

AGENDA

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

Tuesday, 26 June 2018

To be held at the Town Hall
Council Chambers
McCallum Street, Swan Hill
Commencing at 6pm

COUNCIL:

Cr LT McPhee – Mayor

Cr JN Katis

Cr GW Norton

Cr C Jeffery

Cr L Johnson

Cr B Moar

Cr A Young

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SECTION A – PROCEDURAL MATTERS

- **Open**
- **Acknowledgement to Country**
- **Prayer**
- **Apologies**
- **Confirmation of Minutes**
 - 1) Ordinary Meeting held on 15 May 2018
 - 2) Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 12 June 2018
- **Declarations of Conflict of Interest**
- **Receptions and Reading of Petitions, Memorials, Joint Letters and Deputations**
- **Public Question Time**

SECTION B – REPORTS

B.18.40 ADOPTION OF 2018/19 BUDGET

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
File Number: S15-06-09
Attachments: As Advertised

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

Following the statutory advertising period, the 2018/19 Budget is ready for adoption. The Budget is the primary source of financial control across Council operations, and expresses the nature and level of Council's service and infrastructure provision in financial terms for the 2018/19 financial year.

Discussion

At the close of the statutory advertising period two submissions were received. The submissions were formally received and heard at the Special Council Meeting on 12 June 2018. A response to points raised in the submissions was provided at that meeting. Officers believe the points raised in the submissions do not require the Budget to be amended. Council is now in a position to adopt the Budget.

Councillors have been involved in the preparation of the Budget and are well informed as to its content; however highlights and significant issues are as follows:

1. Rating Strategy

The 2018/19 budget proposes an average increase on the 2017/18 rates of 2.05%. This follows last year's 2.0% increase in rate revenue. A 1% early payment discount will apply if rates installments are paid in full by 30 September 2018.

The proposed average rate rise is below the State Government's Rate Cap. As a result of new Valuation that will be applied from July 2018 the Dry Land Farmers Differential Rate discount on the General Rate has been increased from 10% to 15%. This will result in a more even distribution of the rate rise due to the new valuations.

2. Waste Management

The budget reflects increased Waste Management charges at landfill sites in line with State Government policy changes. The increased cost of processing Recyclable materials and general cost increases. The fee for a 120 litre garbage bin will be \$300 (an increase of \$10) and a 240 litre bin \$455 (an increase of \$15). The optional green waste service charge will remain at \$100.

3. Operations

The budget maintains the current level of operational services except where Government Policy changes are occurring. \$37.7 million (excluding depreciation) will be spent on these services primarily on Infrastructure maintenance and provision, Family, Youth and Aged services, Recreational facilities, Economic Development, Tourism and Municipal administration costs.

4. Capital Works

The Budget proposes \$17.6 million capital works program focusing on infrastructure replacement. This is dependent on receiving \$3.5 million in external funding. Some of the major works to be undertaken include \$5.4 million for roadworks, \$3.2 million for the implementation of the Swan Hill Riverfront Master Plan, \$0.6 million towards construction of the Robinvale town levee, \$0.3 million to replace and improve footpaths, \$0.8 million for Bromley Road Robinvale, \$0.5 million for major maintenance to community buildings, \$0.5 million to upgrade the Ken Harrison Soccer Complex, \$0.5 million to implement Community Plans and \$0.4 million for an upgrade to the Early Learning Centre at lake Boga.

5. Asset Management

The Budget is clearly focused on asset management issues and the need to fund infrastructure replacement. \$9 million (subject to external funding) will be spent replacing Councils assets, primarily roads, footpaths and drains.

6. Financial Management

The Budget predicts an operating surplus of \$5.5 million and a rates surplus of \$0.05 million. Net debt will decrease by \$0.7 million. Net assets are budgeted to increase by \$13 million due mainly to asset revaluations and capital expenditure. Cash and investments will be steady at \$16.9 million.

Consultation

The Draft Budget was presented at community information sessions in Robinvale and Swan Hill.

A formal advertising and submission process has taken place. Two submissions were received. Suggestions for projects and programs from the community were received throughout the year and considered as part of the Budget preparation process.

Financial Implications

Adoption of the 2018/19 Budget authorises Council officers to expend Council funds and raise revenue to implement the budgeted programs and projects.

Social Implications

Council's budget covers all aspects of Council operations and therefore impacts economic, social and environmental outcomes.

Economic Implications

As above.

Environmental Implications

As above.

Risk Management Implications

Setting a budget is a vital control that enables the organisation to track financial performance.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Effective and efficient utilisation of resources. - Effective and efficient utilisation of resources.

Options

1. Adopt the 2018/19 Budget as advertised.
2. Adopt the 2018/19 Budget with minor amendments.

Recommendations

That Council:

1. **Having considered the two submissions, adopt the budget as advertised.**
2. **Declare that \$23,898,000 be raised in rates for the 2018/19 financial year.**
3. **Declare a Differential Rate of 0.789065 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value for rateable Commercial properties within Residential 1, Business or Industrial zones of the Swan Hill Planning Scheme in the townships of Swan Hill and Robinvale.**
4. **Declare a Differential Rate of 0.631253 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value for rateable Residential and Industrial properties within the drainage districts Swan Hill and Robinvale townships.**
5. **Declare a Differential Rate of 1.262505 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value for rateable Vacant Residential land within the townships of Swan Hill and Robinvale that has remained as vacant land for a minimum of 5 years since it was last zoned as residential land or 3 years after its sale as a residential allotment, whichever is the latter.**
6. **Declare a Differential Rate of 0.515927 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value for rateable farming properties without access to irrigation water infrastructure and which are primarily used for broad acre**

grain/sheep production and are allocated an Australian Valuation Property Classification Code of 510, 520, 523, 524 or 530.

