



AGENDA

SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

Tuesday, 22 July 2014

To be held
Swan Hill Town Hall
Council Chambers
McCallum Street, Swan Hill
Commencing at 12:30 PM

COUNCIL:

Cr LT McPhee – Mayor

Cr JN Katis

Cr GW Norton

Cr GI Cruickshank

Cr JA Kiley

Cr CM Adamson

Cr JB Crowe

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SECTION A – PROCEDURAL MATTERS

- **Open**

- **Acknowledgement to Country**

- **Prayer**

- **Apologies**

- **Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

SECTION B – REPORTS

B.14.42 CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSIONS TO THE 2014/15 BUDGET

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
File Number: 42-09-71
Attachments: Nil

Declarations of Interest: Officer

David Lenton - as the responsible officer, I declare that I have no disclosable interests in this matter.

Summary

At the close of submissions to the 2014/15 Budget (the Budget) five submissions were received.

Discussion

Council's Budget was advertised in Local newspapers calling for submissions by 4pm on Monday 14 July 2014.

At the close of submissions, five submissions had been received. Two submissions were supported by petitions.

Issues raised in the submissions are:-

1. A request to re-instate \$20,000 in Council funding cut from the Library Budget.
2. A request supported by a petition containing 1,339, signatures, for Council to allocate funding for seating and shelters at bus stops. The letter accompanying the petition also requests more public toilets around Swan Hill including at George Lay Park playground. The letter also mentions a number of maintenance issues concerning line markings and indicators installed on footpaths.
3. A request to remove the proposed "Gold Coin" fee for locals to enter the Pioneer Settlement, to review the usage fees for facilities at the Pioneer Settlement and to establish a Heritage Grants Scheme.
4. Two letters, one with a supporting petition containing 336 signatures, requesting Council fund an additional position within the Youth Services Program to replace the position lost due to the expiration of external funding.

Officer's comments on issues raised in the submissions.

1. The reduction in Council funding of Library services is not expected to affect Library opening hours, core Library services or purchases of items for the Library collection.
2. The bus services that operate within the municipality are not Council owned or run. Council does not have a program for the installation of bus stop seating or shelters. Council's position is that the responsibility for bus stops rests with the operator of the bus services and/or Public Transport Victoria.

Council does regularly seek external funding to improve facilities at known bus stops but these attempts have rarely been successful. Prior to establishing a bus stop upgrade program a detailed consultation, analysis of requirements, design and costing would be required. This work is unlikely to be able to be completed in time to impact the 2014/15 financial year.

If Council decides to introduce a bus stop upgrade program, it is therefore recommended the program be referred to the 2015/16 Major Projects and Budget process.

The consultation process for the George Lay Park master plan, and the associated playground project, determined that a stand-alone toilet block in the park was neither required nor desirable. Instead, the medium term vision for the Park is to incorporate a toilet in a multi-purpose facility such as a community kitchen and garden.

Officers believe there are sufficient toilets within Council and business premises within the CBD to cater for members of the general public.

3. Removal of the proposed "Gold Coin" entry fee for locals to enter the Pioneer Settlement will result in an additional Council subsidy estimated to be \$15,000. The entry fee has been proposed as a means of improving equity across the municipality as not all ratepayers live close enough to access the services available at the Pioneer Settlement on a regular basis.

The fees for hiring the facilities at the Pioneer Settlement are currently being reviewed in detail. It is expected a report on the outcomes of this review will be presented to a Council meeting within the next two months.

Council does not currently have a Heritage Restoration Grants Heritage Program. Officers suggest that, should Council determine to help fund private heritage restoration projects, such funding could be part of the Community Pride Grants Program, either within the existing \$15,000 allocation or with an additional allocation of funds.

4. Council has maintained its own level of funding for Youth Services, however, the expiration of external funding will result in the loss of a Youth Trainee

position with the Youth Services Program. The loss of the additional employee within the Youth Services Program may affect the development and progress of actions from the next Youth Strategy as well as some ongoing tasks.

To maintain the Trainee Position will require approximately \$25,000 in funding most of which would have to be provided by Council. To have a second Youth Services Officer (not a Trainee) will require approximately \$64,000 in funding.

Consultation

The submission process is part of the consultation that occurs in relation to the Budget.

Financial Implications

To be determined after Council has considered this report.

Social Implications

The Budget covers all aspects of Council operation and therefore affects Economic, Social and Environmental outcomes.

Economic Implications

As above

Environmental Implications

As above

Risk Management Implications

As above

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Building community capacity - We seek to connect members of our community and to provide leadership to bring people together to find solutions to community problems.

Options

1. Council can choose to accept some or all of the issues raised in the submissions and adjust the budget accordingly, or
2. Council can choose to adopt the Budget as advertised.

Recommendations

That Council:

1. **Consider the submissions to the 2014/15 Annual Budget.**
2. **Having considered the submissions, note no changes to the 2014/15 Budget are required.**
3. **Prepare a report for the October 2014 Council meeting on the implications of introducing bus stop seating and shelters installation program.**
4. **Prepare a report for the September 2014 Council meeting in relation to the fees for hiring facilities at the Pioneer Settlement.**
5. **Prepare a report to consider how the Heritage Grant Program could be included as part of the Community Pride Grants Program.**
6. **Defer any decision in relation to increasing the resources of Council's Youth Program until Council has adopted the updated Youth Engagement Policy and Youth Strategy.**
7. **Write to the submitters advising the outcome and thanking them for their submissions.**