

MINUTES

SCHEDULED MEETING OF COUNCIL

Tuesday, 20 July 2021

Held Virtually via a Zoom Meeting
Commenced at 2pm

COUNCIL:

Cr B Moar – Mayor

Cr J Benham
Cr A Young
Cr LT McPhee
Cr C Jeffery
Cr S King
Cr N McKay

Confirmed 17 August 2021

Chairperson.....

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SECTION A – PROCEDURAL MATTERS

- **Welcome**

Mayor, Councillor Bill Moar assumed the chair and declared the meeting open at 2.07pm.

- **Acknowledgement of Country**

Mayor, Councillor Bill Moar read the Acknowledgement of Country.

- **Prayer**

Cr Jade Benham read the prayer.

- **Apologies/Leaves of Absence**

Cr Chris Jeffery

100/21 Motion

MOVED Cr King

That the apology be accepted.

SECONDED Cr McPhee

The Motion was put and CARRIED

- **Directors/Officers Present**

John McLinden, Chief Executive Officer
Bruce Myers, Director community and Cultural Services
Svetla Petkova, Director Infrastructure
Joel Lieschke, Director Corporate Services
Warren Snyder, Finance Manager
Ash Free, Financial Accountant
Sharon Lindsay, Executive Assistant
Terri McCormick, Executive Support Officer

- **Confirmation of Minutes**

- 1) Scheduled Meeting Of Council held on 15 June 2021

101/21 Motion

MOVED Cr Benham

That the minutes of the Scheduled Meeting of Council held on 15 June 2021 be confirmed.

SECONDED Cr King

The Motion was put and CARRIED

- **Disclosures of Conflict of Interest**

Nil

- **Joint Letters and Reading of Petitions**

Nil

102/21 Motion

MOVED Cr McPhee

That Standing Orders be suspended at 2.10pm.

SECONDED Cr Benham

The Motion was put and CARRIED

- **Public Question Time**

Moira Deeming

"Under Victorian law, is it legal for Local Government Councils to provide sex based/targeted services and facilities separately to gender identity based/targeted services and facilities? If not, why not? For example, can we legally put signs on a set of public toilets declaring that one is for biological males (including males with an intersex condition), one is for biological females (including biological females with an intersex condition) and one is for people with transgender identities (of any biological sex)? If not, why not?"

The Chief Executive Officer Mr John McLinden replied:

I thank Moira for the question. – I note that this or a similar question has been submitted to a number of councils throughout Victoria for consideration.

I think the question really asks if Council is considering or sees it as necessary to provide toilet facilities for people with intersex conditions or transgender identities.

My understanding is that Victorian Law prohibits any discrimination on the basis of sex. Council provides Male & Female toilet facilities or unisex facilities and/or family rooms and DDA compliant facilities or more commonly a combination of these at any one location.

Toilets are configured depending on their location and thus the predominate use of those facilities. In recent times council has included DDA compliant unisex cubicles in its toilets which are there to cater for all in our community.

This practice will continue.

Alison Black

Installation of Shade Sails at Ritchies IGA Carpark Robinvale

At the Council meeting of 23 February 2021 Council resolved to investigate the request for shade sails and then report the matter to a future Council meeting. Can Council advise the date on which the results of the investigation will be reported to a Council meeting?

The Chief Executive Officer Mr John McLinden replied:

I thank Ms Black for her question.

Council has received the proposal from Ritchies IGA for investigation and implementing the use of solar panels as shade sails. From this request Council has provided Ritchies with several options for their reference. The matter is under active consideration with regular correspondence with Ritchies and their designers. Once an agreement is reached with Ritchies IGA, a proposal will be forwarded to Council for decision and once Council has considered that matter we will certainly be providing information in consultation with Ritchies IGA and the community. We are hoping to achieve here is an option that provides not only shade for those parked in the carpark but also generates electricity which we expect will be utilized by the supermarket.

The Mayor Bill Moar payed tribute to the former Bill Maher a former Councillor and Mayor of the Swan Hill Shire and then as the Swan Hill Rural City Council. On behalf of the Swan Hill Rural City Council we send condolences to his wife and extended family.

Bill was a Councillor for the Shire of Swan Hill from 1990 until amalgamation in 1995. He held the position of Shire President in 1992.

He was also a Councillor for the Swan Hill Rural City from 1997-2003 and in fact Bill was the first Mayor of the amalgamated Shire and Rural City Council.

Bill was a member of many committees and organisations throughout his tenure:

Shire of Swan Hill

Physical Services, Roads & Properties Committee

Saleyards Committee - Chairman

Aerodrome Committee

Joint City / Shire Committee

Mallee Valuation Group

Municipal Public Health Plan

Murray Mallee Training Company

Swan Hill Weights & Measures Union

Community Works & Services Committee

CFA Regional Fire Prevention Committee - deputy

Policy & Resources Committee

Joint Municipal Committee Murray Darling Rver Water Quality
Nyah Salinity Management Plan Working Group
Rural Water Commission Pipeline Planning Committee
Municipal Saleyards Association
North West Municipalities Association - deputy
Rural Water Corporation Northern Mallee Domestic & Stock Committee
Swan Hill Water Board
Murray Mallee Regional Organisation of Councils
Tyntynder Flats Flood Mitigation Committee

Swan Hill Rural City Council

Municipal Association of Victoria
Western Murray Regional Development Organisation
Swan Hill Aerodrome Advisory Committee
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee - Chairman
Nyah Action Group Health Sub-Committee
Murray Crossings Group
Horticultural Expansion Working Group

As you can see former Councillor Maher was heavily involved in Swan Hill and surrounds and we send our sincere condolences to his wife and extended family.

103/21 Motion

MOVED Cr Benham

That Standing Orders be resumed at 2.16pm.

SECONDED Cr McPhee

The Motion was put and CARRIED

- **Open Forum**

Physical attendance at this time is not possible due to COVID-19 restrictions therefore there will be no open forum for this meeting.

SECTION B – REPORTS

B.21.54 DESIGNATED AREAS MIGRATION AGREEMENT (DAMA) PROGRAM

Responsible Officer: Director Development and Planning
File Number: S12-26-06
Attachments: Nil.

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

This report is to update Council on the Designated Areas Migration Agreement (DAMA) program and recommends further investigation be undertaken.

Discussion

Council at its Ordinary Meeting of August 2019 endorsed the labour supply to the horticultural sector paper that recommended that Council advocates for an Ag Visa and not support a DAMA program as it did not respond to the employment needs of the industry.

Since that time there has been changes to the local economy and the demand for workers that warrant further investigation.

DAMA Update

The DAMA program has been in place since 2018 and there are currently seven DAMAs in place throughout Australia:

- Northern Territory
- The Goldfields, WA
- Great South Coast, VIC
- Adelaide City Technology and Innovation Advancement
- South Australia Regional
- Orana, NSW
- Far North Queensland

The program caters for permanent full time positions and is similar to the 494 Subclass Visa offered by Council's Regional Certifying Body. It is less restrictive on the type of occupations accepted and the English language competency requirements.

All existing DAMAs are at a State level such as the Northern Territory or regional level. There is no example of DAMA by a single Council.

The program requires a lot of administration by the auspicing body and the employer. An attached PowerPoint from the Department of Home Affairs details the steps needed.

To be eligible for entering a DAMA agreement the employer must demonstrate that:

- they are financially viable and have been operating for at least 12 months;
- have no history of not meeting its obligations to employees;
- are looking to employ overseas workers to fill full-time positions with duties that align with one of the occupations on each DAMAs occupation list;
- can demonstrate they cannot fill the position locally with Australian citizens or permanent residents; and
- can provide terms and conditions of employment to overseas workers that are in accordance with those offered to Australian workers employed in the region.

Certain occupations will require lower English language competency than those under employer sponsored visa programs and some DAMA occupations will not be required to meet the Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (TSMIT), which is currently \$53,900. To seek this concession, however, there needs to be a strong business case and the employer will also need to show that the salary offered is at least equivalent to what an Australian citizen could expect for the same role.

There is concern that the program is unlikely to suit the needs of the horticulture industry as DAMA is designed for permanent full time positions with the same employer and most jobs not being filled in the horticultural industry are seasonal.

Due to COVID-19 the Department of Home Affairs has advised processing of migrants will be given to critical sectors only.

([https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/critical-skills-and-sectors.](https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/critical-skills-and-sectors))

Regional approach

Most DAMA except for Adelaide have a regional approach. In the Loddon Mallee region Shepparton has partnered with Moira and Campaspe to apply to register a DAMA.

The possibility of establishing DAMA for the northern part of the Loddon Mallee region has been broached with the Murray River Group of Councils. There was little interest from the group to further explore the DAMA concept as the group felt that the most acute employment shortages rest with the agriculture sector which mainly requires seasonal or casual workers, not covered by DAMA provisions.

Sub Class 494 Visa

This visa is available to employers and administered by Council for the Swan Hill and Mildura regions under the Regional Certifying Body program. Unlike DAMA, this visa requires English competency and is restricted to a list of approved occupations (<https://www.seekvisa.com.au/494-visa-occupations-list/>).

The visa allows the holder to live, work and study only in designated regional areas of Australia for 5 years, travel to and from Australia for 5 years and if eligible, apply for permanent residence after 3 years from the time the visa is granted.

Council receives a payment of \$575 per application to offset the processing costs of Council.

Council processes a number of applications every year and examples of applications include Grape Growers, Office Manager, Aged Care Nurse, Cook, OHS Advisor and Crop Farmer as a sample. There was a change in visa requirements in late 2018 which explains the high level of applications in that year prior to the changes taking effect.

2017/2018 – 96 applications processed \$550 each (\$52,800)

2018/2019 – 28 applications processed \$550 each (\$15,400)

2019/2020 – 34 applications processed \$575 each (\$19,550)

Consultation

The following comments were collected through consultation with the Officers of the organisation that were responsible for DAMA activities.

Great South Coast DAMA (Warrnambool)

The Great South Coast DAMA Coordinator indicated that the program has been useful to some employers, in particular in the dairy industry, but that the administrative burden should be considered in making a decision to enter a DAMA. Setting up and running the program was the equivalent of a full time position, with no subsidy available from the DAMA program. He further indicated that the program was extremely quiet since COVID as people were mainly unable to migrate to Australia.

Greater Shepparton DAMA

Greater Shepparton City Council, in partnership with Moira and Campaspe has submitted an application to the Commonwealth Government for a DAMA, after working on the preparation for the project since August 2019.

Discussions with Greater Shepparton Project Officer indicated that the cost of running a DAMA over four years is approximately \$500,000 in wages and expenses, including \$85,000 to prepare a business plan. Shepparton is planning to receive 400 applications, which will assist in recouping some of the monies invested but still leaves a shortfall of between \$120,000 to \$250,000 according to their projections.

Orana DAMA (Dubbo NSW)

This DAMA was established late 2019 through Orana RDA for 12 LGAs. The Orana region covers the central and north western sectors of New South Wales – an area of over 199,000 square kilometres, and has an estimated population of 122, 897.

All work on the application and ongoing activities is and was undertaken by existing resources in the RDA. No new positions were created to administer the DAMA.

The development of the business case took six months and was a complex document to bring together. There was a significant consultation component with stakeholders and industry that was a major part of the business case.

In response to whether the DAMA has worked, the Workforce Development Officer stated yes it has had some success with FTE placements particularly truck drivers but no due to the external impacts of drought and then COVID.

The DAMA has not had a major impact on RDA resourcing and is undertaken as part of the Workforce Development Officer's role, which migration/workforce issues previously and continue to be part of their role. The DAMA fees charged do cover the application process. There is however no ROI on the initial work in applying and setting up the DAMA up.

Critical to the success of the DAMA is understanding the workforce composition. The DAMA is not suitable for a transient workforce, part time or seasonal ie applicants must spend three years at one business.

Cairns Chamber of Commerce DAMA (Far North QLD)

The DAMA was established in April 2019 and the Chamber of Commerce hired an additional resource, 2.5 days/week, to manage the program, once approved.

A business case was developed in-house but according to the DAMA manager it had a few gaps which have been rectified with an amendment currently being approved. 60-70 businesses have accessed the DAMA to date.

DAMA is very useful in meeting the regional workforce needs as opposed to the nation-wide migration rules that only address the first three levels of occupational codes and DAMA also make concessions on age ie older participants are allowed and if it is not a front facing job, English requirements can be relaxed.

DAMA can attract people to regions that they would not have previously considered.

In order for DAMA to be successful the following points need to be addressed:

- Be aware of migration scams
- Have a good understanding of the catchment area
- Have the support of the key stakeholders in the region
- Understand the workforce requirements

It was noted that DAMA required a lot of administrative work and a fee can be charged to cover administrative costs – approx. \$900 to \$1,000 per position.

Overall the Cairns Chamber of Commerce thought it was a positive to have a DAMA in their region as it was another tool to build a productive workforce.

The Goldfields DAMA (Kalgoorlie/Boulder Council, WA)

The DAMA was aimed at reducing the region's reliance on FIFO workers but hasn't necessarily hit the mark yet but has achieved outcomes for in other industries

Although only achieved approximately 20 placements the general opinion was that the DAMA is successful and expectations were that placements would increase as the program gained momentum.

There are some key points to consider in developing the applications and seeking approval.

A regional approach is necessary. A strong regional alliance will create a stronger case for the Federal Government to establish a DAMA in a region. The WA DAMA has involvement from all local shires, chambers of commerce and RDA and the local shire has lead the project and coordinated the business case.

Early engagement with the Department of Home Affairs' Labour Agreement section for advice to guide the applicant on the process and the type of information to include in the Business Case. A clear and detailed description of the regional labour market issues and the surveying of industry to determine the needs are critical to the development of a business case.

The development of a business case and negotiation of a DAMA with the Federal Government will take 6-9 months.

Robinvale Employer

Council Officers visited the workshop of a Robinvale engineering firm that had indicated shortages of labour preventing the company from expanding and fulfilling orders. The main occupation shortages were metal fabricators, welders and similar. The owner expressed interest in suitably qualified and experienced people and was looking at upward of ten positions.

A major impediment in potential workers not qualifying for Sub Class Visa 494 was the difficulties associated with obtaining Band 6 English competency. Band 6 English is defined as a competent use, defined as: generally, an effective command of the English language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriate usage and some misunderstandings. You can use and understand complex language, particularly in a familiar situation.

The DAMA program allows potential applicants to possess a lower level of English.

Woorinen Horticulturalist

The Council met with growers from the Woorinen area to discuss the pros and cons of establishing a DAMA in the municipality. In summary, it was agreed that it would be worth pursuing a DAMA for the region. No details were divulged on the number of jobs that may suit a DAMA but the attendees indicated that there would be demand from a dozen or so growers in the area.

Council's AgriBusiness Committee

At a recent AgriBusiness Committee meeting the DAMA concept was discussed and there was diverse opinions on the necessity and benefits of forming a regional DAMA. However, it was felt by some of the members that requirement of permanent workers at the minimum wage of \$53,000 was not the solution for the sector.

Ministerial engagement

While attending the Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly recently held in Canberra, the Mayor, along with Cr McKay and the CEO engaged with Minister Hawk on the options for establishing a DAMA. To summarise, the Minister was open to any option that could achieve the goals of the program and encouraged SHRCC to explore the possibilities.

Financial Implications

Establishing a DAMA would have a financial implication for Council in Officers' time and training. Council would need to employ an additional Officer or redirect an Officer, meaning that other initiatives may have to be curtailed.

An additional Officer would cost in the vicinity of \$70,000 to \$80,000 plus on costs (fulltime). The development of the business case and application could cost up to \$80,000 based on experience from other regions.

Each employee under DAMA costs the employer between \$3,000 and \$5,000 in visa fees, travel and various administrative fees. In addition, if the visa holder or any of their dependents become unlawful or abscond to another region, the employer might have to pay the cost of locating them and removing them from Australia.

Social Implications

DAMA is aimed at attracting lower paid migrant workers to the region. This has the potential to create social challenges and will also add pressure to the existing housing crisis across the region. These potential issues need to be considered in any DAMA application.

Economic Implications

Establishing a DAMA can have some benefits for industries, although the present Visa Sub Class 494 has similar benefits. However, in the present COVID-19 situation, the benefits are limited for both programs due to the lack of migration.

DAMA can increase the workforce and is more flexible than current visas, but housing solutions have to be found for potential new employees.

Environmental Implications

Not applicable.

Risk Management Implications

Pursuing a DAMA will involve significant and unbudgeted costs with no guarantee it will impact on job creation.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Economic growth - Have a region with an equipped and productive workforce.

Summary of the DAMA's pros and cons

The following summary of the pros and cons are provided to assist in comparison and decision making and are not in any prioritised order.

Pros	Cons
DAMA can attract people to regions that they would not have previously considered	Does not allow for part time or seasonal workers - a big demand in our region
Provides another avenue for industry to attract a workforce to the region	Significant investment up front in the development of business plan and application process and this cost is borne by applicant (Council)
Allows for lower levels of English attainment	Ongoing cost of managing DAMA
Allows for lower levels of occupational codes ie levels four and five of five in total	Inflexible re multiple employers over three years
Improve/increase workforce numbers	Must have a regional approach, therefore broadening employment categories and not necessarily meeting the needs of our industries
	COVID has had a significant impact and is likely to continue to effect international arrival capacity for the immediate future

The potential to join with Shepparton, Moira and Campaspe Councils in their DAMA application was not considered an option at the time but is continuing to be explored.

Options

1. That Council not pursue a DAMA program.
2. That Council progresses the development of an application and business plan to establish a DAMA program.
3. That Council, in 12 months, determines a decision on the establishment of a DAMA which is informed by the Shepparton, Moira and Campaspe Councils' DAMA application, approval and subsequent performance.
4. That Council undertakes a preliminary feasibility study to establish a DAMA in the region which will provide more information for Council to make an informed decision on whether to proceed with a business case or not. This exploration will include joining with another DAMA, creating a regional DAMA with nearby municipalities or pursuing it for SHRCC only.

Recommendation

That Council undertakes a preliminary feasibility study to establish a DAMA in the region which will provide more information for Council to make an informed decision on whether to proceed with a business case or not.

104/21 Motion

MOVED Cr Benham

That Council undertakes a preliminary feasibility study to establish a DAMA in the region which will provide more information for Council to make an informed decision on whether to proceed with a business case or not. This exploration will include, but not be limited to joining with another DAMA, creating a regional DAMA with nearby municipalities & states or pursuing it for Swan Hill Rural City Council only.

SECONDED Cr Young

The Motion was put and CARRIED

B.21.55 DRYLAND CROPS IN THE SWAN HILL LGA REPORT

Responsible Officer: Director Development and Planning
File Number: S12-27-14
Attachments: 1 Dryland Crops in the Swan Hill LGA

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

This report seeks Council's endorsement of the Dryland Crops in the Swan Hill LGA report.

Discussion

Council, on the advice of the Agribusiness Advisory Committee commissioned SunRISE Mapping and Research to produce a complimentary report to the "Irrigated Crops in the Swan Hill LGA" for broadacre crops.

The report details the type, the land area covered and the gross value of dryland crops in the Swan Hill Municipality.

A copy of the document is attached to this report.

In 2017/2018:

- the gross value of dryland crops is \$211.6 million compared to \$1,180 billion for horticulture
- dryland cropping and grazing cover 70% of the total land mass of the municipality horticulture covers 17% and the remaining 13% is urban and crown land

Consultation

Not applicable.

Financial Implications

Not applicable.

Social Implications

Not applicable.

Economic Implications

The report provides information to support applications for funding, strategic decisions of Council and as an information tool for attracting investment.

Environmental Implications

The report identifies the relative scarcity of native vegetation in the municipality

Risk Management Implications

Not applicable.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Governance and leadership - Effective advocacy and strategic planning.

Options

1. That Council receives and endorses the Dryland Crops in the Swan Hill LGA report.
2. That Council requires further information
3. That Council does not endorse the Dryland Crops in the Swan Hill LGA report

Recommendation

That Council receives and endorses the Dryland Crops in the Swan Hill LGA report.

105/21 Motion

MOVED Cr McPhee

That Council receives and endorses the Dryland Crops in the Swan Hill LGA report.

SECONDED Cr King

The Motion was put and CARRIED



Dryland crops in the Swan Hill LGA



May 2021



Publication title: Dryland crops in the Swan Hill LGA

Authors: Sue Argus and Julie Hawtin, SunRISE Mapping & Research



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Acknowledgements

SunRISE Mapping and Research appreciates the support of the following program members:

- Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, NSW
- Dried Fruits Australia
- Lower Murray Water
- Mallee Catchment Management Authority
- Mildura Rural City Council
- Murray Valley Winegrowers
- Seaway Intermodal (Wakefield Transport Group)
- Swan Hill Rural City Council
- TASC Petroleum
- Wentworth Shire Council
- Western Murray Irrigation

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1. Introduction

This report was prepared for Swan Hill Rural City Council to provide information on dryland cropping and an estimate of its gross value of production in 2017-18.

The report compliments an earlier one prepared by SunRISE Mapping and Research (SunRISE) on irrigated crops and an estimate of the gross value of production¹.

The mapping of irrigated and dryland crop areas was based on high-resolution aerial imagery captured January 2018. Hence, the mapping and information represent the (early) 2018 harvest for irrigated crops and the (late) 2017 harvest for dryland crops.

Land use mapping

The mapping of dryland crop areas was largely a process of elimination. Mapping of other land uses, such as irrigated areas, crown land, reserves, parks, roads and town areas, were readily available, so these areas were designated first. The remaining freehold land was mostly dryland farms and these areas were further developed to distinguish cropping areas from non-production areas such as farm houses, vegetation, sheds, grain storage and yards.

The January 2018 aerial imagery was used to verify the different land uses.

The result was a map of broad land use types across the Swan Hill LGA as shown in Figure 4, page 11.

Dryland crop types

While dryland cropping areas were determined using the 2018 aerial imagery, it was not possible to use the imagery to discern different crop types, such as canola, wheat, lupins etc.

Instead, ABS data² was used to determine the composition of dryland crop types in North West Victoria in 2017-18. This was apportioned to the dryland cropping area in the Swan Hill LGA resulting in crop type areas as shown in Figure 5, page 12.

Gross value of production

The 2017-18 ABS data also provided statistics on crop yields (average tonnes/ha) for North West Victoria. Prices (\$/tonne) for 2017-18 were mainly sourced from Birchip Cropping Group reports to calculate gross value per hectare (\$/ha). Gross value per hectare was then applied to crop areas from the SunRISE mapping to calculate gross value of production.

Results are shown in Figure 6 and Table 4, pages 13 and 17 respectively.

GVP for agriculture in the Swan Hill LGA for 2015-16 was also included in the report as figures were readily available from ABS data³ attributed to local government areas.

Results are shown in Table 2, page 14.

¹ *Irrigated crops in the Swan Hill LGA 1997 to 2018*, 31st March 2020

² ABS data 71210DO001_201718 Agricultural Commodities, Australia 2017-18 for North West, Victoria

³ 75030DO006_201516 Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia-2015-16, data by LGA

1.1 Study area

This report covers dryland cropping in the Swan Hill Local Government Area (LGA), Figure 1.

- The Swan Hill LGA covers an area of 611,600 hectares.
- In 2017-18, 70% (427,000 ha) of the Swan Hill LGA was associated with dryland farming.
- The dryland farming area is predominantly used for cropping, but also includes associated infrastructure of houses, sheds, grain storage, headlands, vegetation etc, and a small proportion of land affected by salinity.

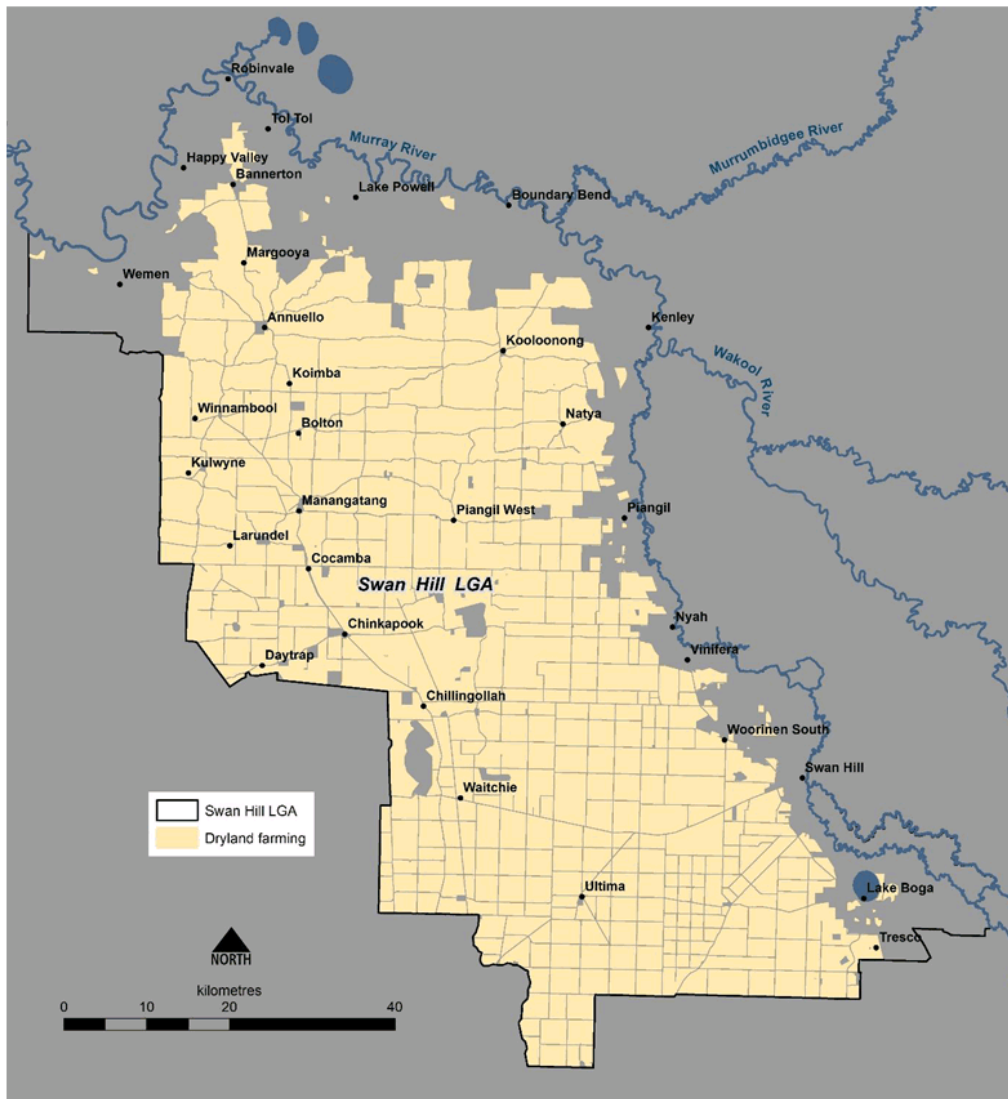


Figure 1: Map of dryland farming areas in the Swan Hill LGA, 2017-18

1.2 Method: land use mapping

The mapping of dryland cropping areas was achieved through a process of elimination. Mapping was first compiled for other land uses as most of the following were already available; irrigated areas, crown land, reserves, parks, roads, town areas, transport etc.

Land use for the remaining areas was determined from a map base of January 2018 aerial imagery. It was mostly dryland farming and these areas were edited to delineate cropping areas from farm areas not in production; saline areas and 'dryland infrastructure' such as farm houses, vegetation, sheds, grain storage and yards.

Headlands in dryland paddocks were not mapped, but 0.5% of the area of paddocks was assigned to headlands i.e. 'dryland infrastructure'. The 0.5% proportion for headlands was estimated by measuring headlands in twenty random paddocks.

Table 1 describes the land use categories that were mapped.

Table 1: Land use categories

Land use category		Description
Dryland areas	Dryland agriculture	Dryland cropping and grazing areas
	Dryland infrastructure	On-farm dryland infrastructure: sheds, silos, farm houses, yards, headlands (estimated at 0.5% of the cropping area)
	Vegetation (freehold land)	Vegetated areas on freehold land, mostly native vegetation
	Saline farmland	On-farm areas affected by salinity, not cropped
Irrigation areas	Irrigation & infrastructure	Irrigable areas and associated infrastructure on freehold land: headlands, houses, water storage, sheds, processing, pipelines etc.
	Floodplain (freehold land)	Floodplain areas on freehold land, not irrigated but adjacent to irrigated areas
Other	Urban & transport infrastructure	Houses and town/transport infrastructure including shops, businesses, airports, railways, solar farms, quarries
	Roads	Road reserves; highways and urban and rural roads
	Crown land and reserves	Crown land, parks and reserves including reserves for utilities

Method: land use mapping

Figure 2 shows a subset of the 2017-18 land use mapping with a backdrop of the aerial imagery flown January 2018.

The imagery was acquired through the Coordinated Imagery Program, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Victoria.

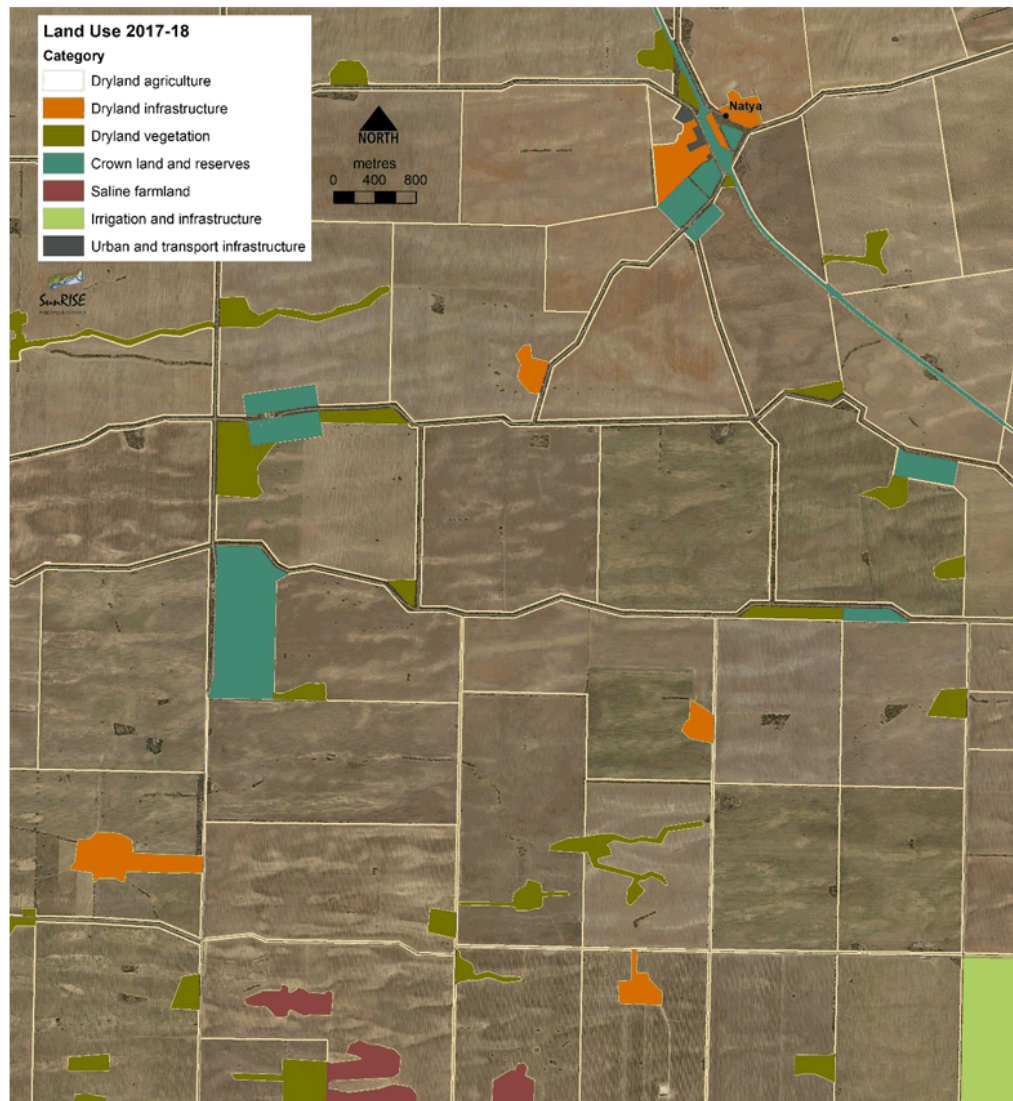


Figure 2: January 2018 aerial imagery used to map land use

Method: dryland crop types

Dryland crop types such as wheat, barley and pulses are not readily determined from aerial imagery, hence ABS data was used to derive the composition (proportion) of dryland crop types in North West Victoria in 2017-18. This composition was apportioned to the cropping area in the Swan Hill LGA.

Dryland cropping across the ABS SA4 North West region (Figure 3) does not necessarily represent cropping in the Swan Hill LGA, however it was the best available fit identified at the time.

The resulting composition of crop types is shown in Figure 5, page 12.

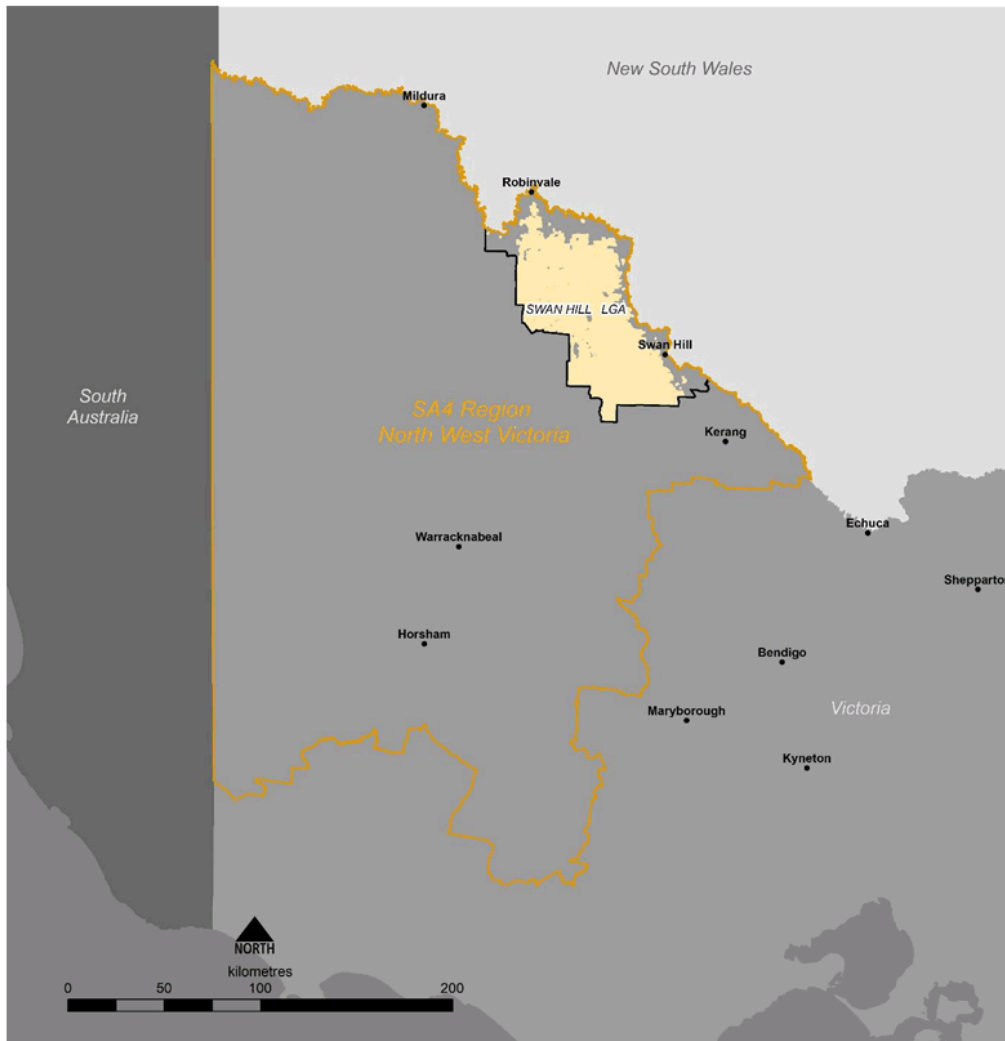


Figure 3: The ABS North West Victoria region and the Swan Hill LGA

2. Land use in the Swan Hill LGA 2017-18

2.1 Land use in the Swan Hill LGA 2017-18

Figure 4, page 11, shows land use in the Swan Hill LGA in 2017-18.