- 7. Declare a Differential Rate of 0.606973 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value for all other rateable land within the municipality.**
- 8. Declare a Garbage Service Charge of \$300 for a 120 litre bin service and \$455 for a 240 litre bin service for residential properties within the declared garbage service areas of the Municipality, for the year commencing 1 July 2018.**
- 9. Declare an optional Green Waste Garbage Service Charge of \$100 for a 240 litre bin service for Residential properties within the declared garbage service area of Swan Hill City (collection area number 20) for the year commencing 1 July 2018.**
- 10. Authorise borrowings of up to \$500,000 for capital works in 2018/19.**
- 11. Provide a payment equivalent to 50% of the applicable rates for Not-For-Profit recreational properties which would have been previously entitled to the lower Recreational Differential Rate.**
- 12. Provide a payment equivalent to 50% of the difference between the Commercial Rate and Urban Rate in Swan Hill and Robinvale for Commercial properties in Common Occupancy with a residence.**

B.18.41 AUDIT COMMITTEE

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
File Number: S15-28-01
Attachments: 1 Confidential Minutes 14-6-18 Placeholder

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

Council's Audit Committee met on 14 June, 2018 and this report summarises the items that were discussed at the meeting.

Discussion

The Audit Committee met on 14 June 2018 and as well as the usual procedural items the agenda items included:

1. A PowerPoint presentation on the Regional Growth Fund Expression of Interest and the associated projects.
2. A report was given on the status of the drag strip repairs with work expected to be completed by the end of June 2018.
3. The Interim Audit Management Letter was presented with no new items raised by the Auditor. All but one of the previous items has been completed.
4. RSM Internal Audit Review of Procurement- a number of minor recommendations for process improvements have been accepted by management.
5. Quarterly Review of Financial Performance to 31 March 2018 was noted.
6. Legislative Changes concerning the Draft Local Government Act were noted.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Financial Implications

The sitting fees paid to independent members on the Audit Committee is adjusted annually by CPI. Sitting fees are included in Councils Budget.

Social Implications

Not applicable.

Economic Implications

Not applicable.

Environmental Implications

Not applicable.

Risk Management Implications

The Audit Committee helps to oversee Councils risk management practices. Internal and other audits are routinely done to reduce the risk to Council.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Governance and leadership - Effective and efficient utilisation of resources.

Options

Not applicable.

Recommendation

That Council note the contents of this report.

Attachment

- Audit Committee Confidential Minutes
14 June 2018

B.18.42 COUNCIL PLAN 2017-21 (2018/19 REVIEW)

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
File Number: 22-23-05
Attachments: Nil

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

Under section 125(6) of the Local Government Act, at least once in each financial year, a Council must consider whether the current Council Plan (the Plan) requires any adjustment in respect of the remaining period of the Plan.

Discussion

Council reviewed the Plan on Tuesday, 22 May 2018 and have made no changes to the Plan. They have created some additional actions within the Key Strategic Initiative document including:

- Investigate and advocate for ways for skilled people to obtain permanent residency.
- Review of the Youth Strategy.
- Conduct a review of public facilities including public toilets.
- Investigate opportunities for recycling industry within our municipality.

Consultation

Councillors and the Executive Leadership Team have reviewed the Plan.

Financial Implications

Initiatives in the Council Plan will be referred to the annual Budget process.

Social Implications

The Council Plan will impact on the social, economic and environment aspects of our municipality, as set out in the Council Plan.

Economic Implications

See above.

Environmental Implications

See above.

Risk Management Implications

Nil

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Governance and leadership - Positive community engagement through appropriate and constructive consultation.

Options

Council may decide to adopt or vary the recommendations contained in this report.

Recommendation

That Council, having reviewed the Council Plan 2017-21, determines that no changes are required with respect to the remaining period of the Council Plan.

B.18.43 ROAD DISCONTINUANCE_BOX ROAD, TYNTYNDER SOUTH

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure
File Number: AST-RD-16962-03
Attachments:
1 Location Plan
2 Discontinuance of part of road

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

A request has been received from an adjacent owner for the discontinuance of the north-western section of Box Road, Tyntynder.

This report is to seek Council approval to commence the road discontinuance and sale process in accordance with the powers and statutory procedures contained in the Local Government Act 1989.

The statutory procedures require that consultation must be undertaken prior to a final decision by Council.

Discussion

Council has been approached by landowner of Lot 5 LP27638, Parish Tyntynder; requesting discontinuance of the road adjacent to their property, and the possibility of them purchasing the land.

The section of road proposed to be sold is 5206m², formed natural surface.

Consultation

Initial investigations and consultation with adjacent landowners has been carried out. Responses have been favourable to the road discontinuance and neighbouring landowners would be in favour of the consolidation into Lot 5 LP27638, Parish Tyntynder.

Council will consult with the community through a 'Public Notice' inviting submissions to be published in the Guardian newspaper, in accordance with statutory procedures.

Service authorities will be consulted to determine any requirements for easements.

Financial Implications

As the portion of land to be consolidated has not been constructed as part of the road reserve, Council and the public will not be disadvantaged in anyway.

Costs in this matter are to be borne by the applicant and comprise the sale price of the land as well as Council's administration services.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Infrastructure - Infrastructure that is provided and appropriately maintained in accordance with agreed standards.

