

MINUTES of the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held in the Council Chambers and livestreamed at www.hrcc.vic.gov.au at 5.30pm on 24 June 2024.

PRESENT

Cr Robyn Gulline (Mayor), Cr David Bowe, Cr Penny Flynn, Cr Claudia Haenel, Cr Les Power, Cr Bob Redden, Cr Ian Ross.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services; Kevin O'Brien, Director Communities and Place; Krishna Shrestha, Acting Director Infrastructure; Fiona Kelly, Executive Assistant to the CEO and Councillors.

1. PRAYER

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

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY STATEMENT

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

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

3. OPENING AND WELCOME

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

Chairman, Cr Robyn Gulline read the following statement:

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

4. APOLOGIES

Nil

5. LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS

Nil

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Recommendation

That the minutes emanating from the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm on 27 May 2024 be adopted.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded Cr David Bowe

That the minutes emanating from the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm on 27 May 2024 be adopted.

CARRIED

7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest

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

Members of Staff

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

Cr Les Power declared a Conflict of Interest for Item No. 9.5 (Community Grants and Donations 2024-2025). Cr Power left the room at 6:13pm and returned at 6:21pm and was absent while the matter was being discussed and considered.

Cr Robyn Gulline declared a Conflict of Interest Exemption for Item No. 9.1 (The Wesley Redevelopment Project) under LGA 2020 Section 129(d). Cr Gulline represents Council on their fundraising committee as Chair and for support.

8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

PUBLIC QUESTION FROM DONNA JOHNS OF DRUNG

Question 1

Under the HRCC Governance Rules point 68.1.4 where it says, “any disclosure of a conflict of interest made by a Councillor including the explanation given by the Councillor under Chapter 5” being part of ‘Form and Availability of Minutes’, and Chapter 5 being at 2.2.2 “explaining the nature of the conflict of interest; and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest;” which comes under Disclosure of a Conflict of Interest at a Council Meeting. Firstly, which Council Meeting did you first declare your conflict of interest and what was your explanation to the nature of the conflict and whether it was a general or material conflict?

Response from Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services

Noting the further information provided to Councillors in addition to your public question, I can confirm the Mayor has made repeated declarations of a conflict of interest in relation to Avonbank Mineral Sands. The first declaration in relation to the mine was made on 28 March 2022 with the description of the conflict noted as both general and material. The explanation provided was that the proposed mine is adjacent to the Mayor’s property. The Mayor left the room during discussion of the item. The Mayor has also reaffirmed that conflict at all other occasions where the mine has been discussed and left the room on those occasions too.

Question 2

Secondly which Council Meeting was this explanation minuted in?

Response from Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services

As provided in the above response, the first declaration in relation to Avonbank Mine was made at the 28 March 2022 Council Meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting. All occasions of conflicts declared and the nature of those conflicts of interest are available on Council’s website under the Council Publications tab – <https://www.hrcc.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Governance-and-Transparency/Public-Documents/Council-Publications/Conflict-of-Interest-Register-Councillors>

PUBLIC QUESTION FROM ANGELA MUNN OF HORSHAM

Question 1

When the beautiful and valuable wood in the floor of the town hall was replaced, it was to be used in another community project. Can you please advise of the project it was used for, including its current location?

Response from Krishna Shrestha, Acting Director Infrastructure

When we upgraded the Town Hall heritage floor, the removed floorboards were stored safely and have not been used in any projects so far. Council officers will collaborate with various community groups to determine where and when these items will be utilised.

Question 2

At council meetings, what is the purpose of councillor reports?

Response from Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services

The purpose of the Councillor reports are to provide Councillors with an opportunity to:

- acknowledge significant community members and events – including any notable achievements by community members and groups and/or the offering of condolences for a recently deceased person who had provided distinguished service in the local area; and/or
- report on any meetings, conferences or events that they have recently attended;

It is standard practice for Councillors for provide these reports and does, in part, demonstrate they are performing the role of Councillor as per the Standards of conduct outlined in the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*.

PUBLIC QUESTION FROM BRIAN BASHAM OF HORSHAM**Question 1**

In your weekly message you mentioned that there are 3000 regional vacancies. Can you identify what industries they are in and what HRCC is doing to assist in regional development.

Response from Kevin O'Brien, Director Communities and Place

As outlined in the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Skills Demand Profile Snapshot 2023 [Regional Skills Demand Profiles | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](#). The Victoria Skills Authority 3-year employment projections show significant demand for workers in the region – with 1,700 – 2,400 additional new workers required in the 3 years between 2022 and 2025. At least 1,210 workers will also be needed to replace retirements. Estimates of total new workers for 2022–2025 across the 6 key industries in Wimmera Southern Mallee are as follows:

- agriculture – 230 to 290
- food product manufacturing – 300 to 360
- construction – 230 to 260
- health and community services – 610 to 820
- mineral sands mining – 170 to 210
- visitor economy – 560 to 830

Council is a member of and financial contributor to Wimmera Southern Mallee Development and is represented on the Board by The Mayor. Wimmera Southern Mallee Development is the peak economic development organisation for the Wimmera Southern Mallee region. Wimmera Southern Mallee Development works with the community and governments to attract new investment, further develop existing business and promote the Wimmera's sustainable development opportunities, both within and outside the region.

Council also assists regional development through implementing actions in the Investment Attraction Strategy & Implementation Plan 2022 onwards: [Investment Opportunities - Horsham Rural City Council \(hrcc.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Liveability i.e. provision of health, education, recreation and childcare is important so that when people come to the region for work that they have a great lifestyle. Council has a role in developing facilities such as those developed through City to River or through advocating for better health services and return of passenger rail as an example.

PUBLIC QUESTION FROM NEVILLE MCINTYRE OF MCKENZIE CREEK**Question 1**

When will the public see the Budget?

Response from Kim Hargreaves, Director Corporate Services

As per the media release issued on 18 June 2024, Horsham Rural City Council will request an extension from Local Government Minister Mellissa Horne for the 2024-2025 Budget to be tabled at the Council Meeting on Monday 22 July. The community will therefore receive the budget as per the usual process whereby Council agendas are available on this page from 5pm on Thursdays prior to Council meetings.

The rating differentials will be confirmed as part of the Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2025 updates for 2024-2025 which will also be presented at the Council Meeting on Monday 22 July. The Plan had to be updated as the difference in the valuation change (increase or decrease) between the general differential rate category and another differential rate category has exceeded 3.5% following the general revaluation of properties (1.5.4 Rating Differentials – section i) Trigger for Review of Differentials). It should be noted, however, that properties are valued each year by an independent valuer appointed by the Valuer-General of Victoria who does not take instructions from Council. Property valuations are a completely independent process undertaken in every municipality every 12 months. While HRCC issues your valuation notice on behalf of the state government, Council are not involved in the annual property revaluation process.

STATEMENT READ BY CR ROBYN GULLINE, MAYOR

Councillors, you will recall at the agenda item No. 9.5 at the 27 May 2024 Council Meeting, Cr Ross challenged my chairing in relation to the questioning and clarification changes that I have adopted and consistently applied since the November 2021 Council Meeting.

In my response, I referenced Cr Ross' referral of me to the Local Government Inspectorate about these changes.

On reviewing my 7 April 2022 email from the Inspectorate, I realised that while Cr Ross had been referenced in the complaint, it had actually been lodged by an unidentified community member.

For your reference Councillors, the Inspectorate dismissed the complaint stating...

The Mayor has followed due process in correctly applying and complying with Council's Governance Rules in her deliberations.

Cr Ross, I apologise, that in this instance, my recollection wasn't 100% accurate.

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

CLOSE



SUNIL BHALLA

Chief Executive Officer

REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

9. OFFICERS REPORTS

9.1 THE WESLEY REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Author’s Name:	Kevin O’Brien	Director:	Kevin O’Brien
Author’s Title:	Director Communities & Place	Directorate:	Communities & Place
Department:	Not applicable	File Number:	F34/A02/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest Officer disclosure in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 130: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil	Status Defined as confidential information in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 3(1): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil
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Appendix
Nil

Purpose

To provide an update on the fundraising campaign recently launched by the Wesley Performing Arts and Cultural Centre (Wesley PACC) Committee and recommend underwriting the fundraising campaign for *The Wesley Redevelopment Project* to enable a grant application to the State Government Regional Tourism Investment Fund 2024.

Summary

- Current support provided by Council for *The Wesley Redevelopment Project*
- *The Wesley Redevelopment Project* Fundraising Campaign
- Proposal to underwrite *The Wesley Redevelopment Project* Funding campaign so that an application to the Regional Tourism Investment Fund can be submitted.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Make an application to the Regional Tourism Investment Fund for The Wesley Redevelopment Project by underwriting The Wesley Redevelopment Project fundraising campaign target of \$550,000, so that all funds can be secured for the Regional Tourism Fund Grant application.
2. Allocate a maximum of \$714,000 to The Wesley Redevelopment Project through funding allocations in the 2024-2025 budget (\$224k already budgeted in 2023-2024) and 2025-2026 budget (\$490k).

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr David Bowe

That Council:

1. Make an application to the Regional Tourism Investment Fund for The Wesley Redevelopment Project by underwriting The Wesley Redevelopment Project fundraising campaign target of \$550,000, so that all funds can be secured for the Regional Tourism Fund Grant application.
2. Allocate a maximum of \$714,000 to The Wesley Redevelopment Project through funding allocations in the 2024-2025 budget (\$224k already budgeted in 2023-2024) and 2025-2026 budget (\$490k).