The total land area of 611,600 ha comprised:

- 70% (427,000 ha) of dryland areas:
 - 398,500 ha of dryland cropping and grazing;
 - 7,000 ha of dryland infrastructure; housing, farm sheds, silos, headlands etc.;
 - 13,000 ha of vegetation (mostly native vegetation) on freehold land in the dryland zone⁴; and
 - 8,500 ha of farmland affected by salinity and not cropped.
- 17% (103,700 ha) of irrigation areas:
 - 99,500 ha of irrigable land and associated infrastructure such as housing, sheds, headlands, water storage, processing plants, wineries etc; and
 - 4,200 ha of floodplain, freehold land but not irrigated.
- 13% (80,900 ha) of other areas:
 - 22,850 ha of urban housing and infrastructure, transport infrastructure; rail, air and roads; and
 - 58,050 ha of crown land and reserves.

Hectare totals were rounded to the nearest fifty hectares.

⁴ Includes remnant native veg. on farmland as well as whole land parcels, possibly never cleared for agriculture.

Map of land use 2017-18

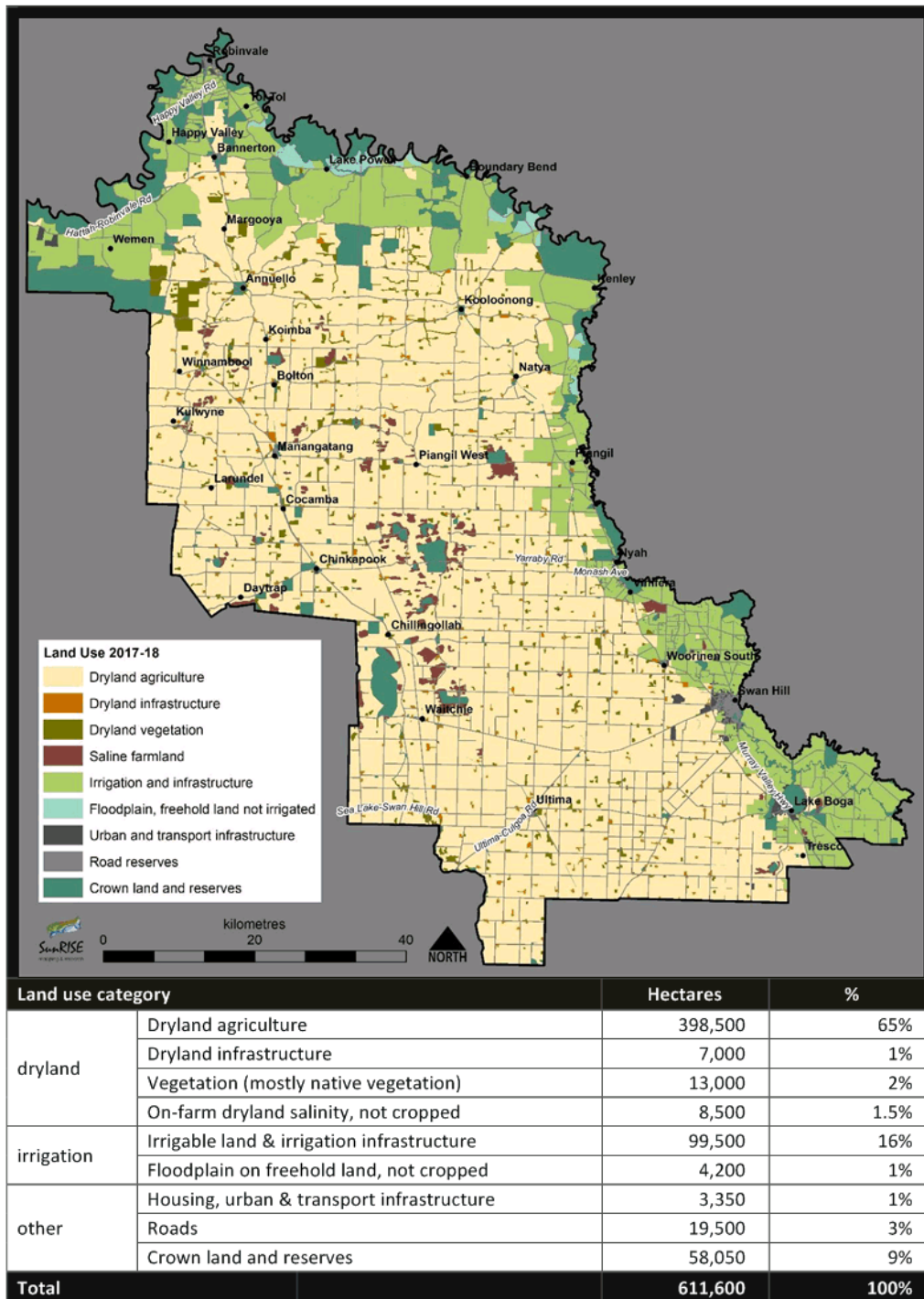


Figure 4: Land use in the Swan Hill LGA in 2017-18

2.2 Composition of dryland crop types in 2017-18

A total dryland cropping area of 398,500 ha was determined from the SunRISE land use mapping. The breakdown of this total area to the different crop types; canola, wheat, lupins etc., was estimated using Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data⁵ for North West Victoria in 2017-18. The ABS data had a relative standard error generally in the 10% to 25% range, and noted that the data should be used with caution.

The following composition of crop types was estimated from the ABS data and applied to the dryland cropping area in the Swan Hill LGA (Figure 5):

- 36% wheat grain;
- 22% barley grain;
- 17% pulses;
- 9% grazing;
- 7% canola;
- 3% other hay;
- 2% cereal hay;
- 2% oats grain; and
- 2% fallow.

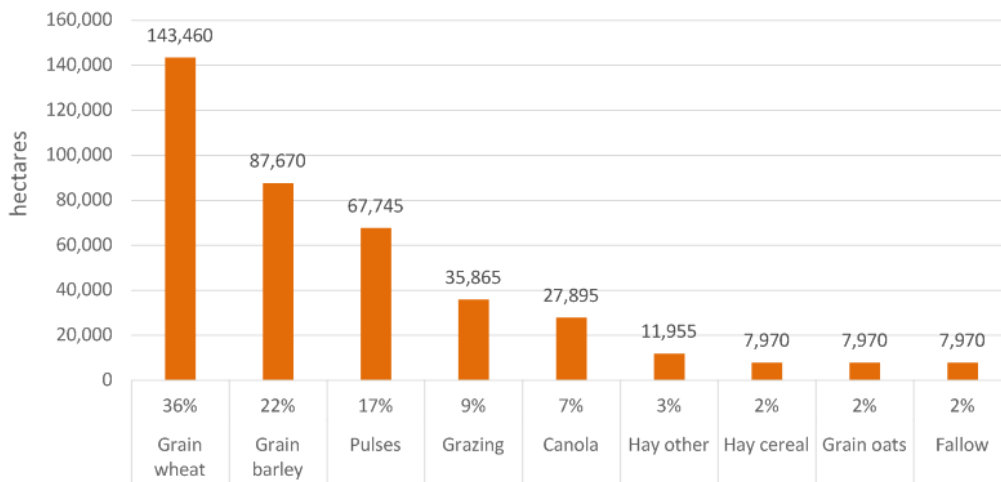


Figure 5: Estimated composition of dryland crop types (hectares) in the Swan Hill LGA in 2017-18

⁵ 71210DO001_201718 Agricultural Commodities, Australia 2017-18 for North West, Victoria

3. Gross value of production: dryland cropping

3.1 GVP of dryland cropping in 2017-18

Gross value of production (GVP) is the income to the producer without deduction of any costs of production.

GVP of dryland cropping in the Swan Hill LGA for 2017-18 was calculated from the estimated 'composition of dryland crop types in 2017-18' (Figure 5, page 12) and an average price (\$/ha) for each of the crop types derived from a range of sources (Table 4, page 17).

The 2017-18 gross value of production for dryland cropping in the Swan Hill LGA was estimated at \$211.6 million.

Figure 6 shows the estimated gross value of production for each dryland crop type in the Swan Hill LGA in 2017-18. The following crop types accounted for 95% of the gross value of production:

- Wheat grain (39%);
- Barley grain (22%);
- Pulses (16%);
- Canola (11%); and
- Grazing (7%).

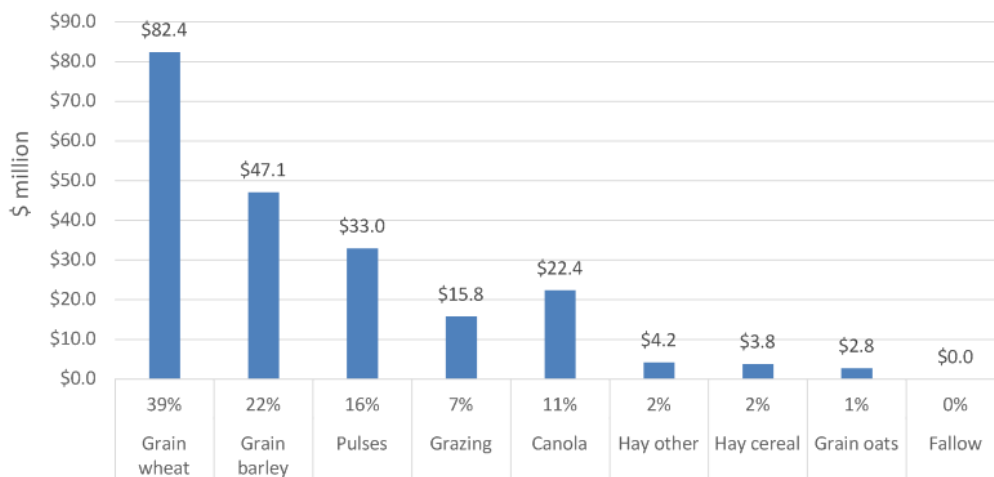


Figure 6: Estimated gross value of production for dryland crop types in 2017-18

3.2 GVP of agriculture in 2015-16

Table 2 shows a summary of Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)⁶ estimates for the gross value of agricultural produce in the Swan Hill LGA in 2015-16, a total GVP of \$931.1 million. Note that agricultural produce includes livestock products (wool, milk and eggs) and livestock slaughtered and other disposals.

ABS data does not distinguish irrigated and dryland crops, however for the purpose of this report the ABS commodity groups in Table 2 were assigned to irrigated (shaded in green) and dryland (shaded in orange). The approximate GVP attributed to irrigated crops and dryland cropping was \$813.4 million and \$88.1 million respectively. This is approximate only, as all 'broad acre crops' and 'hay' were assigned to 'dryland' whereas some are irrigated, for example cereal, Lucerne, maize and pastures.

National ranking for GVP in 2015-16

Table 2 also shows National rankings for the value of agricultural commodities in 2015-16. The rankings were sourced online from Australian Agricultural Census 2015-16 visualisations. They are not based on LGAs, rather on over 1,000 'regions' where the Swan Hill LGA comprises three regions; Robinvale, Swan Hill (city area) and Swan Hill region as shown in Figure 7. Only rankings in the top 20 listing have been noted in Table 2.

The Swan Hill region was ranked No 1 across Australia for GVP of fruit and nuts and Robinvale ranked No 1 for grapes.

Limitations of data

Note: The ABS estimated gross values were apportioned to LGA regions based on the proportion of SA2 (Statistical Area level 2) area that overlaid each LGA region. As per the GVP figures presented in this report for 2017-18, data has been apportioned to different geographies from that of the original data and should be treated with caution.

Table 2: Summary of ABS data for the value of agriculture in the Swan Hill LGA in 2015-16

Commodity	GVP \$m (Swan Hill LGA, 2015-16)		National ranking ⁷ (regions, not LGAs)
Broad acre crops	\$80.9	approx. \$88.1 m dryland crops	Not in top 20 ranking
Hay	\$7.2		
Fruit (citrus, stone fruit & other fruit)	\$87.7	approx. \$813.4 m irrigated crops	1 st Swan Hill region for fruit & nuts
Nuts (almonds & other nuts)	\$467.2		1 st Robinvale, 12 th Swan Hill region
Grapes (wine, dried, juice & table)	\$169.1		11 th Swan Hill region
Vegetables for human consumption	\$65.5		12 th Swan Hill region
Nurseries, cut flowers, cultivated turf	\$23.9		
Total value of crops	\$901.5		3rd Swan Hill region
Livestock (products, slaughtered & other)	\$29.6		Not in top 20 ranking
Total value of agricultural produce	\$931.1		4th Swan Hill region

⁶ 75030DO006_201516 Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia-2015-16, data by LGA

⁷ <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/data/agricultural-census-visualisations#gross-value-of-production>

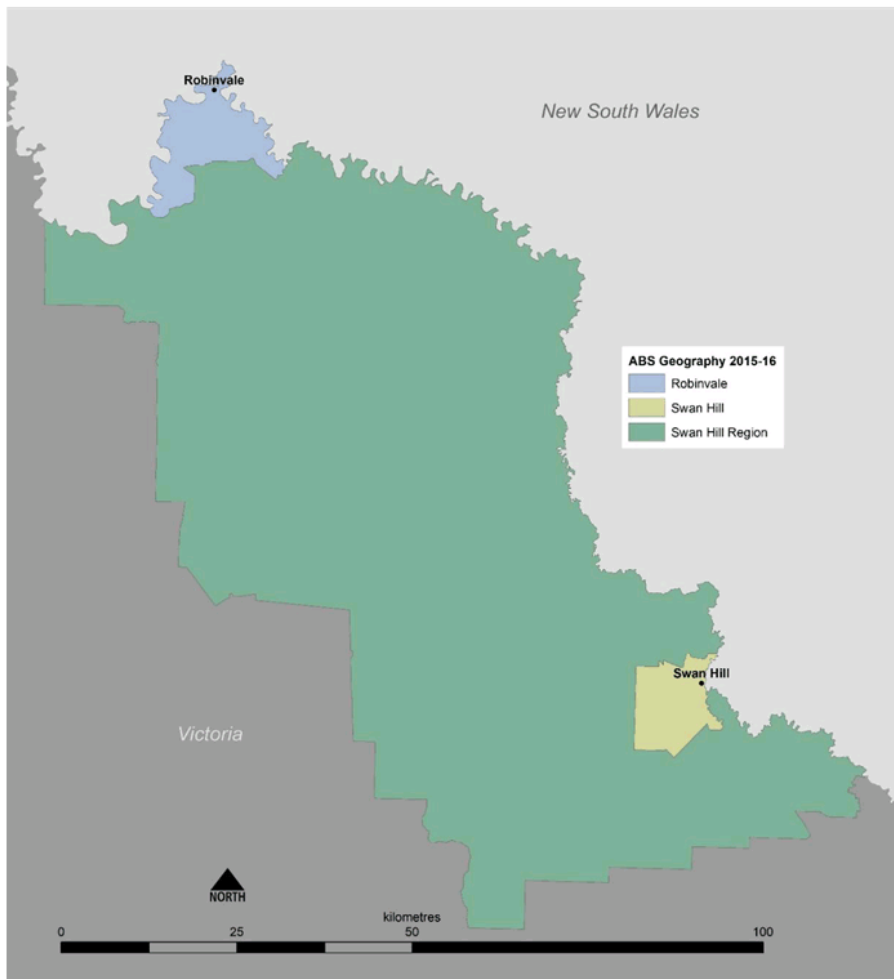


Figure 7: The three ABS 'regions' in the Swan Hill LGA used for 2015-16 National rankings

3.3 Summary of GVP in 2015-16 and 2017-18

Gross value of agricultural production across the Swan Hill LGA for 2015-16 and 2017-18 is shown in Table 3. **Comparison of the figures should be treated with caution as they were derived from very different sources, methodologies and designation of commodity type.**

Total GVP for agricultural commodities in 2015-16, source ABS, was \$931 million. Total GVP for agricultural crops, irrigated and dryland, in 2017-18, source SunRISE Mapping, was \$1,392 million.

It is not within the scope of this report to ascertain the differences in pricing and productivity of agricultural crops for the two seasons. However; a GVP higher in 2017-18 than in 2015-16 is likely, particularly given the high contribution of irrigated agriculture in the Swan Hill LGA. The irrigated area increased by 12% from 2015 to 2018 and a higher proportion of high-value crops, in particular almonds and table grapes, were bearing mature crops in 2017-18. With respect to dryland cropping, the area would have decreased slightly from 2015 to 2018, but the growing season appears to have been more favourable in 2017 than in 2015, based on conditions noted below.

Table 3: Summary of GVP for agriculture across the Swan Hill LGA

Year	Commodity group	\$ million	Source
2015-16	Dryland broad acre crops and hay	\$88	This report, aggregation of ABS data
	Livestock	\$30	
	Irrigated crops	\$813	
	Total GVP for agriculture in 2015-16	\$931	ABS data: Value of production in 2015-16
2017-18	Dryland cropping (including grazing)	\$212	This report, SunRISE Mapping
	Irrigated crops	\$1,180	<i>Irrigated crops in the Swan Hill LGA 1997 to 2018, 31st March 2020, SunRISE Mapping</i>
	Total GVP in 2017-18	\$1,392	

Growing season conditions

The Sunraysia Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS) 2017-18 annual report states that for the Swan Hill region "Yields for most crops, whether cereals, oilseeds or pulses were reportedly average to good. Several rain events in mid and late November caused delays to harvest although quality remained generally high. Hay production was also good with quality significantly up on the previous year's. Barley and canola prices were strong".

Growing season rainfall in 2015 was below average. "This season has proved difficult for Victorian crop farmers. The majority of the state has experienced below to very much below average growing season rainfall. Crops are being cut for hay in many regions. The wheat price has risen recently as buyers react to the declining yield potential of Australian crops."⁸

⁸ National Crop Update October 2015, Rural Bank and Rural Finance

3.4 Data sources used to estimate 2017-18 GVP

Table 4 shows an estimated gross value of production (GVP) for dryland cropping in the Swan Hill LGA in 2017-18.

ABS data was used to estimate the proportion of crop types and average yields (t/ha). All figures are estimates and should be used with caution.

Table 4: GVP data sources and calculations for dryland crops in the Swan Hill LGA in 2017-18

Crop type	% of ha ⁹	hectares ¹⁰	tonnes/ha ¹¹	\$/tonne ¹²	\$/ha ¹³	Gross Value of Production	% GVP
Grain wheat	36%	143,460	2.3	\$250 ¹⁴	\$575	\$82,448,255	39%
Grain oats	2%	7,970	1.8	\$190	\$346	\$2,758,971	1%
Grain barley	22%	87,670	2.5	\$215 ¹⁵	\$538	\$47,122,625	22%
Canola	7%	27,895	1.6	\$500	\$801	\$22,355,576	11%
Pulses	17%	67,745	1.2	\$406 ¹⁶	\$487	\$32,972,846	16%
Hay cereal	2%	7,970	4.2	\$115 ¹⁷	\$483	\$3,847,748	2%
Hay other	3%	11,955	2.8	\$125	\$355	\$4,247,183	2%
Grazing	9%	35,865	-	-	\$441	\$15,816,465	7%
Fallow	2%	7,970	-	-	-	-	-
	100%	398,500				\$211,569,669	100%

Limitations of data

The estimated GVP is based on grain and hay prices late 2017. However, not all produce is sold straight after harvest, it can be stored on-farm for later sale, or kept for seed or livestock feed.

Crop yields and prices vary widely for different crops within each crop type and within a given season; yields, prices and crop values are estimated annual averages.

The area, hectares, of each crop type was based on the proportion of dryland crop types across North West Victoria. This proportion of crop types is not necessarily representative of the Swan Hill LGA.

⁹ Source: ABS data 71210DO001_201718 Agricultural Commodities, Australia 2017-18 for North West, Victoria

¹⁰ Source: SunRISE mapping

¹¹ Source: ABS data 71210DO001_201718 Agricultural Commodities, Australia 2017-18 for North West, Victoria

¹² Source: Birchip Cropping Group report; cash prices as at 4 December 2017 and prices from the Weekly Times 29 November 2017

¹³ Calculated from t/ha & \$/t, except 'grazing' sourced from 2018 Farm Gross Margin Guide, Rural Solutions, SA

¹⁴ Average cash price across wheat grades at Manangatang silo, December 2017

¹⁵ Average of feed and SO1 grade barley cash prices, Manangatang, December 2017

¹⁶ Average of lupins, field peas, chickpeas, lentils, faba beans from the Weekly Times November 2017, cash price less freight and compulsory charges

¹⁷ Hay prices for Swan Hill, from The Weekly Times 29 November 2017

B.21.56 DISCONTINUANCE AND DISPOSAL OF ROADS POLICY

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure
File Number: S29-03-13
Attachments: 1 Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

This report seeks a resolution to adopt the reviewed Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy.

Discussion

The Road Discontinuance Policy was last reviewed in September 2020.

Since this time, the Local Government Act 2020 was introduced and a need to bring the policy up to date and in line with current legislation arose.

The policy outlines

- the requirements for road discontinuance; and
- the requirements for disposal of roads that are no longer required for public use.

Consultation

This policy has been reviewed and discussed by relevant Council staff.

Financial Implications

Nil implications for the policy, however each discontinuance will attract its own implications and will be addressed case by case.

Social Implications

To ensure an appropriate road network is provided.

Economic Implications

To ensure an appropriate road network is provided.

Environmental Implications

Nil implications for the policy. However, native vegetation issues may arise during the discontinuance process and will need to be addressed appropriately.

Risk Management Implications

This policy mitigates the risk of legal implications by using current legislation.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Infrastructure - Infrastructure that appropriately services community needs.

Options

1. That Council adopt the Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy
2. That Council does not adopt the Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy
3. That Council amend the Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy

Recommendation

That Council adopt the Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy.

106/21 Motion

MOVED Cr McPhee

That Council adopt the Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy.

SECONDED Cr Benham

The Motion was put and CARRIED

Date adopted	June 2019
Last review	July 2021
Next review	July 2025
Responsible Officer	Director Infrastructure

Fully compliant with Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
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POLICY TITLE DISCONTINUANCE AND DISPOSAL OF ROADS

POLICY NUMBER CPOL/CORP242

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the criteria and requirements under which roads are discontinued and sold under the Local Government Act 1989 within the Swan Hill Municipality.

Council seeks to provide a consistent and efficient process for the discontinuance and/or sale of roads within its Municipality; including provision to return crown land to the Crown

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the discontinuance and sale of all Council owned and managed roads.

3. POLICY

Council has the power to discontinue a road within its municipality. All actions must be lawfully and properly carried out with a special focus on public consultation and the impartial consideration by Council of any submissions received.

It is the policy of the Council that:

- A road should not be discontinued without assessing:
 - if that action results in an outcome contrary to the interests of the general public
 - the requirements of the emergency service providers and statutory service authorities
 - the effects on Council infrastructure and services and other essential infrastructure services
 - the effects on abutting properties and buildings and their owners and occupiers
 - the effects on future use
 - the historic significance of the road
- Roads should only be closed under the provisions of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* when the closure is associated with an overall redevelopment or rezoning of land.

The sale of the land resulting from the discontinuance of a road must undergo a public notification process under the *Local Government Act 1989*, but is not open to submissions. If it is intended to sell a road that is proposed to be discontinued, this intention must be identified in the notice proposing the discontinuance.

If the road being discontinued is Crown land, it is to be returned to the Crown.

Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Policy CPOL/CORP242		
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4. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS

PRO/CORP242 Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Procedure
Local Government Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale and Exchange of Land
CPOL/GOV025 Community Engagement Policy

5. RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2020
Local Government Act 1989
Road Management Act 2004
Planning and Environment Act 1987
Subdivision Act 1988
Limitations of Actions Act 1958
Transfer of Land Act 1958

6. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	June 2019	Initial Release
2.0	June 2020	Review
2.1	July 2021	Review

Signed: _____ Mayor Date: _____

Date adopted	June 2019
Last review	July 2021
Next review	July 2025
Responsible Officer	Director Infrastructure

Fully compliant with Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
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PROCEDURE TITLE DISCONTINUANCE AND DISPOSAL OF ROADS
PROCEDURE NUMBER PRO/CORP242

ENABLING POLICY

Discontinuous and disposal or roads CPOL/CORP242

ENABLING LEGISLATION

- Local Government Act 2020
- Local Government Act 1989
- Road Management Act 2004
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Subdivision Act 1988
- Limitations of Actions Act 1958
- Transfer of Land Act 1958

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the process of discontinuance and disposal of roads that are no longer required for public use will be handled transparently and that proceeds from any sale of land are calculated adequately.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the discontinuance and sale of all Council owned and managed roads.

3. DEFINITIONS

Council: Indicates reference to Swan Hill Rural City Council as a geographical area and also refers to the entity which has the authority to make decisions on behalf of the Swan Hill Municipal community.

Road: Road is defined in Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1989. The term 'road' includes but is not limited to a right of way, street or footpath

Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Procedure PRO/CORP242		
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4. PROCEDURE

Conditional on the outcome of public consultation (see section 223 of the Act), Council has the power to discontinue a road, or part of it, by a notice published in the Government Gazette; and sell the land from the road (if it is not Crown land), transfer the land to the Crown or itself or retain the land.

All actions must be lawfully and properly carried out with particular focus on public consultation and the impartial consideration by Council of any submissions received.

Gazetting a notice of discontinuance in the Victorian Government Gazette frees the land from all private and public rights and encumbrances save the certain rights and power of public authorities.

The sale of the land resulting from the discontinuance must undergo a public notification process under the Act but is not open to submissions. The intention of selling a road that is proposed to be discontinued must be identified in the notice proposing the discontinuance.

4.1. Methodology

A typical road discontinuance process includes seven process steps as has been outlined below in 4.12.

4.2. Context

Roads and reserves no longer required for its original purpose may be better utilised by either adjoining property owners or Council.

4.3. Consultation

A consultation will be undertaken about specific land parcels with all internal and external stakeholders before any road or reserve being discontinued. The Council should keep all relevant parties informed of progress throughout the process.

4.4. Valuation of Land

To assist with the discontinuance and disposal; and subject to preliminary consultation demonstrating support for the discontinuance to proceed, Council will offer the land for purchase at the current market value as determined by Council's contract valuers. Valuations will reflect the additional cost the subject parcel of land will add within the immediate locale having regard to the location of the subject land and its characteristics including whether the land:

- is incapable of being developed in its own right given the small land area;
- is only marketable to the adjoining owners;
- is long and narrow, and/or;
- is encumbered with an easement

4.5. Division of Land

The division of discontinued roads will be on an equal share basis to adjoining property owners. Council will always provide abutting owners with first opportunity to purchase a discontinued road before seeking offers from other parties.

Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Procedure PRO/CORP242		
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If a neighbour adjoining the land is not interested in purchasing part of the area, the “full” area may be offered to other adjoining owners for the purchase.

4.6. Condition of Sale

The title to the land from the discontinued road, upon sale, must be consolidated with the title of the purchaser’s main property as directed and if required by Council within 12 months of the transfer. To facilitate this outcome, Council officers will commence the process following the Council’s resolution to proceed.

4.7. Costs

The purchaser of the land shall be responsible for all costs incurred including; conveyance, legal, planning and survey.

4.8. Public Road Register

If the road is listed in Council’s register of public roads, it must be removed from register by Council resolution before it can be discontinued.

4.9. Easements

If Council or another authority has assets within the road reserve, an easement in favour of that authority must be made after the road is discontinued and before it is sold.

4.10. Crown road

These roads are owned by the Crown and known as ‘Government road’; may have been created on the original Parish Plan, and/or by gazettal, and/or by an abuttal on a Crown grant.

Whilst the Council can exercise its power to discontinue a road, it is considered best practice to consult the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) before formally proceeding to discontinuance. DELWP will then sell or retain the land for its own purpose.

4.11. Subdivisional road

These roads are freehold land registered on a Plan of Subdivision vesting in Council. The Council can discontinue the road and sell the land or retain for its purpose.

4.12. Road Discontinuance Process Steps

- 4.12.1. Either receive an application or determine that the road is no longer required for any public purpose.
- 4.12.2. Confirm land titles details and consult with relevant stakeholders, authorities, DELWP and adjacent landowners.
- 4.12.3. Obtain valuation information and write to interested purchaser/s to ascertain interest in potential sale transactions.

Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Procedure PRO/CORP242		
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- 4.12.4. If interests exist, a report is to be prepared for Council delegation to commence the statutory discontinuance process and call for submissions under section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989.
- 4.12.5. Place Public Notice as required under S223 and write to objecting and interested parties regarding submissions and advising of entitlement under S223 to make submissions to Council.
- 4.12.6. Liaise with the Community Engagement and Media Unit to engage Council's Community Engagement processes.
- 4.12.7. Review submissions and prepare a report for Council consideration to formally discontinue and sell the road.
- 4.12.8. If no submissions are received, commence the necessary procedural steps to complete the formal procedures for the discontinuance and sale of the road, including the execution of all relevant documentation.

5. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS

Home Wilkinson and Lowry Road Discontinuances report under the Local Government Act 1989
 Local Government Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale and Exchange of Land
 Victorian Government Land Transactions Policy and Guidelines
 CPOL/GOV025 Community Engagement Policy

6. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change
1.0	June 2019	Initial Release
2.0	June 2020	Review
2.1	July 2021	Review

Signed: _____ CEO Date: _____

Discontinuance and Disposal of Roads Procedure PRO/CORP242		
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B.21.57 ROAD NETWORK ACCESS FOR PBS A-DOUBLE VEHICLES

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure
File Number: S32-30-01
Attachments: 1 A-double Proposed Roads
2 A-double Proposed Strategic Routes

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

This report seeks Council's approval to gazette the identified rural roads within our municipality for Performance Based Standards (PBS) approved A-double vehicle access.

Discussion

Background

Swan Hill Rural City Council is required to advise the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) on the suitability of roads under Council management for use by various heavy vehicles classes. Based on Council's advice, the NHVR issues or refuses to permit heavy vehicles to use the roads.

Transport operators apply to the NHVR for permits to use the road network. Under the National Heavy Vehicle Law (NHVL), Council has 28 days to respond to the request. Currently, Council gets approximately five days for responding to permit applications.

The industry finds this process time consuming and unproductive. Typically, heavy vehicle operator request and require same-day responses. There is evidence that truck drivers will take the risk of driving on roads without a permit to save time, putting themselves and others at risk.

To assist in streamlining the process, Council can gazette roads within their network for PBS A-double use. Gazetting roads for PBS A-doubles will negate the need for permits and will ultimately save time by significantly reducing the administrative burden on councils and industry.

Council currently have 83.5% of their road network gazetted for B-Double access and 63% for Higher Mass Limits. **In the last 6 months, Council has received and approved 13 applications for PBS A-Doubles to access the network.**

Performance-Based Standards (PBS) Scheme

The NHVR helps the industry achieving higher productivity and safety through the PBS Scheme, which approves innovative and optimised vehicle designs. The basic principle of the PBS Scheme is to maximise the safe use of higher productivity vehicles by matching suitable vehicles to the road conditions. PBS vehicles are designed to perform their tasks as productively, safely, and sustainably and operate on networks appropriate for their level of performance.

PBS vehicle combinations design depends on specific freight task. The optimised design and greater efficiency mean fewer trucks, less congestion and better safety outcomes that have less impact on infrastructure and the surrounding community.

REPORTS

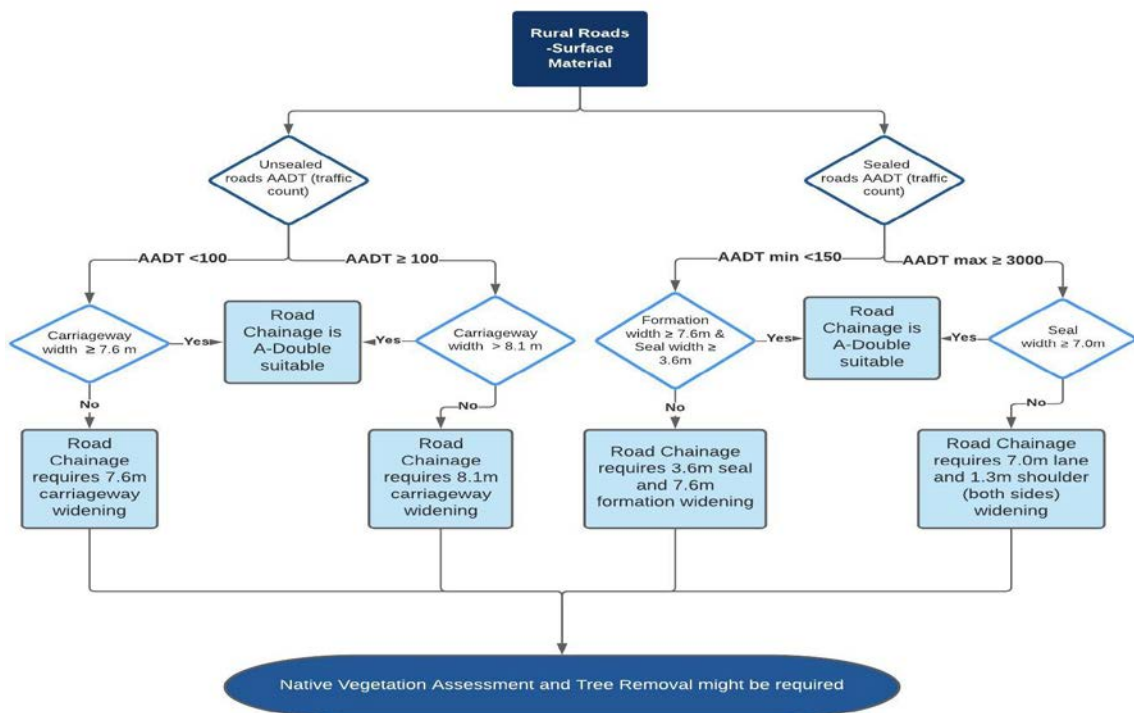
20 July 2021

Once vehicles are approved, road managers decide what access will be allowed to PBS vehicles. Once a vehicle assessment shows compliance with the performance standards for a particular PBS level, it gets access to all approved PBS routes at that level and above. The scheme specifies four different performance levels. The on-road performance of the truck requires matching to the environment it is travelling in.