Options

1. Council use its power:

Acting under Clause 3 of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 1989; to

- 1.1. Commence the statutory procedures to discontinue that part of Box Road Tyntynder that is a road which is shown on the plan attached to this report and labelled as Attachment 2;
- 1.2. Publish a public notice of the proposed discontinuance be given under sections 207A and 223 of the Local Government Act 1989;
- 1.3. If the road is discontinued, state in the public notice that the land shall be sold by Private Treaty to the owner of Lot 5 LP27638, Parish Tyntynder;
- 1.4. Authorise John McLinden, Chief Executive Officer to undertake the administrative procedures necessary to enable Council to carry out its functions under Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989, and
- 1.5. Hear and consider any submissions received pursuant to Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 at a Council meeting.

OR

2. Retain the road in its entirety.

Recommendations

That Council, being of the opinion that the road shown hatched on the plan is not reasonably required as a road for public use,

- 1. Discontinue the road; on condition that the land from the road is consolidated into the adjacent land, under Section 206 and Schedule 10 Clause 3 of the Local Government Act 1989.**
- 2. Commence statutory procedures to discontinue the road and under Section 207(a) and Section 223 of that Act, advertise under public notices of the proposed discontinuance in the Guardian newspaper.**

Attachment 1

Proposed Discontinuance of part road abutting
Lot 5 LP27638, Parish Tyntynder
Location Plan

Created by SWANHILL graphics on Monday, 28 May 2018

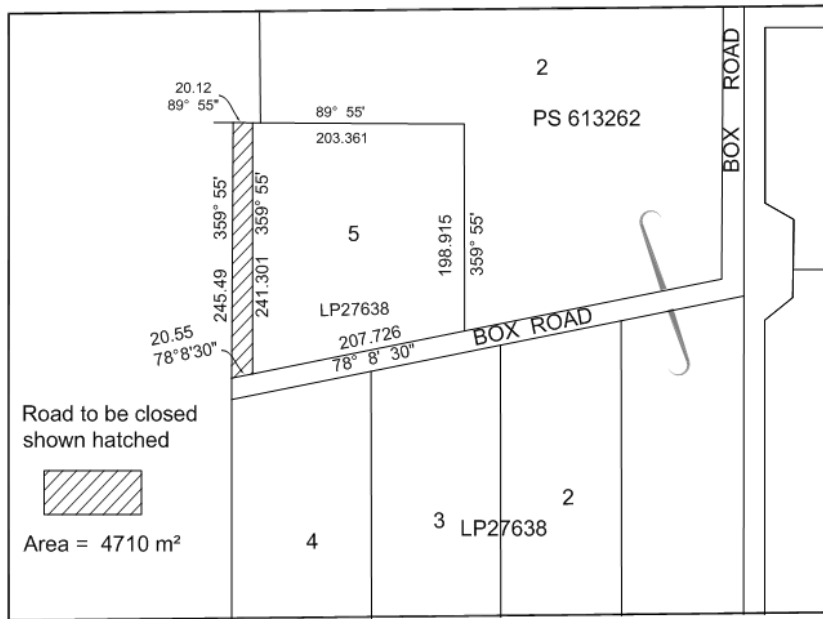


SWAN HILL RURAL CITY COUNCIL
PROPERTY MAP



Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to ensure that the information on this map is correct and up to date, Swan Hill Rural City Council does not guarantee the accuracy, reliability, completeness or suitability of any information.

Discontinuance of part of road
abutting Lot 5 LP 27638
Sec A Parish of Tyntynder



B.18.44 COUNCILLOR AND STAFF INTERACTIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S16-25-04
Attachments: 1 Councillor and Staff Interactions Policy

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

Section 94A (3A) of the *Local Government Act 1989* states that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for managing interactions between Council staff and Councillors, including by ensuring that appropriate policies, practices and protocols are in place, defining appropriate arrangements for interaction between Council staff and Councillors. The attached Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy has been prepared in response to this requirement.

Discussion

The Councillor and Staff Interactions Policy and Procedure outline processes for ensuring that:

- Goodwill is fostered between Councillors and Council staff;
- Productivity is maintained and Council staff feel confident to provide professional advice to Councillors;
- Protocols are established to ensure Councillors are provided with advice and information in a timely manner;
- Interactions between Councillors and Council staff are conducted in a professional manner;
- The risk of potential, perceived, or actual direction of Council staff by a Councillor is reduced and;
- Processes for managing grievances and complaints are set.

Consultation

Equivalent policies of other Councils in Victoria were reviewed and the draft policy has been presented to Council and Council's Executive Leadership Team (ELT) for comment. All feedback received was positive, and some good suggestions for minor amendments were made. These have been incorporated into the draft where appropriate.

Financial Implications

Nil

Social Implications

Clear protocols about interactions between staff and Councillors will contribute to good governance and Council's optimum performance.

Economic Implications

Clear protocols about interactions between staff and Councillors will contribute to good governance and Council's optimum performance.

Environmental Implications

Nil

Risk Management Implications

Managing interactions between Council staff and Councillors is a statutory requirement; failing to have a policy in place puts Council at risk of criticism by the Local Government Investigations and Compliance Inspectorate.

Having a policy in place will also mitigate the risk of a breach of the improper direction provisions in the Act, and the risk of Council or a Councillor being the subject of a WorkCover, bullying and/or discrimination claim.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Governance and leadership - Effective and efficient utilisation of resources.

Options

Council may decide to adopt or vary the recommendation contained in this report.

Recommendation

That Council adopts the Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy as presented.

Date Adopted	June 2018
Date Reviewed-current as at	
To be Reviewed	June 2019

Fully compliant with Victorian
Charter of Human Rights and
Responsibilities Act 2006



POLICY TITLE **COUNCILLOR AND STAFF INTERACTION POLICY**

POLICY NUMBER **CPOL/GOV010**

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all interactions between Councillors and Swan Hill Rural City Council (Council) staff are positive, constructive, and conducted in a manner that facilitates Council's optimum performance.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Councillors, and all Council staff.