CARRIED

Cr Penny Flynn called for a Division of Council

For the motion:

Cr Robyn Gulline

Cr Bob Redden

Cr Claudia Haenel

Cr David Bowe

Cr Penny Flynn

Cr Les Power

Cr Ian Ross

REPORT

Background

At the 27 June 2022 Council meeting, the following was resolved in relation to *The Wesley Redevelopment Project*:

- Note the progress of planning works undertaken in relation to the proposed redevelopment of Wesley PACC.
- Support the redevelopment of Wesley PACC as proposed in the discussion section of this report i.e. flat floor design.
- Allocate up to \$224k in the 2023-2024 budget towards the redevelopment of the facility.
- Provide support to the Wesley PACC to undertake a community fundraising campaign to raise funding for the project to enable matching funding for any grants submissions.
- Support the Wesley PACC Committee to seek out grant opportunities to obtain the balance of funds required.
- Note that once works are complete, Council will own and operate the facility with annual operating costs estimated to be \$70-\$100k.
- Note that future budget allowances will need to be made for renewal of this asset.

Since June 2022, a complete scope of works has been developed and costed. The project is ready to go to tender once all funds are secured. Cost of works are estimated to be \$2 million. Currently the funding shortfall is \$1,550,000.00 with funding commitments of \$226,000.00 from the WPACC Committee and \$224,000.00 from Council.

Discussion

On 24 April 2024, the Wesley PACC Committee launched a funding campaign to raise an additional \$550,000.00. If the fundraising target is met, this would leave a funding gap of \$1 million. Noting the longer the project is delayed, the more expensive it becomes. Since commencing the Fundraising campaign, the Wesley PACC Committee has raised approximately \$60,000 in funds. The dedicated campaign will run for 6 months (April 2024 - September 2024). Any donation is tax deductible. Philanthropic trusts have also been approached.

There are concerns for the project's viability if the fundraising target of \$550,000 is not met, if grants are not available, nor successful if applied for, or the redevelopment of *The Wesley* is not the priority of Council. If the redevelopment of *The Wesley* does not go ahead this would impact on the reputation of the committee and Council as it has been talked about for a number of years now and a substantial amount and time and effort has been put in by the committee and Council to reopen the facility. Further delays would also erode the funds currently available from the committee with rising capital costs and ongoing operating costs whilst the facility is closed.

Before the Wesley PACC was closed there were approx. 6000 users of the facility. It is estimated that this will grow to approx. 8000 attendees with 156 hires held annually. Events will include local touring performances, small conferences and civil ceremonies, weddings, funerals, forums, meetings, symposiums, workshops, consultations, music recitals, Eisteddfod, youth events and film nights. At present the Horsham Town Hall is not able to meet 15% of enquiries. The economic benefit of events held at *The Wesley* is estimated to bring an additional 300k to the local economy.

To take advantage of the current Regional Tourism Investment Fund, it is recommended that Council underwrite the \$550k fundraising campaign. It is noted that as of 14 June, \$60k has already been raised in fundraising, so the target has been reduced to \$490,000. This would bring Council's total funding commitment to a maximum amount of \$714k with funding to be allocated over two financial years as follows 2024-2025 (\$224k already budgeted in 2023-2024), 2025-2026 (\$490k). Council's contribution would be less if more than the \$60K of funds is raised through the fundraising campaign which is highly likely.

If grant funding is secured, a tender could be awarded as early as December this year. Works could be commenced in February 2025 and be completed by the end of 2025. On these timelines, *The Wesley* could reopen at the start of 2026.

The grant opportunity.

The Regional Tourism Investment Fund 2024 is a competitive Victorian Government investment program supported by the Regional Tourism Enabling Fund to fund high-potential tourism infrastructure projects that support the delivery of Experience Victoria 2033 across regional Victoria.

The Regional Tourism Investment Fund promotes partnerships between the Victorian Government, Local Government Authorities (LGAs), Alpine Resorts Victoria (ARV) and the broader tourism sector including private operators, not-for-profit organisations, Traditional Owners and Aboriginal organisations.

The Regional Tourism Investment Fund is underpinned by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions' priorities of driving a strong and resilient economy that benefits all Victorians – by creating more opportunities for people through jobs and skills, supporting businesses and industries to grow and prosper, and building vibrant communities and regions.

The objectives of the Regional Tourism Investment Fund are to:

1. Deliver strategic tourism infrastructure and accommodation projects that will increase visitation, improve quality of visitor experience, and increase length of stay
2. Deliver projects that broaden Victoria's tourism offering, and support and encourage year-round visitation and dispersal across regional Victoria
3. Leverage and facilitate private sector investment, including through strengthening public tourism infrastructure
4. Drive new jobs and improved outcomes for the State's visitor economy

Funding from the Regional Tourism Investment Fund is available under the following streams:

Minimum grant amount Maximum grant amount

- Stream 1: Small-scale projects \$100,000 \$1,000,000
- Stream 2: Large-scale projects \$1,000,001 \$5,000,000
- Stream 3: Accommodation Uplift \$500,000 \$2,000,000

The Wesley Development Project is best suited to an application under: Stream 1: Small-Scale Projects.

Stream 1 projects take advantage of opportunities to invest in a town or region's 'unique to place'. It supports the development of new, or the redevelopment of existing, smaller-scale tourism infrastructure that improve useability and quality to attract new visitors and offers experience in the case of *The Wesley* in the Arts and Culture space.

Options to Consider

Option 1: Not underwrite *The Wesley Redevelopment Project* fundraising campaign.

Option 2: Council underwrite *The Wesley Redevelopment Project* fundraising campaign.

Option 2 is recommended: *The Wesley* has now been closed for over 6 years. It is critical that the redevelopment works are completed, as costs continue to escalate. It is therefore recommended that the fundraising campaign is underwritten, noting worst case scenario that Council's contribution would be \$737k.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

When the Performing Arts Centre Demand Assessment report in 2018 there was extensive community engagement was undertaken. A community survey was open from 4 September 2018 to 30 September 2018. In total, there were 289 responses received. In addition to the data, there were over 1,700 individual comments across all the questions. The primary outcome from the consultation interviews was that interviewees identified that they felt that Wesley PACC is a unique venue that offers a point of difference. *The Wesley* has a role to play, however, there was concern as to on-going costs and affordability.

There was also identified a need for a smaller space, for primary school usage and providing suitable facilities for smaller music performances. It was noted by interviewees that many members of the community feel that *The Wesley* was a foundation for the performing arts in Horsham and that the usage and programming of Wesley was a major contributor to the initiative to redevelop the Town Hall. Due to higher cost overheads regarding the use Horsham Town Hall usage of Wesley PACC for a number of smaller community groups will be more cost effective.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The creation of a flat floor small performing arts space is considered innovative as it adds to the current arts space provision by providing a unique space.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

An amount of up to \$224,000.00 has been allocated in the 2023-2024 budget to provide funding for the project. An additional \$490,000 would be provided through an allocation in the 2025-2026 financial year.

Contribution	
Horsham Rural City Council (already committed in 2023-2024)	<u>\$224,000.00</u>
Wesley PACC Committee	<u>\$226,000.00</u>
Community fundraising/and or other (philanthropic)	\$550,00.000
Less Current raised	<u>\$60,000.00</u>
Council Underwriting Amount (allocation in 2025-2026)	<u>\$490,000.00</u>
External Grant (Regional Tourism Investment Fund)	<u>\$1000,000.00</u>
Total	\$2000,000.00

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

2021 Creative State

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2018 Performing Arts Demand Assessment Report

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme 1 Community: Initiatives and Priorities

- Support and empower localised community groups in their goals and plans
- Enhance the inclusivity, accessibility and safety of our places and spaces
- Promote and support the municipality's key tourism, events, and local and cultural offerings

Theme 2: Liveability: Initiatives and Priorities

- Promote opportunities for life long social interactions and enjoyment
- Create engaging spaces and places for social connection and wellbeing to build community resilience
- Encourage participation, diversity and growth in sports, events, arts, and culture

2023-2024 Annual Action Plan

- 1.2.3 Support Wesley Committee to make the Wesley Performing Arts Centre operational, (subject to funding).

2024 Horsham Rural City Council Tourism Destination Local Area Action Plan

Risk Implications

The Wesley PACC has commenced a fundraising campaign with a target of \$550,00.00. Donors need to have surety when donating funds that the project will go ahead. Underwriting the fundraising campaign provided this surety and also enables a funding application to be submitted to the Regional Tourism Investment Fund.

Conclusion

The primary outcome of the Horsham Performing Arts Future Services Demand Assessment has identified that there is a role for *The Wesley* in that it fills a gap in the existing provision of cultural facilities by providing a small intimate space that is very highly regarded by the community. If further developed it also provides the opportunity for broadening the arts and cultural program. This has the potential to build upon Horsham's support of the creative industries and growing reputation as a cultural destination. By Council underwriting the fundraising campaign, a grant application can be submitted for the additional \$1 million required for the project to go ahead.