- Level 1: equivalent to General Access
- Level 2: equivalent to B-double routes
- Level 3: equivalent to A-Double road train routes
- Level 4: equivalent to Triple road train routes

Currently no Council’s roads are gazetted for PBS A-double access (Level 3). A desktop review has recently been completed to determine if Council’s rural roads are suitable for use by these vehicles. This review considered the following using a process shown in flow chart:

- Road surface type
- Road characteristics
- Classification
- Traffic counts – AADT (average annual daily traffic)
- Private assets in the local road and or structures
- Vegetation
- Priority Routes for intensive agriculture, silo access



etc.

Findings

The analysis outcome is that 19.4% (826km) of Council’s roads are suitable and approved for access A-double vehicles (**Attachment 1**), but all suitable A-double road segments are not contiguous; there are unsuitable sections along a possible A-Double road.

The remaining 80.38% (3422.46km) of rural roads are not currently suitable and will require works at an estimated cost of \$1b, including the gaps and unsuitable roads.

Freight Road Network Mapping and Infrastructure Investment Prospectus Pilot

The establishment and expansion of horticultural developments within the Council area have put pressure on the existing road networks, including first mile/last mile freight routes.

To reduce supply chain costs, farmers increasingly use higher productivity or higher mass limit vehicles, which negatively impacts a regional road network not initially designed for the increased volume and axle weights of HPFV's (high-performance freight vehicles).

The region currently does not have a clearly defined high productivity freight vehicle network, from farm gate to processing plant, port or market that encompasses the whole of the region.

The growth of horticulture and mining developments has negatively impacted specific collector roads, including the Hattah Robinvale Road, which is no longer fit-for-purpose.

Council will need to identify significant funding to complete upgrade works for achieving full A-double connectivity.

Central Murray Regional Transport Forum is working with both the Swan Hill Rural City Council and Gannawarra Shire in a pilot project to develop an investment plan for roads, bridges, culverts and critical intersections within these municipalities. In this month, State Government has allocated \$50,000 towards this study.

The project will consider current and projected growth in High Productivity Freight Vehicles (HPFVs) use on local road networks accessing farms and mining interests in the region. This project includes A-double vehicles and future-proofing for larger and more efficient freight vehicles and connections to railheads where appropriate.

The pilot project will identify a more effective, safe and efficient freight network utilising HPFV permit data and consulting with the industry. The project will inform an infrastructure investment plan that will reduce supply chain costs and provide better connectivity with domestic and export markets. The timeframe for completion of this project is nine months.

Alternative proposal

An alternative proposal to improve the capacity and function of Council's transport network, whilst supporting efficient and sustainable transport of products between producers and markets within the region; could be to gazette a strategic A-Double network within the Municipality.

Attachment 2 shows a proposal for four strategic routes running east west from the Murray Valley Highway to Council's western boundary linking into other local government networks. Majority of these roads are suitable for A-double access and can be gazetted upon approval, refer to Table 1. (Although the Mallee Highway is shown, this is an arterial road and not Council managed and is only shown indicative of the routes that would be available for these types of vehicles.)

Table 1

	A-Double suitable	
	<i>Road Name</i>	<i>Length</i>
Route 1	Culgoa-Ultima Rd 0005 Ch 0-1.74	14610
	Lake Boga-Ultima Road 0002 Ch 0-0.39	32525
	Dallas Street 0005 Ch 0-0.24	240

REPORTS

20 July 2021

	Lalbert Road 0010 Ch 0.31-1.14	1120
	Total length (m) =	48495

Route 2	A-Double Suitable	
	<i>Road Name</i>	<i>Length</i>
	Pier Millan-Chinkapook Road 0005 Ch 0-4.65	15748
	Chinkapook-Nyah West Rd 0005 Ch 0.013-0.063	37116
	Monash Avenue 0003 Ch 0-0.42	2080
	Nyah West Road 0010 Ch 0-1.63	1650
	Total length (m) =	56594

Route 3	A-Double Suitable	
	<i>Road Name</i>	<i>Length</i>
	Mallee Highway	61000

Route 4	A-Double Suitable	
	<i>Road Name</i>	<i>Length</i>
	Webster Road Winnambool 0010 Ch 3.63-8.59	4960
	Bolton-Kooloonong Rd 0006 Ch 0.01-1.14	26739
	Hayesdale-Kooloonong Rd 0003 Ch 0-1.4	12590
Total length (m) =	44289	

The remaining 15km are not suitable and will require works at an estimated \$2,500,000, see Table 2.

Table 2

Route 4	Works required	
	<i>Road Name</i>	<i>Length</i>
	Bolton-Kooloonong Rd 0022 Ch 11.26-14.52	3260
	MI25 0005 Ch 0-0.78	780
	MI41 0005 Ch 0-0.34	340
	Webster Road Winnambool 0005 Ch 0-3.63	3630
	Webster Road Winnambool 0015 Ch 8.59-10.61	2020
	Webster Road Winnambool 0020 Ch 10.62-15.71	5090
	Total length (m) =	15120

If we were to only gazette the strategic routes, over a longer period of time we would see the process costing Council more time and money. Transport operators want to see more first mile/last mile freight routes and they will continue to push for more access to the network.

Gazettal

Upon approval, we will take steps to gazette these roads for Performance-Based Standards (PBS) approved A-double vehicle access. The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) generally takes four weeks to gazette these roads after receiving Council notification.

Should other roads be identified, officers will assess them for Council's consideration through a similar process.

Should concerns be raised for any of these roads identified, the Council officers will assess and remove them from the approved gazette through a similar process.

Consultation

Key stakeholders will be consulted, including transport operators, Council staff and relevant utilities. We will publish notices in both local newspapers following approval to make roads users aware of the changed traffic conditions.

Financial Implications

We expect a significant increase in maintenance cost to the road network proportional to the overall expenditure, increasing \$3 per square metre of pavement for sealed roads.

Social Implications

An increase in the load-carrying capacity of the vehicles could reduce the overall number of vehicles on the road.

Economic Implications

Facilitating quick access will benefit transport companies, support local farming business, and ultimately positively affect the local economy.

Environmental Implications

Additional tree clearance may be required on roads to facilitate access. The overall cost estimated allowed for tree clearance works.

Risk Management Implications

Changes to environmental laws regarding tree offsets may increase the project cost.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Infrastructure - Infrastructure that appropriately services community needs.

Options

1. Approve the gazetting of the roads identified in this report as suitable for A-double access on **Attachment 1** minus the segments that are not contiguous; and actively seek funding opportunities to continue gazetting more roads.
2. Approve the gazetting of the roads identified in this report as 'strategic routes' that have been identified as suitable for A-double access on **Attachment 2**.
3. Do not gazette any routes for A-Double access and continue approving on demand.

Recommendations

That Council approve the gazetting of the roads identified in this report as suitable for A-double access on Attachment 1 minus the segments that are not contiguous; and actively seek funding opportunities to continue gazetting more roads.

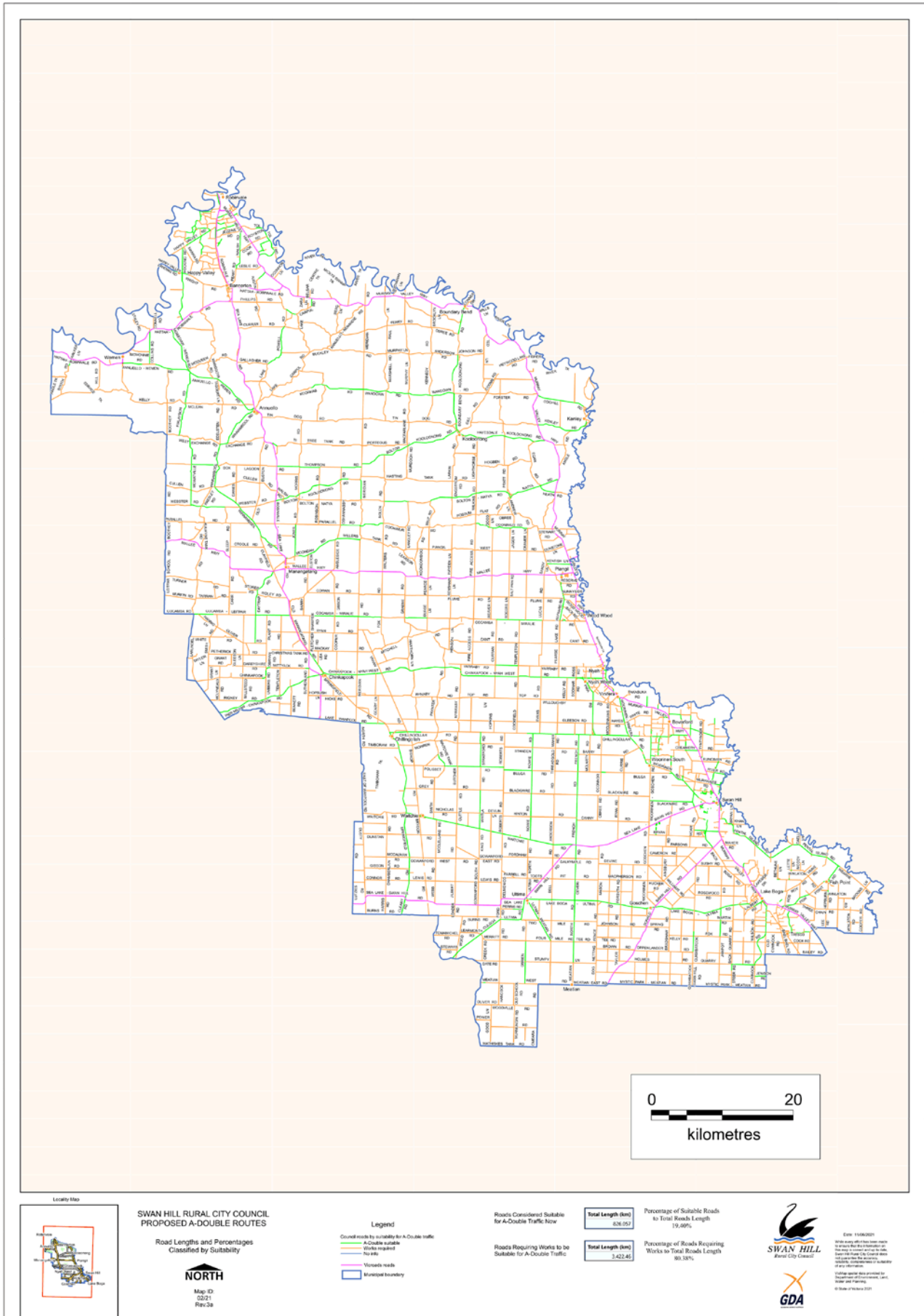
107/21 Motion

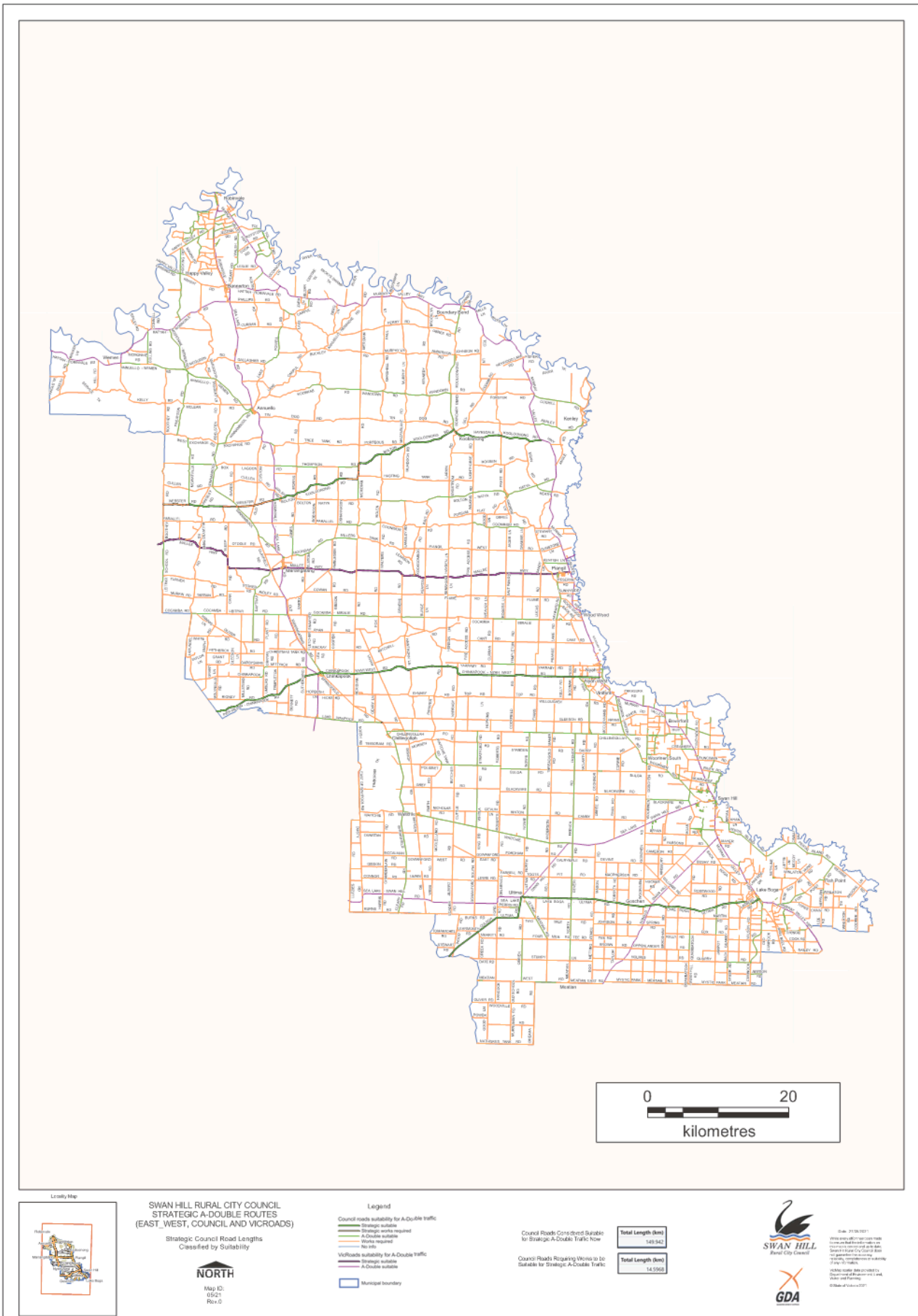
MOVED Cr Benham

That Council approve the gazetting of the roads identified in this report as suitable for A- double access on Attachment 1 minus the segments that are not contiguous; and actively seek funding opportunities to continue gazetting & maintaining more roads for A-Double & Road Train access.

SECONDED Cr Young

The Motion was put and CARRIED





B.21.58 LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2021/22 - 2030/31

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
File Number: S15-06-05
Attachments: 1 Long Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

Officers have developed a Long Term (10 Year) Financial Plan for the organisation. The Financial Plan is based on numerous assumptions which are contained within the document. The Financial Plan is reviewed annually once the Council Annual Budget has been adopted.

The Long Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31 is presented for adoption.

Discussion

The Local Government Act 2020 requires Council to develop a Financial Plan.

Under Part 4 - Planning and Financial Management, Council must develop, adopt and keep in force a 10 Year Financial Plan.

The scope of a Financial Plan is 10 financial years and must include:

- (a) statements describing the financial resources required to give effect to the Council Plan and other strategic plans,
- (b) information about the decisions and assumptions that underpin the forecasts,
- (c) statements describing any other resource requirements that Council considers appropriate, and
- (d) any other matter prescribed by the regulations.

Having a longer term view of our financial position allows Council to assess our financial position and make any necessary adjustments before a significant financial impact occurs.

Ultimately, Council's finances are sustainable in the long term if they are strong enough to allow Council to manage developments and unexpected financial shocks without having to introduce substantial or disruptive revenue (or expenditure) adjustments.

The Plan expresses in financial terms the activities that Council proposes to undertake over the short, medium and long term.

The Plan is by necessity, based on a number of assumptions. These assumptions are detailed within the Plan. Officers have considered a variety of sources to help to determine the level of each assumption used in the Plan. These sources include the Council Plan, historical trends, State and Federal Government forecasts, economic forecasts from Council's bankers, RBA and the media.

The base year for the Plan is the adopted 2021/22 Council Budget. Each year's financial information is projected from the preceding year by applying the specified assumptions and any changes due to a specific event, such as increased revenue from a particular service or expected increases in expenditure that are currently known. The adopted Ten Year Major Projects Plan has been used as the basis for capital and non-recurrent operational expenditure and the associated grant income. Any additional operational efficiencies will be used to offset the reduction, in real terms, in grant income and the operational and maintenance costs of new assets that are to be constructed over the life of the Plan.

Some of the key financial issues and challenges are:-

- Providing sufficient funding to renew existing assets to ensure they continue to meet community needs
- Managing rate capping imposed on Local Government
- Delivering new and upgraded community infrastructure (roads, buildings, drains, footpaths etc.) to address the demands of a growing and changing community
- Continuing to provide an appropriate range and level of services to the community
- Maintaining Council rates and charges to an acceptable level
- Managing ongoing cost shifting from other levels of government, dealing with changes to legislative requirements and the expanding expectations of Local Government
- Managing aged care service reforms
- Managing the extreme nature and uncertainty of future Defined Benefits Superannuation shortfall calls
- Developing a business focus for the Pioneer Settlement, Town Hall and Art Gallery to provide additional revenue raising opportunities and determine an underlying level of subsidy
- Managing ongoing revenue from the development and sale of land at Tower Hill Estate

- Managing the introduction of solar farms to the municipality and their effect on the rating income of Council
- In the short term, managing Council's and the communities response and recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic
- The Plan with the exception of historically low interest revenue has been prepared on a business as usual basis. This is an optimistic view given the current pandemic and relies on economic recovery continuing to come from government stimulus and measures we can introduce in adjusting service delivery in response to restrictions imposed by government
- Managing and adapting Council's waste collection, processing and disposal processes in accordance with changing Federal and State Government policy

Once adopted, the Plan will be used to guide Council's over-arching financial direction. The Plan will be reviewed and adjusted every year following the adoption of the Annual Budget. The review will re-assess all assumptions and highlight any areas of potential concern. This will enable a response to any issues to be planned and implemented in a timely manner.

The Long Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31 is presented for adoption.

Consultation

Council's Executive Leadership Team has reviewed the Plan.
The Plan was discussed at a Councillor Assembly held on 29 June 2021.

Financial Implications

The Plan will guide Council's future financial decisions, as it is the starting point for future draft budgets.

Social Implications

Not applicable.

Economic Implications

Not applicable.

Environmental Implications

Not applicable.

Risk Management Implications

The Plan helps to reduce financial risks by guiding Council's future financial direction and providing an early warning to any potential financial risks.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Governance and leadership - Effective advocacy and strategic planning.

Options

Council can choose to adopt or not adopt the Long Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the Long Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31 as presented.

108/21 Motion

MOVED Cr McPhee

That Council adopt the Long Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31 as presented.

SECONDED Cr McKay

The Motion was put and CARRIED



Financial Plan

2021/22 to 2030/31



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Disclaimer: The information and assumptions contained within this report have been prepared strictly for the purposes of this report and should not be used for any other purpose. No warranty or assertion is made as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of this information, nor its usefulness in achieving any purpose. To the extent permitted by law, Swan Hill Rural City Council does not accept any liability to any person for loss, damage, cost or expense arising from the use of this report. No person should act on the basis of this report without considering, and if necessary taking, professional advice upon their own particular circumstances.

1. Executive summary

1.1 Introduction

Swan Hill Rural City Council is located on the Murray River in north-west Victoria. Our region is home to 20,534. In a recent study by Geografia (2019) there is substantial evidence to suggest that Robinvale's true year-round population is notably higher than the official Estimated Resident Population (ERP) of 3,359. The evidence suggests there is a mean population in Robinvale in the order of 7,900 residents.

The Swan Hill Rural City Council municipality is home to the townships of Swan Hill, Robinvale, Lake Boga, Nyah, Nyah West, Piangil, Woorinen, Ultima, Manangatang, Boundary Bend and Tresco. With an area covering 6,116km², we have 3,654 kilometres of local roads connecting 12,123 rateable properties.

Agriculture and manufacturing drive the Swan Hill Rural City economy. Almost 21 per cent of the total economic output from the region comes from agricultural production. Irrigated farming (including stone fruit, grapes, nuts, olives and vegetable production) accounts for over 15 per cent of the total economic output for the municipality, while traditional livestock and broadacre farming accounts for almost 4.5 per cent. More than 18 per cent of all jobs in the city are directly related to agriculture.

Located along the Murray River, tourism plays an important role in our region's economy. Our climate and natural beauty attracts around 656,000 visitors each year.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Financial Plan is to set out Council's objectives and recommendations for ensuring that Council's finances remain sustainable in the long term.

Ultimately, Council's finances are sustainable in the long term if they are strong enough to allow Council to manage likely developments and unexpected financial shocks without having to introduce substantial or disruptive revenue (or expenditure) adjustments.

The plan expresses in financial terms the activities that Council proposes to undertake over the short, medium and long term and will guide the future strategies and actions of Council to ensure that it continues to operate in a sustainable manner.

For a situation to be sustainable, both present and future needs must be satisfied. Extending this definition to financial sustainability requires Council to manage its resources so that our financial commitments can easily be met both now and in the future. It ensures equality between generations of ratepayers in that each generation is responsible for the costs of the resources that they consume.

Key financial issues and challenges

The key issues and challenges for Swan Hill Rural City Council include:

- Providing sufficient funding to renew existing assets to ensure they continue to meet community needs
- Managing rate capping imposed on Local Government
- Delivering new and upgraded community infrastructure (roads, buildings, drains, footpaths etc.) to address the demands of a growing and changing community
- Continuing to provide an appropriate range and level of services to the community
- Maintaining Council rates and charges to an acceptable level
- Managing ongoing cost shifting from other levels of government, dealing with changes to legislative requirements and the expanding expectations of Local Government
- Managing aged care service reforms
- Managing the extreme nature and uncertainty of future Defined Benefits Superannuation shortfall calls
- Developing a business focus for the Pioneer Settlement, Town Hall and Art Gallery to provide additional revenue raising opportunities and determine an underlying level of subsidy
- Managing ongoing revenue from the development and sale of land at Tower Hill Estate
- Managing the introduction of solar farms to the municipality and their effect on the rating income of Council
- In the short term, managing Council's and the communities response and recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic
- The Plan with the exception of historically low interest revenue has been prepared on a business as usual basis. This is an optimistic view given the current pandemic and relies on economic recovery continuing to come from government stimulus and measures we can introduce in adjusting service delivery in response to restrictions imposed by government
- Managing and adapting Council's waste collection, processing and disposal processes in accordance with changing Federal and State Government policy

Summary of key outcomes

The Financial Plan is a 10 year plan that feeds directly into the Annual Budget and the Strategic Resource Plan (four year view). The updated Strategic Resource Plan for 2021/22 seeks to deliver the following key outcomes:

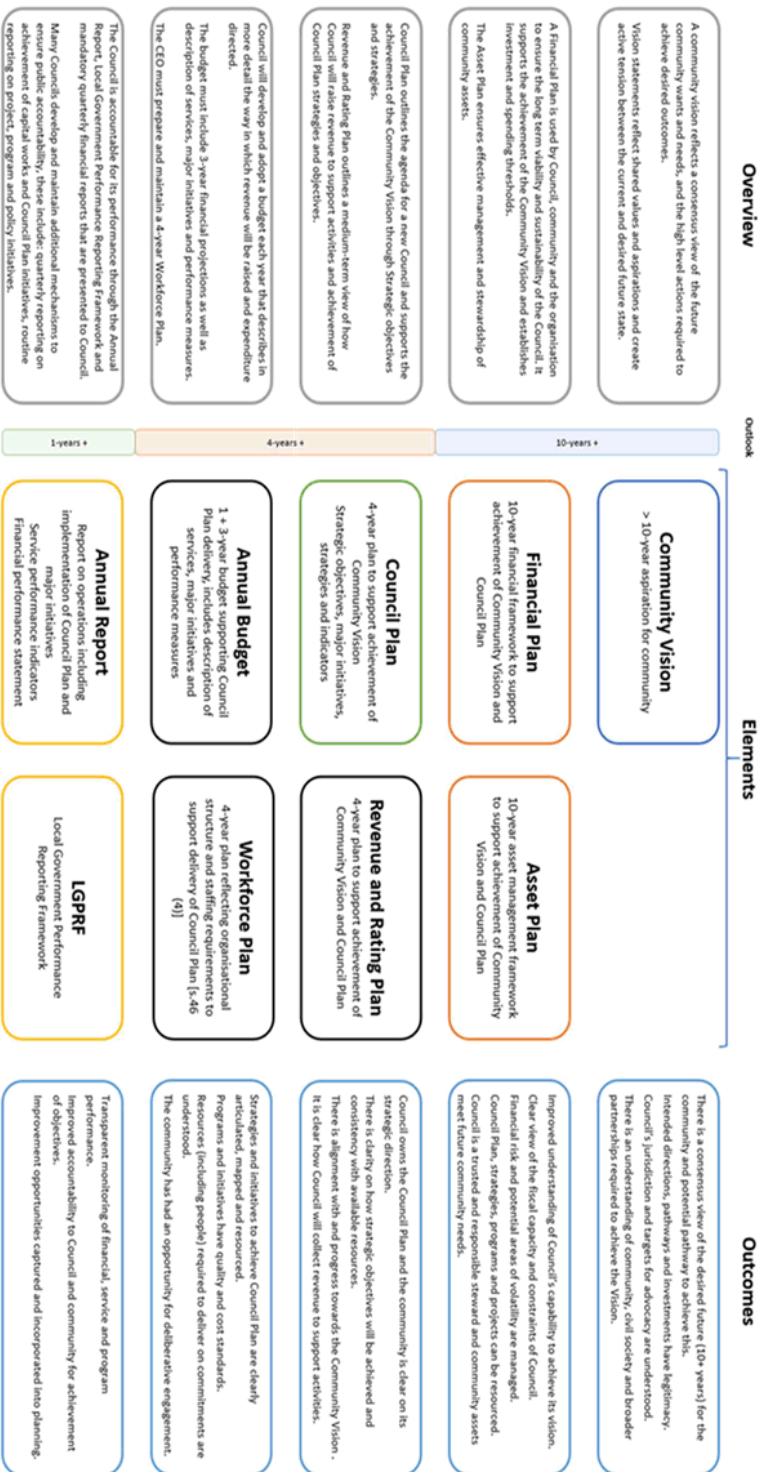
- Ensure each years budgeted rate rise remains within the Rate Cap set by the Minister for Local Government
- Maintain Council's liquidity ratio at a level greater than 150 per cent
- No future loan borrowings and plan to be debt free by the end of 2031
- The ongoing renewal of infrastructure assets with more than \$9 million forecast in each financial year
- A prudent cash balance including cash backed reserves to \$13.6 million in 2030/31

The successful implementation of the Financial Plan will ensure that Swan Hill Rural City Council meets or exceeds the targets set by the Victorian Auditor-General for all the financial sustainability indicators it uses to assess councils in Victoria. Refer section 5.

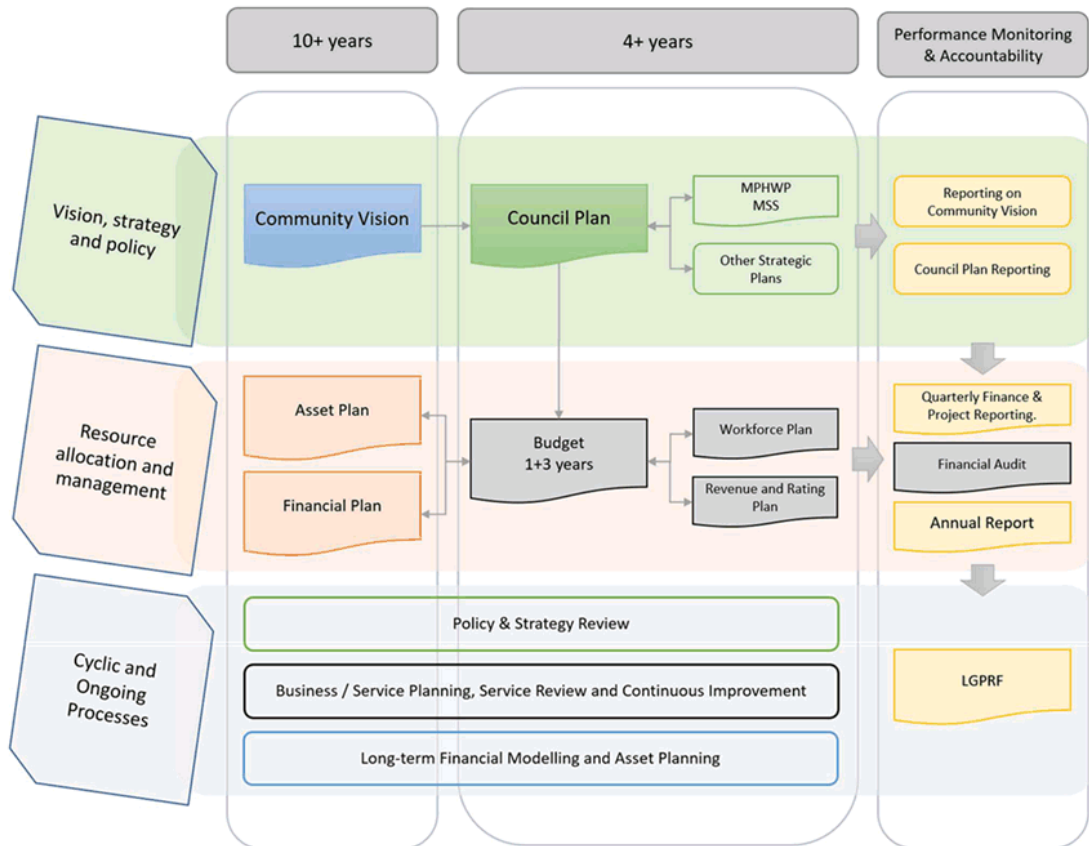
2. Legislative Requirements

This section describes how the Financial Plan links to the achievement of the Community Vision and the Council Plan within the Integrated Strategic Planning & Reporting framework. This framework guides the Council in identifying community needs and aspirations over the long term (Community Vision), medium term (Council Plan) and short term (Annual Budget) and then holding itself accountable (Annual Report).

The following diagram provides an overview of the core legislated elements of an integrated strategic planning and reporting framework and outcomes.



The following figure demonstrates how each element might inform or be informed by other parts of the integrated framework.



2.1 Strategic Planning Principles

The Financial Plan provides a 10 year financially sustainable projection regarding how the actions of the Council Plan may be funded to achieve the Community Vision. The Financial Plan is developed in the context of the following strategic planning principles:

- a) Council has an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting.
- b) Council financial plan addresses the Community Vision by funding the aspirations of the Council Plan. The Council Plan aspirations and actions are formulated in the context of the Community Vision.
- c) The Financial Plan statements articulate the 10-year financial resources necessary to implement the goals and aspirations of the Council Plan to achieve the Community Vision.
- d) Council's strategic planning principles identify and address the risks to effective implementation of the Financial Plan. The financial risks are included at section 2.2.2.
- e) The Financial Plan provides for the strategic planning principles of progress monitoring and reviews to identify and adapt to changing circumstances.

2.2 Financial Management Principles

The Financial Plan demonstrates the following financial management principles:

- 2.2.1 Revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments and financial transactions are managed in accordance with Council's financial policies and strategic plans.
- 2.2.2 Management of the following financial risks:
 - a) The financial viability of the Council (refer to section 3.1 Financial Policy Statements).
 - b) The management of current and future liabilities of the Council. The estimated 10 year-liabilities are disclosed in section 4.2 Balance Sheet projections.
 - c) The beneficial enterprises of Council (where appropriate).
- 2.2.3 Financial policies and strategic plans are designed to provide financial stability and predictability to the community.
- 2.2.4 Council maintains accounts and records that explain its financial operations and financial position (refer section 4 Financial Plan Statements)

2.3 Engagement Principles

There are a range of different engagement options councils use to inform their communities in the preparation of financial documents.

The Annual Budget including a four year Strategic Resource Plan (SRP) is prepared and adopted following a 28 day period calling for public submissions. This is a requirement of the Local Government Act.

The Financial Plan however does not require a public submission process. It has undergone a detailed review by Councillors at special briefings prior to being placed on the Council Agenda and subsequently adopted at a Scheduled Council meeting, at which time the community is informed of our forecast revenue, expenses and financial position.

This is an extremely high level plan that is built from the adopted 10 Year Major Projects Plan and the adopted 2022 Annual Budget and SRP.

Council is aware that this low level engagement may need to be expanded should community interest grow in this forecasting document.

The financial plan is required to be adopted by councils by 31 October 2021.

2.4 Service Performance Principles

Council services are designed to be targeted to community needs and provide value for money. The service performance principles are listed below:

- a) Services are provided in an equitable manner and are responsive to the diverse needs of the community. The Council Plan is designed to identify the key services and projects to be delivered to the community. The Financial Plan provides the mechanism to demonstrate how the service aspirations within the Council Plan may be funded.
- b) Services are accessible to the relevant users within the community.
- c) Council provides quality services that provide value for money to the community. The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) is designed to communicate Council's performance regarding the provision of quality and efficient services.
- d) Council is developing a performance monitoring framework to continuously improve its service delivery standards.
- e) Council is developing a service delivery framework that considers and responds to community feedback and complaints regards service provision.

2.5 Asset Plan Integration

Integration to the Asset Plan is a key principle of the Council's strategic financial planning principles. The purpose of this integration is designed to ensure that future funding is allocated in a manner that supports service delivery in terms of the plans and the effective management of Council's assets into the future.

The Asset Plan identifies the operational and strategic practices which will ensure that Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner. The Asset Plan, and associated asset management policies, provide Council with a sound base to understand the risk associated with managing its assets for the community's benefit.

The Asset Plan is designed to inform the 10-year Financial Plan by identifying the amount of capital renewal, backlog and maintenance funding that is required over the life of each asset category. The level of funding will incorporate knowledge of asset condition, the risk assessment issues as well as the impact of reviewing and setting intervention and service levels for each asset class.

In addition to identifying the operational and strategic practices that ensure that Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner, the Asset Plan quantifies the asset portfolio and the financial implications of those practices. Together the Financial Plan and Asset Plan seek to balance projected investment requirements against projected budgets.

3. Financial Plan Context

This section describes the context and external / internal environment and consideration in determining the 10-year financial projections and assumptions.

3.1 Financial Policy Statements

This section defines the policy statements, and associated measures, that demonstrates Council's financial sustainability to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision and the Council Plan.