The policy covers interaction through all forms of communication, including meetings (both planned and unplanned), personal visits, telephone calls, interactions through social media, and emails between Councillors and Council staff.

This procedure does not apply in the context of social interactions between a Councillor and member of Council staff who have a personal relationship outside the Council environment. Where social interaction occurs between Councillors and Council staff, any discussion of Council business and/or operational matters will be in accordance with the Councillor and Staff Interactions Procedure PRO/GOV010.

3. POLICY

Council is committed to ensuring that all interactions between Councillors and staff are positive, constructive, and conducted in a manner that facilitates Council's optimum performance.

3.1 Background

This policy has been prepared in accordance with section 94A (3A) of the *Local Government Act 1989* (VIC).

It is acknowledged in the local government sector that the relationship between Councillors and the Council administration is complex and can be fragile; but the strength of this relationship is critical to achieving good governance.

This policy is intended to contribute to respectful, trusting, and constructive relationships between Councillors and Council staff, by articulating their different but complementary roles, defining reasonable expectations, and establishing clear and effective communication protocols that facilitate good governance and Council's optimum performance.

This policy complements the Councillor Code of Conduct and the Staff Code of Conduct.

Date Adopted	June 2018
Date Reviewed-current as at	
To be Reviewed	June 2019

Fully compliant with Victorian
Charter of Human Rights and
Responsibilities Act 2006



3.2 Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Foster goodwill between Councillors and Council staff, and mitigate the potential for divisive and dysfunctional relationships to develop, by defining appropriate professional interaction;
- Enhance productivity by maintaining an environment in which Council staff have the morale and confidence to provide frank and fearless professional advice to Councillors, to facilitate informed decision making;
- Establish protocols to ensure that Councillors are provided with all necessary information and advice in an orderly, timely, courteous and equitable manner, to enable them to perform their civic duties;
- Avoid inefficiency, unnecessary duplication of work and stress by improving role clarity;
- Ensure that all interactions between Councillors and staff are conducted in a professional and respectful manner, with due regard for each other's roles and responsibilities;
- Support compliance with the *Local Government Act 1989*; the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*; the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*; and the *Fair Work Act 2009*, and thereby reduce the risk of a WorkCover or bullying claim against Council or a Councillor, and the risk of potential, perceived or actual direction of Council staff by a Councillor; and
- Set out a process for managing any grievance that may arise between Councillors and Council staff.

3.3 Authorisation

Section 94A(3A) of the *Local Government Act 1989* (VIC) stipulates that the CEO is responsible for managing interactions between Council staff and Councillors; and section 65(3) states that the role of a Councillor does not include the performance of any functions that are specified as functions of the CEO under section 94A. Accordingly, the CEO must have exclusive responsibility for this policy and its administration. The CEO and Mayor will work together to foster a culture which supports the application of this policy.

Notwithstanding the above, Councillors may provide feedback or comments regarding this policy to the CEO for consideration.

3.4. Non-compliance with this policy

Failure to comply with this policy may constitute a breach of the Councillor Code of Conduct, the Staff Code of Conduct, the *Local Government Act 1989*, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, the *Fair Work Act 2009*, the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* and other anti-discrimination legislation, the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*, the *Health Records Act 2001* and/or the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Non-compliance with this policy also has the potential to negatively impact on Council's performance.

Date Adopted	June 2018
Date Reviewed-current as at	
To be Reviewed	June 2019

<p>Fully compliant with Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</p>



4. REVISION

This policy will be reviewed within twelve months of the next general Council elections, unless an earlier review is deemed necessary by the CEO.

RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS

- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Policy POL/STAFF104
- MAV Land Use Planning in Victoria Councillor Guide 2016
- Councillor and Staff Interactions Procedure PRO/GOV010

RELATED LEGISLATION

- Local Government Act 1989;*
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004;*
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and other anti-discrimination legislation;*
- Fair Work Act 2009;*
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014;*
- Health Records Act 2001.*
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006;*

Signed: _____ Mayor Date: _____

B.18.45 MURRAY BASIN RAIL PROJECT

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S12-23-01-V2
Attachments: 1 Murray Basin Rail Project Summary Brochure

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

This report alerts Council to suspected delays in the delivery of the Murray Basin Rail Project.

The Murray Basin Rail Project will deliver important upgrades to the rail network throughout northern Victoria. The project is estimated to cost \$440 million and will see the standardisation of the Mildura and Manangatang lines, as well as a number of rail line augmentations south of this region ensuring that freight from the Mallee can be transported by rail to Portland, Geelong or Melbourne ports.

Discussion

The Murray Basin Rail Project is part of an overall rail freight transport strategy for Victoria that sees freight being moved from broad gauge to standard gauge and it also see significant investment into the rail network, ensuring that a freight network throughout Victoria runs on standard gauge lines.

Recently, rumours have abounded that the \$440 million Murray Basin Rail Project is in some difficulties. This is indeed concerning, as a number of significant investments have been established within the Swan Hill Rural City Council or are being considered for establishment on the back of the standardisation of the Manangatang rail line.

The Mallee hay facility at Ultima has been strategically located adjacent to the Manangatang rail line and there have also been significant investments by other corporate entities, either established or slated for development along the Manangatang line and particularly at Manangatang.

Any delay in the delivery of a standard gauge rail service to Manangatang will have a impact on this municipalities economy and on the bottom line of a number of enterprises that have either invested or are proposing to invest and also to the primary industries that rely on these service providers.