9.2 RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONE COMMUNITY BENEFITS PLAN

Author’s Name:	Kevin O’Brien	Director:	Kevin O’Brien
Author’s Title:	Director Communities & Place	Directorate:	Communities & Place
Department:	Not applicable	File Number:	F06/A13/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest Officer disclosure in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 130: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil	Status Defined as confidential information in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 3(1): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil
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Appendix
Draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan May 2024 (Appendix 9.2A)

Purpose

To present Council’s submission to the *Draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan*.

- Summary**
- Planning and development of Renewal Energy Zones
 - Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan
 - Feedback on Draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan

Recommendation

That Council make a submission to State Government on the Draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan May 2024 (Appendix 9.2A) as per contents contained in Table 1 of the *Discussion* section of this report.

Council Resolution
MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded Cr Claudia Haenel
That Council make a submission to State Government on the Draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan May 2024 (Appendix 9.2A) as per contents contained in Table 1 of the *Discussion* section of this report.

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

VicGrid is a division within the Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). It coordinates the overarching planning and development of Victoria's Renewable Energy Zones. This includes coordinating new transmission infrastructure to reduce impacts as much as possible and create benefits for landholders, local communities, and Traditional Owners.

An important first step in building the Victorian Transmission Plan is to identify "Renewable Energy Zone Priority Areas". These are geographical areas that could be appropriate for the development of generation, storage and transmission. They are a starting point from which further investigation and planning for Renewable Energy Zones can be undertaken. To help identify Priority Areas, VicGrid is conducting a state-wide energy-specific Strategic Land Use Assessment (or SLUA). The purpose of this assessment is to help guide where Renewable Energy Zone development should occur across the state, considering a range of land use, engineering, environmental, cultural and social factors. It will also consider local and regional values and preferences, to minimise local community impacts and maximise opportunities for regions to benefit from Renewable Energy Zone development. The result of this state-wide assessment will be a high-level view of the suitability of land for potentially hosting renewable energy generation and transmission. The outcomes of this assessment will help to avoid or minimise impacts to areas that are considered highly sensitive or significant.

The Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan will establish how the Victorian Government will allocate funds from transmission companies and energy project developers, to deliver lasting benefits to landholders, communities and First Peoples. A draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan has been developed (**Appendix 9.2A**). The State Government wants to hear community and regional stakeholders' views to help deliver lasting benefits for those communities hosting renewable energy development.

The Renewable Energy Zone 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.

Discussion

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 thinking and feedback on the proposed benefits as follows:

- 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.

Proposed Submission

The following points are recommended for inclusion in a submission to Vic Grid regarding their Draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan.

Table 1: Council feedback to the Draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan.

Council supports the following aspects of the Draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefit Fund	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The development of a community benefit scheme that returns value and opportunity to hosting communities. 2. The use of place-based decision making. Council considers that local communities are best placed to determine projects that are of regional and local strategic importance. 3. Government's commitment to partner with First Peoples to co-design benefits for Traditional owners in Renewable Energy Zones and related transmission corridors.
Council recommends the following considerations for the eligibility of projects under the Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Fund.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Eligible projects must deliver strategic, long-term/ intergenerational benefits for host communities that support greater equity and the sustainable growth of communities. 5. To ensure maximum benefit for host communities, eligibility for funding must be broadened from energy projects only to include priorities deemed to have the most strategic importance by the host community. In some communities, energy projects will not be the most impactful option. 6. The definition of hosting communities should be expanded to include communities where energy/transmission workers will be based. An influx of residents to host communities will have implications for community infrastructure, housing availability, demand on support services including childcare, health and community services. 7. Investment in community infrastructure under the Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Fund should not be used to replace existing State and Federal Government funding responsibilities. 8. Local Government Authorities should be explicitly included as an eligible organisation, recognising their place as the service provider, maintainer and delivery agent for many community assets and services in rural and regional communities. An overwhelming majority of critical community assets are owned or managed by Local Government including open spaces, playgrounds, recreation facilities, halls, libraries, senior citizen facilities, kindergartens as well as waste and sustainability activities and Local Government exclusion would be to the wider community's detriment. 9. Local Government Authorities should be eligible to act as auspice organisations for volunteer, community and not for profit groups with limited project delivery experience and expertise. 10. The application processes for the Community Benefits Fund should be designed to ensure there is minimal burden on applicants and the focus is on best outcomes for the region such as grant categories in the program

Horsham Rural City Council**Council Meeting**

	guidelines ensure that the administration requirements are commensurate to the grant amount.
Recommendations following considerations for how decisions will be made on the Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Fund.	<p>11. Key strategic planning documents, such as the Regional Economic Development Strategies and Council strategic plans, should be required as a reference for decision-making in the allocation of funds. These documents represent significant consultation with communities and articulation of regional priorities.</p> <p>12. Consideration in the decision-making process needs to be given to the administration of these funds – currently the proposed Renewable Energy Zone areas do not align with any existing local or state government boundaries as they, understandably, follow the energy resources. This however could complicate the distribution of funds as reference groups are made up from organisations such as the Regional Partnerships who follow boundary alignments.</p>
Council also recommends the following for consideration:	<p>13. Flexibility in the fund, that allows for funding accruals and/or bring forward future years funding to support significant projects that are deemed a priority and require substantial investment.</p> <p>14. The option of pooling of funds in applications that can demonstrate wider community benefit.</p>

Options to Consider

Option 1: Make a submission as proposed in this report

Option 2: Not make a submission

Option 1 is supported as it is important that Council influence what the Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan looks like so that it provides a great benefit for the community.

Sustainability Implications

Community benefits are an acknowledgement by government that new infrastructure from renewable energy projects result 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.

Community Engagement

Due to the timeframe when the draft plan was made available to the community and stakeholders (14 May 2024-2025 June 2025), no community engagement has occurred as part of developing the Council submission apart from engaging Wimmera Southern Mallee Development and Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnerships.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not applicable

Collaboration

Discussions have taken place at the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnerships forum, and it was agreed that Local Councils, Wimmera Southern Mallee Development as well as Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnerships should make a submission.

Financial Implications

Not applicable

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

- Victoria's Climate Change Strategy 2021-2030
- Victoria's 2035 Emissions Reduction Target: Driving Real Climate Action
- Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnerships roadmap 2018
- Wimmera Southern Mallee Development 2023-2027 Strategic Plan

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 3 – Sustainability

Strategies

- Achieve a sustainable and sound environmental future
- A region where climate change impacts are addressed and remediated
- A region that attracts new investment, technologies and opportunities

Risk Implications

Not applicable

Conclusion

The Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan will establish how the Victorian Government will allocate funds from transmission companies and energy project developers, to deliver lasting benefits to landholders, communities and First Peoples. It is important that feedback is provided on the draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan, so it provides maximum benefits to the community and the broader region.

9.3 REQUEST FOR INCLUSION ON COUNCIL’S STREET NAME LIST – WOODHART

Author’s Name:	Kayla Christian	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author’s Title:	Co-ordinator Rates	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Finance	File Number:	F27/A15/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest Officer disclosure in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 130: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil	Status Defined as confidential information in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 3(1): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil
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Appendix
Nil

Purpose

To seek approval to the inclusion of the name Woodhart on Council’s Street Naming list.

Summary

- Shane Woodhart has requested that the name Woodhart be added to Council’s Street Naming list to honour his late mother, Lorna Woodhart.

Recommendation

That Council endorse the inclusion of the name Woodhart on Council’s Street Naming list.

Council Resolution
MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr David Bowe
That Council endorse the inclusion of the name Woodhart on Council’s Street Naming list.

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

The *Naming rules for places in Victoria* – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities – 2022 (the naming rules) have replaced the 2016 naming rules. They are the statutory guidelines provided for under section 5 of the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*; and are mandatory for all naming authorities in Victoria – councils, government departments and emergency response and public service providers – and include all government-owned or administered roads, features (natural or otherwise) and localities. Based on national standards and policies, they provide a strong basis for standardised and clear naming procedures across the state.

Members of the public are encouraged to participate in the naming process in Victoria by proposing a name, initiating a proposal or responding to a relevant naming authority regarding a naming proposal. Any applicant requesting to have a new name placed on Council's Street Naming list must submit an application to Council for approval with substantiating information to support their request. Criteria include significant contributions to the local community; linkages to the history of the locality; and/or significant / notable achievements.

Developers should consult the respective road naming authority when preparing plans of subdivision but can put forward their own preferred street name for consideration and approval. Alternatively they can choose to use a particular name from the Council Street Naming list. Council currently has over 50 names to choose from on that list.

Discussion

A naming proposal request has been made by a member of the public, Shane Woodhart, to include the name Woodhart on Council's Street Naming list to commemorate his mother, Lorna Woodhart. Born and raised in Horsham and the surrounding district, Lorna and her family were farmers at Kalkee. After her marriage, Lorna moved to Chelsea and Swan Hill with her husband Edward but returned to Horsham in the late 1960's and remained living in Horsham and Riverside until she passed away.

Lorna was heavily involved in many local organisations including the Victorian Farmers Federation, the Wimmera CMA, GWM Water, Rural Financial Counselling, Wimmera Machinery Field Days, local sporting clubs and neighbourhood watch. Lorna was also an active member in the community serving as Vice President of the Horsham Garden Club, Secretary of the Horsham Spring Garden Festival and Local Community Australia Day Award Recipient in 2001. She was also part of the Hospital ladies' auxiliary group and volunteered in the Hospital Op Shop.