Policy Statement	Measure	Target	Forecast										
			Actual 2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Consistent underlying surplus results	Adjusted underlying result greater than \$0	>\$0.5M	(\$0.90M)	\$1.36M	\$1.33M	\$1.69M	\$1.55M	\$1.44M	\$1.72M	\$1.60M	\$1.23M	\$1.59M	\$1.75M
Ensure Council maintains sufficient working capital to meet its debt obligations as they fall due.	Current Assets / Current Liabilities	>1.5	2.0	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.5
Allocate adequate funds towards renewal capital in order to replace assets and infrastructure as they reach the end of their service life.	Asset renewal and upgrade expenses / Depreciation	>90%	133.6%	110.3%	84.7%	91.2%	88.6%	88.0%	91.0%	77.3%	81.5%	74.7%	120.7%
That Council applies loan funding to new capital and maintains total borrowings in line with rate income and growth of the municipality.	Total borrowings / Rate revenue	<30%	26.8%	8.8%	7.8%	6.6%	5.5%	3.0%	2.1%	1.1%	0.4%	0.1%	0.0%
Council maintains sufficient unrestricted cash to ensure ongoing liquidity as well as to address unforeseen cash imposts if required.	Unrestricted cash / Current Liabilities	>1.5	1.7	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3
Council generates sufficient revenue from rates and charges to ensure consistent funding for new and renewal capital.	Capital expenditure / Rates & Charges	>40%	103.7%	87.8%	59.8%	60.2%	47.8%	46.6%	43.9%	42.3%	45.4%	41.1%	51.4%
Alternative revenue streams to take pressure off rate increases	Fees & Charges / Total Revenue	>10%	6.3%	9.0%	9.7%	9.4%	10.1%	10.1%	10.3%	10.2%	10.2%	10.4%	9.9%

3.2 Strategic Actions

Following a series of community engagement activities, Council has identified the following strategic actions that will support the aspirations of the Council Plan.

The strategic actions are included to the 10-year Financial Plan and, where appropriate, referenced in the commentary associated with the 10-year Comprehensive Income Statement and the 10-year Statement of Capital Works.

- Increase investment in renewal capital to reduce the escalating risk and maintenance of ageing infrastructure.
- That Council adopt the budgeted Statement of Financial Performance (Comprehensive Income Statement) as an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
- That Council adopt the budgeted Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) as being an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
- That the working capital ratio be targeted to remain above a ratio of 1.5.
- That Council adopt the budgeted Statement of Cash Flows as being an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
- That Council consider the most appropriate Fees and Charges Strategy so that adequate funds are recovered to offset operational expenses in annual and future budgets.
- Identify alternative revenue streams to take pressure off rate increases (Refer 3.3.3)
- Aggressively pursue government grants to fund new infrastructure and services (Refer 3.3.5)
- Actively lobbying for a return of funding for Local Government to a minimum of 1% of Federal Taxation Revenue
- Seek greater financial and community returns from Council's property portfolio including the rationalisation of property holdings (Refer 3.3.4)
- Identify sustainable efficiency gains in the operating budget (Refer 3.3.8 & 3.3.9)
- Ensure that any new programs or projects generate specific community value and are funded in a sustainable way
- Reduce the level of debt held by Council and ensure that any new debt is based on a sound business case and demonstrated community benefit (Refer 3.3.11)
- Increase funding for capital renewal and new/upgrade works (Refer 3.3.9)

3.3 Assumptions to the Financial Plan Statements

Income

In developing the Financial Plan a range of issues and challenges have been identified that will have an impact on Council's financial position in the years ahead.

Rate capping was first introduced for the 2016/17 financial year budget. Any increase in Council rates will be capped at a value to be determined by the Minister for Local Government. At this stage the capping of rates will be linked to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The annual CPI increase used throughout this document is detailed in the table below:

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
CPI	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%

Assumptions made for each line item of Council's financial statements are detailed as follows:

3.3.1 Rates and charges

Rates income is the amount that Council will receive as a result of raising rates and related charges on properties each financial year. Other charges included here are charges levied for the kerbside collection of garbage, recycling and green waste along with the special marketing levy.

Assumptions: Rate capping percentage increase (%) consistent with CPI.
Additional rates (supplementary) from expected new development each year.
Waste management charge increases above CPI in the first 2 years due to Federal and State Government policy changes.

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Rates	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Waste	2.37%	10.00%	10.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Supplementary Rates (\$'000 p.a.)	163	124	163	83	82	80	83	81	80	80

3.3.2 Statutory fees and fines

Statutory fees and fines comprise income generated for Council as a result of Federal or State legislation or Council by-laws, including planning fees, animal registration, parking fees and fines.

Assumptions: Percentage increase (%) consistent with CPI.
Increased building and planning permits issued in 2022/23 and 2023/24 due to increased development.

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Statutory fees and fines	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Building and planning permits (\$'000 p.a.)	-	10	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

3.3.3 User fees

User fees comprise amounts charged to recipients for Council goods and services to fully or partially cover the cost of delivering those services. In a limited number of cases, Council recovers a gross profit margin as part of the user charge.

Assumptions: Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been considered in preparation of this plan and user fees and charges have been forecast to return to pre-pandemic levels for the 2021/22 year and any adjustments to individual items are noted below.

- Increased admissions at the Pioneer Settlement due to day-product improvements and additional marketing.
- Managing aged care service reforms.
- The installation of Jet Fuel facilities at the Swan Hill Aerodrome will provide an additional source of revenue.
- The redeveloped Swan Hill Livestock Exchange and improved weather outlook will result in additional income.
- Additional car parking meter fees.
- All other fees and charges to increase 1% higher than CPI.

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
User fees and charges	1.00%	2.75%	3.00%	3.25%	3.25%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%
Pioneer Settlement – General Admissions (\$'000 p.a.)	-	25	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Aged Care (\$'000 p.a.)	-	(742)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of Jet Fuel (\$'000 p.a.)	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Livestock Exchange (\$'000 p.a.)	-	25	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Car Parking Meter Fees (\$'000 p.a.)	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

3.3.4 Net gain / (loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

The net gain or loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment relates to the sale of Council assets and is usually associated with land and buildings or plant and equipment replacement.

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Plant and Equipment (\$'000 p.a.)	82	343	394	437	395	415	299	338	346	180
Land and Buildings (\$'000 p.a.)	250	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200	-

3.3.5 Grants

Grants – operating (recurrent)

These are Federal and State government grants received for operational projects/programs. To be considered recurrent, the grant funding agreement must be for a term greater than two years. Included within this category is the Federal Grants Commission funding, funding for Aged Care and Children's Services and further funding for a wide range of services provided by Council.

Assumptions: Grants Commission funding has been forecast to increase by CPI plus 0.2%.
All other operational grants are forecast to increase by CPI.
Managing aged care service reforms.

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Grants Commission	0.00%	1.95%	2.20%	2.45%	2.45%	2.70%	2.70%	2.70%	2.70%	2.70%
Operational Grants	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Aged Care (\$'000 p.a.)	-	(1,731)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Grants – operating (non-recurrent)

Non-recurrent operating grants are those where funding is expected as a once off payment or payments to be received within a period less than two years and for operational purposes.

Assumptions: Only non-recurrent operating grants included in the 10 Year Major Projects Plan are included in the Financial Plan.

Grants – capital (recurrent)

Recurrent capital grants are grants acquired for a capital purpose to be received for a period of greater than two years. Included in this item are the grants for the Roads to Recovery program.

Assumptions: It is assumed that the Roads to Recovery program will continue for the life of the Financial Plan. Total value of funding received is spent on capital works projects.

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Roads to Recovery (\$'000 p.a.)	2,151	1,434	1,434	1,100	1,115	1,148	1,171	1,195	1,223	1,236

Grants – capital (non-recurrent)

Non-recurrent capital grants are those where funding is acquired for once off capital projects.

Assumptions: Only capital grants included in the 10 Year Major Projects Plan are included in the Financial Plan.

3.3.6 Contributions

Cash contributions are funds received from user groups and developers towards capital works.

Assumptions: Cash contributions included in the 10 Year Major Projects Plan.

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Major projects and capital works (\$'000 p.a.)	255	19	417	30	103	11	380	262	30	13

3.3.7 Other income

Other income represents income that can't be classed into the above categories, and includes items such as reimbursements, interest on outstanding rates and bank investments, and Council's sale proceeds from the Tower Hill residential development.

Assumptions: Interest income is linked relative to the value of cash holdings.
Other non-specific Council income has assumed an annual percentage increase linked to the increase in average material costs. This includes all reimbursements and Tower Hill sales.

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Interest (\$'000 p.a.)	311	250	249	255	239	233	232	229	232	231
Other income	1.50%	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.50%	2.50%	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%

Expenses

3.3.8 Employee costs

Employee costs include salary, wages and other costs of employing staff (e.g. WorkCover, superannuation, leave entitlements, industry allowances) and involves direct employees and staff employed through agencies.

Assumptions: Annual Enterprise Bargaining Agreement increase and performance based Band and Level increase for non-managerial staff.
Other oncost movements i.e. superannuation, leave loading, allowances, staff training.
Managing aged care service reforms.
Allowance made for increase in superannuation guarantee.

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Employee costs – including oncosts*	1.95%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.60%	2.60%	2.60%	2.95%	2.95%	2.95%
Aged Care (\$'000 p.a.)	-	(2,045)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Super Guarantee (\$'000 p.a.)	-	100	100	100	100	-	-	-	-	-

* - Oncosts includes, superannuation, leave loading, allowances, staff training and performance bonuses.

3.3.9 Materials and services

Payments for materials and services comprises goods and services purchased for the general operations and activities of Council and the cost of non-recurrent operational items funded through Council's Major Projects budget process.

Assumptions: Annual increase on all contract payments, materials and services.
Operational resources as identified in the Council Plan.
Additional resources allocated towards infrastructure maintenance and renewal.
Managing aged care service reforms.
Increased costs due to changes in the recycling industry.
Insurance cost increases expected above CPI.
Completion of project management contract.
Completion of building surveyor contract.
Reduction of rental expenses.

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Contracts and materials	2.50%	2.00%	2.25%	2.50%	2.50%	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%
Utilities	2.50%	2.25%	2.50%	3.25%	3.25%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%
Council plan operational resources (\$'000 p.a.)	-	20	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Infrastructure maintenance and renewal (\$'000 p.a.)	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
Aged Care (\$'000 p.a.)	-	(299)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Waste management (\$'000 p.a.)	-	366	403	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Insurance cost increases (\$'000 p.a.)	-	75	-	-	75	-	-	-	75	-
Project manager contractor (\$'000 p.a.)	-	(145)	(145)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Contracts and materials (cont.)	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Building surveyor (\$'000 p.a.)	-	(40)	(40)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rental expenses (\$'000 p.a.)	-	-	(300)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

3.3.10 Depreciation & amortisation

Depreciation represents an allocation of the current replacement cost of Council assets over their remaining economic life.

Assumption: Asset and infrastructure modelling has been used to determine depreciation expenditure for the Financial Plan. The modelling is based on current asset valuations and takes into consideration the forecast capital works and asset disposals. Right of use assets have been amortised over the life of the leased assets to which they relate.

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Depreciation (\$'000 p.a.)	11,183	11,260	11,776	12,219	12,665	12,916	13,220	13,748	14,166	14,240
Amortisation (\$'000 p.a.)	240	73	73	20	10	10	10	10	-	-

3.3.11 Borrowing costs

Borrowing costs include the interest paid by Council on loans.

The budget reflects the movement in the total outstanding loan balance and reflects Council's borrowings strategy to cease any future borrowings.

Refer Section 6.1.

3.3.12 Other expenses

This expense category comprises agency payments and community grants, Councillor allowance expenses, audit fees, legal costs, software licences, bank charges etc.

Assumptions: Other expenses are expected to increase annually by CPI plus 0.25%.

	Budget	Forecast								
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Other expenses	2.50%	2.00%	2.25%	2.50%	2.50%	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%

3.4 Other Matters impacting the 10-year financial projections

Unprecedented low interest rates has negatively affected Council's financial position in this Financial Plan. Positive benefits through low financing costs has no offsetting balance, as there are no future loan borrowings planned. Invested cash is approximately \$0.5M lower due to the pandemic, and this places more pressure on our ability to maintain assets whilst remaining within the rate cap determined by the Minister.

Other than the long-term effects of low interest returns on investment, no other impediments have been factored into this ten-year plan for the continuation of or for another global health/financial crisis.

4. Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information regarding the Financial Plan Statements for the 10 years from 2021/22 to 2030/31.

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Statement of Capital Works
- Statement of Human Resources

4.1 Comprehensive Income Statement

	Forecast	Budget	Strategic Resource Plan Projections									
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Income												
Rates and charges	29,206	30,022	31,036	32,268	33,305	34,233	35,248	36,341	37,413	38,509	39,632	
Statutory fees and fines	887	1,045	1,073	1,105	1,130	1,155	1,184	1,213	1,244	1,275	1,307	
User fees	3,472	4,539	3,987	4,156	4,292	4,431	4,586	4,747	4,913	5,085	5,263	
Grants - operating (recurrent)	6,258	9,893	8,350	8,531	8,738	8,950	9,190	9,436	9,688	9,948	10,214	
Grants - operating (non-recurrent)	10,933	1,672	2,360	273	278	284	289	294	294	294	299	
Grants - capital (recurrent)	2,147	2,151	1,434	1,434	1,100	1,115	1,148	1,171	1,195	1,223	1,236	
Grants - capital (non-recurrent)	12,084	9,130	447	4,425	1,002	1,102	437	742	1,132	482	4,242	
Contributions - cash	461	255	19	417	30	103	11	380	262	30	13	
Net gain on disposal of property, infrastructure and equipment	190	332	343	394	437	395	415	299	338	546	180	
Other income	4,029	3,335	3,547	3,615	3,699	3,762	3,847	3,939	4,030	4,130	4,229	
Total income	69,667	62,374	52,596	56,618	54,011	55,530	56,355	58,562	60,509	61,522	66,615	
Expenses												
Employee benefits	(21,777)	(21,407)	(19,839)	(20,388)	(20,949)	(21,596)	(22,160)	(22,739)	(23,413)	(24,107)	(24,821)	
Materials and services	(23,862)	(17,386)	(18,303)	(16,515)	(16,882)	(17,238)	(17,716)	(18,456)	(19,267)	(19,664)	(20,027)	
Depreciation and amortisation	(10,778)	(11,423)	(11,333)	(11,849)	(12,239)	(12,675)	(12,926)	(13,230)	(13,758)	(14,166)	(14,240)	
Bad and doubtful debts	(1)	(2)	(20)	(14)	(15)	(15)	(15)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(17)	
Borrowing costs	(351)	(216)	(81)	(70)	(60)	(51)	(24)	(16)	(6)	(2)	-	
Other expenses	(1,253)	(1,200)	(1,223)	(1,252)	(1,282)	(1,314)	(1,351)	(1,389)	(1,425)	(1,464)	(1,505)	
Total Expenses	(58,022)	(51,634)	(50,799)	(50,088)	(51,427)	(52,889)	(54,192)	(55,845)	(57,885)	(59,420)	(60,610)	
Surplus for the year	11,645	10,740	1,797	6,530	2,584	2,641	2,163	2,717	2,624	2,102	6,005	
Other comprehensive income												
Net asset revaluation increment	350	6,760	6,748	9,770	9,140	10,317	7,221	10,540	7,529	6,332	8,794	
Comprehensive result	11,995	17,500	8,545	16,300	11,724	12,958	9,384	13,257	10,153	8,434	14,799	

4.2 Balance Sheet

	Forecast		Budget		Strategic Resource Plan Projections							
	2020/21 \$'000	2021/22 \$'000	2022/23 \$'000	2023/24 \$'000	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	
Current assets												
Cash and cash equivalents	32,059	22,969	18,640	18,901	19,702	18,732	18,650	19,303	18,909	19,760	20,072	
Trade and other receivables	3,685	3,909	3,084	3,293	3,130	3,232	3,274	3,397	3,530	3,565	3,905	
Inventories	270	146	139	146	138	145	138	145	138	145	145	
Other assets	285	311	311	311	311	311	311	311	311	311	311	
Total current assets	36,299	27,335	22,174	22,651	23,281	22,420	22,373	23,156	22,888	23,781	24,433	
Non-current assets												
Trade and other receivables	130	130	119	118	118	118	118	118	118	118	118	
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	510,204	530,745	542,753	558,036	568,790	581,758	590,840	602,973	613,117	620,532	634,579	
Right-of-use assets	444	204	131	58	38	29	19	10	-	-	-	
Intangible assets	3,133	3,196	3,196	3,196	3,196	3,196	3,196	3,196	3,196	3,196	3,196	
Total non-current assets	513,911	534,275	546,199	561,408	572,142	585,101	594,173	606,297	616,431	623,846	637,893	
Total assets	550,210	561,610	568,373	584,059	595,423	607,521	616,546	629,453	639,319	647,627	662,326	
Current liabilities												
Trade and other payables	3,940	3,375	2,039	1,881	1,930	1,975	2,029	2,102	2,193	2,242	2,288	
Trust funds and deposits	2,514	2,514	2,514	2,514	2,514	2,514	2,514	2,514	2,514	2,514	2,514	
Provisions	5,936	5,835	5,734	5,633	5,532	5,431	5,330	5,229	5,128	5,027	4,926	
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	5,433	288	274	282	790	298	306	262	99	41	-	
Lease liabilities	269	75	78	22	10	10	11	11	-	-	-	
Total current liabilities	18,092	12,067	10,639	10,332	10,776	10,228	10,190	10,118	9,934	9,824	9,728	
Non-current liabilities												
Provisions	1,654	1,650	1,646	1,642	1,639	1,634	1,631	1,626	1,622	1,618	1,614	
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	2,349	2,350	2,078	1,796	1,007	709	402	140	41	-	-	
Lease liabilities	216	142	64	43	32	22	11	-	-	-	-	
Total non-current liabilities	4,219	4,142	3,788	3,481	2,678	2,365	2,044	1,766	1,663	1,618	1,614	
Total liabilities	22,311	16,209	14,427	13,813	13,454	12,593	12,234	11,884	11,597	11,442	11,342	
Net assets												
Equity	527,899	545,401	553,946	570,246	581,969	594,928	604,312	617,569	627,722	636,185	650,984	
Accumulated surplus	292,618	311,757	317,491	323,490	325,612	329,263	331,669	333,824	336,937	338,291	343,800	
Asset revaluation reserve	210,343	217,103	223,851	233,621	242,761	253,078	260,299	270,839	278,367	284,729	293,523	
Other reserves	24,938	16,541	12,604	13,135	13,596	12,587	12,344	12,906	12,418	13,165	13,661	
Total equity	527,899	545,401	553,946	570,246	581,969	594,928	604,312	617,569	627,722	636,185	650,984	

4.3 Statement of Changes in Equity

	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2020/21 Forecast Actual				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	515,904	273,209	209,993	32,702
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	11,645	11,645	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	350	-	350	-
Transfers (to)/from other reserves	-	7,764	-	(7,764)
Balance at end of the financial year	527,899	292,617	210,343	24,939
2021/22				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	527,899	292,617	210,343	24,939
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	10,740	10,740	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	6,760	-	6,760	-
Transfers (to)/from other reserves	2	8,400	-	(8,398)
Balance at end of the financial year	545,401	311,757	217,103	16,541
2022/23				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	545,401	311,757	217,103	16,541
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,797	1,797	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	6,748	-	6,748	-
Transfers (to)/from other reserves	-	3,937	-	(3,937)
Balance at end of the financial year	553,946	317,491	223,851	12,604
2023/24				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	553,946	317,491	223,851	12,604
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	6,530	6,530	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	9,770	-	9,770	-
Transfers (to)/from other reserves	-	(531)	-	531
Balance at end of the financial year	570,246	323,490	233,621	13,135
2024/25				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	570,246	323,490	233,621	13,135
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	2,584	2,584	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	9,139	-	9,139	-
Transfers (to)/from other reserves	-	(462)	-	462
Balance at end of the financial year	581,969	325,612	242,761	13,597
2025/26				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	581,970	325,612	242,761	13,597
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	2,641	2,641	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	10,317	-	10,317	-
Transfers (to)/from other reserves	-	1,010	-	(1,010)
Balance at end of the financial year	594,928	329,263	253,078	12,587
2026/27				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	594,928	329,263	253,078	12,587
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	2,163	2,163	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	7,221	-	7,221	-
Transfers (to)/from other reserves	-	243	-	(243)
Balance at end of the financial year	604,312	331,669	260,299	12,344

Statement of Changes in Equity (continued)

	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2027/28				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	604,312	331,669	260,299	12,344
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	2,717	2,717	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	10,540	-	10,540	-
Transfers (to)/from other reserves	-	(562)	-	562
Balance at end of the financial year	617,569	333,824	270,839	12,906
2028/29				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	617,569	333,824	270,839	12,906
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	2,624	2,624	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	7,528	-	7,528	-
Transfers (to)/from other reserves	-	489	-	(489)
Balance at end of the financial year	627,722	336,937	278,367	12,417
2029/30				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	627,721	336,937	278,367	12,417
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	2,102	2,102	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	6,362	-	6,362	-
Transfers (to)/from other reserves	-	(748)	-	748
Balance at end of the financial year	636,185	338,291	284,729	13,165
2030/31				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	636,185	338,291	284,729	13,165
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	6,005	6,005	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	8,794	-	8,794	-
Transfers (to)/from other reserves	-	(496)	-	496
Balance at end of the financial year	650,984	343,800	293,523	13,661

4.4 Statement of Cash Flows

	Forecast		Budget		Strategic Resource Plan Projections												
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31						
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows
	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities																	
Receipts																	
Rates and charges	29,129	29,797	31,704	32,265	33,312	34,250	35,263	36,363	37,427	38,529	39,652						
Statutory fees and fines	887	1,045	1,203	1,213	1,241	1,269	1,300	1,333	1,366	1,400	1,435						
User fees	3,761	4,993	4,470	4,561	4,711	4,864	5,034	5,211	5,392	5,581	5,777						
Grants - operating	17,191	11,565	10,916	8,906	9,001	9,220	9,463	9,715	9,965	10,225	10,495						
Grants - capital	14,231	11,281	1,917	5,641	2,305	2,210	1,619	1,895	2,304	1,738	5,271						
Contributions – monetary	461	255	19	417	30	103	11	380	262	30	13						
Interest	408	311	250	249	255	239	233	232	229	232	231						
Other revenue	4,030	3,352	3,699	3,715	3,808	3,875	3,975	4,087	4,207	4,299	4,384						
Net GST refund	4,659	3,759	2,250	2,359	2,070	2,186	2,173	2,186	2,173	2,386	2,315						
	74,757	66,358	56,428	59,326	56,733	58,216	59,071	61,402	63,538	64,349	70,009						
Payments																	
Employee benefits	(21,001)	(21,513)	(20,123)	(20,486)	(21,046)	(21,692)	(22,257)	(22,837)	(23,508)	(24,202)	(24,916)						
Materials and services	(26,186)	(20,957)	(22,629)	(19,715)	(19,933)	(20,379)	(20,920)	(21,770)	(22,674)	(23,210)	(23,650)						
	(47,187)	(42,470)	(42,752)	(40,201)	(40,979)	(42,071)	(43,177)	(44,607)	(46,182)	(47,412)	(48,566)						
Net cash provided by operating activities	27,570	23,888	13,676	19,125	15,754	16,145	15,894	16,795	17,356	16,937	21,443						
Cash flows from investing activities																	
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(33,326)	(28,990)	(19,740)	(20,775)	(16,964)	(16,988)	(16,492)	(16,357)	(18,091)	(16,839)	(21,750)						
Proceeds from sales of property, plant and equipment	952	1,662	2,157	2,333	2,374	724	848	548	620	854	660						
Net cash used in investing activities	(32,374)	(27,328)	(17,583)	(18,442)	(14,590)	(16,264)	(15,644)	(15,809)	(17,471)	(15,985)	(21,090)						
Cash flows from financing activities																	
Finance costs	(324)	(198)	(73)	(66)	(58)	(50)	(23)	(15)	(6)	(2)	-						
Proceeds from borrowings	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-						
Interest paid - lease liability	(27)	(18)	(8)	(4)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(1)	-	-	-						
Repayment of lease liabilities	(427)	(269)	(75)	(78)	(21)	(10)	(10)	(11)	(11)	-	-						
Repayment of borrowings	(569)	(5,165)	(266)	(274)	(282)	(790)	(298)	(306)	(262)	(99)	(41)						
Net cash used in financing activities	(847)	(5,650)	(422)	(422)	(363)	(851)	(332)	(333)	(279)	(101)	(41)						
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(5,651)	(9,090)	(4,329)	261	801	(970)	(82)	653	(394)	851	312						
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	37,710	32,059	22,969	18,640	18,901	19,702	18,732	18,650	19,303	18,909	19,760						
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	32,059	22,969	18,640	18,901	19,702	18,732	18,650	19,303	18,909	19,760	20,072						

4.5 Statement of Capital Works

	Forecast		Strategic Resource Plan Projections									
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital works areas												
Land	4,708	3,409	2,121	1,414	1,455	1,496	1,536	1,576	1,565	1,554	1,543	
Buildings	4,848	8,511	5,534	3,555	2,650	1,860	1,410	2,320	1,625	3,773	7,274	
Plant & Equipment	1,273	1,414	1,427	1,638	1,819	1,646	1,728	1,246	1,410	1,438	1,500	
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	340	63	33	33	34	34	34	35	35	36	36	
Computers and telecommunications	258	250	590	285	299	380	275	278	584	289	290	
Library Books	150	155	157	162	165	167	172	177	177	181	182	
Sealed Roads	6,641	6,613	4,435	4,302	4,401	4,677	4,864	4,801	5,538	5,249	5,067	
Unsealed Roads	1,401	1,295	1,177	1,113	1,210	1,258	1,293	1,258	1,690	1,316	1,341	
Footpaths	545	115	116	116	428	342	373	444	381	347	253	
Drainage	2,023	121	254	124	104	254	1,260	1,380	200	200	200	
Parks & Open Space	2824	1134	1,127	2,631	2,807	1,939	2,085	1,396	982	964	1,151	
Recreation Leisure	1,904	175	60	2,990	80	425	-	-	1,300	-	364	
Other infrastructure	2,980	3,078	147	652	102	102	102	102	102	102	712	
Waste Management	402	22	960	-	-	1,000	-	-	1,000	-	-	
Total capital works	30,297	26,355	18,138	19,015	15,554	15,580	15,132	15,013	16,589	15,449	19,913	
Represented by:												
New assets	16,436	14,017	8,598	8,277	4,733	4,439	3,384	4,789	5,390	4,871	2,721	
Asset renewal	13,166	11,055	9,066	10,049	10,601	11,001	9,891	9,166	10,841	10,519	11,523	
Asset expansion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Asset upgrade	695	1,283	474	689	220	140	1,857	1,058	358	59	5669	
Total capital works	30,297	26,355	18,138	19,015	15,554	15,580	15,132	15,013	16,589	15,449	19,913	

4.6 Statement of Human Resources

Staff expenditure	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Total staff expenditure										
Female	11,342	9,672	9,993	10,269	10,591	10,874	11,146	11,482	11,830	12,177
Male	9,672	9,766	9,985	10,260	10,575	10,844	11,138	11,463	11,797	12,146
Total staff expenditure	21,014	19,438	19,978	20,529	21,166	21,718	22,284	22,945	23,627	24,323
Permanent full time										
Female	5,596	5,502	5,728	5,908	6,131	6,315	6,484	6,715	6,955	7,193
Male	9,083	9,163	9,370	9,630	9,931	10,185	10,465	10,775	11,094	11,424
Total	14,679	14,665	15,098	15,538	16,062	16,500	16,949	17,490	18,049	18,617
Permanent part time										
Female	5,746	4,171	4,265	4,361	4,460	4,560	4,662	4,767	4,874	4,984
Male	589	602	616	630	644	658	673	688	704	722
Total	6,335	4,773	4,881	4,991	5,104	5,218	5,335	5,455	5,578	5,706

Staff numbers	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
Total staff numbers										
Female	110.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Male	104.8	103.8	103.8	103.8	103.8	103.8	103.8	103.8	103.8	103.8
Total staff numbers	214.8	203.8	203.8	203.8	203.8	203.8	203.8	203.8	203.8	203.8
Permanent full time										
Female	51.0	49.0	49.0	49.0	49.0	49.0	49.0	49.0	49.0	49.0
Male	98.0	97.0	97.0	97.0	97.0	97.0	97.0	97.0	97.0	97.0
Total	149.0	146.0	146.0	146.0	146.0	146.0	146.0	146.0	146.0	146.0
Permanent part time										
Female	59.0	51.0	51.0	51.0	51.0	51.0	51.0	51.0	51.0	51.0
Male	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8
Total	65.8	57.8	57.8	57.8	57.8	57.8	57.8	57.8	57.8	57.8

4.7 Planned Human Resource Expenditure

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Corporate Services										
Permanent - Full time	4,275	4,372	4,470	4,621	4,796	4,935	5,097	5,273	5,457	5,641
Female	2,303	2,356	2,408	2,462	2,527	2,584	2,642	2,712	2,783	2,855
Male	1,972	2,016	2,062	2,159	2,269	2,351	2,455	2,561	2,674	2,786
Permanent - Part time	1,393	1,424	1,456	1,489	1,523	1,557	1,592	1,627	1,665	1,707
Female	1,393	1,424	1,456	1,489	1,523	1,557	1,592	1,627	1,665	1,707
Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Corporate Services	5,668	5,796	5,926	6,110	6,319	6,492	6,689	6,900	7,122	7,348
Infrastructure										
Permanent - Full time	6,014	6,149	6,288	6,480	6,697	6,892	7,075	7,292	7,525	7,756
Female	1,017	1,040	1,064	1,138	1,225	1,297	1,354	1,435	1,528	1,614
Male	4,997	5,109	5,224	5,342	5,472	5,595	5,721	5,857	5,997	6,142
Permanent - Part time	178	182	186	190	195	200	203	208	213	219
Female	137	140	143	146	150	154	156	160	164	167
Male	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	52
Total Infrastructure	6,192	6,331	6,474	6,670	6,892	7,092	7,278	7,500	7,738	7,975
Development and Planning										
Permanent - Full time	2,784	2,847	3,014	3,082	3,171	3,242	3,315	3,415	3,512	3,620
Female	1,307	1,336	1,469	1,503	1,546	1,581	1,617	1,668	1,716	1,769
Male	1,447	1,511	1,545	1,579	1,625	1,661	1,698	1,747	1,796	1,851
Permanent - Part time	1,528	1,562	1,598	1,633	1,670	1,708	1,746	1,785	1,825	1,867
Female	1,201	1,228	1,256	1,283	1,313	1,342	1,373	1,403	1,434	1,467
Male	327	334	342	350	357	366	373	382	391	400
Total Development and Planning	4,312	4,409	4,612	4,715	4,841	4,950	5,061	5,200	5,337	5,487
Community and Cultural Services										
Permanent - Full time	1,606	1,297	1,326	1,355	1,398	1,430	1,462	1,511	1,555	1,601
Female	969	770	787	805	832	852	871	900	928	955
Male	637	527	539	550	566	578	591	611	627	646
Permanent - Part time	3,236	1,605	1,641	1,678	1,716	1,754	1,794	1,834	1,875	1,917
Female	3,015	1,379	1,410	1,442	1,474	1,507	1,541	1,576	1,611	1,647
Male	221	226	231	236	242	247	253	258	264	270
Total Community and Cultural Services	4,842	2,902	2,967	3,033	3,114	3,184	3,256	3,345	3,430	3,518
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	1,091	1,115	1,140	1,166	1,178	1,190	1,204	1,217	1,231	1,245
Total staff expenditure	22,105	20,553	21,119	21,694	22,344	22,908	23,488	24,162	24,858	25,573

Planned Human Resource Expenditure (continued)

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
Corporate Services										
Permanent - Full time	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0
Female	21.0	21.0	21.0	21.0	21.0	21.0	21.0	21.0	21.0	21.0
Male	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0
Permanent - Part time	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4
Female	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4
Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Corporate Services	47.4	47.4	47.4	47.4	47.4	47.4	47.4	47.4	47.4	47.4
Infrastructure										
Permanent - Full time	76.0	76.0	76.0	76.0	76.0	76.0	76.0	76.0	76.0	76.0
Female	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
Male	67.0	67.0	67.0	67.0	67.0	67.0	67.0	67.0	67.0	67.0
Permanent - Part time	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8
Female	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
Male	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Total Infrastructure	78.8	78.8	78.8	78.8	78.8	78.8	78.8	78.8	78.8	78.8
Development and Planning										
Permanent - Full time	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0
Female	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0
Male	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0
Permanent - Part time	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0
Female	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3
Male	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7
Total Development and Planning	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Community and Cultural Services										
Permanent - Full time	15.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0
Female	8.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Male	7.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Permanent - Part time	30.6	22.6	22.6	22.6	22.6	22.6	22.6	22.6	22.6	22.6
Female	28.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
Male	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6
Total Community and Cultural Services	45.6	34.6	34.6	34.6	34.6	34.6	34.6	34.6	34.6	34.6
Total staff numbers	214.8	203.8	203.8	203.8	203.8	203.8	203.8	203.8	203.8	203.8

5. Financial Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide an analysis of Council's 10-year financial projections and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives and financial management principles.

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Forecast										Trend	
			Actual 2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30		2030/31
Operating position														
Adjusted underlying result	Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue	1	(1.6%)	2.6%	2.6%	3.3%	2.9%	2.6%	3.1%	2.8%	2.1%	2.6%	2.8%	o
Liquidity														
Working Capital	Current assets / current liabilities	2	200.6%	226.5%	208.4%	219.2%	216.0%	219.2%	219.6%	228.9%	230.4%	242.1%	251.2%	+
Unrestricted cash	Unrestricted cash / current liabilities		175.6%	187.9%	209.5%	213.1%	207.4%	219.0%	221.3%	223.8%	228.9%	232.5%	232.9%	+
Obligations														
Loans and borrowings	Interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue	3	26.8%	8.8%	7.8%	6.6%	5.5%	3.0%	2.1%	1.1%	0.4%	0.1%	0.0%	+
Loans and borrowings	Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue		3.1%	18.0%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	2.5%	0.9%	0.9%	0.7%	0.3%	0.1%	+
Indebtedness	Non-current liabilities / own source revenue		11.2%	10.5%	9.5%	8.4%	6.2%	5.4%	4.5%	3.8%	3.5%	3.3%	3.2%	+
Asset renewal	Asset renewal and upgrade expense / Asset depreciation	4	133.6%	110.3%	87.4%	91.2%	88.6%	88.0%	91.0%	77.3%	81.5%	74.7%	120.7%	-
Stability														
Rates concentration	Rate revenue / adjusted underlying revenue	5	50.8%	56.3%	58.0%	60.7%	61.3%	61.4%	61.5%	61.6%	61.7%	61.5%	61.9%	-
Rates effort	Rate revenue / CIV of rateable properties in the municipality		0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	o
Efficiency														
Expenditure level	Total expenses/ no. of property assessments		\$4,818	\$4,276	\$4,207	\$4,148	\$4,259	\$4,380	\$4,488	\$4,625	\$4,794	\$4,921	\$5,019	+
Revenue level	Total rate revenue / no. of property assessments		\$2,114	\$2,152	\$2,202	\$2,266	\$2,318	\$2,376	\$2,436	\$2,497	\$2,559	\$2,622	\$2,687	+

Key to Forecast

Trend:

- + Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator
- o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator

Notes to indicators

1. Adjusted underlying result

An indicator of the sustainable operating result required to enable Council to continue to provide core services and meet its objectives. Improvement in financial performance expected over the period, although continued losses means reliance on Council's cash reserves or increase debt to maintain services.

