhalla)

- State Government Housing Targets

7. CLOSE

The meeting closed at 6:50pm

SUNIL BHALLA
Chief Executive Officer