Options to Consider

Council can opt not to approve a request for street/road/place naming and may select an appropriate name of their choice after consideration of the requirements of the policy.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

Details of how the community can nominate a new name to the street naming list is available on Council's website along with the application form for doing so. This proposal has arisen from a member of the public completing that process.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not applicable

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

This proposal has no financial implications.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2022

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan

Horsham Rural City Council Road, Feature and Locality Naming Policy

Risk Implications

The process by which the names were provided and the intent for inclusion of the names on Council's Naming list conforms to the naming rules and Council policy which mitigates the risk associated with consideration of their inclusion.

Conclusion

The name Woodhart conforms to the relevant statutory requirements and Council's relevant policy. The request for the addition of name to the Street Naming list was submitted to and processed by Council's Rate Collector as required by that policy. The name is considered appropriate to be added to Council's Street Naming list.

9.4 AGE FRIENDLY PLAN 2024 - 2027

Author's Name:	Louise Kelly	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author's Title:	Acting Community Inclusion Officer	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Governance and Information Management	File Number:	F07/A09/000002

Officer Conflict of Interest Officer disclosure in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 130: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil	Status Defined as confidential information in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 3(1): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil
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Appendix
Age Friendly Plan 2024-2027 **(Appendix 9.4A)**
Draft Age Friendly Plan 2024-2027 - Summary of responses **(Appendix 9.4B)**

Purpose

To present the Age Friendly Plan 2024-2027 for adoption.

Summary

- A Draft Age Friendly Plan was developed based on research and engagement with our community and Council staff.
- The Plan is a renewal of the Age Friendly Communities Implementation Plan adopted by Council in 2019.
- Community consultation occurred over a period of 4 weeks following approval by Council to undertake community engagement.
- Four individual submissions were received from the community, which contained a range of suggestions.
- Some changes have been made to the Plan as a result of those submissions.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the Age Friendly Plan 2024-2027 **(Appendix 9.4A)**.

Council Resolution
MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr Claudia Haenel
That Council adopt the Age Friendly Plan 2024-2027 **(Appendix 9.4A)**.

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

Horsham Rural City has a total population of approximately 20,500 people with some 5,746 of these aged 60 or over, representing 28% of the overall population. The statistics indicate that we have an aging population. This data indicates the importance of developing an age friendly community with resources and facilities that improve access and liveability for older people.

Discussion

Council needs an Age Friendly Plan to ensure that we develop and deliver inclusive and accessible projects, services and facilities, and continue to develop an age friendly community.

Key opportunities to improve access and liveability for people as they age include:

- Celebrate older people as valuable members of the community
- Communicate and engage with older people in a way that works for them
- Accessibility of infrastructure, particularly paths, crossings, and buildings
- A diverse range of events and activities
- Employment and volunteering opportunities.

The draft Plan was developed following a process of community engagement that occurred between August and November 2023. The Older Persons Advisory Committee provided advice to staff around relevant engagement activities with these activities then conducted by Council staff.

Community engagement included an online survey, engagement at the Expo, workshops and focus groups and reached 197 people, including:

- 12 people across two meetings with the Older Persons Advisory Committee
- 10 staff at one staff workshop
- 113 people at workshops with Horsham U3A, Horsham Probus and Upper Class
- Individual feedback from 62 people either completing the survey online or at the Expo.

Note: Some people may have participated multiple times in the engagement.

The feedback received from the engagement activities identified a range of barriers that exist in our community. This led to discussion as to how HRCC can improve liveability for Seniors through projects, systems, and initiatives that we implement. An action plan was then developed as a result of these discussions. The Plan is intended to identify priorities for older people living in our municipality. Progressing the implementation of the plan will lead to an increasingly age friendly community.

The Age Friendly Plan includes six themes:

1. Outdoor spaces and buildings
2. Transport
3. Housing
4. Respect and social inclusion
5. Civic participation
6. Communication and information.

The draft Plan was presented to Council in March for approval to distribute for community feedback. Engagement was conducted over a four-week period in April 2024 with feedback from the community sought on the draft Age Friendly Plan 2024-2027. The attached report (**Appendix 9.4B**) summarises the feedback received and any changes to the Plan made as a result of that feedback.

Options to Consider

Council can decide not to adopt the Plan however a draft was informed through consultation with the public and the Older Persons Advisory Committee. Further feedback was then invited on the draft document with a final document now presented for adoption. Council needs an Age Friendly Plan to ensure that we develop and deliver inclusive and accessible projects, services and facilities, and continue to develop an age friendly community. Adoption of the plan is therefore recommended.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

The development of the draft plan was informed by the community engagement activity outlined in the report and supplemented by the community consultation period. The draft Plan was presented to Council who agreed that the Plan would undergo a period of community consultation over a four-week period.

During this consultation four submissions were received. A detailed engagement report is attached outlining those suggestions that have resulted in changes to the Aged Friendly Plan 2024-2027 now presented for adoption (refer **Appendix 9.4B**).

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The World Health Organisation provides a checklist for age friendly cities. The previous Age Friendly Communities Implementation Plan was developed based on this checklist. For this Age Friendly Plan the survey was guided by some of the sections from the WHO checklist, in particular the sections that are relevant to local government. To be innovative and continue to work towards developing an age friendly community, referring to this resource will be helpful.

Collaboration

The Older Persons Advisory Committee will play a key role prioritising and providing advice on the implementation of the plan.

Financial Implications

Some actions within the plan will require funding and staff resources to implement.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan

Theme 1 – Community: Enhance the inclusivity, accessibility and safety of our places and spaces.

Risk Implications

In developing the plan and during the consultation period following the draft, we have actively listened to the community. While many of the ideas and issues raised fall outside the scope of this specific plan, they are within the broader scope of Council's responsibilities. Some of these issues highlight the need for community education about the work we can and will deliver.

Conclusion

This submission is presented to Councillors to adopt The Age Friendly Plan 2024-2027. This will ensure Horsham Rural City Council becomes an increasingly inclusive organisation, and will assist us to deliver projects, services and places that are inclusive of people as they age.

Cr Les Power left the room at 6.13pm

9.5 COMMUNITY GRANTS AND DONATIONS 2024-2025

Author’s Name:	Susan Surridge	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author’s Title:	Co-ordinator Community Relations and Advocacy	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Community Relations and Advocacy	File Number:	F20/A01/000016

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

☒ Yes ☐ No

Reason:

At all levels of the assessment process, those on the assessment panels and at briefings have been requested to declare any conflict of interest and to not discuss or vote on any particular applications where there may be a real or perceived conflict of interest. Details of conflict of interest declarations made by Officers and others involved in the process is attached (**Appendix 9.5B**)

Status

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

Reason: Nil

- Appendix**
- Community Events Grants 2024-2025 (**Appendix 9.5A**)
 - Community Grants and Donations Conflict of Interest Declarations (**Appendix 9.5B**)
 - Community Events Grants Application Form (**Appendix 9.5C**)
 - Community Events Grants Guidelines 2024-2025 (**Appendix 9.5D**)

Purpose

To approve the Community Events Grants for 2024-2025 financial year.

Summary

This report details community event grant allocations recommended for approval.

- This is the first year that Council has run a separate community event grant funding round.
- A total of 29 Community Event grant applications were received requesting \$131,317.03.
- The budget allocation for Community Events funding for 2024-2025 is \$73,000. Of this, a total of \$69,960 is recommended to be allocated for 25 Community Events with a small contingency of approximately 4% retained.
- There will be no second round of funding made available in November as the annual funding has been exhausted in the first round.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Approve various Community Event Grants as detailed in **Appendix 9.5A**.
2. Advise all successful and unsuccessful community event grant applicants of the outcome of their applications by 5 July 2024.

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Bob Redden, Seconded Cr David Bowe

That Council:

1. Approve various Community Event Grants as detailed in **Appendix 9.5A**.
2. Advise all successful and unsuccessful community event grant applicants of the outcome of their applications by 5 July 2024.

CARRIED

Cr Claudia Haenel abstained from voting.

Cr Les Power returned to the room at 6.21pm

REPORT

Background

Council approved a revised Community Grants Policy on 18 December 2023 that split the community grants program into four streams:

- 1. Community Development Grants - annual program open in February each year
- 2. Community Events Grants – open in May and November each year
- 3. Youth Grants – open continuously from 1 July each year until funding is exhausted
- 4. Quick Response Small Grants - open continuously from 1 July each year until funding is exhausted.

At the Council meeting held on 27 May, Council allocated funding of \$422,579 in the 2024-2025 Budget for approved community grants and donations as follows:

- Community donations	\$190,695
- Community development grants	\$137,548
- Events grants	\$ 73,000
- Youth grants	\$ 10,000
- Quick response grants	\$ 11,336

Discussion

This year, in accordance with the revised 2024-2025 Community Grants Policy, the Community were invited to submit applications for grant funding for community events for the first time. Applications were open 1 to 31 May 2024.

Following the closing date, Council received 29 applications requesting a total of \$131,317.03 in community grants. Applications have been considered by:

- an internal assessment panel as detailed in the Community Grants Policy,
- the Executive Management Team (11 June 2024); and
- at a Council Briefing meeting (17 June 2024).

A final list of proposed Community Event Grants (**Appendix 9.5A**) has been developed for the consideration and approval of Council.