2. Working capital

The proportion of current liabilities represented by current assets. Working capital is forecast to decrease due to the use of funds put aside for the repayment of interest only loans as they fall due. The last of the interest only loans falls due in 2025/26.

3. Debt compared to rates

Trend indicates Council's reducing reliance on debt against its annual rate revenue through redemption of long term debt.

4. Asset renewal

This percentage indicates the extent of Council's renewal of assets against its depreciation charge (an indication of the decline in value of its existing capital assets). A percentage greater than 100 indicates Council is maintaining its existing assets, while a percentage less than 100 means its assets are deteriorating faster than they are being renewed and future capital expenditure will be required to renew assets.

5. Rates concentration

Reflects extent of reliance on rate revenues to fund all of Council's on-going services. Trend indicates Council will become more reliant on rate revenue compared to all other revenue sources.

Victorian Auditor-General's Office Indicators

Insight into the financial sustainability of councils is obtained from analysis of financial sustainability indicators over the 10 year period. The five indicators applied to Councils are underlying result, liquidity, indebtedness, self-financing and investment gap.

Financial sustainability should be viewed from both short and long term perspectives. The shorter term indicators involve the Council's ability to maintain a positive operating cash flow and adequate cash holdings, and to generate an operating surplus over time. These are the underlying results and liquidity indicators.

The longer-term indicators signify whether there is adequate funding available to cover long term debt and for spending on asset replacement to enable the Council to maintain the quality of service delivery, meet community expectations and the demand for services. The long term indicators are indebtedness, self-financing and investment gap.

Measures of sustainability

The Victorian Auditor General's Office uses the following measures of financial sustainability.

Indicator	VAGO Target	Calculation	Explanation
Net result	Greater than 0%	Net result / Total revenue	A positive result indicates a surplus, and the larger the percentage, the stronger the result. A negative result indicates a deficit. Operating deficits cannot be sustained in the long term.
Liquidity	Greater than 1.5	Current Assets / Current Liabilities	Measure of ability to pay existing liabilities within 12 months. A ratio of one or more means there are more cash and liquid assets than short-term liabilities.

Indicator	VAGO Target	Calculation	Explanation
Internal financing	Greater than 100%	Net Operating cash flow / Capital expenditure	This indicator examines the capacity of Council to fund capital expenditure using cash generated from operations and government funding each year.
Indebtedness	Less than 40%	Non-current liabilities / Own sourced revenue	Compares non-current liabilities (including loans) to own source revenue. Own-sourced revenue is used because it does not include capital grants.
Capital replacement ratio	Greater than 1.5	Capital spend / Depreciation	Comparison of the rate of spending on infrastructure with its depreciation. Ratios higher than 1:1 indicate that spending is faster than the depreciation rate. This is a long-term indicator, as capital expenditure can be deferred in the short term if there are insufficient funds available from operations, and borrowing is not an option.
Renewal gap ratio	Greater than 1.0	Capital expenditure on renewal and upgrade / Depreciation	Comparison of the rate of spending on existing assets through renewing, restoring, and replacing existing assets with depreciation. Ratios higher than 1:1 indicate that spending on existing assets is faster than the depreciation rate.

Swan Hill Rural City Council forecast results of the above indicators are displayed below:

Indicator	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Net result	17.3%	3.4%	11.6%	4.8%	4.8%	3.9%	4.7%	4.4%	3.4%	9.0%
Liquidity	2.27	2.08	2.19	2.16	2.19	2.2	2.29	2.3	2.42	2.51
Internal financing	80.6%	69.3%*	92.1%	92.9%	95.0%	96.4%	102.7%	95.9%	100.6%	98.6%
Indebtedness	10.5%	9.5%	8.4%	6.2%	5.4%	4.5%	3.8%	3.5%	3.3%	3.2%
Capital replacement ratio	2.36	1.75	1.76	1.39	1.34	1.28	1.24	1.32	1.19	1.53
Renewal gap ratio	1.10	0.85	0.91	0.89	0.88	0.91	0.77	0.81	0.75	1.21

Risk indicator ranges for the above calculations are defined as follows:

Indicator	Red	Yellow	Green
Net result	< -10%	-10% - 0%	> 0%
Liquidity	< 0.75	0.75 - 1.0	> 1.0
Internal financing	< 75%	75 - 100%	> 100%
Indebtedness	> 60%	40% - 60%	< 40%
Capital replacement	< 1.0	1.0 - 1.5	> 1.5
Renewal gap	< 0.5	0.5 - 1.0	> 1.0

* The internal financing result in 2022/23 falls into the high risk category, due to a significant value of capital works in the year being funded from reserves. Works on the construction of the Our Place project of \$3.17M funded by the Our Region Our Rivers grant has been forecast to be carried forward from 2021/22. Another project to assist with the increase in housing supply within Swan Hill of \$1.32M had also been funded from reserves. Excluding these projects in this indicator the result would be 89.7%, which moves the indicator out of the red high risk category.

6. Strategies and Plans

This section describes the strategies and plans that support the 10-year financial projections included to the Financial Plan.

6.1 Borrowing Strategy

6.1.1 Current Debt Position

The total amount borrowed as at 30 June 2022 is \$2.6 million.

Council has accessed debt funding to complete a range of major infrastructure projects. Borrowings of \$500,000 in 2020/21 is being used to undertake renewal works on the lighting and runways at the Swan Hill Aerodrome. This is the only borrowings identified in this financial plan, with no further borrowings forecast for the next ten years.

6.1.2 Future Borrowing Requirements

The following table highlights Council's projected loan balance, including new loans and loan repayments for the 10 years of the Financial Plan

	Forecast Actual 2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Opening balance	7,851	7,782	2,618	2,352	2,078	1,797	1,007	708	402	140	41
Plus New loans	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Less Principal repayment	(569)	(5,165)	(266)	(274)	(282)	(790)	(298)	(306)	(262)	(99)	(41)
Closing balance	7,782	2,618	2,352	2,078	1,797	1,007	708	402	140	41	-
Interest payment	(324)	(198)	(73)	(66)	(58)	(50)	(23)	(15)	(6)	(2)	-

6.1.3 Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of debt management performance indicators.

Performance Indicator	Target	Forecast Actual 2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total borrowings / Rate revenue	Below 60%	26.9%	8.8%	7.8%	6.6%	5.5%	3.0%	2.1%	1.1%	0.4%	0.1%	0.0%
Debt servicing / Rate revenue	Below 5%	3.1%	18.0%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	2.5%	0.9%	0.9%	0.7%	0.3%	0.1%
Debt commitment / Rate revenue	Below 10%	2.7%	15.5%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	2.2%	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%	0.2%	0.1%
Indebtedness / Own source revenue	Below 60%	20.6%	6.7%	5.9%	5.0%	4.2%	2.3%	1.6%	0.9%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%

Council maintains its loan borrowing within prudent and management limits as demonstrated by the following performance indicators.

Total borrowings / Rate revenue

Council has achieved a position where no further borrowings is required to provide a source of funds for capital projects. The Financial Plan includes \$0.5M in the 2020/21 forecast actual, as the last borrowing. The ratio reduces from 26.8% to 0.0% in 2030/31 when the final monthly principal payment is due on the 2021 borrowing. Council's strategic plan to be debt free in ten years, clearly meets targets set for all four performance indicators.

Debt servicing / Rate revenue

Similar to the explanation provided above, this ratio reduces as each of the remaining four loans mature. The ratio increases well above the performance indicator target in 2021/22 when principal of an 'interest only' loan is repaid. The principal of two 'interest only' loans have been funded from appropriations to cash backed reserves over their respective ten-year terms to provide funds of \$4.795M in 2021/22 and \$0.5M in 2025/26.

Debt commitment / Rate revenue

Refer to Debt Servicing commentary above. The performance indicator target of below 10% is achieved in every year with the exception of 2021/22, when the \$4.795M interest only loan principal is repaid.

Indebtedness / Own source revenue

The closing balance of non-current loans each year is the primary reason for this reducing ratio. Council exceeds the performance indicator ratio across all years of the Financial Plan. The increase in reliance on rate revenue trending from 50.8% to 61.9% over the life of the plan is evident in this ratio.

6.2 Reserves Strategy

Reserves are either 'statutory' or 'discretionary' in nature. Statutory reserves relate to Council held cash and investments that must be expended on a specific purpose. These are directed by legislation or other funding body, and include car parking and open space reserves. Discretionary reserves are amounts set aside for specific purposes and help shield the organization from financial shocks or the need to have funds available to meet financial obligations such as the principal repayment of 'interest only' loans when they mature. In general these funds do not have a bank accounts of their own but are a theoretical split up of the cash surplus.

There is a likely danger with reserves of not having adequate policy framework around the purpose/use of the reserves. This is because the funds could be inappropriately spent or used to overcome annual budget shortfalls and hide an underlying financial deficiency.

6.2.1 Current Reserves

Public Open Space Reserve

- Purpose - the Open Space Reserve holds funds contributed by developers for the purchase of land and for works associated with developing and improving public open space and recreational facilities within Council. Funds are contributed in accordance with Section 18 of the Subdivision Act and transfers are restricted to the purpose of creating open space such as parks, playgrounds, pavilions and other such items where it is deemed that these works should occur at a later point than the initial development.
- Movements - transfers to the reserve (inflows) comprise contributed income from sub-dividers in lieu of the Public Open Space requirement. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) are applied to fund Open Space capital projects determined by Council.

Car Parking Reserve

- Purpose – if a planning permit applicant cannot meet their car parking requirements, there will be a cash-in-lieu requirement, which is a mechanism for Council to collect cash-in-lieu contributions for car parking. The fund is to be spent on car parking improvements, including construction of new car parking facilities and improving existing facilities to satisfy growing needs.
- Movements – use of these funds are to establish new car parking facilities or to provide significant upgrades to car parking within the Swan Hill and Robinvale townships.

EPA Financial Assurance Reserve

- Purpose – due to the environmental risks inherent in landfill sites, the EPA require councils to have reserve funds to cover future remediation as a condition of having a landfill license.
- Movements – transfers from this reserve are used to fund remediation costs to landfill sites.

Swan Hill and Robinvale Drainage Reserve

- Purpose – the Swan Hill and Robinvale townships have declared drainage districts and these areas pay a drainage levy of 4% on their general rates to fund improvements to the drainage systems within the townships.
- Movements – inflows to this reserve come via the drainage levy raised as a higher differential in the annual rating process. Outflows from this reserve will be in the form of agreed drainage projects within these drainage districts.

Plant and Fleet Replacement Reserve

- Purpose – this reserve is to set aside funds to replace Council's heavy plant, fleet and equipment at the end of their service life.
- Movements – inflows to the reserve are sourced from plant and fleet hire charges costed to projects and maintenance works. Transfers from the reserve are aligned to Council's replacement schedule to fund acquisitions on an annual basis.

Loan Principal Repayment Reserve

- Purpose – the Loan Principal Repayment reserve is discretionary in nature and designed to hold funds for the repayment of 'interest only' loans when they mature.
- Movements – the annual contributions are equal to the deemed principal repayment so sufficient funds will be available to fund the repayment at maturity.

Landfill and Waste Management Reserve

- Purpose – Council Landfill sites require significant works to ensure they operate under strict guidelines set by the EPA. Current landfill cells are nearing capacity in Swan Hill and Robinvale and the first construction of a replacement cell in Swan Hill made to standard is forecast to commence in 2022/23. Other capital improvements to the landfill sites can also be funded from the reserve at Council discretion.
- Movements – inflows to this reserve are funded via the waste collection charges raised each year. A portion for these charges are placed into this reserve to be able to fund future works. Outflows are determined via Council's 10 Year Major Projects Plan. These projects are assessed during the plan development and scheduled to occur as need arises.

Tower Hill Reserve

- Purpose – the Tower Hill Reserve is used to fund future developments at Tower Hill Residential Estate.
- Movements – proceeds from the sale of land at Tower Hill are transferred to this reserve as they occur. Funds in this reserve are then used to construct the next stages of the development. These funds are used for all civil works at the estate.

Unused Restricted Grants Reserve

- Purpose – the purpose of this reserve is to quarantine Federal and Victorian government funding relating to projects and operations that were not able to be completed in the year in which they were received. These funds are transferred to reserve and in most cases used in the following year to complete agreed project deliverables. The funds are restricted for the specific purpose for which the grant funding was provided.
- Movements – inflows are solely composed of grant funds received within a financial year and the projects or deliverables remain incomplete at year-end. Outflows from this reserve will be transfers back to operations or specific projects as the projects are completed.

Asset Replacement Reserve

- Purpose – the Asset Replacement Reserve has been established by Council with the proceeds to fund works considered by Council to be of a strategic nature.
- Movements – inflows to this reserve typically come from sale of land (not Tower Hill residential estate) and better than budget operating surpluses. Outflows fund asset purchases and capital works projects.

Employee Provisions Reserve

- Purpose – Council has provided for a number of employee type provisions to help reduce any financial shock from likely future defined benefits superannuation liability calls, spikes in WorkCover premiums and restructure costs.
- Movements – inflows come from annual appropriations recovered as a cost against various program budgets and from savings in unspent insurance premiums. Council determines outflows from reserves when a significant cost event occurs.

Swan Hill Riverfront Reserve

- Purpose – this discretionary reserve provides for future works identified in the Swan Hill Riverfront Masterplan. Funds in this reserve are generally used when matching contributions are required for grant funded projects that relate to the development of Swan Hill's riverfront.
- Movements – inflows come from allocated rate monies raised and unspent at year-end, and as determined by Council if better than budget surplus funds are available. Outflows occur when appropriate riverfront projects are identified with optimum value derived from matching grant funding opportunities if available.

Other Discretionary Reserve

- Purpose – this reserve category provides for contingency sums, future return on investment opportunities, stabilisation of the rating system through valuation appeals and legal costs, and other committed costs.
- Movements – Inflows come from budgeted appropriations or forced savings; returns from investment activities (housing development) and from unspent rates monies required in the following or future financial year. Outflows from this reserve group are used as the funding to enable operational and project expenditure to be committed without the need to prepare a revised budget (as appropriate).

6.2.2 Reserve Usage Projections

The next table discloses the balance and annual movement for each reserve over the 10-year life of the Financial Plan. Total value of reserves aligns with the Statement of Changes in Equity. Restricted reserves are to be included to the disclosure of restricted cash assets.

Reserves	Restricted / Discretionary	2020-21 \$000's	2021-22 \$000's	2022-23 \$000's	2023-24 \$000's	2024-25 \$000's	2025-26 \$000's	2026-27 \$000's	2027-28 \$000's	2028-29 \$000's	2029-30 \$000's	2030-31 \$000's
Public Open Space	Restricted											
Opening balance		135	174	184	186	189	191	194	196	198	200	202
Transfer to/(from) reserve		39	10	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2
Closing balance		174	184	186	189	191	194	196	198	200	202	204
Car Parking	Restricted											
Opening balance		70	75	80	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
Transfer to/(from) reserve		5	5	(65)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	(50)
Closing balance		75	80	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	-
EPA Financial Assurance	Restricted											
Opening balance		1,483	1,453	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423
Transfer to/(from) reserve		(30)	(30)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance		1,453	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423
Swan Hill & Robinvale Drainage	Discretionary											
Opening balance		664	480	703	753	1,003	1,253	1,303	993	993	1,043	1,093
Transfer to/(from) reserve		(184)	223	50	250	250	50	(310)	-	50	50	50
Closing balance		480	703	753	1,003	1,253	1,303	993	993	1,043	1,093	1,143
Plant and Fleet Replacement	Discretionary											
Opening balance		665	905	880	946	800	474	321	87	334	417	471
Transfer to/(from) reserve		240	(25)	66	(146)	(326)	(153)	(234)	247	83	54	(7)
Closing balance		905	880	946	800	474	321	87	334	417	471	464
Loan Principal Repayment	Discretionary											
Opening balance		3,336	4,795	100	200	300	400	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer to/(from) reserve		1,459	(4,695)	100	100	100	(400)	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance		4,795	100	200	300	400	-	-	-	-	-	-
Landfill and Waste Management	Discretionary											
Opening balance		3,042	2,687	2,586	1,773	1,840	1,912	1,240	1,374	1,514	661	814
Transfer to/(from) reserve		(355)	(101)	(813)	67	72	(672)	134	140	(853)	153	158
Closing balance		2,687	2,586	1,773	1,840	1,912	1,240	1,374	1,514	661	814	972

Reserves	Restricted / Discretionary	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
		\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's
Tower Hill												
Opening balance	Discretionary	77	674	476	(183)	(101)	(22)	55	137	224	368	571
Transfer to/(from) reserve		597	(198)	(659)	82	79	77	82	87	144	203	263
Closing balance		674	476	(183)	(101)	(22)	55	137	224	368	571	834
Unused Restricted Grants												
Opening balance	Discretionary	10,018	3,873	3,318	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer to/(from) reserve		(6,145)	(555)	(3,318)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance		3,873	3,318	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Asset Replacement												
Opening balance	Discretionary	7,065	2,533	884	984	1,104	1,134	1,164	1,194	1,224	1,254	1,484
Transfer to/(from) reserve		(4,532)	(1,649)	100	120	30	30	30	30	30	230	30
Closing balance		2,533	884	984	1,104	1,134	1,164	1,194	1,224	1,254	1,484	1,514
Employee Provisions												
Opening balance	Discretionary	2,882	2,932	2,982	3,032	3,082	3,132	3,182	3,232	3,282	3,332	3,382
Transfer to/(from) reserve		50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Closing balance		2,932	2,982	3,032	3,082	3,132	3,182	3,232	3,282	3,332	3,382	3,432
Swan Hill Riverfront												
Opening balance	Discretionary	2,803	2,653	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272
Transfer to/(from) reserve		(150)	(1,381)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance		2,653	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272
Other Discretionary												
Opening balance	Discretionary	3,009	2,307	1,653	2,203	2,203	2,403	2,403	2,403	2,403	2,403	2,403
Transfer to/(from) reserve		(702)	(654)	550	-	200	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance		2,307	1,653	2,203	2,203	2,403	2,403	2,403	2,403	2,403	2,403	2,403
Reserves Summary												
Opening balance	Restricted & Discretionary	32,702	24,938	16,540	12,603	13,134	13,596	12,586	12,345	12,345	12,417	13,164
Transfer to/(from) reserve		(7,764)	(8,398)	(3,937)	531	462	(1,010)	(241)	561	(489)	747	496
Closing balance		24,938	16,540	12,603	13,134	13,596	12,586	12,345	12,906	12,417	13,164	13,660

B.21.59 COUNCIL PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2020/21

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
File Number: S16-28-03
Attachments: 1 Council Plan – Progress Report June 2021

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

The purpose of this report is to present the fourth quarter progress update of Council's performance against the Council Plan 2017-2021. The period reported is from 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021.

The quarterly progress report, provided as an attachment, offers a summary of the progress against the five Council Plan areas; Economic Growth, Community Enrichment, Infrastructure, Governance and Leadership, and Environment. The report also provides updates for any actions carried over from previous years.

The intent of this report is to give Councillors and the community the confidence that Council is on track to meet its published commitments.

Discussion

In accordance with Section 125 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, Council developed and adopted a four-year Council Plan on 27 June 2017.

The plan is a strategic document outlining what Swan Hill Rural City Council will do to help achieve Council's and the community's vision for the municipality.

The plan describes Council's priorities and outcomes for its four-year term and how these will be resourced.

The plan has been divided into five areas:



Economic Growth



Community Enrichment



Infrastructure



Governance and Leadership



Environment

This report provides the fourth quarter update in relation to the actions taken and progress made to achieve these goals and strategic objectives in the 2020/21 financial year.

Regular reporting to Councillors and the community is a key principle of transparency and good governance. This report will be provided to Council on a quarterly basis and published online for the community to access.

The following objectives were marked as complete and ongoing during the fourth quarter:

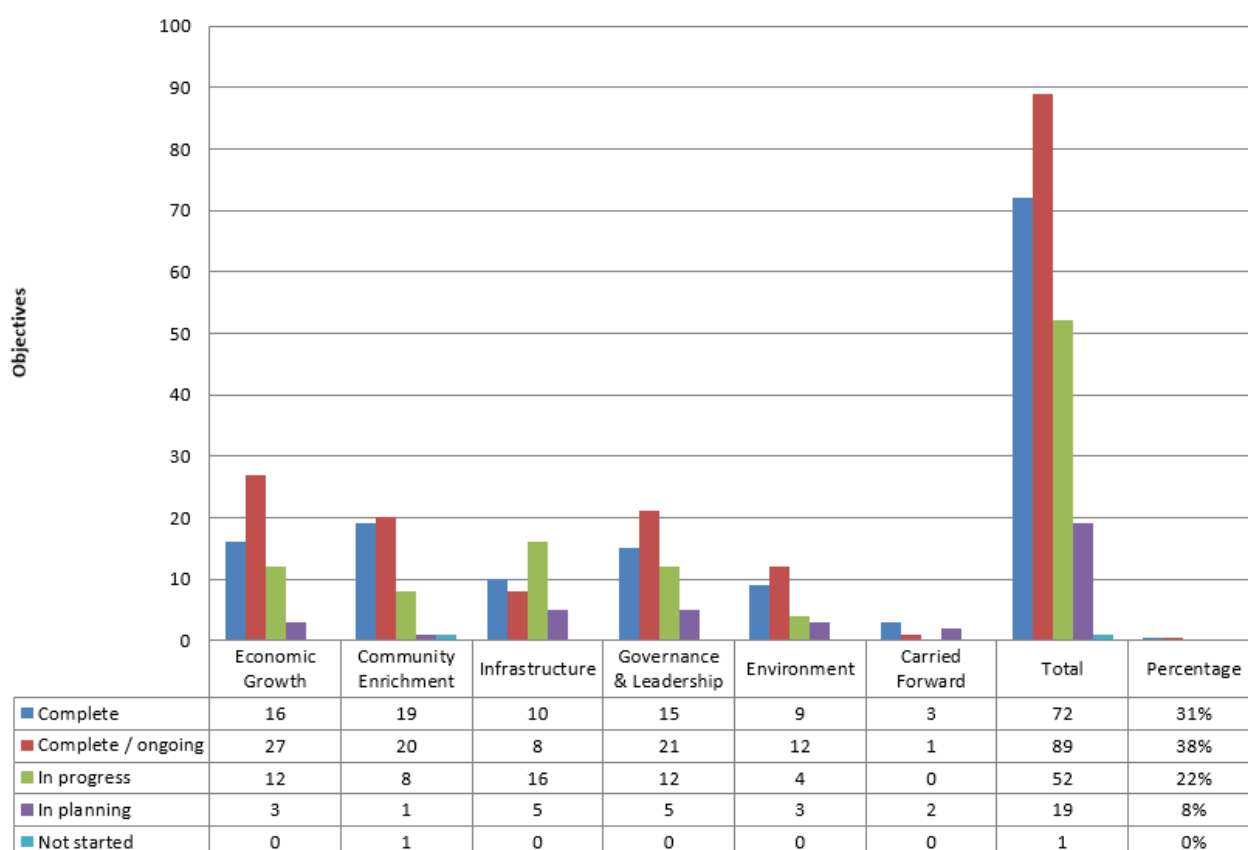
- Encourage and attract new business to our region – Apply for funding through Regional Development Victoria (RDV) (1.1.2).
- Investigate and identify potential export opportunities and facilitate connections - Analyse the region's products and identify where we have competitive advantages that may provide opportunities for growth (1.3.1).
- Investigate opportunities to improve stormwater runoff from townships into the River - Pritchard Street Drainage Upgrade works Completed in May 2021. (15.4.2).

Council has made progress on the following:

- Identify and investigate suitable land parcels for new business - Working with company to establish demolition service in Swan Hill and individual for new business in Manangatang (1.1.1).
- Increase the availability of appropriate housing to support growth of industry and agriculture - Tender for building 8 houses has been awarded. (1.6.1).
- The Residential Land Strategy is underway. A draft of the strategy is scheduled to be delivered in July 2021 (4.2.2).
- Strategically position Council's ongoing role regarding the community-based aged care reforms – Councillors briefed on Royal Commission outcomes and likely next steps June 2021 (6.2.2).
- Complete and implement the Recreation Reserve Master Plan – multiple projects completed (6.5.2).
- Levee construction work has commenced in Robinvale and on schedule to complete construction works by 30 Aug 21(8.4.2).
- Identify opportunities to rationalise Council assets - Road network assessment has been conducted and revised network has gone out to public consultation as part of the RMP process (10.3.2).
- Road Management Plan 2021 and Register of Public Roads approved June 2021(10.4.2).

- Develop Council's systems and processes to improve our customer service, efficiency and effectiveness of our operations - Digital transformation project underway with a focus on customer practices and services to achieve better customer service (11.1.2).

Progress Report Graph



Consultation

Council consulted the community during the development of the Council Plan 2017/21.

Financial Implications

This report contains no financial implications, however many of the initiatives contained within the Council Plan requires Council to allocate funds in its 2020/21 budget to implement the Council Plan.

Social Implications

The report is provided and made available to the community to increase awareness of the activities of Council, provide a mechanism for transparency and could increase community involvement in decision making at Council level.

Economic Implications

Implementation of the actions will improve a number of economic outcomes for our community.

Environmental Implications

Implementation of the actions will improve a number of environmental outcomes for our community.

Risk Management Implications

Council is required to be compliant with the *Local Government Act 1989* in regards to the Council Plan and annual reporting. This quarterly report supports that compliance.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Governance and leadership - Effective and efficient utilisation of resources.

Options

Not applicable for this report.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the fourth quarter Council Plan - Progress Report 2020/21 as presented.

109/21 Motion

MOVED Cr McPhee

That Council adopt the fourth quarter Council Plan - Progress Report 2020/21 as presented.

SECONDED Cr Young

The Motion was put and CARRIED



Council Plan Progress Report – June 2021



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Key Results Areas

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Introduction

What is the Council Plan?

The Council Plan is a strategic document outlining what the Swan Hill Rural City Council (Council) will do to achieve Council’s and the community’s vision for the municipality. The 2017-2021 plan describes Council’s Strategic Initiatives for its four-year term.

The Council Plan is an important document that drives everything the Swan Hill Rural City Council does over a four-year period. It sets the vision, priorities and outcomes for Council’s term and lists how progress will be measured. The plan guides Council’s annual budget, which determines the projects, services, events and other initiatives that will be funded and delivered in the next financial year.






Council is held accountable for its progress on the Council Plan’s outcomes through quarterly progress reports, and annually in the Swan Hill Rural City Council’s Annual Report.



How we will track and measure our progress

Each of the Council Plan Initiatives has a number of objectives that will track Council’s progress. Council will report on its progress in completing the four-year priorities quarterly with updated progress commentary.

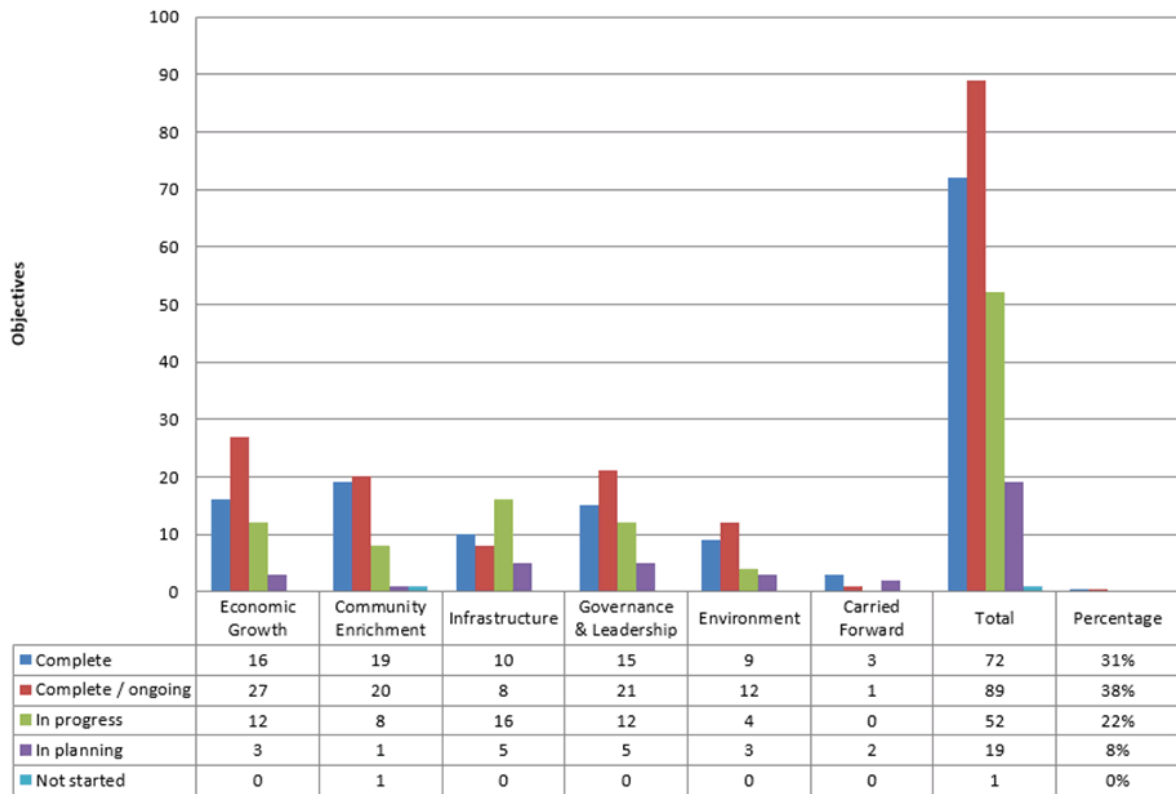
All objectives will be marked with the following symbols to represent their current status:

-  Complete - the objective has been completed.
-  Completed/Ongoing - objectives/actions that span over a number of years that cannot be marked as completed until later years.
-  In progress - these objections are past the planning phase, and are in progress towards completion.
-  In planning - objectives that are not complete or in progress but actions have been taken are marked as in planning stage.
-  Not started - objectives that have not been commenced at the time of reporting.

Overall results snapshot

The Council Plan 2017-21 includes 92 initiatives and 233 actions through which the achievement of the Council Plan may be measured over its four-year term. Each action has a nominated responsible officer who is a member of the Leadership Team, reflecting the importance placed on achieving targets. As some objectives/actions span over a number of years they cannot be marked as completed until later years.

Progress Report Graph



The following objectives were marked as complete and ongoing during the fourth quarter:





- Encourage and attract new business to our region – Apply for funding through Regional Development Victoria (RDV) (1.1.2).
- Investigate and identify potential export opportunities and facilitate connections - Analyse the region’s products and identify where we have competitive advantages that may provide opportunities for growth (1.3.1).
- Investigate opportunities to improve stormwater runoff from townships into the River - Pritchard Street Drainage Upgrade works Completed in May 2021. (15.4.2).



Council has made progress on the following:

Swan Hill Rural City Council Plan - Progress Report – June 2021

- Identify and investigate suitable land parcels for new business - Working with company to establish demolition service in Swan Hill and individual for new business in Manangatang (1.1.1).
- Increase the availability of appropriate housing to support growth of industry and agriculture - Tender for building 8 houses has been awarded. (1.6.1).
- The Residential Land Strategy is underway. A draft of the strategy is scheduled to be delivered in July 2021 (4.2.2).
- Strategically position Council's ongoing role regarding the community-based aged care reforms – Councillors briefed on Royal Commission outcomes and likely next steps June 2021 (6.2.2).
- Complete and implement the Recreation Reserve Master Plan – multiple projects completed (6.5.2).
- Levee construction work has commenced in Robinvale and on schedule to complete construction works by 30 Aug 21(8.4.2).
- Identify opportunities to rationalise Council assets - Road network assessment has been conducted and revised network has gone out to public consultation as part of the RMP process (10.3.2).
- Road Management Plan 2021 and Register of Public Roads approved June 2021(10.4.2).
- Develop Council's systems and processes to improve our customer service, efficiency and effectiveness of our operations - Digital transformation project underway with a focus on customer practices and services to achieve better customer service (11.1.2).

Objectives carried forward from Council Plan 2013-17

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
12.1 Pursue funding for the redevelopment of the Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery	12.1.1 Provide final designs and all costs and contingencies	Complete 	Our Region Our Rivers funding secured. On 17 September Council endorsed Option 1 concept for further design work by architects, and the project is proceeding. Further opportunities for funding are being sought on an ongoing basis. As of April 2020 two potential sites with two possible designs each have been considered in response to public submissions. Site selected. Designs underway and landscape architects appointed September 2020.
12.5 Develop and implement a Cultural Plan	12.5.3 Development continues	Complete 	October 2018 The Creative Strategy was adopted by Council.
13.1 Review and implement identified actions following the review of Aboriginal Partnership Plan	13.1.2 Implement actions identified in Aboriginal Partnership Plan	Complete/ongoing 	Aboriginal Community Partnership Strategy adopted September 2017. The Actions within the Plan will continue to be implemented.
15.3 Review of the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) taking into consideration appropriate accommodation options	15.3.1 Commence MSS review	Complete 	Review of MSS is complete. Amendment C73 has been authorised by the Minister subject to conditions. C73 went to a panel hearing on 19 November 2019 and has been adopted by Council.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
19.2 Actively pursue suitable alternative opportunities arising from decommissioned irrigation infrastructure	19.2.6 Modernisation undertaken, Channel decommissioned.	In planning 	The options were presented to Council for consideration on 29 September 2020. Formal proposal will be presented to Council early in 2021 for approval.
	19.2.7 Gain ownership of the available land for future development	In planning 	Finalising options for opportunities and land ownership. Have received a contract from DHHS for purchase of land. In discussions with Goulburn Murray Water in regards to transfer of their land. Project was presented to Council 29 September 2020. Council has received legal advice concerning acquisition of deceased estates.







Key result area Economic growth











“We will encourage new business development, provide support for business expansion and will continuously seek to help our existing businesses”.








We will:







1. Encourage and attract new business to our region.
2. Assist existing businesses to expand and increase their efficiency.
3. Have a region with an equipped and productive workforce.
4. Provide land use planning that is responsive and which proactively encourages appropriate development.