In short, any delay in the delivery of a standard gauge rail freight service on the Manangatang line will impact the Swan Hill Rural City Council economy in a negative way.

Recent media coverage suggests that there are some contractual issues plaguing the initial stages of this project. The early stages see the standardisation of the Mildura line and it was the intention of the State Government to complete the Mildura line and whilst these works were being undertaken that freight would be carried on the Manangatang line. It was then intended that upon the completion of the Mildura line that freight would swing over onto the Mildura line whilst the Manangatang line was upgraded.

Council officers have made a number of approaches to V/Line but are still waiting on a response and briefing on the status of the Murray Basin Rail Project. It is suggested that Council may wish to write to the Minister for Transport, the honourable Jacinta Allan seeking an urgent briefing on the status of this project. In this correspondence Council should remind the Minister of the importance of this project and in particular the standardisation of the Manangatang line to this municipalities economy.

Clarification from the Ministers office will assist Council in informing the greater Swan Hill community of the future of this project.

Councillor McPhee is also attending the Rail Freight Alliance conference on Wednesday the 27th of June, Council may wish to consider requesting that Councillor McPhee use his attendance at this conference to ask questions of the Minister and also the deputy leader of the opposition, both of whom will be in attendance at the conference.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Governance and leadership - Effective advocacy and strategic planning.

Options

1. Seek clarification on the status of the Murray Basin Rail Project.
2. Take no action.

Recommendations

That Council:

- 1. Write to the Minister for Public Transport, the honourable Jacinta Allan seeking an urgent briefing on the status of the Murray Basin Rail Project and inform the Minister of the importance of the successful delivery of this project to the greater Swan Hill economy.**
- 2. Request that Councillor McPhee during his attendance at the Rail Freight Alliance conference on 27 June make representations to all members of Parliament present on the importance of this project and seek clarification on the status of the Murray Basin Rail Project.**



Murray Basin Rail Project



Project overview

The Murray Basin Rail Project will deliver important upgrades to Victoria's rail freight network to meet the increasing demand for freight services.

The project will drive economic growth, create jobs and provide a major boost to the transport industry, agricultural sector and regional communities.

It will play an important role in supporting freight mode shift from road to rail, removing around 20,000 truck trips from our roads to the ports and improving safety for regional communities.

The project involves standardising the rail freight lines servicing the Murray Basin region in the north-west of Victoria. The project will also increase axle loading on these lines from 19 to 21 tonnes.

These improvements will mean the freight industry in the Murray Basin region will be able to deliver exports to Victoria's ports in a more efficient and cost-competitive way.

Most importantly, the Murray Basin Rail Project will reduce transport logistics costs for our industries and primary producers and ensure our rail network can meet the future freight demands of our state.

Following an assessment of the business case and consultation with freight industry and regional communities, the Andrews Labor Government has committed to the \$416 million project, which delivers the most for regional Victoria. \$220 million has already been committed by the Government to this project, and Victoria hopes to partner with the Commonwealth to help deliver the remainder of the funding required for this project of critical importance to Victoria and Australian freight.

Key freight types from the Murray Basin

- **Grain exports** – around 2 million tonnes per annum from the Murray Basin
- **Mineral sands exports** – around 1-1.5 million tonnes from the Murray Basin
- **Containerised import and exports** – export grain and containerised wine, grapes, citrus, dried fruit and juice, totalling around 13,000 export containers as well as 500 import containers

Why do we need this project?

The Murray Basin is a nationally important producer of grain, mineral sands, fruit, vegetables and wine. Much of this product is exported via the Ports of Portland, Geelong and Melbourne and is transported using the region's road and rail network. Grain and mineral sands are the largest bulk freight products for the state and this region.

Rail has a natural transport advantage over road for bulk freight products as it more efficiently delivers large volumes of products over long distances in a single movement to port.

However a lack of capital investment in the rail network has diminished rail's natural advantage despite an increasing volume of freight from this region. Lack of maintenance has led to speed restrictions, increasing rail travel times and derailments. Four derailments in the Murray Basin region have occurred in the past three years. Speed restrictions have also resulted in more freight shifting from rail to road.

Iluka Resources has invested in a rail terminal at its processing plant in Hamilton and at a rail terminal at Hopetoun on standard gauge. With the intended shift of mining operations north to Balranald in New South Wales, access to standard gauge rail is a fundamental requirement to maintain efficiency and access to its processing plant.

A standard-gauge rail option in the Murray Basin region would significantly improve rail access to the Port of Portland and ensure competitive supply chain costs. Standard-gauge rail access to Hamilton will ensure the viability of the processing plant.

This project is essential to better connect key freight centres in Victoria with our ports and encourage competition and private investment in our rail freight network.