A ranking system was designed for use in the assessment of the applications for 2024-2025 and reflected the assessment criteria in the event grant guidelines. The objective of the ranking system is to provide general guidance for assessors and greater transparency in the assessment process. The grant application form (**Appendix 9.5C**) and the event grant guidelines (**Appendix 9.5D**) outline the assessment criteria applied.

It is proposed that groups be advised of the outcome of their grant application as soon as practicable following the adoption of the Community Events Grants for 2024-2025. This will assist them in preparing for the implementation of their events for the 2024-2025 financial year.

While it was initially thought that there may be a second round of funding available in November, the first round of funding was over-subscribed and exhausted the available funding and as such there will be no second-round funding.

Options to Consider

That Council accept the recommendations of the assessment panel and endorse the allocation of funds as per the amounts specified in the report. Alternatively, Council may decide not to support the panel recommendations.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

General Community Grant Information Sessions were held prior to the Community Grants closing date. These were held in both Horsham and Natimuk. Applications for the event grants were advertised extensively in Council's e-newsletter, the Weekly Advertiser and Council's website during the month of May. An information session for the Events Grants was also held at Council on 1 May 2024.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The creation of a grant funding round specifically for community events is an innovation for the 2024-2025 year.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

The total amount requested from the 29 applications received was \$131,317.03 against a budget allocation for events grants of \$73,000. The amount recommended by the panel for allocation to 25 community groups is \$69,960 which will leave a small amount for budget for any contingencies.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

- 2021-2025 Council Plan (including the Health and Wellbeing Plan)
- Community Inclusion Plan
- Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan
- Youth Strategy
- Age-Friendly Communities Implementation Plan
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2023-2026

Risk Implications

Having a separate funding round for Community events is a change to previous years and will need to be reviewed to ensure Council objectives are being achieved.

Conclusion

The 2024-2025 Community Events Grants program will release significant money into the local community and economy to support a variety of diverse, inclusive and vibrant community events. The local expenditure resulting from this Council support will provide both an important economic stimulus to our not-for-profit sector as well as enable opportunities for participation and social connectivity.

9.6 INVESTMENT POLICY

Author’s Name:	Belinda Johnson	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author’s Title:	Chief Financial Officer	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Finance	File Number:	F19/A10/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest Officer disclosure in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 130: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil	Status Defined as confidential information in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 3(1): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil
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Appendix
Investment Policy (Appendix 9.6A)

Purpose

To present the revised Investment Policy for adoption.

Summary

- Council has an Investment Policy that has not been amended since adoption on 20 July 2009.
- The intention of that policy is to direct how Council invests surplus funds
- The current process of managing investments requires revision.
- The Audit and Risk Committee endorsed the Investment Policy at their 20 June 2024 meeting and recommend to Council that the policy be adopted.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the Investment Policy (Appendix 9.6A).

Council Resolution
MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Ian Ross

That Council adopt the Investment Policy (Appendix 9.6A) including the following wording at 4.7(vi):
The Chief Financial Officer prepares a quarterly financial report incorporated in the Quarterly Performance Report provided to Council and the Audit and Risk Committee as soon as possible at the end of the reporting period.

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

Council currently has an Investment Policy that has not been amended since its adoption on 20 July 2009. The intention of that policy was to direct how Council invested surplus funds to the best advantage of Council and to safeguard Council's funds as far as practicable with permitted investments made in accordance with the provisions of s143 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Discussion

The Investment Policy has since undergone an extensive review, including ensuring that the updated policy aligns with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* (s103).

The policy provides for surplus funds to be invested in a manner which provides the highest investment return with the maximum security, while meeting the daily cash flow demands. The policy also ensures any investments conform to legislation governing the investment of local government funds.

A major change reflected in the revised policy relates to the options for investment, most notably that investments will be diversified by institution. To control the credit quality on the entire portfolio, credit framework limits will be applied to the percentage of the portfolio exposed to any particular credit rating category.

An earlier version of the revised policy was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee in December 2023 with a request that an updated policy addressing feedback be presented to the next Audit and Risk Committee meeting. At the March meeting (the next meeting referred to), it was reported that Council had recently employed a Chief Financial Officer so the decision was made to allow the CFO time to consider the policy and amend as appropriate, noting the feedback provided at the December 2023 meeting.

An updated version of the policy addressing the feedback provided by the Audit and Risk Committee was presented to the Committee at their meeting on 20 June 2024. At the meeting the Committee endorsed the Investment Policy provided at **Appendix 9.6A** and recommend to Council that the Policy be adopted.

The updated Investment policy is also supported by a comprehensive Investment Procedure which outlines the steps to be taken in relation to Investing/redeeming Council funds from both Cash Management Account (overnight investment) and Term Deposit Accounts (short/long term investment). The Committee also endorsed the Investment Procedure that supports the policy and recommend to EMT that the procedure be adopted.

Options to Consider

Council approval and adoption of the Policy will provide guidance to Council with how to invest funds and establishes the basis for the investment of Council's surplus funds and to optimise the balance between risk and return.

Council may choose not to adopt the policy however this places Council in a position where it may no longer be able to adequately manage risks associated with investments.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

Preliminary revised documents were presented to the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 7 December 2023 where further revisions were requested based on the Committee's feedback.

Final drafts of the Investment Policy and Procedure were reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee at their 20 June 2024 meeting. The Audit and Risk Committee endorsed the policy and procedure at that meeting and recommend to Council that both be adopted by the respective authorising entities.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

As custodians of public money this policy aims to balance the security of investments, rate of return, and commitment to supporting environmentally and socially responsible investments.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

There are financial benefits associated with maximising returns on investment.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 5 – Leadership

Risk Implications

There are risk implications if Council does not have a rigorous approach to investment. The updated policy reduces those risks by ensuring investments are managed in an appropriate, transparent and ethical manner. The Policy also ensures that investment is undertaken within approved risk guidelines and in a manner to ensure the security of funds.

Conclusion

Council has an approach to investment that has not been revisited since the investment policy was adopted in 2009. A proposed revised investment policy is now presented to the Committee for consideration and recommends council funds be invested in a manner that provides the highest investment return with the maximum security while meeting daily cash flow demands. The policy is supported by a comprehensive procedure which applies to Council officers with delegated authority to invest HRCC funds.

9.7 RATE CONCESSIONS FOR CULTURAL, RECREATIONAL AND CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS POLICY

Author’s Name:	Kayla Christian	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author’s Title:	Co-ordinator Rates	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Finance	File Number:	F19/A10/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest Officer disclosure in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 130: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil	Status Defined as confidential information in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 3(1): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil
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Appendix
Rate Concessions for Cultural, Recreational and Charitable Organisations Policy (**Appendix 9.7A**)

Purpose

To present the updated Rate Concessions for Cultural, Recreational and Charitable Organisations Policy.

Summary

- The Rate Concessions for Cultural, Recreational and Charitable Organisations Policy provides:
- Details of Council’s ability to set a separate rating structure for cultural and recreational lands.
 - Identification of the four heads of charity that are entitled for consideration of a rate concession.
 - Detailed eligibility criteria and rules that must be met for a rate concession to be granted to a cultural, recreational or charitable organisation with the proposed revision adding further rigour to the criteria.
 - Decision process - flow chart to assist in the application of the policy, which is required to be read in-conjunction with the eligibility criteria and definitions outlined in the policy.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the updated Rate Concessions for Cultural, Recreational and Charitable Organisations Policy (**Appendix 9.7A**).

Council Resolution
MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Bob Redden

That Council adopt the updated Rate Concessions for Cultural, Recreational and Charitable Organisations Policy (**Appendix 9.7A**).

CARRIED

REPORT

Background

The Rate Concessions for Cultural, Recreational and Charitable Organisations Policy ensures that all cultural, recreational and charitable organisations in the municipality have the opportunity to be considered for a rate concession. It was established to articulate the eligibility criteria that a cultural, recreational and charitable organisation need to meet before they are eligible for a rate concession. The Policy was first adopted by Council in June 2015 and last reviewed in April 2019.

The Rate Concessions for Cultural, Recreational and Charitable Organisations Policy forms an important part of the Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024.

Discussion

The policy has recently undergone review and is considered still aligned with the legislation and no gaps have been identified however a minor change was made to improve the utility of the document. The changes proposed to the policy seek to deliver a fairer policy for all cultural, recreational and charitable groups within the community and more clearly define the rules around exemptions for consistency and equity.

The policy affirms that all cultural, recreational and charitable organisations will continue to pay their Fire Services Property Levy and waste charges, if utilising this service, but will be exempt from paying the municipal charge if eligible for the concession.

The policy includes a decision process flow chart that assists in the decision making for Cultural and Recreational Organisations but not all charities. The flow chart assists the assessor to determine if a cultural or recreational organisation will receive a 50% or 100% rate concessioning accordance with the *Culture and Recreational Lands Act 1963*.

One of the key eligibility criteria for rate concession is 'An organisations capacity to raise significant income'. Although the policy provides a definition of 'Capacity to raise significant income', it is difficult to determine if an organisation has additional revenue raising capacity, without viewing their financial information.

Administrative changes made to the Policy include:

- Updating policy in line with the updated Horsham Rural City Council logo and policy format.
- Amend section 4.1.8 of the policy to require all organisations requesting a rate concession provide full and complete financial information to help determine if an organisation has the capacity to raise significant income.