What have we done





STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
1.1 Formulate new ways to encourage new business development.	1.1.1 Identify and investigate suitable land parcels for new business.	Complete 	Economic and Community Development Unit continue to work with Planning to identify opportunities to expand new businesses. Working with a company to establish a demolition service in Swan Hill and an individual for a new business in Manangatang. Ongoing work with multiple businesses
	1.1.2 Apply for funding through Regional Development Victoria (RDV).	Completed/ongoing 	Council were successful in obtaining \$3.98M funding from both RDV and Building Better Regions Fund that will support new commercial activities within the Swan Hill Riverfront Precinct. Works include providing improved public access infrastructure from CBD to riverfront and the creation of new public spaces / facilities such as the active play precinct.
	1.1.3 Develop a business expansion or relocation strategy.	Complete 	Business Expansion and Retention Strategy completed and presented to Council. Follow up work is being completed by monitoring jobs and talking to employers on barriers. Working with real estate developers and investors on a series of residential and commercial developments in the region
	1.1.4 Commence an Investment Attraction campaign.	Completed/ongoing 	Ongoing through business visits and networking. Working closely with RDV Industry Engagement Officers. Postponed due to COVID-19.









STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
1.2 Identify the types of businesses suited to this region and develop investment prospectuses.	1.2.1 Perform an industry gap analysis.	Completed/ongoing 	The industry gap analysis is scheduled to be presented to Council later this year. Postponed due to COVID-19. Engagement of Sue Anderson for addressing vacant shops. Business breakfast to discuss with business community scheduled 30th March. Started Vacant Shop initiative.
	1.2.2 Review the Investment Attraction Policy.	In progress 	Currently reviewed and will be presented to Council later this year. Currently consulting with industry to determine what is the best assistance that can be offered.
	1.2.3 Develop suite of industry and business prospectuses.	Completed/ongoing 	A suite of documents has been collated that captured our region's economic data and this is provided to potential developers as enquiries are received.
	1.2.4 Market the opportunities available.	Completed/ongoing 	Working on possible investment by developers to construct residential and commercial ventures, in particular short term residential. Working with manufacturing industry to attract new businesses to the region. Several accommodation and commercial projects have started in the region.
1.3 Investigate and identify potential export opportunities and facilitate connections.	1.3.1 Analyse the region's products and identify where we have competitive advantages that may provide opportunities for growth.	Completed/ongoing 	To be completed as part of the Liveability Campaign. New videos featuring local people have been prepared. Videos have been released on social media and website.
	1.3.2 Investigate what role Council can play with development of new markets.	In progress 	Assistance with agriculture export opportunities.
	1.3.3 Facilitate connections and partnerships to achieve market access.	In progress 	Organised information sessions on labour related issues. Continue to inform the horticulture industry of available export opportunities through grants and training programs.
	1.3.4 Encourage the establishment of value adding industries.	In progress 	Assisting horticulture producers to enter the export market or strengthen existing markets through assisting with sourcing funding for new infrastructure and facilitating planning processes. Identifying training and advice opportunities for the agriculture sector.
1.4 Pursue new businesses that are upstream processors for our local produce.	1.4.1 Engage with local industry to identify opportunities.	In progress 	Assisting retail businesses to expand premises. Facilitating for local goods and services industries to be competitive in tendering contracts for new developments such as solar farms. In discussion with a number of investors in Robinvale and Swan Hill.
	1.4.2 Work with industry to establish new businesses.	Completed/ongoing 	Working with interstate composting business to establish new composting business in Swan Hill region. Working with new businesses in retail, hospitality and construction. Working on new solar farm project.









STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
1.5 Promote new technologies and new ways of working.	1.5.1 Investigate and market opportunities for internet based business.	Completed/ongoing 	Delivery of a series of training programs for businesses. Information sessions and mentoring also facilitated. Delivered online because of COVID-19.
	1.5.2 Promote and educate industry and the community to encourage the uptake of new technologies through training and workshops.	Complete 	September 2019 Training for job readiness delivered through Connect U. Business training in conjunction with Australian Small Business Advisory Services around Digital Solutions. Workshops held on drone technology and combat online shopping. Delivered ATO workshops with a component explaining new online tools for Businesses.
1.6 Increase the availability of appropriate housing to support growth of industry and agriculture.	1.6.1 Investigate the housing needs and identify appropriate solutions.	Completed/ongoing 	The amount of available housing in both Swan Hill and Robinvale is of concern. A housing strategy is complete for Robinvale. An action plan has been developed and some actions commenced. Officers are working with a range of government agencies to assist in investment. A Planning permit has been issued for the subdivision of land to build houses in Ronald Street Robinvale. Subdivision works have commenced. Tender for building 8 houses has been awarded.
	1.6.2 Facilitate combined public and private sector investment to diversify housing stock.	Completed/ongoing 	Officers have been liaising with owners of land ready for development to assist in progressing development - both in Swan Hill and Robinvale. Advocacy is underway with the state government to ensure diversity in housing types is achieved across the municipality. Further stages of development at Tower Hill are expected. Enquiry level for the development of the South West Development Precinct is high.
2.1 Encourage the growth of agriculture through appropriate advocacy and strategic planning.	2.1.1 Advocate for improved transport links.	Complete 	Central Murray Regional Transport Strategy adopted.
	2.1.2 Review the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) to ensure the growth of agriculture is supported.	Completed/ongoing 	Review of MSS is complete. Amendment C73 includes the implementation of the commendations within the Rural Land Use Strategy, which is used to protect agriculture. Amendment C73 has been authorised by the Minister subject to conditions. Exhibition period for C73 has ended. Received 15 submissions. Panel hearing was 19 November 2019. Council adopted the amendment on 17 March 2020. Amendment is sent to the minister for approval. 09/03/2021 - still awaiting on the Minister's approval.
	2.1.3 Implement the Rural Land Use Strategy.	In progress 	Will be implemented as part of Amendment C73 excluding the Rural Living Zone areas.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
2.2 Investigate opportunities for Agricultural businesses to establish new enterprises.	2.2.1 Engage with local industry to identify opportunities, for example clean energy on farms.	Complete 	Working with OLAM to establish telecommunications towers in Wemen and Annuello, and looking at possibility of point-to-point laser technology. Wemen and Bannerton solar farms operating on land leased from farmers. Started the scoping of the Environmental Upgrade Finance project. Working with Mildura Innovation Centre on Hydrogen plant.
	2.2.2 Investigate opportunities for agri-tourism products and experiences e.g. paddock to plate, farm stays.	Completed/ongoing 	Initial audit of Farm Gates between Robinvale and Swan Hill has been undertaken. Next stage is to develop product / experiences based on seasonality and product type and location. Audit to be undertaken in other outlying areas and stage the implementation.
2.3 Encourage organisations to joint tender for works and services.	2.3.1 Investigate, and where possible implement, shared contracts and services with the region's Councils.	Completed/ongoing 	Ongoing discussion and liaison via Loddon Mallee Procurement Excellent Network. Council has recently engaged with 6 other Councils for new procurement contracts. Council are currently participating in a joint Power Purchase Agreement with 47 other Councils. Council has made all Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) contracts available to staff as an alternative to Council's own tender procurement process.
	2.3.2 Conduct workshops and provide advice to local business and tenderers to improve their tendering processes.	Completed/ongoing 	Procurement Policy reviewed and adopted at December 2019 Council Meeting. Several sessions on a range of topics have been conducted by EDU with local businesses. How to do business with Council information sessions held in June 2019. Vendor Panel will make it easier for businesses to quote and tender for Council works and works from all other Vendor Panel members.
2.4 Actively pursue opportunities for regionally focused infrastructure.	2.4.1 Advocate for additional and upgraded infrastructure that will improve efficiency of local businesses e.g. rail freight.	Completed/ongoing 	Council maintains an active role in the Victorian Rail Freight Alliance and is the coordinating member of the Central Murray Regional Transport Forum. Council signed the RFA petition calling for the completion of the Murray Basin Rail Project.
	2.4.2 Advocate for adequate and alternative utilities supplies.	In progress 	Council continues to advocate to both state and federal governments and agencies about major infrastructure requirements for the municipality. Submissions are either made or supported in this regard

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
2.5 Investigate options for investment in renewable energy technologies for the municipality.	2.5.1 Complete and adopt a study.	Completed/ongoing 	The Social Access Solar Garden Project led by the Institute of Sustainable Futures is now complete. However more work is required on site selection and the business model SHRCC was interested in testing was not adequately tested through the project. No further investigation has taken place since November 2018. Opportunities for landholders and businesses do exist however through the Mallee Sun Solar Bulk Buy to lower energy costs.
	2.5.2 Facilitate renewable energy projects.	In planning 	Meetings have been held with State and Federal politicians to raise awareness of the need to fund a network upgrade to allow more solar energy to enter the grid and be used in Melbourne and parts of the state and interstate.
2.6 Encourage and assist existing business to pursue value adding to their industry.	2.6.1 Undertake forums and discussions with industry to understand opportunities.	Completed/ongoing 	The Connect U program has included the manufacturing industry on the website/portal. This portal has been established as an alternative to setting up a committee. Manufacturing Expo organised for May 2021.
	2.6.2 Complete an analysis of relevant industry data.	Completed/ongoing 	Data recorded and analysed after each business visit.
	2.6.3 Identify and prioritise government grant applications.	Completed/ongoing 	Ongoing Applied for and received the following grants: Federal Government Drought Funding – Round 1 Successful Federal Government Drought Funding – Round 2 Successful Applied for the following grants: Murray Darling Basin Economic Development Fund (pending) Regional Airports Program Successful Victorian Camping Grants (For Robinvale , Swan Hill and Lake Boga) Successful Agrilinks: Upgrade to Winlaton Road Successful
	2.6.4 Develop business prospectus.	In planning 	Refer to comment 1.1.4

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
2.7 Improve the commercial position of the Pioneer Settlement.	2.7.1 Implement the Day Product Review.	Complete 	Works at LMI, Pyap, Towninnie and Iron House now complete.
	2.7.2 Review the promotion plan.	Complete 	Plan presented to Council Assembly in June 2018. Plan now in place for 2018-19 financial year onwards.
	2.7.3 Enhance the Heartbeat of the Murray night time product by improving operational effectiveness and adding additional elements to the visitor experience.	Complete 	New evening soundscapes implemented enhancing the walk to and from the Paragon. Long term plan for new entry building will include the 'Heartbeat holding area'.
2.8 Utilise Swan Hill Incorporated, market and promote the region as a place to live, work and invest.	2.8.1 Continue agreement with Swan Hill Incorporated.	Complete 	A Special Rate for marketing and business development programs in the Swan Hill region was declared at the April 2019 Council Meeting. The agreement between Council and Swan Hill Inc. was adopted by Council at the September Council Meeting. Working in conjunction with Swan Hill inc for marketing and promotion campaigns

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
3.1 Assist local businesses to up-skill and retrain their workforce.	3.1.1 Identify skills shortages and training gaps.	Completed/ongoing 	Connect U program being reviewed due to resignation of coordinator. Meeting with SuniTAFE and Murray Mallee LLEN to determine direction to happen in new year. SuniTAFE Swan Hill has a new program called Skills and Job Centre that will fulfil some of this object. Economic Development Coordinator (EDC) is on Committee
	3.1.2 Advocate for support for regional training opportunities.	In progress 	EDC attending meeting with SuniTAFE re Nursing training. Council has input in the Skills and Job Centre program. EDU staff working with TAFE and MMLLEN on 50 jobs in 50 days campaign.
	3.1.3 Create partnerships to deliver short courses and training.	Completed/ongoing 	Training for job readiness delivered through Connect U. Business training in conjunction with Australian Small Business Advisory Services around Digital Solutions.
3.2 Promote the benefits of the region as a place to live, work and invest.	3.2.1 Participate in regional expos.	Completed/ongoing 	Attendance at Country Tennis Week in Albury to showcase region. Organising Manufacturers expo in May 2021. Phase 2 Dream Swan Hill commenced.
	3.2.2 Support regional promotion of the municipality.	Completed/ongoing 	Council signed new Memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Murray Regional Tourism Board in August 2017 and continues partnership with Swan Hill Inc to leverage and collaborate on regional promotional opportunities. Dream Swan Hill campaign launched in October 2019 and ramping up in 2020
	3.2.3 Advertised all job vacancies with a link to a website that outlines regional information.	Completed 	Job advertisements contain links to the New Residents Guide and Discover Swan Hill sections on Council's website.
	3.2.4 Develop New Residents Guide.	Completed 	Launched in September 2017. Media release published in The Guardian on 27/08/17. Guides available for Swan Hill and Robinvale, printed and online and updated when needed. Swan Hill guide updated, Robinvale to be updated after photo shoot completed
3.3 Implement the Workforce Development Strategy.	3.3.1 Complete a project to quantify labour force data from within the municipality, with a particular focus on agricultural sector.	Completed/ongoing 	Constant monitoring via Agribusiness committee and industry visits. SunRise 21 has completed a report on growth in horticulture which will allow extrapolation of data re employment. Broadacre report due October 2020. December 2020: Broadacre report draft received and being reviewed.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
3.4 Encourage the development of appropriate accommodation for various workforces.	3.4.1 Review the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and Planning Scheme to ensure diverse housing and land is available.	In progress 	Review of MSS is complete. Diverse housing and land availability was considered during this review. Additional land was not required due to the approval of the C58 Amendment: South West Development. Continuing to review rural living land supply, this will form part of the Residential Land Strategy that is currently underway.
	3.4.2 Investigate opportunities for improved public transport.	Completed/ongoing 	Continued support and involvement in Mallee Local Transport Forum.
	3.4.3 Investigate alternative ways to provide accommodation.	Completed/ongoing 	Robinvale Housing Strategy and Population Determination completed and implementation planned. Applied for grant to assist with compliance and development. Talking to employers and investors to encourage investment. Council is in the process of subdividing Ronald Street Robinvale and continues with Stage 12 development of Tower Hill. Working with Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to develop accommodation options. Several accommodation projects being supported and grants applied for.
3.5 Improve the employability skills of the long term unemployed and unskilled in Robinvale and district.	3.5.1 Continue to facilitate the Robinvale Employment Network project.	Completed 	Council no longer facilitates the Robinvale Employment Network project.
4.1 Review of the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS).	4.1.1 Revise Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and refer back to the Minister for approval.	Completed 	MSS has been re-written removing the need for a review in 2018.
4.2 Identify and zone appropriate land for future development.	4.2.1 Identified land through strategic work program.	Completed/ongoing 	Rural living land has been identified in the Rural Land Use Strategy to be rezoned. The Minister for Planning requested that the Rural Living Zone areas be taken out of Amendment C73. A further review of the Rural Residential land supply of the municipality will be undertaken to justify rural living re-zonings. Residential Land Strategy is underway.
	4.2.2 Rezone land as approved by Council.	In progress 	Rural Living land has been identified in the Rural Land Use Strategy to be rezoned. A further rural residential review will be undertaken to justify any rezoning of land to Rural Living Zone. Prepare a Residential Land Strategy that identifies and recommends rural residential and rural living development opportunities. The Residential Land Strategy is underway. A draft of the strategy is scheduled to be delivered early in the next financial year.
	4.2.3. Prepare a Settlement Strategy that identifies and recommends rural residential and rural living development opportunities (included as part of 19/20 review)	In progress 	A brief has been completed and approved by the State Government. Once a consultant is selected work is expected to commence in August 2020.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
4.3 Investigate and develop options for de-watered farming land.	4.3.1 Complete audit of areas with de-watered land.	Complete 	An audit was completed and further strategic work is to be undertaken.
	4.3.2 Develop and implement strategy to address issues.	In planning 	Further strategic work to be undertaken.
4.4 Review of the availability and suitability of industrial land in Swan Hill and Robinvale.	4.4.1 Complete an Industrial Zones Strategy.	Complete 	The review has been completed and adopted by Council.
	4.4.2 Amend planning scheme as appropriate.	Complete 	No amendment required as a result of the strategy.
4.5 Review Small towns for further housing development.	4.5.1 Develop and implement Small Town Strategy.	In progress 	Residential Land Review strategy is underway. A draft of the strategy is scheduled to be delivered early in the next financial year.





Key results area Community Enrichment







“We will provide a range of services to individuals and to the broader community that assist all in our community to live healthy, fulfilling lives. We will embrace our role as a regional centre by providing a range of cultural opportunities ”






We will:







1. Help all people to find a place in our community.
2. Provide services and support initiatives that create a healthy and safe community.
3. Develop a community with a sense of pride and responsibility/ownership that strives to achieve its aspirations.










What have we done







STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
5.1 Review and implement the Aboriginal Partnership Plan.	5.1.1 Undertake initiatives with the intent to work toward developing a Registered Aboriginal Party.	In progress 	<p>Council continues to support the development of the Wandarrah Action Committee - WAC has completed a review of its Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct, Membership policy and nomination forms and is now keen to work towards the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan.</p> <p>Council has enhanced its engagement with the Aboriginal community through the development of Our Place. COVID-19 has impacted on how Council undertakes its meetings and community consultation with the local Aboriginal community however.</p> <p>The Aboriginal Liaison Officer continues to assist to develop Our Place - on a needs base. (Identifying an Aboriginal language name and business model remain the key focus). New Aboriginal Liaison Officer appointed. Council has agreed to focus on the development of a RAP and the APP is coming to an end and will be reviewed in terms of progressing or otherwise.</p>
5.2 Investigate opportunities to develop Aboriginal leadership capabilities.	5.2.1 Investigate leadership opportunities e.g. scholarship, grants, host a forum with young people and local service providers.	Completed/ ongoing 	<p>Koori Youth Council of Victoria held their Blackout event in Swan Hill in June 2017, and was targeted at engaging young Aboriginal community members. Around 90 attended on the day. Koori traineeship in Business Administration set up in July 2017. Koori scholarships advertised in 2019 with no applications received. Council to look at other options when there are no applicants, such as commencing a Koori trainee position. Scholarship program in 2020 on hold due to COVID-19.</p>






STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
5.3 Establish and maintain partnership with organisations that support Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.	5.3.1 Participate in the Settlement Services Group to provide support to new arrivals through adapting how services are provided.	Completed/ongoing 	Council is represented on local refugee groups, including attendance at forums, consultations with Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council and other groups. Regular updates to refugee groups on Council services, guidance and assistance is provided.
	5.3.2 Assist with the delivery of multi-cultural events.	Completed/ongoing 	Annual Swan Hill Harmony Day community celebrations take place (cancelled in 2020 due to Covid-19). The library meeting room is used weekly by a volunteer community group to run English conversation sessions for migrant women.
	5.3.3 Review of service access plans to ensure inclusion.	Complete 	Plans reviewed and adopted in December 2017. Quarterly reports on achievements to be presented to Councillor Assembly, with six-monthly reports to Council Meeting.
	5.3.4 Investigate and advocate for ways of skilled people attaining permanent residency (included as part of 18/19 review).	In Progress 	Council is a partner in the Try Test and Learn program, a Federal initiative auspiced by the Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council to relocate underemployed and unemployed refugees from metropolitan areas to regional Victoria. Three families have been relocated to Mildura with three additional families pending. Council is being updated on the status of DAMA. Letter advocating for safe haven enterprise visa to obtain permanent residency to Department of Immigration Council is reviewing its previous decision on the establishment of a DAMA and a Council decision will direct future actions.
5.4 Develop and implement Disability Action Plan.	5.4.1 Adopt the plan.	Complete 	Adopted at December 2017 Council Meeting.
	5.4.2 Implement the actions within timelines.	Complete 	The Community Access and Inclusion Strategy (CAIS) and its implementation plan was adopted by Council at the December 2017 meeting. The Community Access and Inclusion Strategy (CAIS) have been integrated into Council's core business. The Rural Access Officers role ceased at 31 December 2019. Council no longer receives external funding for this program. Infrastructure will be inclusive of all abilities as a way of doing things. This was recently exemplified by the Swan hill Riverside Park adventure playground - all abilities status.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
5.5 Implement actions from the Youth Strategy 2015-19.	5.5.1 Review make up and role of Youth Council.	Complete 	A review of the make up and role of Youth Council was undertaken by Youth Council and discussed at Council Assembly in July and September 2017.
	5.5.2 Implement actions in the Youth Strategy within budget and timelines.	Completed/ongoing 	2017-2018 Annual Operational Plan prepared and actions for 2017-18 were implemented. 2018-19 Operational Plan prepared and actions being implemented. Operational plan was developed for 2019-2020 and is being implemented.
	5.5.3 Improve partnerships and relationships with other youth services.	Completed/ongoing 	Youth Support Program staff record all activities undertaken on an annual reporting / evaluation template in chronological order that is cross referenced with the 2018-19 Annual Operational Plan. All events are evaluated.
	5.5.4 Hold youth specific events.	Completed/ongoing 	Youth Support Program staff record all activities undertaken on an annual reporting / evaluation template in chronological order that is cross referenced with the 2018-19 Annual Operational Plan. Events held include Youth Week Leadership Camp, Youth Ball, and Empower Project has commenced.
	5.5.5 Review Youth Strategy (included as part of 18/19 review).	Complete 	Local Logic Place has been appointed to conduct the new Youth Strategy 2020-2025. New Strategy complete and adopted by council June 2020.






STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
5.6 Strengthen our connection with youth.	5.6.1 Review the structure of the Youth Council with young people.	Complete 	A review of the make up and role of Youth Council was undertaken by Youth Council and discussed at Council Assembly in July and September 2017.
	5.6.2 Deliver a responsive and relevant program of Youth Services.	Completed/ongoing 	Youth Support Program staff record all activities undertaken on an annual reporting / evaluation template in chronological order that is cross referenced with the 2019-2020 Annual Operational Plan.
	5.6.3 Deliver the actions within the Youth Strategy.	In progress 	Events held include Youth Week Leadership Camp, Youth Ball, and Empower Project has commenced. Up Skilling and leadership opportunities have been delivered to young people.
	5.6.4 Develop work placement and work experience programs.	Completed/ongoing 	2019 - 6 Scholarship places advertised and 5 were awarded into the following workgroups: Engineering, Economic Development x 2, Youth Inc, and Depot.
	5.6.5 Implement the Robinvale Employment Program in accordance with the funding agreement.	Complete 	Council has exited out of the Robinvale Employment Network program.
	5.6.6 Maintain and develop our partnerships with youth agencies.	Completed/ongoing 	Youth Affairs Council Victoria (YACVic) Rural Officer is co-located at Youth Inc. Youth Support Program staff attend relevant network meetings including Southern Mallee Sub Regional Group, Child Youth and Family Network, Victorian Rural Youth Services, and Swan Hill College Wellbeing Team. Empower Project has started and will continue over four years.




STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
5.7 Develop and implement Cultural Services Plan.	5.7.1 Develop and adopt a plan.	Complete 	The Creative Strategy was adopted by Council at the October 2018 Council meeting.
	5.7.2 Implement initiatives within timeframes and subject to adequate resourcing.	Completed/ongoing 	Sept 2019 The Library, Art Gallery and Performing Arts programs have delivered a range of programs, activities and exhibitions.
6.1 Review and implement actions within the Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.	6.1.1 Review the Plan, including actions, to address violence against women.	Complete 	Adopted at the October 2017 Council Meeting. An annual operational action plan for quarterly reporting has been developed.
	6.1.2 Report on status of actions biannually.	Completed/ongoing 	Reporting undertaken bi-annually, beginning in February 2018. Ongoing: No formal reporting is required linked to funding, but reports to key representative groups are provided.
6.2 Strategically position Council's ongoing role regarding the community-based aged care reforms.	6.2.1 Produce an options paper on integration of Commonwealth Home Support Program to National Standards.	Complete 	Options paper completed - investigation of findings and responses to be developed.
	6.2.2 Ascertain how HACC/Commonwealth Home Support Program services can be delivered within funding levels.	In progress 	In progress, due to uncertainty and lack of definitive information from the Commonwealth. Awaiting Commonwealth determination of Royal Commission recommendations. Councillors briefed on Royal Commission outcomes and likely next steps June 2021. Development of advocacy plan for this region a new priority.
	6.2.3 Develop positive Aging Plan.	Not started 	No longer a required, compliance with legislation is now incorporated as part of normal service planning.
6.3 Review and determine Council's role in early years and child care services.	6.3.1 Review early years services.	Complete 	Local Logic Place was the consultant appointed to undertake the Municipal Early - Middle Years Plan (MEMYP) in August 2019. One of the objectives of this project was to define Council's role and investment in early - middle years services.
	6.3.2 Produce a report on outcomes and provide recommendations.	Complete 	Local Logic Place provided an overview of MEMYP consultation at Council Assembly on 26th November 2019. A draft MEMYP was presented at Council Meeting on 18th February 2020 where it was approved to be circulated for public comment for three weeks. The period for public comment has now passed and the MEMYP was presented and adopted at the April Council Meeting 2020.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
6.3 Review and determine Council's role in early years and child care services (continued).	6.3.3 Develop an Early Years Plan (EYP).	Completed 	The engagement commenced in August 2019 and was completed in February 2020. Council's first Municipal Early to Middle Years Plan was adopted at the April 2020 Council Meeting.
	6.3.4 Implement EYP actions within timeframes and resources.	In Progress 	SHRCC adopted the Municipal Early-Middle Years Plan (2020-2029) in April 2020. An Annual Operational Plan has been developed for implementation in 2020/2021. Activities undertaken are recorded on an annual reporting / evaluation template.
6.4 Improve personal and community safety by working with partners on community safety issues.	6.4.1 Promote awareness of the Community Charter for the Prevention of Violence against Women.	Completed/ongoing 	Council participated in the '16 Days of Action' facilitated by the State, and undertook Orange events that were promoted on social media and in the press. Council will be undertaking a gender equity audit and assessing White Ribbon compliance during 2018-19. June 2019: gender equity audit delayed due to lack of resources, but with assistance of Women's Health Loddon Mallee, will take place during 2019-2020. Council will be required to develop a Gender Equity Action Plan (GEAP) during 2020-21, and preliminary work began by engaging with local and state-wide groups during April-May 2020.
	6.4.2 Implement the requirements of Child Safety Standards.	Completed 	Revised Child Safe Standards Policy presented for adoption at the December 2017 Council meeting. Ongoing actions to remain compliant will continue. DHHS conducted an audit of Child Safe Standards in June 2018, and determined Council is compliant.
	6.4.3 Expand and continue CCTV operation.	In progress 	Requirements and opportunities are monitored and investigated with relevant stakeholders.
	6.4.4 Enforce local laws and develop a MOU with Victoria Police to support additional community crime prevention measures.	Completed/ongoing 	Council has attended Police call out sessions to educate and update Officers on the new Local Law No.2 2017 and provided resources in Robinvale and Swan Hill. Council and Police MoU has been updated.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
6.5 Plan for the future provision of sport and recreation facilities and services.	6.5.1 Support the development of sport and recreation clubs across the municipality.	Completed/ongoing 	Swan Hill Recreation Reserves Master Plan was endorsed at the Council meeting in May 2018. A Recreation Implementation Plan was developed and was endorsed by Council on 19 March 2019. Ongoing support is provided via Council's Community Grants Programs. COVID-19 support packages have been provided and assistance with return to play procedures including deferring payment user group annual fee for winter period.
	6.5.2 Complete and implement the Recreation Reserve Master Plan.	In progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Facility / clubrooms for the Swan Hill Soccer Club - Out for tender • Lake Boga Netball Change room - 50% construction completed • Swan Hill Leisure Centre –Preparing tender documentation • Lake Boga Equestrian - Completed • Swan Hill Stadium Renovation - Completed • Robinvale Netball Court - Completed • Robinvale Netball Change room - 10% construction completed • Manangatang Pool upgrades - Completed • Robinvale Leisure Centre - detailed designs underway • Woorinen Netball Courts - preparing tender documentation • Robinvale Football Change room - RFQ designs • Tyntynder Football Netball Club - New electronic scoreboard grant submitted to SRV • Showgrounds show society facilities upgrade - masterplan
6.6 Expand library services in Robinvale and review the delivery of library services in our small communities.	6.6.1 Scope, fund and complete Robinvale Library Project within limitations.	Completed 	The library opened to the community on 18 January 2021. Review of library services in our smaller communities was completed in 2018. A Living Libraries Infrastructure funding application has been submitted to assist with the purchase of a smaller library vehicle to replace the current articulated mobile library so a more flexible outreach library services can be delivered to our small communities.
	6.6.2 Develop an effective partnership arrangement with Robinvale College.	Completed 	June 2018: Draft Community Joint Use Agreement (CJUA) developed. June 2019: the joint use agreement with the Education Department is nearly completed, and initial concept drawings and schematics are agreed by all parties. The next piece of work is to finalise the operational needs of the facility. Building works commenced in February 2020 with works to be completed in late 2020 and opening in early 2021. At 30 June 2020, the building was on schedule, within budget and set for an October 2020 practical completion, allowing for planning the January 2021 opening. Library open and in operation.
	6.6.3 Confirm that the new library is meeting the Robinvale community's needs.	In planning 	This can only be completed after the library opens which is expected to be in early 2021. Community consultation to determine the Robinvale community's needs was completed in late 2018 to determine the community's needs and incorporate these in the library design.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
6.7 Investigate the need for an off leash dog park.	6.7.1 Survey community needs for off-leash dog park.	Complete 	Survey completed in May 2017. The survey results were taken to Council in November 2017 and resulted in Council adopting to trial four off leash areas for two years. At the half way point of the trial, a survey was completed to assess how the community thought that the trial was working. The survey was completed online in late January 2019.
	6.7.2 Develop a project scope if the community need is identified.	Completed/ongoing 	<p>In November 2017, Council adopted to trial four off leash areas for two years. Signage, rubbish bins, dog waste dispensers/bags were installed in all areas. Council conducted a media campaign to educate dog and non-dog owners about the use of these areas. Over the two year trial, quarterly assessments will be undertaken to gauge use, compliance and complaints. The community had the opportunity to provide feedback through a survey at the half way point of the trial that was made available through Council's website and Facebook. 103 responses were received from the community. At the September Council meeting Council resolved to cease the trial and continue only with one off leash area. Council also resolved to budget in the future for off leash parks in Robinvale and Swan Hill.</p> <p>Council received funding from DEWLP in August 2020 of \$80,000 to complete an off-leash dog area in Swan Hill. The funding agreement required \$8,000 contribution from Council in 2020/21 budget. Council also agreed to put in a further \$70,000 in 2021/22 budget to ensure the project can be adequately fenced and landscaped. The off-leash dog park plans were taken out to community consultation again in November 2020. The community consultation was held as an online forum due to COVID-19 restrictions. Construction for the off-leash dog park is expected to begin in March and is expected to be completed by October 2021. The minister will attend in November 2021 to officially open the park.</p>

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
7.1 Support the capacity of communities to self-manage and self-regulate.	7.1.1 Review and renew Community plans as appropriate.	Completed/ongoing 	Robinvale Plan - reviewed and updated Aug 2017 Lake Boga - Plan-reviewed and updated Nov 2017 Swan Hill - No review needed, Council does not want a Swan Hill Community Plan Piangil - reviewed 2018 Woorinen - review completed 2018 Nyah - reviewed 2018 Boundary Bend - review complete Feb 2020 Beverford - working to re establishing the group, possibility of joining with Speewa and Tyntynder focus for 2020 Ultima - completed 2017 Manangatang - review complete 2018 Wemen - review complete 2018
	7.1.2 Implement ways to encourage all communities to actively participate in the community grants program.	Completed/ongoing 	All communities are encouraged via email and by Council representatives at Town Representative Group (TRG) meetings to apply for the community grants. TRG are encouraged to distribute the grant info throughout their community and networks encouraging other local community groups to be involved.
	7.1.3 Advocate on behalf of our communities for priority issues and opportunities.	Completed/ongoing 	Continue to work with the TRG to prioritise their projects, updating implementation plans on a yearly basis to reflect their hopes and aspirations. The "Vibrant Villages" funding application was successful, \$500K from RDV. Tenders have been received and are currently being assessed. These plans will guide Council and the TRG for funding applications and provide a structure 5 year plan.
	7.1.4 Sponsor Loddon Murray Community Leadership Program.	Completed/ongoing 	Support is provided on an annual basis, subject to the Annual Budget process.
7.2 Review each of our Community Plans.	7.2.1 Develop and publish new Community Plans.	Completed/ongoing 	Robinvale Plan-reviewed and updated Aug 2017 Lake Boga-Plan-reviewed and updated Nov 2017 Swan Hill - No review needed, Council does not want a SHCP Piangil - reviewed 2018 Woorinen - review completed 2018 Nyah - review completed 2018 Boundary Bend - review complete 2018 Beverford - working to re establishing the group, possibility of joining with Speewa and Tyntynder Ultima completed 2017 Manangatang - review complete 2018 Wemen - review complete 2018. In conjunction to the reviews, each community plan has been vital in the development of the Vibrant Villages milk bar plans. This has provided Council with a mini review of priorities for each of the towns, not including Wemen and Robinvale. The Milk Bar plans will be reviewed annually, keeping priorities up to date. Community groups are currently updating their action plans.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
7.3 Plan for the development of the Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery precinct.	7.3.1 Determine the long-term site for Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery.	Complete 	Reviewing two potential sites as a result of public concerns and a council resolution. Designs and options are being investigated.
	7.3.2 Prepare final Gallery designs for approval and costed.	Complete 	Sept 2019 Council endorsed Option 1 concept for further design work by architects. Alternative designs on alternative sites are due for Council decisions early in the 2020-21 period. Alternative designs on alternative sites were considered by Council in July and detailed designs for the Pioneer Settlement site have begun. Final plans being used for tender preparation.
	7.3.3 Secure funding and complete the project.	In progress 	Funding has been secured. Project completion dependant on external factors including Pioneer Settlement Heritage Victoria status.






Key results area Infrastructure







“We will provide and maintain publicly accessible infrastructure that is appropriate for the community’s needs in the most effective and efficient manner possible.”







We will have:






1. Infrastructure that appropriately services community needs.
2. Infrastructure that is provided and appropriately maintained in accordance with agreed
3. standards.
4. A strong focus on asset management systems and planning.








What have we done








STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
8.1 Manage Council's roads and road related infrastructure in line with the Road Management Plan.	8.1.1 Complete 100% of inspections outlined in Road Management Plan (RMP) by identified time frames.	Completed/ongoing 	New Road Management Plan (RMP) commenced on 1 July 2017. Council Officers are meeting all timeframes set out in the RMP which was updated in November 2019.
	8.1.2 Ensure 100% defects are repaired in line with RMP timeframes	In progress 	All defect repair timeframes are being met in accordance with RMP. An internal 'Safety Action Plan' process has been implemented and shall be used in instances where appropriate warning of a defect is required until a suitable repair or treatment can be completed.
8.2 Advocate for funding for an active trail between Lake Boga and Swan Hill.	8.2.1 Complete project scope and plan to enable future funding submission	In progress 	Preliminary work only undertaken—significant scoping needs to be undertaken before grants could be applied for—eg detailed design, Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP), tree assessment, formal Vic Track Approval.






STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
8.3 Advocate for improved transport routes across the region.	8.3.1 Work with the Central Murray Regional Transport Forum (CMRTF) to identify regional priority projects.	Complete 	Strategy endorsed by Council in September 2018.
	8.3.2 Advocate with CMRTF for funding for identified projects.	In progress 	Advocacy brochures are being finalised to assist in sourcing funding. The projects also have been incorporated in the draft Murray Valley Hwy and Calder Hwy transport corridor strategies developed by the Department of Transport
	8.3.3 Advocate with the Rail Freight Alliance for funding for suitable rail projects.	In progress 	Ongoing as opportunities arise.
	8.3.4 Advocate for the full implementation of the Murray Basin Rail Project.	In progress 	Letters have been written to relevant Ministers and the CEO has spoken with the media.
8.4 Pursue funding for a levee bank at Robinvale.	8.4.1 Complete detailed design.	Complete 	Robinvale Levee Upgrade and Associated drainage works tender closed on Thursday 28 May 2020, good number of response received. Shortlisted tenders evaluation meeting was held on 23 June 2020 and clarification response received on 26 June. Contractor assigned for the Levee construction works. Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) approved by Aboriginal Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning provided Council planning department "No Objection" to issue a planning permit. Out of final 3 License Approval to work on Parks Victoria land Crown Allotment 75, 76 and 77 working license for CA 77 was obtained in Dec 2020 and remaining licenses are expected to be obtained by Jan 21. Contract awarded and construction work expected to start from Feb 2021. Mar 2021 - Still waiting for the final signed copy from Parks Vic for site mobilisation. Contractor preparing for site mobilisation after Easter. Levee construction work commenced and on schedule to complete construction works by 30 Aug 21.
	8.4.2 Lodge funding application.	Complete 	Council secured \$710,000 through the 2016-17 Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme (NDRGS) and first instalment of \$355,000 received. Council has applied for additional funding through Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DEWLP), which was successful. Project is at planning permit stage.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
8.5 Review the Swan Hill Active Transport Strategy.	8.5.1 Review the Strategy.	In planning 	The Active Transport Strategy (ATS) is part of the Missing Links Strategy. To support the construction of Anniversary Drive path in Robinvale, this has received funding through the LCIF.
	8.5.2 Adopt the reviewed Strategy.	Complete 	The Missing Links Strategy has been adopted by Council.
8.6 Review the way that we procure and maintain our Infrastructure.	8.6.1 Continuously improve the efficiency of our works and maintenance crew.	In progress 	Tablet computers are progressively being rolled out to Works teams. These enable staff to record daily completion of tasks.
	8.6.2 Identify opportunities to rationalise assets and facilities that do not have an identified service need.	In progress 	Completed and adopted Public Convenience Facilities Strategy and Urban Trees management Plan. Asset rationalisation strategy will be developed following asset management plan development. Asset Disposal policy adopted in September.
	8.6.3 Conduct a review of public facilities including public toilets (included as part of 18/19 review).	Completed/ongoing 	The Public Convenience Strategy was adopted June 2020.
8.7 Maximise community benefits from the opportunities presented at the Chisholm Motor Sports Complex.	8.7.1 Continue to work with Community Groups of Chisholm Motor Sports complex.	Completed/ongoing 	CRC have reviewed masterplan and developed an implementation plan 2019/20 which will be presented to Council in April for adoption. External funding was applied for lighting and fencing (unsuccessful).

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
9.1 Implement Swan Hill and Robinvale Riverfront Masterplan.	9.1.1 Identify and successfully apply for funding opportunities.	Completed/ongoing 	In December 2019 SHRCC was successful in obtaining \$260k from the PSIF funding stream to Light Up Riverside Park. Project is progressing as planned, with path construction and light tender awarded to preferred contractor. Robinvale Riverfront Masterplan was been awarded to GSA, AHHA assessment has been completed and community engagement material is being finalised, currently finalising engagement dates taking into account COVID restrictions. Please note projects were delayed due to COVID restrictions in 2020 and 2021.
	9.1.2 Ensure projects complete in accordance with timelines.	In progress 	Active Play Precinct and Skate Park has been completed at Swan Hill Riverside Park.
	9.1.3 Identify and encourage private sector investment.	In progress 	Commercial Development Strategy completed. Currently pursuing land acquisition opportunities.
9.2 Ensure developers comply with the Infrastructure Design Manual where relevant to local standards.	9.2.1 Improve internal and external stakeholders understanding of the Infrastructure Design Manual.	Completed/ongoing 	Ongoing communication with developers and Council's Planning Department through pre-application meetings and post-application Engineering referrals to Planning. Improved engineering process by organising pre-planning permit application meetings with developers to conceptually approve drainage and other infrastructure provisions.
	9.2.2 Develop local policy position in areas where the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) can be varied.	In planning 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing discussions and consultation with key stakeholders including; IDM Author, Design and Development Consultants and Council Staff. 2. A report was presented to Council meeting in this regard. 3. Old policy named Footpath on Road Reserve has been cancelled and replaced by the IDM requirement. 4. It was recommended that the current IDM is to be reviewed over time to Councils particular needs. <p>Recently Council requested some improvement in IDM related to road and footpath classification based on traffic volume which was successful.</p>

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
9.3 Upgrade Swan Hill Livestock Selling Complex.	9.3.1 Implement upgrade project.	Complete 	Completed September 2019.
	9.3.2 Identify funding opportunities for future stages.	Complete 	Funding identified and cattle loading ramp update completed.
9.4 Review the Road network and classify each road.	9.4.1 Complete a service review of the road network.	Complete 	Completed and incorporated in the Road Management Plan.
	9.4.2 Identify and pursue funding opportunities for upgrades.	Complete/ongoing 	<p>Round one grants have included: Lake Boga Ultima Road Reconstruction and Dead Horse Lane project design. The total contribution from the State Government to Swan Hill Rural City Council is \$700,000.</p> <p>Round two grants have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dead Horse Lane (construct 2.3km from Sea Lake Swan Hill Road to EOS). \$336,250 has been budgeted for in the 2019/20 financial year. • Kenley Road (widen 4.1m seal to 6.2m for approximately 4km starting from MVH) \$210,000 has been budgeted for in the 2019/20 financial year. • Lutzies Road Ext (resheet 1.2km and realign intersection onto Sea Lake Swan Hill Rd) \$81,550 has been budgeted for in the 2019/20 financial year <p>Council received \$1,200,000 in extra funds from the second round to complement SHRCC's budget.</p>
9.5 Plan and deliver Council's capital works program and Major Project Plan.	9.5.1 Minimise capital works and major project carry over from year to year.	In planning 	Work in progress.
	9.5.2 Complete Major Projects Plan review each year.	Complete/ongoing 	Major Projects Plan is reviewed annually in Nov/Dec.
	9.5.3 Minimise project budget overruns.	In progress 	Work in progress.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
10.1 Actively pursue opportunities from decommissioned irrigation infrastructure.	10.1.1 Work with Goulburn Murray Water to decommission channel number 9.	Complete 	Work on decommissioning is complete.
	10.1.2 Identify opportunities for land parcels taken over by Council.	In progress 	Initial discussions held with Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and Council. 10-Year Major Projects Plan includes funding for scoping, design and implementation. A list of property owners, easements and Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) intentions for each separate parcel of land has been prepared. Advice has been obtained on the process to acquire unused land with former channels from deceased estates. Concept plan and cost estimates on possible pathway(s) were discussed by ELT June 2020.
	10.1.3 Identify funding opportunities to upgrade newly available land.	In planning 	Concept plans are being prepared for discussion with Council.
10.2 Complete the Recreation Reserve Masterplan.	10.2.1 Adopt the Recreation Reserves Masterplan.	Complete 	Completed and endorsed at May 2018 Council meeting.
	10.2.2 Establish a long term operational maintenance program for Council managed reserves.	In planning 	Working through the Recreation Reserve Masterplan to identify key areas.
	10.2.3 Investigate funding options to implement actions within the Masterplan.	Complete 	Cricket practice nets at Robinvale Completed Cricket practice nets at Gurnett Oval Completed Robinvale Moto X Arena Cross Track Funding Variation Approved Showgrounds Change Room Upgrade Completed Stadium Renovation Swan Hill Completed New netball courts Nyah Recreation Reserve Complete Robinvale Netball Precinct Design Completed Aquatics Needs Analysis 2019/29 Completed Indoor Recreation Centres Development Plan Completed (Draft version)
	10.2.4 Review and update user agreements between Council and recreation reserve users groups.	In progress 	Council's User Group Agreements is currently under review - exploring best practice approach in regards to - Risk Management Plan, Covid 19, Risk Management Policy, Medical Emergency Plan, Insurance, Oval inspection report, Building inspection report and collate information.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
10.3 Review current use of council facilities.	10.3.1 Produce usage report, including analysis of non-Council facilities that provide similar services.	In progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways to better calculate accurate usage are being investigated. • The public Convenience Strategy utilised toilet paper usage to better gauge and rank usage to assist with decision making.
	10.3.2 Identify opportunities to rationalise Council assets.	In progress 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Asset Management Plans are being developed as assets are conditioned rated for valuation purposes. Asset management plans are to ISO55000 standard and include rationalisation discussion. 2. Toilet Strategy has been approved and a number of rationalisations have been identified 3. Multi-use options are considered for all new facilities. 4. Road network assessment has been conducted and revised network has gone out to public consultation as part of the RMP process. The review included significant classification changes amending the levels of service on some roads to reflect actual usage and removing roads that are not required for public use.
10.4 Plan and deliver assets for the current and future needs of our growing community and changing environment.	10.4.1 Implement an effective asset management system.	Completed/ongoing 	<p>Asset Policy has been reviewed to bring it into alignment with ISO55000 and includes a number of statements which consider the needs of the community</p> <p>Strategic Asset management in progress that creates an Asset Framework that will drive the asset systems. Demand drivers and trends are an important consideration in the SAMP and AMP's</p>
	10.4.2 Develop and update policies, strategies and registers.	In progress 	<p>Asset Management Plan adopted in December 2017.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Naming Policy and Procedure approved 2019 • Public Convenience Strategy - completed • Further discussions and development of policy being undertake to incorporate Recreation Reserve Agreements. • Asset Policy has been reviewed and bought into alignment with ISO55000 principles. Approved Feb 2021. • Road Management Plan 2021 and Register of Public Roads approved June 2021. <p>The following policies, plans and strategies are being finalised</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Asset Management Plan in progress in draft form being utilised internally. Awaiting unsealed road condition assessment for formal adoption • Parks and Open Space Asset Management Plan • Drainage Asset Management Plan in progress • Strategic Asset Management Plan In progress • Asset Data Dictionary - in progress
	10.4.3 Complete a centralised asset register.	In progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways to better calculate accurate usage are being investigated. • Asset Disposal Policy has been developed to ensure assets are removed from Asset registers on Disposal • Formal Asset handover process being developed with PMO • Authority is our central Asset Register. Processes are being developed to improve the Asset capture process from capital works and Asset registers are being tidied up as condition assessment happen.






Key results area Governance and Leadership








“We will represent the interests of our community, conduct our affairs openly, with integrity, reflecting the high levels of governance expected by our community. We will plan for the long term growth and development of our municipality by committing to a robust program of strategic planning.”







We will have:






1. Positive community engagement through appropriate and constructive consultation.
2. Effective and efficient utilisation of resources.
3. Effective partnerships and relationships with key stakeholders and staff.
4. Effective advocacy and strategic planning.









What have we done








STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
11.1 Develop Council's systems and processes to improve our customer service, efficiency and effectiveness of our operations	11.1.1 Undertake Council Services Review.	In progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff realignment occurred during November 2018. • Ongoing Aged Care Reform. • Family Day Care program re-auspiced from July 2019. • Multi-purpose building proposed as part of Our Place Development. • Digital transformation project underway with a focus on customer practices and services to achieve better customer service.
	11.1.2 Implement the new IT Strategy.	In progress 	Council has selected a consultant for the new ICT Strategy, this strategy should be completed by June 2021 with a new set of objectives and recommendations. The consultants have been engaged in the development of the new ICT Strategy for 6 weeks. Due to it's complexity and COVID restrictions the timelines have been extended. It is likely the project will be completed by the end of July.
	11.1.3 Implement Customer Service Strategy actions.	Completed/ongoing 	Ongoing.









STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
11.2 Use social media as a medium for community consultation and communication.	11.2.1 Introduce Facebook advertising.	Complete 	Facebook advertising is regularly used and posts are continuing to be used to consult and communicate with the public. A new Facebook page for the Swan Hill Big Green Shed was launched in June 2019.
	11.2.2 Increase the use of online survey tools.	Completed/ongoing 	Online surveys have been used as a community consultation tool for Council's - Communication and Engagement Strategy 2019-22 - 212 responses, Off-leash Dog Park - 103 responses, and Robinvale Community Library - 146 responses.
11.3 Establish new and alternative methods of consultation.	11.3.1 Research and report to council on contemporary consultation methods.	Complete 	A discussion paper has been developed and was presented to Council Assembly in October 2017.
	11.3.2 Investigate the use of multilingual publications.	In planning 	Included in Council's Community Engagement Guidelines.
	11.3.3 Increase the use of social media, online survey tools.	Complete 	Council has been increasing the use of social media for public information (Facebook), an online survey was used effectively for the consultation regarding the communication strategy in July 2018. This will continue to occur. Council are also investigating use of other social media platforms, like Twitter and Instagram.
	11.3.4 Increase the use of current and professional networks and contacts to canvass opinion and share information.	In planning 	Murray River Group of Councils CEOs continues to be a useful forum.
	11.3.5 Review Councils Communication strategy.	Complete 	A Communication Survey was completed in July 2018 with 212 responses from the community. New Communication and Engagement Strategy adopted by Council in December 2018.










STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
11.4 Champion a culture that values strong community engagement.	11.4.1 Include effective community engagement processes in all planning and project delivery plans.	Completed/ongoing 	As an organisation Council are increasing our commitment to engage with the community affected by our projects. Nyah Road reconstruction and line- marking are recent examples. An online survey was used to consult with the community regarding the recently adopted Communication and Engagement Strategy.
	11.4.2 Conduct training for staff.	In planning 	Council has committed to purchase a community engagement platform: The Hive in line with the new Local Government Act 2020.
	11.4.3 Implement a project management system.	In planning 	The workflow and policies and procedures are currently under review. Project Management Office Manager appointed and commenced early March.
11.5 Develop a strong positive message and image for Council and the region.	11.5.1 Publish two community newsletters a year.	Completed/ongoing 	Winter newsletters published and distributed in July 2019. Summer newsletter distributed 2020.
	11.5.2 Use Facebook advertising and social media to promote Council.	Complete 	Promotion continues through regular use of Council's Facebook page. A new Facebook page was created for the Swan Hill Big Green Shed was launched in June 2019.
	11.5.3 Use established connections/partnerships to promote a positive Council image.	Complete 	Council seek opportunities to reinforce the message that Council are here for the community through our media engagement and in our Mayoral Columns in local newspapers.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
12.1 Continually improve workplace safety and staff health and wellbeing.	12.1.1 Participate in MAV Workcover self-insurance scheme.	Complete 	Officially commenced in this scheme November 2017.
	12.1.2 Develop and implement an OH&S framework.	Completed/ongoing 	Initial audit has been completed. OHS Management plan adopted by ELT and OHS committee in August 2018. Worksafe occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS) audit in November 2019, 68% conformance. Remedial Action plan submitted and approved. February and May actions completed for desk Audit. OHS Framework and OHS Management Plan 2020-2022 endorsed by ELT and the OHS committee June 2020.
	12.1.3 Implement National Assessment Tool (NAT) auditing across the organisation.	Complete 	Auditing schedule adopted by ELT October 2017. Four internal audits completed to date.
	12.1.4 Test the Business Continuity Plan.	Complete 	Business Continuity Plan testing Completed November 2017 and November 2019.
	12.1.5 Review and develop Councils Risk Framework and Strategy.	Complete 	Council's Risk Management Framework adopted by Council in July 2019, Policy, and Risk Register have been reviewed. Council's Business Continuity Management Framework and plans have been reviewed and approved by ELT. Risk Management for Risk Owners training has commenced. Risk management roles and responsibilities have been included in induction training for all staff and risk management responsibility statements for position descriptions have been developed. Risk reporting to the Audit Committee continues.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
12.2 Review results of community satisfaction survey, submissions and community consultations to identify and respond to changes in service demand or expectations.	12.2.1 Participate in annual community satisfaction survey.	Completed/ongoing 	Community survey completed March 2019. Results presented to Council in August 2019
	12.2.2 Review, report and act as appropriate on survey results, formal submissions and specific consultations.	Completed/ongoing 	Community Satisfaction Survey results are analysed and reported to Council annually. Complete for 2017, 2018 and 2019.
12.3 Implement a Project Management System.	12.3.1 Review and improve current processes.	In progress 	The workflow and policies and procedures are currently under review. Project Management Office Manager appointed and commenced early March.
	12.3.2 Implement a centralised Project Management System utilised throughout the organisation.	In progress 	The workflow and policies and procedures are currently under review. Project Management Office Manager appointed and commenced early March.
12.4 Review council services for efficiency, effectiveness and quality.	12.4.1 Prioritise services for a detailed review.	In progress 	Staff realignment occurred during November 2018. Councils involvement in Family Day Care ceased on 30 June 2019. Ongoing review of Councils role in Aged Care.
	12.4.2 Identify relevant benchmarks for a service review.	In progress 	This objective is delivered incrementally as part of our continuous drive to improve efficiency.
	12.4.3 Implement an improvement plan.	In progress 	This objective is delivered incrementally as part of our continuous drive to improve efficiency. We have reviewed multiple service delivery areas including, Early Years (Plan developed), ITC strategy, Youth, Planning Scheme and Asset Management Plans.
	12.4.4 Implement the IT Strategy.	Completed/ongoing 	Council are continually reviewing and improving Council's external facing business processes, but with the new ICT Strategy soon to be developed Council are ensuring we do not start projects that may not be complimentary to the new strategy.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
13.1 Engage and partner with organisations, business and individuals to increase co-operation and avoid duplication of resources when common objectives are identified.	13.1.1 Conduct skills audit of community organisations.	In planning 	Work with community organisations to identify gaps.
	13.1.2 Identify areas in which to increase co-operation.	In progress 	Council has engaged and partnered with organisations and businesses, holding business breakfasts and training sessions.
	13.1.3 Form strategies and partnerships for key issues / projects.	Completed/ongoing 	Some examples include the Saleyards redevelopment, advocacy for the Swan Hill Bridge replacement, housing in Robinvale, and the Swan Hill hospital.
13.2 Encourage and support Council representatives to obtain positions on relevant boards that support council's activities, providing these duties do not conflict with Council responsibilities.	13.2.1 Identify Key Board positions.	Completed/ongoing 	Council has a number of staff on boards including the Swan Hill Hospital Board, Robinvale Hospital Board, the local school boards and community sporting group boards. Councillors sit on a variety of boards which is determined following Mayoral elections each November.
	13.2.2 Discuss Board position opportunities regularly at Councillor Assemblies and Management meetings.	In progress 	As opportunities arise these are discussed and relevant officers identified.
	13.2.3 Develop advocacy strategies.	Complete 	A number of advocacy strategies have been developed including Our River – Our Region, Our Hospital, Central Murray Region Central Transport Strategy, and Our Top Five Projects. These documents are used when advocating for strategic projects with government bodies.
	13.2.4 Train staff and Councillors on Governance responsibilities and industry based awareness.	Completed/ongoing 	Presentations given to Councillors on Conflict of Interest and Principal Conduct Officer provisions of Local Government Act in November 2017, and draft new Local Government Bill in February 2018. Audit of Returns of Interest conducted in January 2018. Presentation on return of Interest forms conducted in June 2018. Training session on Local Law No. 1 delivered to Councillors in May 2019. Review of Local Law No 1 was presented to Council Assembly in March 2020.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
13.3 Ensure regular dialogue with neighbouring municipalities and other stakeholders.	13.3.1 Schedule regular meetings with Murray River Shire, Balranald Shire and Murray River Group of Councils.	Completed/ongoing 	The CEO regularly attends Murray River Group of Councils meetings. Latest meeting was held in June 2019.
	13.3.2 Schedule meetings with State Government Representatives.	In progress 	Meeting held regularly with local members. Meetings held prior to recent elections. CEO and Councillors attend the National General Assembly in June each year.
13.4 Ensure we have appropriately skilled staff that are aligned to the organisational values of Council and are recognised accordingly.	13.4.1 Implement ongoing training and education program.	Completed/ongoing 	Training needs database developed post annual performance reviews in July each year and organisational training plan implemented. More than 4,500 hours of organisational training was provided to staff during the 2018-19 year, or 22 hours per EFT, this is due to additional online learning modules being assigned to staff.
	13.4.2 Recognise achievements in innovation and best practice, including through the staff awards.	Completed/ongoing 	Staff awards were held in August 2017, 2018 and 2019. Commenced a regular innovation section in the Staff Matters Newsletter. Two staff recognised in December 2017 for innovative Occupational Health and Safety practices. 2019 Staff Awards held August 2019.
	13.4.3 Pursue industry and professional recognition for staff.	Completed/ongoing 	2018 Councils Youth Support Co-ordinator was inducted into the Youth Affairs Council Victoria Hall of Fame. 2018 and 19 recognition in the Premiers Active April. Recognition in the Vic Health Healthy Workplaces Program for Smoking, Physical Activity and Mental Health and Wellbeing.
	13.4.4 Utilise management and leadership development programs.	Completed/ongoing 	The CEO, Directors and Managers were engaged in a leadership development program for 2017/18. Coordinators completed a Leadership Development program in 2017/18. Senior Accountant participating in LGFin Pro mentoring program.
	13.4.5 Increase cross-organisational awareness and resource sharing.	Completed/ongoing 	Staff short term vacancies filled internally in the first instance. Resource sharing occurs on an ongoing basis. Staff filling in across different work groups to up-skill.
	13.4.6 Invite Councillors to all staff recognition events.	Completed/ongoing 	Councillors attended Staff Recognition Awards 2017, 2018, 2019 and the Staff/Councillor Christmas event in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
13.5 Council to lead the conversation on Bridge placement with the community.	13.5.1 Represent councils views at stakeholder meeting.	In progress 	Council has requested a review of the heritage values of the Swan Hill bridge and has requested authorities review the location of a new bridge in light of the BPAC Engineers Australia Report. Councils views were shared with Transport for NSW during the community consultation process. The announcement of the McCallum Street option after comprehensive planning investigations and community consultation is a step towards a new bridge at Swan Hill.
	13.5.2 Conduct public engagement and awareness campaign.	In progress 	Council regularly issues media releases. The Swan Hill bridge is part of Councils state and federal advocacy strategy.
14.1 Improve effectiveness of Council's advocacy.	14.1.1 Identify the key issues to be advocated for.	Complete 	The Advocacy Strategy outlining key issues was adopted by Council in May 2019.
	14.1.2 Develop and implement an Advocacy Strategy.	Complete 	The Advocacy Strategy outlining key issues was adopted by Council in May 2019.
14.2 Work with Swan Hill District Health and Robinvale District Health Services to develop joint advocacy strategies for improved health services for our community.	14.2.1 Adopt the health precinct plan into the Swan Hill Planning Scheme.	Complete 	Council adopted Health Precinct Plan into Swan Hill Planning Scheme in November 2017.
	14.2.2 Regular meetings with relevant bodies to determine needs.	Completed/ongoing 	A 'Swan Hill needs a new Hospital' group has been operational for some time and includes officers and Councillors working with the community to advocate for a new hospital. The Group and Council have continued to advocate to the State and Federal Governments as appropriate. An announcement of funding for a new Emergency Department has been made in March by the state government.
	14.2.3 Advocate State and Federal Government.	Completed/ongoing 	Swan Hill District Health and the proposed redevelopment is a key part of Council's Advocacy Strategy. Swan Hill Needs a New Hospital campaign was initiated in June 2018, and the process has continued with various activities, and presentation of petition/letters to Minister, post-June.
14.3 Advocate to State and Federal governments to fund priorities in Community Plans, Major Projects Plan and other key Council plans and strategies.	14.3.1 Develop marketing material on key issues.	Complete 	A prospectus of potential government investment opportunities has been prepared and will continue to be updated.
	14.3.2 Strategically meet with key stakeholders and policy makers.	Completed/ongoing 	The Murray River Group of Councils has been particularly useful for Council in regional advocacy.







Key results area Environment






“We will adopt work practices and implement policies that reduce the environmental impact, advocate for the protection of our environment and fulfil our regulatory obligations.”



We will have:




1. Sound policies and practices that protect and enhance our environment.
2. A waste management program that is environmentally and financially sustainable.





What have we done




STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
15.1 Be actively involved in external discussions that affect the Murray River, its tributaries and lake systems.	15.1.1 Nominate a Councillor to represent Council on the Murray Darling Association.	Complete 	Swan Hill Rural City Council has withdrawn its membership to the Murray Darling Association.
	15.1.2 Lodge submissions to Federal agencies via Murray River Group of Councils (MRGC) and report to Council.	In progress 	CEO has contributed to the Murray River Group of Councils advocacy campaign ACT 2017. MRGC continues to have a voice on the socio-economic impacts of the Murray Darling Basin Plan.
15.2 Maintain and improve the condition of Lake Boga foreshore and its environs within our area of control in collaboration with other stakeholders.	15.2.1 Continue restoration works.	In planning 	Discussions with other stakeholders will begin on who is responsible for certain areas.
	15.2.2 Chair and attend Lake Boga Land and On Water Management Plan meetings.	Completed/ongoing 	Meetings of the committee have been less regular with a significant number of projects completed. Goulburn Murray Water is considering a review of the Lake Boga land and on Water Management Plan.








STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
15.3 Seek to influence how environmental water is used within the municipality.	15.3.1 Attain membership to Catchment Management Authorities (CMA).	In progress 	A Council position on Murray-Darling Basin Plan (MDBP) is under development.
	15.3.2 Seek a position on CMA committees.	In progress 	No positions were filled at the last CMA elections.
15.4 Investigate opportunities to improve stormwater runoff from townships into the River.	15.4.1 Complete an investigation.	Completed/ongoing 	<p>Updates on Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) adoptions, issues and progress were provided to Council Assembly on 9 June 2020.</p> <p>2. To further assists developers, surveyors and consultants a stormwater engineering guide was widely circulated in May 2020 to further clarify the IDM requirements in an easy to follow steps.</p> <p>3. No further actions requested by the Council.</p>
	15.4.2 Action recommendations.	Completed/ongoing 	<p>1. On-going improvement of stormwater networks</p> <p>2. Completed stormwater network design for Butterworth Street, Graemar Drive, Suttie drive, Berry Bank drive and Yvonne Close to support growth in Swan Hill.</p> <p>Delivery of Pritchard Street drainage upgrade is in progress as per 10 Year Major Projects Plan.</p> <p>Pritchard Street Drainage Upgrade works Completed in May 2021.</p>
	15.4.3 Identify funding opportunities and submit applications.	Complete 	Successful funding application for \$410,000 from Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme (NDRGS) with \$205,000 from Council.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
15.5 Investigate alternative energy for council buildings, and a community solar option.	15.5.1 Identify additional buildings to connect to renewable energies.	Complete 	Council has joined Sustainability Victoria Local Government Energy Saver Program to take advantage of initiatives targeted at identified resource constrained municipalities. Stream 1: Establish Local Government Corporate Emissions Profile and Reduction Plan. Stream 2: Local Government owned facility energy audits. Stream 3: Implementation of Retrofit Work (funding opportunities of up to \$100,000). Ongoing investigation into solar options for facilities. Investigation of natural gas connection to Council owned buildings where possible. Detailed audits on selected facilities have now been completed ELT have approved priority works.
	15.5.2 Prepare a business case for each option.	Complete 	Sustainability Victoria has made available funding to identified resource constrained councils including the Swan Hill Rural City Council to participate in the Local Government Energy Saver Program and Council has accepted the invitation to participate. Stream 3 works are now underway and is expected to be completed by June 2020. Works include solar installs on Swan Hill Depot, Nyah Community Centre, Lake Boga Community Centre, Robinvale Community Centre and Swan Hill Basket Ball Stadium. LED lighting installs will occur on main office building in Splatt St, Swan Hill Depot and Robinvale community centre. Variable speed drives will be installed at Nyah Pool and Manangatang Pool. The Splatt St main office also receive 30kWh battery install. Finally all sites that have upgrades will have Solar Analytics monitoring system that will enable staff to monitor electricity systems to help quantify the benefits of the upgrades and provide useful data on where further improvements can occur. The monitoring install is expected to be completed by the 26 June 2020. All installations are complete and reporting software capability is installed and complete.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
15.6 Advocate for improved control on private and public land of feral pests and weeds (continued)	15.6.1 Engage with local Landcare groups	Completed/ongoing 	Continue to provide support to landcare groups through landcare facilitators to support landholders in controlling pests and weeds. Council has also partnered with the Mallee Catchment Management Authority to undertake pest and weed works on roadsides that support on farm control. Most of this work is concentrated around Robinvale, Sea Lake and Waitche area to support identified Biodiversity Corridors. Rabbit, African Boxthorn and Cactus are the main targets with other minor weed species.
	15.6.2 Identify and reduce box thorn infestations.	Completed/ongoing 	Boxthorn control between Piangil and Swan Hill west of the Murray Valley Hwy has been undertaken with over 10,000 individual plants being treated. Currently the area between Swan Hill - Ultima and Lake Boga west of the Murray Valley Hwy is being treated.
	15.6.3 Extend fruit fly program.	Completed/ongoing 	New funding applied for at local and regional level. Good results with the tree removal program. SHRCC staff on executive committee board. Funding received. Ongoing collaboration with the Greater Sunraysia QFF committee. Now that the Greater Sunraysia QFF committee has been operational for a number of years, Council's involvement has lessened and limited to occasional support.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
15.7 Review our work methods to reduce the environmental impact of what we do.	15.7.1 Review our fuel usage.	Completed/ongoing 	Fuel consumption figures captured and reports being established within fleet management system. Consumption data provided to Council's Environmental Officer for inclusion in energy and green house gas reduction study. Preliminary report received and discussed. Main recommendation to replace 32 vehicles with electric (impractical). Other suggestions for reduction of fuel will be further investigated.
	15.7.2 Review plant and corporate fleet requirements.	Complete 	Established plant committee to review plant and equipment requirements, current and future. Utilisation of all plant and vehicles captured and reports being established. Car pool booking system established and accessible for all Council staff. Adjusted replacement program to reflect altered priorities. Identifying potentially underutilised plant, for discussion and action.
15.7 Review our work methods to reduce the environmental impact of what we do (continued).	15.7.3 Investigate and use where possible sustainable building practices.	In progress 	Council are electing to use (where possible) less obtrusive means of auguring so as to minimise damage to earth integrity and use compaction rather than concrete. Removing excess sprinklers to eliminate excessive watering, ongoing investigations into reclaiming storm water.
	15.7.4 Investigate and use where possible recycled materials.	Completed/ongoing 	Recycled materials used in Nyah Road median strip, (recycled material borders, drought tolerant plants, low maintenance landscaping). In April 2019, the resurfacing of Perrin Street, Robinvale was completed with asphalt incorporating crumbed rubber, made from recycled tyres. This material comes with a predicted life span of five to 10 extra years, compared with traditional asphalt.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
15.8 Define Councils approach to fulfilling our environmental enforcement obligations.	15.8.1 Develop a clear Policy.	Complete/ongoing 	The planning scheme covers all the requirements for Council's environmental enforcement obligations. The Senior Environmental Officer assists the Planning Department with illegal native vegetation removal. Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) have developed amended native vegetation management rules which are now in force. The Planning Scheme will need to be amended to incorporate all relevant changes. Council staff have completed training to acquaint themselves with the new regulations. Additional training has been provided to field staff and Council was successful in securing the Roadside Maintenance Exemption within defined envelopes depending on classification assigned to particular roads throughout the municipality.
16.1 Review and implement the Waste Management Plan.	16.1.1 Approve a revised and updated Waste Management Plan.	Complete/ongoing 	<p>Victorian Government's release of the State's circular economy policy - Recycling Victoria. The policy outlines a 10-year action plan, with more than \$300 million committed to fundamentally transform Victoria's recycling sector, reduce waste, and set Victoria up for a more sustainable future.</p> <p>Recycling Victoria commits \$49.5 million in new funding to target infrastructure for priority materials; paper and cardboard, plastic, glass and hazardous waste (solvents). This commitment builds on the \$28 million already committed in the 2019- 20 budget delivering a record investment in Victoria's recycling infrastructure.</p> <p>The Recycling Victoria Infrastructure Fund is designed to assist businesses to improve the quality of materials recovered and increase the capacity and capability of Victoria's resource recovery sector.</p> <p>Council currently reviewing its position with respect to circular economy policy and in discussion with Veolia to explore short-term extension of the current contract.</p> <p>The joint procurement process has been discontinued by the Regional Waste Management Group as limited benefit to any Council.</p>
	16.1.2 Implement identified actions.	Complete/ongoing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing progressive capping 2. Ongoing investigation into relocating the Materials Recycling Facility from Gray Street to the Swan Hill Landfill site. 3. Construction of the e-waste sheds is completed. 4. Ongoing works to ensure compliance with EPA/ Licence conditions. 5. Ongoing works with DELWP to support circular economy policy.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	ACTION	PROGRESS	COMMENTARY
16.2 Investigate opportunities for green waste and organic collection service.	16.2.1 Review data for current green waste service.	Complete 	Green waste service in place and it is expanding. Organics has been investigated by EDU. (Ongoing).
	16.2.2 Develop and implement a green waste information campaign.	Complete 	Council officers are running a green waste management media campaign in September each year. A plan in place for promoting free green waste disposal at Robinvale and Swan Hill Landfill one weekend per year. Council need to launch new campaign in Lake Boga and Robinvale townships. Calendar of Green waste collection circulated to the participated residents every year.
	16.2.3 Investigate organic waste disposal opportunities.	Complete 	Grant applied for to fund a business plan for regional composting facility between Buloke, Yarriambiack and Swan Hill. Writing grant for a transfer station. Business plan for regional composting facility between Buloke, Yarriambiack and Swan Hill to be completed April 2020. Completed
16.3 Continue to lobby for a state-wide container deposit scheme.	16.3.1 Have the container deposit scheme identified as a priority in the Loddon Mallee Waste Resource Recovery Forum	Complete 	Loddon Mallee Waste Resource Recovery Forum continues to lobby government. Now this has been announced as state wide policy to be implemented by 2023.
16.4 Develop projects that can be funded from the Victoria Sustainability Fund that provide environmental benefits for our community.	16.4.1 Identify projects.	In planning 	No viable projects identified at this stage.
	16.4.2 Secure funding for identified projects.	In planning 	No viable projects identified at this stage.
	16.4.3 Investigate opportunities for recycling industry within the municipality (included as part of 18/19 review).	Completed/ongoing 	Working with a new business trying to establish a demolition recycling business in Swan Hill. Business was established.



Swan Hill Rural City Council

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B.21.60 S5 INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: 74-00-23
Attachments:
1 Maddocks Letter 25-06-2021
2 S5 Delegation to CEO

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

Section 11 of the Local Government Act (2020) enables Council to delegate to the Chief Executive Officer, with specified exemptions, 'any power, duty or function of a council under this Act or any other Act' and delegate the Chief Executive Officer the power to delegate a power of the Council, other than power of delegation, to another member of council staff.

Maddocks, in their attached letter, has recommended that Council should remake the Chief Executive Officer's delegations on a regular basis.

On this occasion we seek to remake the delegation as a result of the commencement of the Environment Protection Act 2017 as amended and subsequent commencement of the Environment Protection Regulations 2021. This is in addition to the bi-annual updates provided by Maddocks.