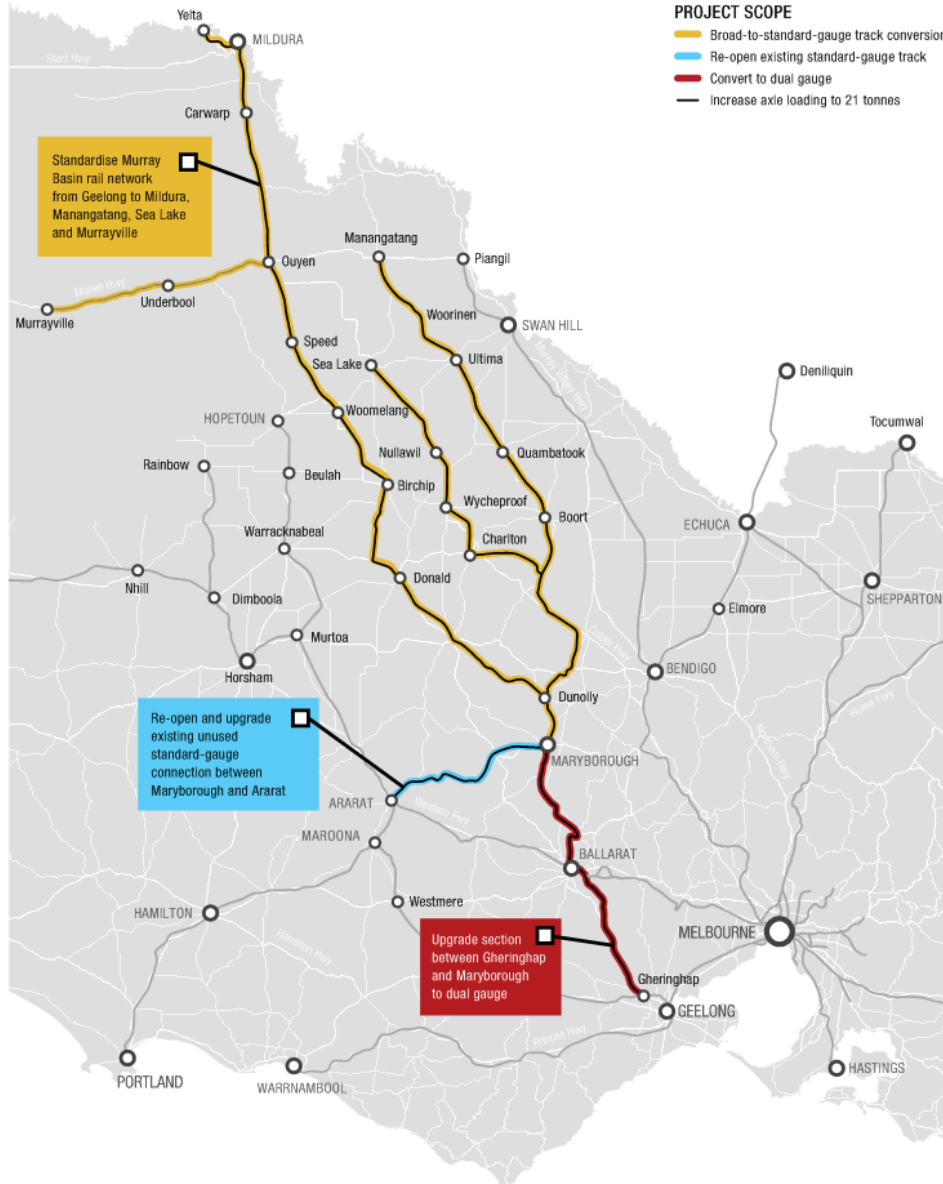
Issues the project will address

Lack of capacity: lines in the Murray Basin have an allowable axle loading of only 19 tonnes per axle.

Lack of competition between rail operators: lines in the Murray Basin restrict access to broad-gauge trains, closing access to other competitors operating standard-gauge rolling stock.

Lack of competition between ports: the two gauges have the effect of isolating the Murray Basin from the Port of Portland – rather than having the state's two bulk ports compete. The Port of Geelong has a natural advantage because it is serviced by both the broad and standard-gauge network while Portland is serviced solely by standard gauge. The Port of Portland has a deeper draft than Geelong, yet has lacked rail access to the Murray Basin.

Project map



Project scope

The project will:

- upgrade the lines in the Murray Basin from broad gauge to standard gauge
- restore and upgrade the existing standard gauge line between Ararat and Maryborough
- upgrade the lines in the Murray Basin from 19 tonne per axle to 21 tonnes per axle
- upgrade the broad-gauge line from Geelong (Gheringhap) to Ballarat (Warrenheip) to dual gauge
- upgrade the Ouyen to Murrayville line from broad gauge to standard gauge with axle loading of 19 tonnes per axle.

Importantly, the restoration of the line between Ararat and Maryborough will connect the Port of Portland to the Murray Basin, via standardised tracks. This link will allow mineral sands to be transported to Hamilton from Manangatang, eliminating a long road connection that sees trucks transporting mineral sands to the standard-gauge line at Hopetoun.

Project benefits

- Lower rail freight costs will see trains taking a larger share of the freight task in the Murray Basin. Exporters from the Murray Basin will see strong modal competition between road and rail, with more choice for freight users.
- Upgrading the lines to a 21-tonne axle loading will provide an immediate 15 per cent productivity efficiency improvement that will increase train loads by 300 to 400 tonnes. Average grain train payloads will increase to 2500 tonnes per train.
- Farmers in the Murray Basin will gain access to a deep-sea port at Portland, delivering them the efficiencies that more heavily-laden bulk carriers offer. Ships berthing at Portland can be loaded with more grain than ships berthing at Geelong.
- The ports of Geelong and Portland will more actively compete for bulk export freight from the Murray Basin.
- Rail operators from all over Australia will actively compete to provide rail services, in particular to the grain marketers and intermodal operators.
- There will be more private sector investment as bulk handlers build new loading facilities to take advantage of the efficiencies delivered by the project.
- The upgrade and standardisation of the Ouyen to Murrayville rail line – which would have otherwise become gauge isolated – will enable grain from this corridor to be carried by rail to Victoria's ports rather than travelling by road to competing ports in South Australia.