Options to Consider

Council may choose not to adopt the updated policy however the inclusion of a review of financial information places Council in a position where it can make more informed decisions about eligibility for concession.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

Only minor administrative change is being proposed the policy. EMT considered the proposed change on 11 June and Council on 17 June with the updated policy now presented for formal adoption rather than updated via the option for administrative amendment.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

As custodians of public money, this policy aims to ensure Council has robust processes to assess cultural, recreational and charitable organisations' eligibility for a rate concession before such a concession is applied.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

There are financial costs associated with providing concessions, it is therefore vital that concessions are only awarded to eligible applicants. The proposed update to the policy seeks to strengthen the eligibility assessment.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 5 – Leadership

Risk Implications

There are risks associated with a lack of robust assessment criteria associated with any eligibility criteria resulting in a financial discount. The revised policy seeks to strengthen the assessment for eligibility by ensuring contemporary financial information is provided by the applicant to ensure any concessions are appropriately applied.

Conclusion

All cultural, recreational and charitable organisations in the municipality have the opportunity to be considered for a rate concession. It is vital that such concessions are appropriately applied so the revisions to the policy seek to strengthen the assessment criteria to ensure only eligible organisations are granted the concession.

9.8 FEES AND CHARGES 2024-2025 – BIN SERVICES AND WASTE MANAGEMENT CHARGES

Author's Name:	Belinda Johnson	Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Author's Title:	Chief Financial Officer	Directorate:	Corporate Services
Department:	Finance	File Number:	F18/A14/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

Reason: Nil

Status

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

☐ Yes ☒ No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Horsham Rural City Council Register of Fees and Charges 2024-2025 (**Appendix 9.8A**)

Purpose

To present the bin services and waste management fees for inclusion in the Horsham Rural City Council Register of Fees and Charges 2024-2025.

Summary

- Council adopted the Horsham Rural City Council Register of Fees and Charges for 2024-2025 at the May 2024 meeting.
- At adoption it was noted that the fees and charges provided were based on information available at the time of publishing and that information may vary during the financial year subject to any changes in Council's policy or legislation.
- It was specifically noted in that register that some fees would be calculated and resolved by Council separately. Those fees and charges all relate to bin services and waste management fees.
- The fees to be charged in respect to bin services and waste management during the 2024-2025 financial year are now provided for adoption.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the bin services and waste management fees and confirm their inclusion in the Horsham Rural City Council Register of Fees and Charges for 2024-2025 (**Appendix 9.8A**).

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr Ian Ross

That Council adopt the bin services and waste management fees and confirm their inclusion in the Horsham Rural City Council Register of Fees and Charges for 2024-2025 (**Appendix 9.8A**).

CARRIED

Cr Penny Flynn called for a Division of Council

For the motion:

Cr Robyn Gulline

Cr Penny Flynn

Cr Les Power

Cr Ian Ross

Against the motion:

Cr Bob Redden

Cr Claudia Haenel

Cr David Bowe

REPORT

Background

The Register of Fees and Charges for 2024-2025 was presented as an item separate from the budget with the reason for doing so two-fold. Firstly, the provision of information at that time ensures the community and customers are aware of the changes to fees in advance of those changes being made. Secondly, having the Register presented as a document separate to the budget means it is easier to present any changes required during the year for consideration by Council, noting that the fees and charges are based on information available at the time of publishing and may vary during the financial year subject to any changes in Council's policy or legislation.

Discussion

Council adopted the Horsham Rural City Council Register of Fees and Charges for 2024-2025 at the May 2024 meeting. At the time it was noted in the Register that there were calculations of fees and charges to be resolved by Council separately.

It was also noted in the report accompanying the Register that Environment Protection Authority Waste Levies have increased in the State Budget released earlier in May and that Council was still calculating some of the associated fees. The specific fees and charges related to or influenced by the Environment Protection Authority Waste Levies are now provided for adoption (**Appendix 9.8A**).

Options to Consider

Council has the option not to disclose fees and charges they intend to levy for various goods and services. Even though the information is not required by legislation, the provision of such information is considered best practice and good governance. It is therefore recommended that Council opt to adopt the Register presented and disclose the fees and charges.

Sustainability Implications

There are statutory fees and other charges that Council must apply. Council also sets fees and charges that are non-statutory in nature and represent user fees. The fees and charges register identifies which fees are statutory and those which are non-statutory and provides explanation for any variance greater than 10% from previous years.

Council sets out the rationale for the pricing of services in its adopted Revenue and Rating Plan which cites the following basis for the setting of fees and charges:

1. Market Price – where Council sets prices based on the benchmarked competitive prices of alternate suppliers. Market prices will be used when other providers exist in the given market and Council needs to meet its obligations under the government's Competitive Neutrality Policy.
2. Full Cost Recovery – where Council aims to recover all direct and indirect costs incurred by Council. This pricing is used where a service benefits individual customers specifically.
3. Subsidised Price – where Council may receive alternative revenue to offset the cost or service or provides the service to the customer with a reduced price to promote inclusiveness or some other intangible benefit.

Community Engagement

The additional fees and charges were discussed with Councillors in a Briefing on 11 June. Noting the Budget will now be presented in July, Council has opted to provide these further fees and charges in advance of the adoption of the budget so the community and customers of Council are aware of the changes in advance of those changes occurring.

Financial Implications

The fees and charges directly affect the 2024-2025 Budget as they represent both statutory and user fees. On that basis they represent a form of revenue within the budget. Council's methodology for fees and charges pricing is set out in the Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The fees and charges have been developed in accordance with the requirements of the Better Practice Guide which accompanies the Local Government Model Budget provided by Local Government Victoria. Relevant statutory charges set by other levels of government and collected by Council have been included in the Register to assist the community in navigating this complex area.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

The fees and charges have been prepared with reference to previous years' charges and in line with key Council documentation such as Community Vision 2041, the 2021-2025 Council Plan, Annual Action Plan Year 3: 2024-2025 and Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-2024.

Risk Implications

While there is no legislative requirement to disclose fees and charges it is considered best practice to do so. Adopting best practice principles helps to reduce risk to Council and ensures we are being transparent in the application of such fees.

Conclusion

The 2024-2025 Register of Fees and Charges, both statutory and non-statutory, has been prepared as part of the budget development. They were presented to Council for adoption in advance of the formal adoption of the Budget 2024-2025 to ensure community and customers are aware of the changes to those fees and charges in advance of any changes being implemented and will be incorporated into revenue calculations for the 2024-2025 Budget. The fees and charges provided here represent the completion of the Register noting the provision to vary during the financial year subject to any changes in Council's policy or legislation.

REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

9.9 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND GROWTH DEPARTMENT REPORT

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

Officer Conflict of Interest Officer disclosure in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 130: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil	Status Defined as confidential information in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 3(1): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil
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Appendix
Spendmapp Report April 2024 (Appendix 9.9A)

Purpose

To present the Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report for April 2024.

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

Recommendation

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

Council Resolution
MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Les Power
That Council receive and note agenda item:

- 9.9 Investment Attraction and Growth Department Report for April 2024.
- 9.10 Chief Executive Officer’s Operational Report for June 2024.

CARRIED

Cr Bob Redden left the room at 6.36pm and returned at 6.45pm

Council Resolution
MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr Ian Ross
That the meeting adjourn to assist Cr Redden.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 6.38pm

Horsham Rural City Council

Council Meeting

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Les Power, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn

That the meeting resume.

CARRIED

The meeting resumed at 6.41pm

REPORT

Background

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

Discussion

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

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

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

Year 1 - 2022-2023

Year 2 - 2023-2024

Year 3 - 2024-2025

Year 4 - 2024-2025

Year 5+ 2025+

Ongoing – life of plan

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

INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured by	Progress
2.10 (Ongoing)	Undertake regular meetings between Wimmera Southern Mallee Development and Investment Attraction Department to inform and discuss economic development opportunities	10 forums held per year	Meetings held on a regular basis. Outcomes relate to business development opportunities that benefit the region overall. 4/10 meetings held to date in 2024.
(2 years)	Prepare and implement the recommendations from the Aerodrome Masterplan	Airport Master Plan development	Final Stakeholder engagement on initial findings in the Master Plan was held in April. The draft plan will be presented to Council in May to seek community feedback.
3.6 (ongoing)	Widely promote the advantages of establishing solar and wind farms in the Horsham region	Website updated and investment prospectus developed	The Investment Team met with BaWa r.e in April to discuss the Wimmera Plains Renewable Energy Project
4.1 (5+years)	Advocate for the use of rail as a mode for transport of materials to the Port	Increased container use on rail	Planning underway for a logistics forum in June in collaboration with SCT and Port of Melbourne

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured By	Progress
2.6.1 (ongoing)	Promote recreational activities in our natural environment to increase destination tourism and visitation	Activities reported on in the Investment Attraction and Growth monthly Council Report	The final Summer Series event was held in April and feature two live music acts and an evening timeslot which was highly successful.
2.7.1 (ongoing)	Identify and seek out commercial opportunities to activate the riverfront	Commercial opportunities reported on in the Investment Attraction and Growth monthly Council Report	Two more annual mobile food and beverage trading permits were issued in April with more enquiries continuing. We now have issued three annual permits and two six month permits and are looking to expand the site.
3.1.3 (2 years)	Develop and implement the Natimuk Social and Economic Plan and Dadswell's Bridge Community Action Plan	Plan Developed and Progress report to Council	New marketing brochures for the Arapiles Bike Trail have been printed and are available at the Natimuk Post Office for tourists. We are also redesigning the Heritage Trail brochures and hope to have them available in May.
(ongoing)	Host seasonal workshop sessions with Grampians Tourism and Wimmera Mallee Tourism to organise and update our businesses and tourism operators about relevant information for the region	Four industry workshops have been hosted	The Business and Tourism Team attended the VTIC Vision Summit with members of Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism which provided fantastic networking opportunities with State Government representatives to advocate for increasing tourism in our region.
(ongoing)	Ensure constant communication through e-mails and business newsletters with tourism operators and local businesses regarding what is happening in the region	A minimum of 10 business newsletters distributed annually 4 business forums are held annually	Monthly newsletter was sent to 1,068 business contacts on 23 April 24 with 748 opens and 152 clicks.