Discussion

In order to comply with the various legislative requirements, Council delegates a range of powers and responsibilities to the Chief Executive Officer. These delegations are made in accordance with section 11 of the Local Government Act 2020.

The delegation of Council powers and obligations are managed by the Maddocks 'delegations and authorisations service'. Maddocks monitors changes to State legislation, and every six months provides a listing of the sections of legislation that a municipality could delegate to enable efficient and effective delivery of services.

As per letter attached from Maddocks dated 25 June 2021 it has been advised that Council remake the Chief Executive Officers Instrument of delegation to allow the Chief Executive Officer to exercise their powers of sub-delegation and authorisation as per the amended legislation.

The delegation to the Chief Executive Officer is a 'delegation by exception'.

Consultation

This is a statutory requirement of Council and as such consultation is not part of the process.

Financial Implications

Not applicable

Social Implications

Ensures the CEO has the appropriate delegation to implement the Council Plan.

Economic Implications

Ensures the CEO has the appropriate delegation to implement the Council Plan.

Environmental Implications

Ensures the CEO has the appropriate delegation to implement the Council Plan.

Risk Management Implications

Appropriate delegation ensures the organisation can run effectively and efficiently.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

Governance and leadership - Effective and efficient utilisation of resources.

Options

1. That Council adopt the delegations as presented.
2. That Council adopt the delegations with variations, noting that the efficiency of Council operations would be affected.

Recommendations

That Council:

1. **Exercise the powers conferred by section 11 of the Local Government Act 2020 and the other legislation referred to in the attached Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer as attached.**
2. **Delegate to the person holding the position of Chief Executive Officer, or Acting Chief Executive Officer, the powers, duties and functions set out in the attached Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer as attached to the report, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that instrument.**

110/21 Motion

MOVED Cr McPhee

That Council:

- 1. Exercise the powers conferred by section 11 of the Local Government Act 2020 and the other legislation referred to in the attached Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer as attached.**
- 2. Delegate to the person holding the position of Chief Executive Officer, or Acting Chief Executive Officer, the powers, duties and functions set out in the attached Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer as attached to the report, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that instrument.**

SECONDED Cr McKay

The Motion was put and CARRIED



Maddocks

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Collins Square, Tower Two
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Australia

Telephone 61 3 9258 3555
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DX 259 Melbourne

Email Letter

From Maryam Popal	Date 25 June 2021
Direct 03 9258 3305	Email Maryam.Popal@maddocks.com.au
Partner Melanie Olynyk	

Our Ref MSB:MARP:628721

Dear subscriber

Environment Protection Act 2017 Delegations and Authorisations Service

We have prepared a 'mini' update to the Delegations and Authorisations Service, specifically in response to the proposed changes to the *Environment Protection Act 2017* (as amended) (**Act**) which commence on 1 July 2021.

Pursuant to s 437(1) of the Act, the Environment Protection Authority (**EPA**) has issued the Instrument of Delegation under s 437(1) of the Act dated 4 June 2021 to councils (**EPA Delegation**).

In light of this, we have prepared the following new instruments:

1. **S18 Instrument of Sub-delegation to members of Council staff** under s 437(2) of the Act and the EPA Delegation; and
2. **S11B Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation** under s 242(2) of the Act for the purposes of exercising the powers and functions set out in the Instrument of Direction by the Environment Protection Authority under the Act dated 4 June 2021 (**Instrument of Direction**).

We have also prepared the following instruments with respect to powers and functions conferred on councils under the Act and *Environment Protection Regulations 2021* (**Regulations**):

3. **S18A Instrument of Sub-delegation by the CEO of powers and functions conferred on councils** under s 47(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*; and
4. **S11C Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation** under the EPA 2017 of residential noise enforcement officers and litter enforcement officers.

[628721: 29881683_1]

Interstate offices
Canberra Sydney

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Maddocks

Please review the documents carefully. When doing so, please have regard to the following comments:

New powers from the EPA

- The EPA has given councils the power to appoint authorised officers under the Act and, once appointed, those officers can also be delegated some of the EPA's powers. To achieve this, you need to first use the new S11B to appoint the authorised officer/s and then use new S18 to delegate the EPA's powers to that authorised officer/s.
- These authorised officers must be members of Council staff. And they are only authorised to exercise the powers as set out under the EPA's Instrument of Direction.
- It appears Council's power of appointment can be delegated to the CEO, who can then sub-delegate the power to members of Council staff. This is on the basis that s 437(2) is to be interpreted as meaning a council only needs to have been delegated a power or function under s 437(1) in order to appoint an authorised officer. This appears to be the approach taken by the EPA (see EPA Guide for local government and litter authorities issued June 2021). Before doing so, Council will need to remake the instrument of delegation to the CEO so as to ensure the CEO is conferred with this power.

New Council powers

- In addition to the new powers from the EPA, councils also have new powers under the Act and Regulations. These powers can be delegated by the CEO to other Council staff under the new S18A. As outlined above, Council will need to remake the instrument of delegation to the CEO so as to ensure the CEO is conferred with the powers they are now sub-delegating. We will incorporate these powers into the existing S7 Instrument of Sub-delegation to the CEO in our next Update.
- Pursuant to the transitional provisions under ss 495 and 496 of the Act, a litter enforcement officer under the old Act is taken to have been appointed as a litter enforcement officer under the Act and a council officer within the meaning of s 48A(1) of the old Act is taken to be a residential noise enforcement officer appointed under s 171 of the Act, on the same terms as applied to that person immediately before 1 July. This means previous appointments of authorised officers remain valid after the commencement of the Act. However, we have provided a new instrument S11C for litter enforcement officers and residential noise enforcement officers, which you may also wish to make now.

We will still be releasing our mid-year update to the Delegations and Authorisations Service in July, incorporating other changes made to other Acts.

If you have any queries about the above, or the Delegations and Authorisations Service more generally, please contact us via our Delegations and Authorisations website or email us.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Olynyk
Partner

INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION
**S5 INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER**

20 JULY 2021

Instrument of Delegation

In exercise of the power conferred by s 11(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) and all other powers enabling it, the Swan Hill Rural City Council (Council) delegates to the member of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the position of Chief Executive Officer, the powers, duties and functions set out in the Schedule to this Instrument of Delegation,

AND declares that

1. this Instrument of Delegation is authorised by a Resolution of Council passed on 20 July 2021;
2. the delegation
 - 2.1 is subject to any conditions and limitations set out in the Schedule;
 - 2.2 must be exercised in accordance with any guidelines or policies which Council from time to time adopts; and
 - 2.3 remains in force until Council resolves to vary or revoke it.

Delegation Sources

- Local Government Act 2020

Titles

Abbreviation	Position
CEO	Chief Executive Officer

S5 Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer

Local Government Act 2020			
Provision	Powers and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
11(1)	<p>SCHEDULE</p> <p>The power to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. determine any issue; 2. take any action; or 3. do any act or thing <p>arising out of or connected with any duty imposed, or function or power conferred on Council by or under any Act.</p>	CEO	<p>The delegate must not determine the issue, take the action or do the act or thing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action, act or thing which involves <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 entering into a contract exceeding the value of \$1,000,000; 1.2 making any expenditure that exceeds \$1,000,000 (unless it is expenditure made under a contract already entered into or is expenditure which Council is, by or under legislation, required to make in which case it must not exceed \$2,000,000); 1.3 appointing an Acting Chief Executive Officer for a period exceeding 28 days; 1.4 electing a Mayor or Deputy Mayor; 1.5 granting a reasonable request for leave under s 35 of the Act; 1.6 making any decision in relation to the employment, dismissal or removal of the Chief Executive Officer; 1.7 approving or amending the Council Plan; 1.8 adopting or amending any policy that Council is required to adopt under the Act; 1.9 adopting or amending the Governance Rules; 1.10 appointing the chair or the members to a delegated committee; 1.11 making, amending or revoking a local law; 1.12 approving the Budget or Revised Budget; 1.13 approving the borrowing of money;

Local Government Act 2020			
Provision	Powers and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
			1. 15 subject to section 181H(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 1989, declaring general rates, municipal charges, service rates and charges and specified rates and charges; 2. if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action, act or thing which is required by law to be done by Council resolution; 3. if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action or thing which Council has previously designated as an issue, action, act or thing which must be the subject of a Resolution of Council; 4. if the determining of the issue, taking of the action or doing of the act or thing would or would be likely to involve a decision which is inconsistent with a 4.1 policy; or 4.2 strategy adopted by Council; 5. if the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing cannot be the subject of a lawful delegation, whether on account of s 11(2)(a)-(n) (inclusive) of the Act or otherwise; or 6. the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing is already the subject of an exclusive delegation to another member of Council staff.

SECTION C – DECISIONS WHICH NEED ACTION/RATIFICATION

C.21.11 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.

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

No.	Document Type	Document Description	Date signed/ sealed
1060	Deed of end an agreement 514 Chillingollah Road Woorinen	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and Kulani Pty Ltd	29/06/2021
1061	Deed of agreement Section 121 Road Management Act	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and Farm 6 Pty Ltd	29/06/2021
1062	Contract for Cleaning Services – long form	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and Wayne Cleaning Services	29/06/2021
1063	Contract for Cleaning Services – short form	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and Wayne Cleaning Services	29/06/2021

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.

111/21 Motion

MOVED Cr McPhee

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

SECONDED Cr Benham

The Motion was put and CARRIED

C.21.12 COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES - RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA ITEMS

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

Declarations of Interest:

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

Summary

The following report provides details of Councillor Assemblies on a monthly basis.

Discussion

Whilst Minutes have not been recorded, Agenda items and those in attendance are reported and 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 Assemblies are reported to ensure good governance and transparency.

Recommendation

That Council note the contents of the report.

112/21 Motion

MOVED Cr McPhee

That Council note the contents of the report.

SECONDED Cr Benham

The Motion was put and CARRIED

**COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
29 June 2021 at 1.00pm, Swan Hill Town Hall**

AGENDA ITEMS

- Paragon Cafe update: Laura Smith
- Investment Fast Track Fund
- Presentation of LTFP at Councillor Assembly
- Hard waste
- Trees along Monash Drive
- Working Towards Swan Hill 2050
-

ADDITIONAL ITEMS DISCUSSED

- Nil

ATTENDANCE

Councillors

- Cr Bill Moar
- Cr Stuart King
- Cr Jade Benham
- Cr Nicole McKay
- Cr Ann Young

Apologies

- Cr Les McPhee
- Cr Chris Jeffery

OFFICERS

- Bruce Myers, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Director Community & Cultural Services
- Joel Lieschke, Director Corporate Services
- Heather Green, Director Development and Planning
- Jess Warburton, General Manager Pioneer Settlement
- Nathan Keighran, Liveability and Project Development Coordinator
- Dione Heppell, Construction Project Manager Regional Livestock Exchange Redevelopment
- Warren Snyder, Finance Manager
- Ash Free, Financial Accountant

Other

- Nil

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Nil

**COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
6 June 2021 at 1.00pm, Swan Hill Town Hall**

AGENDA ITEMS

- Swan Hill Dryland Crops Report
- Robinvale Levee update
- Swan Hill Aerodrome update
- Deb Prentice RMCG
- KSI 4th Quarter Review
- Purchase of Grain Corp site update
- Discontinuance & Disposal of Roads Policy
- Swan Hill Show Society
- Waste Management Status

ADDITIONAL ITEMS DISCUSSED

- Nil

ATTENDANCE

Councillors

- Cr Bill Moar
- Cr Jade Benham
- Cr Nicole McKay
- Cr Ann Young
- Cr Chris Jeffery
- Cr Les McPhee
- Cr Stuart King

Apologies

- Nil

OFFICERS

- John McLinden, Chief Executive Officer
- Bruce Myers, Director Community & Cultural Services
- Heather Green, Director Development and Planning
- Svetla Petkova, Director Infrastructure
- Helen Morris, Organisational Development Manager
- Nazrul Islam, Engineering and Capital Projects Manager
- Muriel Scholz, Economic Development Coordinator
- Nathan Keighran, Liveability and Project Development Coordinator

Other

- Deb Prentice RMCG
- Anne Crowe and Reg Parker – Swan Hill Show Society

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil

**COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
13 June 2021 at 8.15am, Bus Tour – Swan Hill**

AGENDA ITEMS

- Aerodrome
- Ken Harrison Reserve – Soccer Pavilion Site
- South West Development Precinct
- Tower Hill
- Hope Aged Care
- Riverfront Precinct and Pioneer Settlement
- Wetlands
- Karinie Street, Industrial Estate
- Lunch with Swan Hill Inc
- Campbell Street Retail Walk
- Alan Garden Reserve
- Leisure Centre
- Basketball Stadium
- Swan Hill Toyota/Kia

ADDITIONAL ITEMS DISCUSSED

- Nil

ATTENDANCE

Councillors

- Cr Bill Moar
- Cr Nicole McKay
- Cr Ann Young
- Cr Stuart King

Apologies

- Cr Les McPhee
- Cr Jade Benham
- Cr Chris Jeffery

OFFICERS

- John McLinden, Chief Executive Officer
- Joel Lieschke, Director Corporate Services
- Bruce Myers, Director Community & Cultural Services
- Heather Green, Director Development and Planning
- Svetla Petkova, Director Infrastructure
- Laura O'Dwyer, Enterprise Assets Manager
- Helen Morris, Organisational Development Manager
- Jan McEwan, Family Youth & Children's Services Manager
- Terri McCormick, Executive Support Officer
- Ian Baker, POM
- Camille Cullinan, Libraries Manager
- Sharon Lindsay, Executive Assistant

Other

- Nil
- Rebecca Wells, Mallee Regional Innovation Centre

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Nil

SECTION D – NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

SECTION E – FORESHADOWED ITEMS

Nil

SECTION F – URGENT ITEMS NOT INCLUDED IN AGENDA

Nil

SECTION G – TO CONSIDER & ORDER ON COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cr Stuart King

Swan Hill Inc Board Meeting

Cr Nicole McKay

Councillor Assembly – Swan Hill Tour

Report on Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly. Canberra June 2021.

The National Assembly held a pre-conference “Regional Co-operation and Development Forum” on the Sunday 20th. Unfortunately we didn’t attend, which was a shame and in retrospect I regret not making the effort, as the topics such as health, communications and infrastructure were pertinent to SHRC.

HIGHLIGHTS:

DAY 1.

Peter Van Onselen, Presentation was titled “All Politics is Local”

Peter did not focus on topic at all, rather on when the next election would be. However, this was fairly interesting as there was a spill in the National Party and Michael McCormack was deposed, Barnaby elected leader, and now deputy PM. Generalised interest, amusement, and shock at the result.

COVID The Long Goodbye, with presentations from Mary-Louise McLaws, Sanjaya Senanayake, (both scientific and medical academics) and Gigi Foster, (economist)

This was a fantastic session covering varying perspectives around the pandemic. I loved that the Assembly was courageous and unafraid to have presenters with opposing views sharing the stage and effectively debating the impact of COVID 19 and where the focus should be.

The scientific academics made assessments of the continued health risks and accurate predictions that COVID would continue to necessitate Public Health action until vaccination causes herd immunity. Given the situation unfolding in NSW they were accurate.

Gigi Foster, the economist, proposed a totally different argument, that the Public Health response had caused economic, psychological and health impacts that would have exceeded impact of a more “high risk directed” public health actions.

Both Gigi and Maryanne were terrifically interesting and worth an internet search to watch them speak. I think we will only be able to judge who has been most true retrospectively.

Rommilly Madew, CEO of Infrastructure Australia. Strengthening Economic Capital.

Link to presentation here:

<https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/listing/speech/alga-national-general-assembly-strengthening-economic-capital>

Very good. Discussed greater liaison with local communities, “place based infrastructure” and advised regions to nominate priority projects. This can be done by July.

Strengthening Social Capital, “Every Age Counts” Great new advocacy group, with useful asks to our council to positively counter act ageism.

Plan: display magazines, supportive motion.

Networking Dinner:

Great to meet councillors from other regions, such as Wagga and Wodonga.

Day2.

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications-Policy Sprints, 6 program managers spoke about their area, which usually involved potential funding opportunities.

This was a fantastic quick-fire presentation from departmental heads and representatives who each spoke about their project funding and focuses for the next few years, with particular relevance as to where our lobbying could be directed.

-The worst reception was for the two regarding **telecommunications**. (Assistant Secretaries of Telecomms Market Policy Branch, and Productivity and Technology presented)

It is upsetting for people to be told “to go to the ombudsmen, or to apply for black spot funding”. This just has people longing for public ownership of telecommunications. Frustrations throughout following poor connectivity, and breakdowns during natural disasters.

-Best: **Fiona Yule, director, targeted road infrastructure programs.**

The "roads to market" concept, and the bridge renewal projects funding could become rolling funding. I met Fiona afterward. She is new to the Department and keen to network. We discussed the infrastructure needs in our region and she invited council to correspond with her.

Fiona could be an Important liaison contact for nominating roads for upgrade. Particular priority is increasing weight and restrictions related to this and upgrading roads to improve safety and suitability.

Also involved in bridge upgrades, pertinent to bridges around Swan Hill.

-Kieran Vassallo, A/G Director Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.

More funding opportunities to be released by January. Important to have prior notice and to do planning well before. I think that it is important that we put some money into planning now.

-Malcolm Southwell, Assistant Secretary, Policy, Science and Engagement, National Water Grid Authority. Opportunities for small and large projects.

Important to nominate projects now, such as water and sewers for our small towns.

The Exhibiton Hall space for gathering and meals:

The display area where we gathered for breaks had many interesting displays and we met many people who were great and hopefully may be useful connections. Good place for networking. All of the stall holders were very engaging and generous. I met a lot of people with useful ideas, such as "SpendMap" who discussed how to utilise their data, but also options for sharing data with other councils to find out who from our region is shopping there, and what are they buying. SpendMap representative discussed the opportunities to liaise with other councils, such as Bendigo to explore data sharing.

DAY 3.

Anthony Albanese presented.

Focussed his discussion on the importance of Local Government.

Meetings and Networking:

Mayor Moar, CEO McLinden and myself with James Strahan, Executive Director Mineral Councils of Australia to discuss gold mines, and more relevant to us, Mineral Sands at Goschen.

James was very engaged and willing to visit Swan Hill to look at training opportunities and familiarise himself with the area.

John McLinden, (CEO) and Bill Moar (Mayor) attended the Houses of Parliament as representatives of the Murray River Group of Councils. I was not invited to these meetings.

Met Craig Foster, human rights and refugee activist.

On the final day we met with Minister for Immigration, the Honourable Alex Hawke. We discussed labour needs in our region and potential opportunities to increase/retain migration to our region to improve workforce shortages.

Cr Jade Benham

MAV training - Dealing with difficult people workshop

Meeting with Anne Webster at Piangil

Active Together funding announcement - Mark Gepp was in Robinvale to announce funding for a refurb on the Robinvale Leisure Centre including a new high ball court

NAIDOC week - Flag raising at MVAC

NAIDOC week art gallery - Helping out with the community led NAIDOC week art gallery

Meeting with Norsiyah Mokak regarding the CENSUS coming up on August 10th
REBA Meeting

Cr Les McPhee

North West Municipalities AGM

Meeting with Andy Millar (Save Swan Hill Serenity Action Group)

Cr Ann Young

Woorinen Progress Association Meeting

Geoff Dea SuniTAFE

Meeting with Anne Webster at Piangil

Riverside Park meeting with Mark Gepp (funding for the pathway)

Opening ceremony of NAIDOC week

Agribusiness meeting

Inner Wheel function

Cr Bill Moar

Woorinen Progress Association

National General Assembly – Canberra

Meeting with Murray River Group of Councils

- The Hon. Mark Coulton – The then Minister for Regional Health , Communications and Local Government
- The Hon. Keith Pitt – Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia
- Minister for Energy and Emissions reductions

Meetings Swan Hill Rural City Council

- The Hon. Alex Hawke

Informal Meeting with James Sorahan – Minerals Council of Victoria

Community Meeting in Piangil – Dr Anne Webster MP

Robinvale - Active Together Funding Announcement by Mark Gepp - \$2.9 million
Swan Hill Completion of a section of footpath as part of the Riverfront Master Plan.
Ian Johannsen farewell
Ultima Lions Club Changeover dinner
Robinvale LAN Flag Raising for NAIDOC Week
Agribusiness Meeting
Boundary Bend Progress Association
Robinvale Meeting re: Census with Norsiyah Mokak
Big Ideas Workshop – LLEN
NAIDOC Parade

Mayor, Cr Bill Moar report on the ALGA (Australian Local Government Association) 27th National General Assembly National at the Convention Centre Canberra 20-23 June 2021

Over 500 local government delegates from all over Australia attended this year's conference in Canberra and were warmly welcomed at the Sunday evening check-in. Monday morning saw us heading to Parliament House. Our first meeting, as MRGC, was with The Hon Mark Coulton. Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government.

The following are notes of meetings and proceedings as recorded by the CEO, Mr John McLinden:

Report on the ALGA conference

The Murray River Group of Councils held a meeting with The Honourable Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government

Communications

- Mr Coulton sees a significant role of Local Government on bringing people together i.e. identifying the local problems and finding those that can provide the solutions - often individual businesses or community members are unable to see the solutions or have the networks of contacts necessary to solve these problems. Local Government can play an important role here.
- The Minister advised that round six of the Blackspots Program is now funded. The program itself, however, has not been designed but funding has been secured and so we should expect a further round of blackspots funding for mobile blackspots.
- The Minister talked favourably about the regional connectivity program. This is a program where the Swan Hill region recently received funding to an organisation called "Field Solutions" who will be developing a private broadband network

along parts of the Murray Valley, including the area from Swan Hill to Tooleybuc and on both sides of the river. The Minister was supported by Mr Mark Wood who is his regional communications advisor.

- The Minister acknowledged that coverage in regional Australia is very patchy and that there is more to do by the big telcos in meeting the universal service obligations.

Health

- The Minister understands that the delivery of health services to regional Australia cannot be achieved by using the models employed for the last 50 years.
- Young doctors are reluctant to come to regional areas and to go into general practice where they may be sole practitioners.
- Today's young doctors look for mentorship and backup and do not want the responsibility of being the only medically qualified person in a community.
- Young graduates are looking for a better worklife balance.
- A funding model has been put up and secured which involves a pilot training program with Latrobe University involving Buloke, Gannawarra and Loddon Shire's. The number of applicants for GP places for this training program was in the hundreds, but only 15 places available.
- The Minister sees the future of health delivery in regional Australia requiring significant innovation and not just through digital or telehealth but in other delivery models.

A conference presentation by Peter Van Onselen, Political Editor, Network Ten and Professor of Politics and Public Policy, Griffith University

Peter provided a commentary on federal politics and established his credentials by outlining a large number of political predictions that he had made over the last 15 years, all of which had proved to be spectacularly wrong. At the commencement of his address he also indicated that he expected that Michael McCormack would remain as Deputy Prime Minister and by the end of his speech caucus had dumped McCormack and installed Barnaby Joyce as Leader of the Nationals and therefore Deputy Prime Minister, all of which provided great humour to the audience.

Points that Peter made were that the Morrison Government will win the next election, but the date chosen by the Prime Minister will provide a clear indication of his confidence in victory.

- The economic situation going forward is unlikely to improve, nor deteriorate, meaning that there is not much leverage for the Prime Minister on that front.
- The Coalition has significantly greater fundraising capacity than the Labor Government and this will be an important factor in who wins the next election.
- There has been a significant centralisation of power both at the Federal level and at the State level and State level politicians have been very happy to defer to and to hide behind the 'medical advice' almost shirking their political responsibility by hiding behind the medical advice.
- Peter thought that this ploy will run its race pretty quickly and that the community will grow impatient with politicians hiding behind what they call "medical advice".
- In the Federal Government, Local Government has been excluded from the National Cabinet again centralising power. In fact, the Morrison Government would have excluded the States from the National Cabinet as well, except that constitutionally he was required to include them and the States held him to account. Unfortunately, Local Government does not have such power as Local Government is not recognised in the Constitution as having a seat at the National Cabinet.
- The way that governments have reorganised themselves during the pandemic crisis has seen a significant reduction in parliamentary scrutiny, media scrutiny and again is centralisation of power in the hands of a few.

The conference held a session on COVID-19 with a number of differing perspectives provided on the progression of the disease and various Government's responses and their effectiveness.

Professor Mary-Louise McLaws is an epidemiologist working in the area of hospital infection and infectious diseases control for the University of New South Wales. She reported that South America is really beginning to heat up, and whilst the US may have gone off the news in recent times, there are still massive problems with the growth of the virus in US communities. She talked about various mutations and strains and talked about the Delta variant being of considerable concern, given its apparent high level of contagion. Ms McLaws proposed the idea that contact tracing is not the answer. She says that it is equivalent to chasing the horse after it has bolted rather than shutting the stable door in advance of the bolt. Her view is that we need to be adopting best practice nationally in terms of hygiene, mini shutdowns and testing and that we should be doing rapid antigen tests, not the current system of testing.

It is estimated that in Melbourne alone the economic losses due to shutdowns have now totalled \$1 billion. She believes that quarantine needs to be fixed. We require purpose-built facilities near our airports.

We heard from Professor Sanjaya Senanayake, who is infectious diseases specialist with the Australian National University.

He echoed the strong concerns about the Delta variant, it being more infectious. He reported that worldwide we now have 131 vaccines currently in clinical trials, eight of which are approved both the Pfizer and the AstraZeneca use a spike protein in their methodology for beating the virus. He talked in some detail about vaccination protocols, but provided no data on the effectiveness of any of these processes.

The conference then heard from Professor Gigi Foster from the School of economics at the University of New South Wales. Worldwide, she says that 100 million people have become the new unemployed. The global drop in GDP is in excess of 20%, not to mention the loneliness and loss of human contact caused by shutdowns. Interestingly, Gigi advise that childhood inoculations are down significantly worldwide because of lockdowns and a fear of undertaking what is seen as unnecessary movement outside the house. She proffers that this will inevitably cost millions of lives far more than COVID-19 is taking. She reported that dementia is increasing and that the education disruption to 1 or 2 years of students will lead to \$1 billion in lost future earnings for this cohort of students.

She reported that each day in Australia between three and 400 people die. She basically said that the Australian Government's response has been to wreak untold damage on the Australian economy for the loss of approximately 1000 people, which is about the usual death rate of three days in Australia. She reports that we've lost \$60 billion in GDP with loss of quality of life and that we've cost a significant number of children a strong education. Her view was that from an economic point of view, the management of COVID-19 has been a significant overreaction with drastic economic consequences which, whilst saving some lives that could have been lost to COVID-19 will probably ultimately cost many more lives worldwide and in Australia through other impacts. All three speakers provided good information and gave the audience considerable pause for thought.

The conference included a session on planning for a prosperous future.

We heard from Danielle Wood who is the CEO of the Grattan Institute an Economic Think Tank. Ms Wood spoke about the economic impacts of COVID-19 and provided excellent data in her presentation.

Ms Wood reports that the economic impact of COVID-19 has seen the biggest annual drop in GDP since the great depression and the biggest monthly drop in GDP since records were recorded, the data that she provided also showed that the bounce back has been quite rapid. The Victorian lockdown for one week costs approximately \$900 million. She believes that without a strong vaccination rate that lockdowns will be the tool of choice which are extremely costly to our economy and the borders will remain closed. The longer we wait for a strong vaccination program, the more we lose. Meanwhile, our overseas competitors are moving rapidly, particularly in relation

to the overseas student market. Melbourne has lost 60,000 overseas students. Whilst other countries are now beginning to open their borders to this market and are actively recruiting the brightest and the best educators from around the world.

COVID-19 has considerably shifted how we live and how we work, people now want flexibility and in particular working from home. She sees hybrid models of working being the thing the future - that is a mixture of some working from home and some office contact. We are seeing significant shifts in living patterns, the Victorian Government are talking about creating public service hubs in the suburbs where staff from many agencies can congregate and conduct their business. This will see a significant shift in the CBD office environment.

There has been a significant increase in online traffic not only online buying but also social chat, zoom meetings and a significant other amount of online traffic - all driven by COVID-19. She believes that the circular economy is important to our future and that Australia is lagging behind in its uptake of circular economies, changes in agriculture and waste are required to meet our emissions targets and these will drive increases in economic growth in the long run in Australia.

The conference also heard from the Deputy Lord Mayor of Melbourne Nicholas Reece, Nicholas painted a rather dire picture of what has happened to the Melbourne CBD precinct as a result of COVID-19. On any one day in Melbourne, one expects 1 million pedestrians on footpath's COVID-19 reduced this number to 50,000 pedestrians per day. 30% of shops have closed and the business have gone or the shops remain vacant. One area that was overlooked by both State and Federal Governments was the overseas student market where these students could no longer study, all of their employment opportunities in the hospitality sector vanished overnight and they found themselves stuck in Melbourne in dire straits. The City of Melbourne started a \$200 food voucher program expecting approximately 2000 students to take up this offer and they are overwhelmed with a queue for these vouchers stretching three city blocks and in the end they provided 12,000 students with these food vouchers. After seeing the need other levels of government stepped in to assist the City of Melbourne. Again, Nicholas Reece reported that there were 60,000 overseas students living and studying in Melbourne. All of these have been lost. All speakers push the message about the need to vaccinate and then open up our borders and open up our economy.

The circular economy

The Australian waste industry consumes over \$3 billion per annum, Mike Ritchie of MRA consulting explained that the recycling rate across Australia has gone from 7% in 1996 to 56% of waste diverted from landfill in 2019 and yet we still have 21 million tons of waste going to landfill the same figure in 2019 as there was in 1996. What has changed is that the total volume of waste and recycling has increased, but with the increased rate of diversion to recycling the total amount going to landfill has remained static Mr Ritchie is of the view that Australia needs to double its recycling rate.

A significant proportion of mixed plastics will continue to go to landfill for a long time and the organics issue needs addressing. He believes that landfill pricing is very important, cheap landfill sucks all the recyclables out of the system. Australia's landfill rates are way too cheap. The landfill levies across Australia generate almost \$1 billion per annum and yet only \$150 million of this is returned to the waste and recycling industry.

The goal is to achieve 80% diversion from landfill by 2030 the question to ask is why local government is not specifying recycled product in our asphalt and our quarry product contracts. There is a view that the waste issue could be fixed if all of the landfill levy could be reinvested for two years in waste and recycling services and this would be assisted if landfill gate fees were increased.

The Murray River Group of Councils secured a meeting with Minister Keith Pitt, Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia.

Minister Pitt spoke about the Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism (SDLAM) projects and noted that they are progressing perhaps better than is being reported. He advised that New South Wales has agreed to re-scoped the Yanco and Menindee Lakes projects and this will provide for positive outcomes. Councillor Moar as the Acting Chair of Murray River Group of Councils advised how we appreciate the Minister's support for pursuing no more buybacks to achieve the 450 gigalitres saving. He pressed the Minister that we would like to see this locked into legislation. The Minister advised that such an amendment was before the upper house today and was going to the vote and noted casually that it probably won't get past.

The Minister indicated that the government is committed to proceeding with the implementation of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) report recommendations. He noted, their complexity and the large number of recommendations, but again reiterated that the government is committed to proceed with these.

The Minister also responded positively to the Murray River Group of Councils call for support for more transparency in the benefit of environmental watering programs.

Meeting with Minister Angus Taylor, Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction

Minister Taylor indicated that there were two real barriers preventing significant investment in solar energy or any renewable energy within Victoria

1. Victoria is not being overly helpful. The Victorian Government needs to come to the table on the transmission issue.
2. Dispatchability is a significant issue. We need other sources of energy to supplement energy input when solar does not supply power, Victoria in the Minister's view didn't quite get this. The Minister believes that investment in renewable energy will stop pretty quickly as those industries understand the importance of having alternative dispatchable supplies. The Minister discussed the

need for Victoria to not close coal too soon and to ensure that adequate storage is provided. Storage is deeply important. Storage technology will improve, currently a lot of our battery storage provides us with approximately two hours of storage we need about 180 hours.

We had a good discussion about the benefits of hydrogen and the Minister is of the view that it has a large future. It's a critical storage system to underpin and support the renewable energy sector. The snowy system is also important for Victoria's renewable energy grid. The Minister closed by reverting back to his discussion on dispatchability, noting that the development of suitable dispatchable power sources was critical to the future of the renewable energy sector in Victoria.

Meeting with Minister Alex Hawke, Minister for immigration

The Swan Hill Rural City Council secured a meeting with Minister Alex Hawke and thanks to our Local Member Anne Webster for arranging this meeting. The meeting was attended by Mayor Cr Bill Moar, along with Cr Nicole McKay and CEO John Mclinden.

It became apparent from the meeting that the Minister for Immigration works well with our Local Member Anne Webster, the Minister explained that when looking at designing new Visa structures such as the Ag Visa that the structure of the visa is so important to minimise future legal challenge. The Minister is currently respondent to over 1500 legal challenges on existing immigration matters. The Minister is open to joining Council and our neighbours to the Shepparton DAMA. This can be done as a variation and this requires some significant consideration by Council.

The Mayor provided multiple examples of the need for labour from seasonal workers through to permanent farm managers and manufacturing skills.

Councillor McKay raised the idea of giving undocumented workers permanency and we talked around many of the complexities around immigration issues.

The Minister is hearing that there is a rush on the Ag Visa, but it probably won't be in place in time for the coming horticultural season. Councillor McKay raised the Medicare question for Ag Visa recipients. This received some discussion but the Minister was not in a position to give a response to this as he explained the Visa system is currently under design.

With respect to the DAMA issue and whether to seek a variation to the Shepparton application, I think that this needs some significant consideration. Neither officers nor Councillors have the information necessary to make a good decision on this.

SECTION H – IN CAMERA ITEMS

113/21 Motion

MOVED Cr King

That Council, pursuant to section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* , resolve to close the meeting to members of the public at 3.30pm to consider the following items which relate to matters specified under section 3(1), as specified below:

B.21.61 IN CAMERA CONSIDERATION OF CONFIDENTIAL REPORT

(d) contractual matters

SECONDED Cr Benham

The Motion was put and CARRIED

114/21 Motion

MOVED Cr McPhee

That the meeting move out of closed session at 3.35pm

SECONDED Cr Benham

The Motion was put and CARRIED

SECTION I – DECISIONS MADE IN CAMERA

B.21.61 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEMBER VACANCY

115/21 Motion

MOVED Cr McPhee

That Council:

- 1. Appoint Ms Rosanne Kava as an independent member of the Swan Hill Rural City Council Audit and Risk Committee affective 10/09/2021 for a three-year term.**
- 2. Appoint Mr Jason Young is an independent member of the Swan Hill Rural City Council Audit and Risk Committee for a three-year term commencing 18/11/2021.**
- 3. Write to Mr Robert Jardine and Mr Rod Saville, expressing Council's appreciation for the service to the Swan Hill community through their service to the Swan Hill Rural City Council Audit and Risk Committee.**
- 4. Note that Council will need to advertise for and appoint a new independent chair to the Swan Hill Rural City Council Audit and Risk Committee in August 2022.**

SECONDED Cr Benham

THE MOTION WAS PUT AND CARRIED

There being no further business the Mayor, Councillor Bill Moar closed the meeting at 3.35pm.