Project outcomes

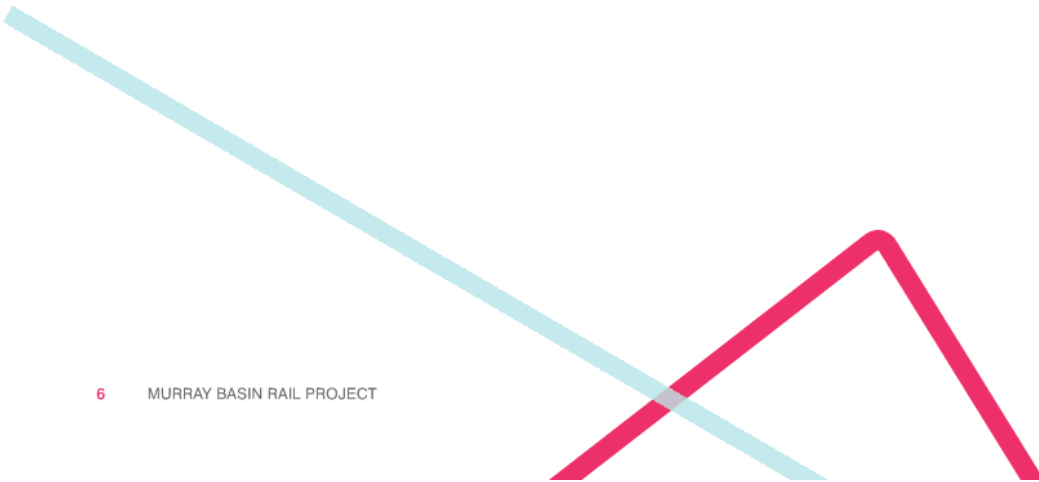


- Up to an extra 500,000 tonnes of grain transported by rail per annum
- 20,000 fewer truck trips to the ports of Geelong, Melbourne and Portland per annum
- 276 construction jobs during the project's implementation
- 1130 km of standardised rail gauge (including the Murrayville line)
- direct investment by rail operators in new rolling stock and bulk handlers in new loading facilities
- flow-on investment at the ports of Melbourne, Portland and Geelong due to increased competition and as a direct result of the need to handle higher tonnages per train
- improved safety and liveability for communities in the region and near the ports as a result of reduced truck numbers.

Cost benefit analysis

Standardisation and upgrade of all the key rail lines in the Murray Basin Region produces a strong benefit cost ratio of 1.74, net present value of \$323.6m and a nominal P50 cost estimate of \$416.2m

The Murray Basin Rail Project is considered to be ready to deliver with the final approach to construction to be determined following consultation with industry.



Scope of works

The scope of works will include significant upgrades to ensure the rail track's ongoing integrity. Additional works will be required to increase the axle loading to 21 tonnes and to standardise or dual-gauge the tracks.

Upgrading the Murray Basin rail lines from a 19 tonne to 21 tonne includes:

- restoring the track formation and ballast
- bridge inspections and drainage improvements
- tie renewal and replacement of worn rail
- continuous welding of the track to enable 80km per hour train speed
- replacing life expired sleepers with new concrete timber replacement sleepers on the Yelta to Ararat, Dunolly to Manangatang and Korong Vale to Sea Lake line sections, and with timber sleepers on the Maryborough to Gheringhap dual gauge line section

- supply and placement of additional ballast and re-tamping the track after installation of new sleepers
- vegetation clearance along the track to ensure line of sight safety as required
- upgrading level crossings and signalling

Gauge standardisation includes:

- moving one rail across to the standard gauge configuration and realigning both rails on curves and bridge structures
- supply and installation of additional rail on the new dual gauge section between Warrenheip and Gheringhap
- turnout renewal involving new timber bearers and track fasteners.

Project delivery

The project will be delivered by V/Line under the direction of Public Transport Victoria (PTV).

Engagement with industry stakeholders will be a feature of the project to ensure disruption is minimised during line closures for gauge standardisation and upgrade works.

All stages of the project are capable of being completed by the end of 2018.





More information

Further information about the project can be found on the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources website at <http://economicdevelopment.vic.gov.au/>

Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

DED/JTR 0266/15

SECTION C – DECISIONS WHICH NEED ACTION/RATIFICATION

C.18.9 SIGN & SEAL REPORT

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil.

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

The following documents and agreements have been signed and sealed by the Councillors and the Chief Executive Officer on the respective dates. Those actions require the ratification of the Council.

Discussion

During the course of any month Council is required to sign and seal a range of documents arising from decisions made on a previous occasion(s). Examples include sale of land, entering into funding arrangements for Council programs etc.

As the decision to enter into these agreements has already been made, these documents are signed and sealed when received, with Council ratifying the signing and sealing at the next Council meeting.

Consultation

Not applicable

Financial Implications

Not applicable

Social Implications

Not applicable

Economic Implications

Not applicable

Environmental Implications

Not applicable

Risk Management Implications

Not applicable

DECISIONS WHICH NEED ACTION/RATIFICATION

26 June 2018

Background

During the course of any month Council is required to sign and seal a range of documents arising from decisions made on a previous occasion(s). Examples include sale of land, entering into funding arrangements for Council programs etc.

As the decision to enter into these agreements has already been made, these documents are signed and sealed when received, with Council ratifying the signing and sealing at the next Council meeting.

Issues

The following documents were signed and sealed since the last Council meeting:

No.	Document Type	Document Description	Date signed/ sealed
882	Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and Environment Act 1987)	To Tamara Broadsmith	15-05-18
883	Instrument of Delegation Special Committee for the Management of the Leisure Centre	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and Swan Hill Leisure Committee of Management	15-05-18
884	Section 173 Agreement – for Planning Permit 2017/13, 19 Werril Street, Swan Hill	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and R.J. Skinner and L.M. Skinner and Lower Murray Urban and Rural Water Corporation.	22-05-18
885	Section 173 Agreement – Pursuant to S121RMA + S173 Planning and Environment Act 1987 – ongoing ownership and maintenance of private pipeline in Council's Road Reserve	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and Chislett Investments Pty Ltd	29-05-18
886	Section 173 Agreement Planning Permit 2015/159 Condition 2 Lot 1+ 2 on 574 + 648 Tyntynder Road, Tyntynder	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and A.S. Atchison and K.J. Burge	29-05-18

Conclusion

Council authorise the signing and sealing of the above documents.