Tourism & Business Development**Business Team - 2024 Victoria Tourism Industry Council (VTIC) Summit**

Council's Business Development Team attended the VTIC Summit along with representatives from various LGA's and Industry Leaders across Victoria. The summit delved into showcasing Victoria as a premier destination and how tourism operators can leverage from the visitor economy.

Wendi Pearce, Head of Traveller Experience Melbourne Airport, presented an in-depth analysis of their research on the changing "Face of Travellers" to Victoria, by addressing customers expectations from the destination they travel to.



Katrina Sedgwick Director & CEO Melbourne Arts Precinct Corporation, addressing attendees of Melbourne’s enviable position as Australia cultural capital with the presentation of the Melbourne Arts Precinct transformation “The Fox National Gallery Victoria (NGV) Contemporary Gallery”.

Once constructed the NGV will be Australia’s largest gallery dedicated to contemporary art and design.

Katrina was delighted to announce the long-standing supporter of the NGV Lindsay Fox, extraordinary donation of \$100 million towards the construction of the NGV.

Occupied Businesses:

Street and Number of Businesses	March 2024 Businesses Occupied	April 2024 Businesses Occupied	April 2024 Businesses Vacant	April 2024 Percentage Businesses Occupied
Darlot St – 43 car wash and businesses operating from a house included	43	42	1	97%
Firebrace St - 99	92	90	9	90%
Hamilton St - 17	17	17	0	100%
Wilson St – 34	27	27	7	79%
Pynsent St – 28 Cinema included	26	26	2	92%
Roberts Ave – 27 Coles included	25	25	2	92%
McLachlan St – 24 CFA & GWM included	24	24	0	100%
Total 272 Post February 2022 there were 262 shops identified in the study area	254/272	251/272	21	92%

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

Monthly Business Visitations for 2024

Month Visitation	Retail Services	Hospitality / Accommodation & General Tourism visits	Event contacts	Over all contacts for the month
January	8	6	20	34
February	20	13	18	51
March	23	16	7	46
April	10	14	4	28
Total	61	49	49	159

SPENDMAPP

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

The biggest spending night of the month of April 2024 was Friday 5 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. The 7.51 % increase in Visitor Local Spend suggests a relatively healthy growth in visitor economy activity.

M = Million	April 2024	March 2024	% Change Previous Month	% Change Previous Year
Total Local Spend	\$36.80 M	\$38.50 M	4.4% decrease	3.62% increase
Resident Local Spend	\$23.00 M	\$24.30 M	5.3% decrease	1.41% increase
Visitor Local Spend	\$13.80 M	\$14.20 M	2.8% decrease	7.51% increase
Resident Escape Spend	\$10.30 M	\$11.00 M	6.4% decrease	6.71% increase
Resident Online Spend	\$11.50 M	\$12.20 M	5.7% decrease	0.38% increase

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Council Priorities	Action	Goal Measured By	Progress
1.3.4	Develop an open space contribution rate(s) and a new local Public Open Space Contribution Policy.	Policy adopted by Council and Horsham Planning Scheme amended.	A draft review of the Open Space Strategy has been prepared and is being reviewed by the Project Control Group.
1.6.4 (2 years)	Implement the Horsham Heritage Study to protect buildings and places of historic cultural heritage to reinforce a 'sense of place' and celebrate Horsham's character and distinctiveness	Horsham Planning Scheme amended	Officers responded to Department of Transport and Planning enquiries and are now awaiting Authorisation for Exhibition (formal notification and advertising).
(4 years)	Prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the Horsham Cinema	Management plan endorsed by Council	The Final Conservation Management Plan was reviewed by the Project Control Group.
2.10.1	Implement the Horsham planning scheme and monitor land use and demand	Investment Attraction and Growth Monthly Report	The flood planning scheme amendment was approved and gazetted.
2.10.2 (2 to 3 years)	Develop and implement a Housing Affordability and Diversity Strategy and complete an amendment to the planning scheme	Strategy developed and implemented through a planning scheme amendment	Community consultation on the Discussion Paper commenced on 23 April and will continue until 16 June.
(2 years)	Complete a Planning Scheme Review as a vehicle for specifying desired outcomes across the municipality	Planning Scheme Review Completed and suggested changes implemented	The Planning Scheme Review report was adopted.

STATUTORY PLANNING

Planning Applications Determined

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

Type	APRIL 2024		APRIL 2023	
	No.	*Value \$	No.	*Value \$
Miscellaneous Domestic	4	1,778,940	1	250,000
Industrial/Commercial	3	3,167,247	3	6,197,200
Subdivisions	2 (14 lots)	450,000	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-
Total	9	5,396,187	4	6,447,200

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

Total number of planning permits issued in the Horsham Rural City Council area from 1 July 2023 to 30 April 2024 is 68 compared to 113 in the same period in 2022-2023.

Planning permits issued for subdivision have permitted 79 new lots from 1 July 2023 to 30 April 2024 compared to 290 in the same period in 2022-2023.

Building Services

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

Permits issued by Horsham Rural City Council for this Municipality

Type	2024		2023	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	-	-	-	-
Alterations to Dwellings	-	-	-	-
Dwelling resittings	-	-	-	-
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	1	53,786	1	42,000
Removal/Demolish	2	6,820	-	-
Industrial/Commercial	-	-	1	55,698
Signs	-	-	-	-
Total	3	60,606	2	97,698

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

Type	2024		2023	
	No.	Value \$	No.	Value \$
Dwellings	5	2,458,737	7 (10)*	4,400,834
Alterations to Dwellings	2	53,900	3	86,780
Dwelling resittings	1	41,470	-	-
Misc Domestic (Carports, Garages etc)	10	319,351	4	149,548
Removal/Demolish	-	-	1	7,000
Industrial/Commercial	3	1,541,174	1	113,520
Signs	-	-	-	-
Sub Total	21	4,414,632	16	4,757,682

A total of **25** Building Permits have been issued by the Horsham Rural City Council at a total value of **\$3,980,788** from **1 July 2023 to 30 April 2024** compared to **34** Building Permits at a total value of **\$2,826,688** in 2022-2023.

Private Building Surveyors have issued **179** Building Permits at a total value of **\$86,293,838** from **1 July 2023 to 30 April 2024** compared to **197** at a total value of **\$44,663,536** in 2022-2023.

Options to Consider

Not applicable – no decision required.

Sustainability Implications

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

Community Engagement

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

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Report provides overview of activity and assists with continuous improvement.

Collaboration

Report has been prepared in collaboration with Council officers across Planning, Building and Business Development and Tourism Support.

Financial Implications

Nil

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable – no direct relationship or requirements

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

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

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

Destination Horsham Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan 2022 onwards.

Risk Implications

Not applicable – no decision required.

Conclusion

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

9.10 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S OPERATIONAL REPORT

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

Officer Conflict of Interest Officer disclosure in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 130: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil	Status Defined as confidential information in accordance with <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> – Section 3(1): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Reason: Nil
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Appendix
Nil

Purpose
To present the Chief Executive Officer’s Operational Report for June 2024.

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

Recommendation
That Council receive and note the Chief Executive Officer’s Operational Report for June 2024.

Refer to Item 9.9 for Council Resolution.

REPORT**Background**

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

Discussion

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

A. Advocacy/Funding Announcements

MAV Mayor & CEO Dinner: The Mayor and CEO attended the MAV dinner on Thursday 30 May 2024. MAV President and CEO provided key updates on the advocacy work that the MAV are undertaking to best position the local government sector moving forward.

Joint State/Local Government Monthly CEO Forum: The CEO attended the forum on 5 June 2024 via Teams. Discussions included the Local Government Elections and a Local Government Victoria update.

Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership (WSMRP) Meeting: The CEO attended the WSMRP Meeting on 6 June 2024. The group received an update from Regional Development Victoria and Regional Development Australia. Discussions were also held on the VicGrid Draft Community Benefits Fund Framework.

Quarterly Wimmera Regional Mayor & CEO Meeting: The Mayors and CEOs from Horsham, Yarriambiack, West Wimmera, Buloke, Northern Grampians and Hindmarsh had their quarterly meeting on Friday 14 June. The group discussed the Regional Emergency Management Program and Wimmera renewable energy and mining impact/readiness study.

Regional Cities Victoria Meeting: The Mayor and CEO attended the bi-monthly Regional Cities Victoria meeting in Shepparton on 12 and 13 June at the Shepparton Art Museum. The Hon Melissa Horne, Local Government Minister and Richard Willingham, ABC Victoria State Political Reporter were guest speakers.

MAV Meeting: The CEO attended a monthly MAV CEO meeting on 17 June 2024 (virtual). The discussion primarily focussed on the recently released state government housing targets.

Funding Opportunities:

Nil

B. Community Engagement

Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) Forum: The CEO attended an IBAC Forum on 29 May 2024 at the Horsham Town Hall and presented a welcome address. Speakers on the day included IBAC Deputy Commissioner David Wolf and Chief Municipal Inspector Michael Stefanovic. The forum was titled Corruption Risks in local government and focused on the unique risks of an election year, plus the ongoing corruption risks in local government including conflicts of interest, misuse of information and resources, improper influence and vulnerabilities in procurement.

C. Projects and Events

National Reconciliation Week (NRW): NRW was held from 27 May to 3 June. Council’s Youth Team hosted a move afternoon at The Station on Wednesday 29 May, the Library Team recognised NRW during its regular programs including Rhymetime and Storytime to learn from First Nations stories and celebrate Indigenous authors and illustrators. The Supported Playgroup and Kalkee HUB had an interactive display that visitors to the HUB could enjoy and contribute to, and the Town Hall and Art Gallery also held events during the week.

Wimmera Regional Port Logistics Industry Event 2024: The CEO and Mayor attended the event on 13 June 2024 at the Horsham Town Hall. The Mayor welcomed the guests and spoke about the role of WIFT and the Wal Hub. Guest speakers included Matt Eryurek, General Manager Ports and Government Relations, SCT Group, Leatrice Treharne, Head of Business Development, Port of Melbourne, David Jochinke, President, National Farmers’ Federation and Fiona Gormann, Manager Investment Attraction & Growth HRCC.

Citizenship Ceremony: Council welcomed 11 new citizens at a Citizenship Ceremony on 18 June 2024. Their countries of origin included United Kingdom, New Zealand, India, China and Wales.

Financial Implications

Not applicable

Links To Council Plans, Strategies, Policies

2021-2025 Council Plan - Theme 5: Leadership

Consultation/Communication

Not applicable

Risk Implications

Not applicable

Environmental Implications

Not applicable

Human Rights Implications

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

Conclusion

That Council receive and note the Chief Executive Officer’s Operational Report for June 2024.

10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**Cr Robyn Gulline (Mayor)**

Committee Representation	
30/05/24	Attended MAV Mayor and CEO dinner in Melbourne
03/06/24	Attended WSMD Governance Nominations Remuneration Committee meeting (virtual)
03/06/24	Chaired the Aboriginal Community Roundtable
12-13/06/24	Attended the Regional Cities Victoria (RCV) meeting in Shepparton with CEO
18/06/24	Attended Wimmera Southern Mallee Board meeting
19/06/24	Welcomed RCV Chair/Shepparton Mayor and Shepparton CEO to Horsham
20/06/24	Attended Audit and Risk Committee meeting
Other Council Activities	
28/05/24	ABC Wimmera Radio interview with Rebekah Lowe
28/05/24	3WM radio interview with Emma Clark
28/05/24	Chaired Wesley fundraising committee meeting
28/05/24	Attended Art Is...JRS Workshop
29/05/24	Attended IBAC Forum on Corruption Risks at Horsham Town Hall
29/05/24	Attended Reconciliation Week event at The Station
30/05/24	Attended Reconciliation Week event at Longerenong College
31/05/24	Triple H radio interview with Di Trotter
31/05/24	Attended "Conflated" Exhibition at Horsham Art Gallery
31/05/24	Attended "Oedipus The King" by Smart Artz at Horsham Town Hall
04/06/24	Chaired the Wesley fundraising committee meeting
08/06/24	Attended the Wimmera Filipinos 126 th Philippines Independence Day and conducted the Induction of new office bearers
11/06/24	Presented the letter of thanks and certificate of appreciation to Blaze Aid volunteers at Dadswells Bridge
13/06/24	Presented Welcome address at Wimmera Regional Port Logistics Forum at Horsham Town Hall
15/06/24	Sold raffle tickets for Wesley fundraising campaign at Bunnings
15/06/24	Attended the 2024 Horsham Harness Club Annual Dinner

Horsham Rural City Council**Council Meeting**

18/06/24	Attended the Refugee Week lunch at Horsham Neighbourhood House
18/06/24	Welcomed 11 new citizens at Citizenship Ceremony
18/06/24	Chaired the Wesley fundraising committee meeting
18/06/24	Attended the Tina Turner Tribute concert at Horsham Town Hall
20/06/24	Joined Ch 7's Sunrise at Dadswells Bridge Giant Koala

Cr David Bowe

Other Council Activities	
29/05/24	The Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) Forum on Corruption Risks in Local Government – Horsham Town Hall
31/05/24	Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) - Navigating Meeting Procedures in an Election Year - online
03/06/24	Council Briefing meeting – Council Chambers
11/06/24	Council Briefing meeting – Council Chambers
17/06/24	Council Briefing meeting – Council Chambers
18/06/24	Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) - Culture of Implementing Freedom of Information in Australia Report Launch - online

Cr Penny Flynn – June 2024

Committee Representation	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>
20/06/24	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting – Council Chamber
Other Council Activities	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>
29/05/24	IBAC Forum on Corruption Risks in Local Government – Horsham Town Hall
31/05/24	Conflated Exhibition Opening – Horsham Regional Art Gallery
01/06/24	Oedipus The King – Horsham Town Hall
18/06/24	Citizenship Ceremony – Council Chamber

Horsham Rural City Council**Council Meeting****Cr Claudia Haenel**

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
22/05/24	CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee meeting
Other Council Activities	
22/05/24	Coffee with Cr. Claudia
27/05/24	West Vic Business 2024 Precinct Forum
29/05/24	IBAC Forum on Corruption Risks in Local Government
5/06/24	Coffee with Cr. Claudia
16/06/24	Horsham RSL Volunteers
17/06/24	Council Briefing – Budget
19/06/24	Coffee with Cr. Claudia
20/06/24	Giant Koala Sunrise – Dadswells Bridge
24/06/24	Council Meeting

Council Resolution**MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded Cr Claudia Haenel**

That the Councillor Reports and Acknowledgements be received.

CARRIED

11. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

Nil

13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

13.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS

- Council Briefing meeting held on Monday 3 June 2024 at 5:00pm
- Council Briefing meeting held on Tuesday 11 June 2024 at 5:00pm
- Council Briefing meeting held on Monday 17 June 2024 at 5:00pm

Refer to **Appendix 13.1A**

13.2 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

Nil

13.3 INWARD CORRESPONDENCE

Nil

13.4 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Nil

Recommendation

That Council receive and note agenda items:

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

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded Cr Penny Flynn

That Council receive and note agenda items:

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

CARRIED

14. NOTICE OF MOTION

Nil

Council Resolution**MOVED Cr Penny Flynn, Seconded Cr Les Power**

That the meeting close to the public to consider Confidential Matters.

CARRIED

The time being 6.44pm, the meeting closed to the public.

Cr Bob Redden returned to the room at 6:45pm

Council Resolution**MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Bob Redden**

That the meeting move into open Council.

CARRIED

The time being 7.16pm, the meeting opened to the public.

Council Resolution**MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded Cr Les Power**

That Council resolution Item No. 15.1 (1&2) (Supply Panel for the Provision of Real Estate Services for Council Owned and Managed Property), 15.2 (3) (Community Grants) and 15.3 (Reconstruction of North-East Wonwondah Road, Stage 5, Contract 24-028) be brought into open Council.

CARRIED

15.1 SUPPLY PANEL FOR THE PROVISION OF REAL ESTATE SERVICES FOR COUNCIL OWNED AND MANAGED PROPERTY**Council Resolution****MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Les Power**

That Council appoint the following suppliers to the contract panel for the Provision of Real Estate Services for Council Owned and Managed Property for the initial term of three years, with the option of a further three-year term:

1. Harcourts Horsham for the -
 - (a) Provision of specialist property advice (including the provision of market valuations and information regarding market trends for commercial property and industrial land subdivisions, and assistance with the acquisition of land assets)
 - (b) Sale of various types of property (including vacant land and newly developed land in industrial subdivisions)
 - (c) Property management services for commercial rentals (including management of new and ongoing commercial leases).
2. Preston Rowe Paterson Horsham and Wimmera Pty Ltd for the -
 - (a) Provision of specialist property advice (including the provision of market valuations and information regarding market trends for commercial property and industrial land subdivisions, and assistance with the acquisition of land assets).

CARRIED

15.2 COMMUNITY GRANTS

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Ian Ross, Seconded Cr Les Power

3. Determine that a special consideration grant application from the Wimmera Poultry Club be approved for \$2,000 to purchase material to build cages at their new location be granted from contingency in the 2023-2024 Community Development Grants funds.

CARRIED

15.3 RECONSTRUCTION OF NORTH-EAST WONWONDAH ROAD, STAGE 5, CONTRACT 24-028

Council Resolution

MOVED Cr Claudia Haenel, Seconded Cr Les Power

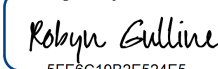
That Council award Contract 24-028 to Pearson Plant Pty Ltd for the lump sum of \$504,909.88 ex GST for the reconstruction of stage 5 of North East Wonwondah Road.

CARRIED

CLOSE

After dealing with Confidential Matters, the meeting closed at 7.19pm.

Signed by:



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The Mayor, Cr Robyn Gulline
Chairperson