Recommendation

That Council notes the actions of signing and sealing the documents under delegation as scheduled.

C.18.10 COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES - RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA ITEMS

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S15-05-06
Attachments: 1 Councillor Attendance at Assemblies

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

The Local Government Act 1989 requires that the details of Councillor Assemblies be reported to Council meetings on a monthly basis.

Discussion

The State Government has amended the Local Government Act 1989 which requires Council to report on Councillor Assemblies.

Whilst Minutes do not have to be recorded, Agenda items and those in attendance must be, and a report presented to Council.

An assembly of Councillors is defined as a meeting that is planned or scheduled at which at least half of the Council and one Officer are in attendance, and where the matters being considered that are intended or likely to be the subject of a Council decision.

No formal decisions can be made at an assembly but rather direction can be given that is likely to lead to a formal decision of Council.

Details of the most recent assemblies of Council are attached.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Financial Implications

Not applicable.

Social Implications

Not applicable.

Economic Implications

Not applicable.

Environmental Implications

Not applicable.

Risk Management Implications

Not applicable.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Governance and leadership - Effective advocacy and strategic planning.

Options

Council must comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1989.

Recommendation

That Council note the contents of the report.

**COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
22 May 2018 at 1.00pm, Swan Hill Town Hall, Council Chambers**

AGENDA ITEMS

- SES Volunteers units Leases MOU
- Pick My Project Funding Initiative
- Swan Hill Inc Special Rate discussion
- Commercial Development Strategy/Murray River Interpretative Centre Feasibility Study
- Review of Council Plan

ADDITIONAL ITEMS DISCUSSED

- Nil

ATTENDANCE

Councillors

- Cr Les McPhee
- Cr Lea Johnson
- Cr Bill Moar
- Cr Ann Young
- Cr John Katis
- Cr Chris Jeffery

Apologies

- Cr Gary Norton

OFFICERS

- John McLinden, Chief Executive Officer
- Heather Green, Director Development and Planning
- Svetla Petkova, Director Infrastructure
- David Lenton, Director Corporate Services
- Helen Morris, Organistional Development Manager
- Meagan Monk, Community Recreation & Grants Officer
- Fiona Gormann, Community Development and Riverfront Coordinator
- Kirsty Mayes, Properties Officer
- Felicity O'Rourke, Community Planning Officer

Other

- Nil

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Cr Bill Moar declared an indirect conflict of interest due to a close association (his sister is a board member) with item No.3 - Swan Hill Inc Special Rate discussion.

**COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
29 May 2018 at 1.00pm, Swan Hill Town Hall, Council Chambers**

AGENDA ITEMS

- Solar Presentation
- Internal offsets report
- Communication Strategy
- Councillor and Staff Interactions Policy and Procedure
- Connection between Economic Development and Community Planning
- Our Region, Our River & CVGA update
- Silo Art up-date
- Aged Care Reform (14 June) Update
- Rating of Solar Farms

ADDITIONAL ITEMS DISCUSSED

- Nil

ATTENDANCE

Councillors

- Cr Les McPhee
- Cr Lea Johnson
- Cr Ann Young
- Cr John Katis
- Cr Chris Jeffery

Apologies

- Cr Gary Norton
- Cr Bill Moar

OFFICERS

- Bruce Myers, Director Community & Cultural Services
- Heather Green, Acting Chief Executive Officer/Director Development and Planning
- Svetla Petkova, Director Infrastructure
- Samuel Steel,
- Helen Morris, Organistional Development Manager
- Felicia Chalmers, Media & PR Coordinator
- Fiona Gormann, Community Development and Riverfront Coordinator

Other

- Tully Robertson (Forsight Group – Bennerton)

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Nil

**COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
12 June 2018 at 1.00pm, Swan Hill Town Hall, Council Chambers**

AGENDA ITEMS

- Councillor Only Session
- Pioneer Settlement Marketing Plan
- Discount to Fees and Charges at the Pioneer Settlement
- Long Term Financial Plan
- Rating of Solar Farms
- Our Region, Our River
- Robinvale College projects
- Road Discontinuance Box Road Tyntynder South
- Rezoning request for South of Werril Street land holders

ADDITIONAL ITEMS DISCUSSED

- Nil

ATTENDANCE

Councillors

- Cr Les McPhee
- Cr Lea Johnson
- Cr Ann Young
- Cr John Katis
- Cr Chris Jeffery
- Cr Bill Moar

Apologies

- Cr Gary Norton

OFFICERS

- John McLinden, Chief Executive Officer
- Heather Green, Director Development and Planning
- David Lenton, Director Corporate Services
- Mazen Aldaghstani, Acting Director Infrastructure/ Engineering Projects & Assets Manager
- Jessica Warburton, General Manager Pioneer Settlement
- Stefan Louw, Development Manager

Other

- Nil

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Nil

SECTION D – NOTICES OF MOTION

SECTION E – URGENT ITEMS NOT INCLUDED IN AGENDA

SECTION F – TO CONSIDER & ORDER ON COUNCILLOR REPORTS

SECTION G – IN CAMERA ITEMS

Recommendation

That Council close the meeting to the public on the grounds that the following report(s) include industrial matters

B.18.46 IN CAMERA CONSIDERATION OF CONFIDENTIAL REPORT