



Agenda

Scheduled Council Meeting

Tuesday 26 November 2024

to be held at 2:00 PM

Council Chambers

Swan Hill Town Hall

53 – 57 McCallum Street, Swan Hill. VIC 3585

Public Access

Open to the public and live streaming from
Council's website: www.swanhill.vic.gov.au



Governance Rules

A copy of Swan Hill Rural City Council's governance rules can be found at <https://www.swanhill.vic.gov.au/about/overview/policies/governance-rules-2020/>

Executive Leadership Team

Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer

Bruce Myers, Director of Community and Cultural Services

Michelle Grainger, Director of Development and Planning

Bhan Pratap, Director of Corporate Services

Leah Johnston, Director of Infrastructure

Swan Hill Elected Members

Councillors

Cr Stuart King

0437 967 531

stuart.king@swanhill.vic.gov.au

Cr Terry Jennings

0429 449 578

terry.jennings@swanhill.vic.gov.au

Cr Les McPhee

0427 319 394

les.mcphee@swanhill.vic.gov.au

Cr Hugh Broad

0408 250 683

hugh.broad@swanhill.vic.gov.au

Cr Peta Thornton

0417 219 229

peta.thornton@swanhill.vic.gov.au

Cr Lindsay Rogers

0499 720 035

lindsay.rogers@swanhill.vic.gov.au

Cr Philip Englefield

0429 079 650

philip.englefield@swanhill.vic.gov.au

Vision Statement

Built on strong foundations that embrace our rich History and natural environment, our region will be a place of progressions and possibility. We are a community that is happy, healthy and harmonious - we are empowered, we are respectful and we are proud.

Our Mission

We will lead, advocate, partner and provide efficient services and opportunities for growth and the wellbeing of our community, environment and economy.

Our Values

Council values our residents and community and will be responsive to their needs. In pursuing our objectives, we believe in, and are committed to, the following values:

Community engagement - We will ensure that our communities are consulted, listened to and informed.

Leadership - We will be at the centre of our community and by actively engaging our community we will form the collective view on strategic issues and will then express our views through strong advocacy and action.

Fairness - We will value and embrace the diversity of our community and ensure that all people are treated equally.

Accountability- We will be transparent and efficient in our activities and we will always value feedback.

Trust - We will act with integrity and earn the community's trust by being a reliable partner in delivering services, projects and providing facilities.

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1 Procedural Matters

1.1 Welcome

- **Swearing in of Councillors**

All Councillors were sworn in and made the Oath or Affirmation of Office on Tuesday 19 November 2024.

Councillors-elect on this day recited the Oath or Affirmation of Office in the presence of the Chief Executive Officer, Scott Barber. Councillors signed the declaration and it was witnessed by the Chief Executive Officer.

The following Councillors took the Oath or Affirmation of Office:



Swan Hill Rural City Council

Oath of Office

Stuart King

I swear by Almighty God that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the municipal community. I will abide by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and uphold the standards of conduct set out in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct. I will faithfully and impartially carry out and exercise the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the *Local Government Act 2020* and any other Act to the best of my skill and judgement.

Signed
Stuart King

19/11/2024

19/11/2024

Witness
Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer
Swan Hill Rural City Council



Swan Hill Rural City Council

Affirmation of Office

Terry Jennings

I solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the municipal community. I will abide by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and uphold the standards of conduct set out in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct. I will faithfully and impartially carry out and exercise the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the *Local Government Act 2020* and any other Act to the best of my skill and judgement.

[Redacted Signature]

19/11/2024

Signed
Terry Jennings

[Redacted Signature]

19/11/2024

Witness
Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer
Swan Hill Rural City Council



Swan Hill Rural City Council

Oath of Office

Les McPhee

I swear by Almighty God that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the municipal community. I will abide by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and uphold the standards of conduct set out in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct. I will faithfully and impartially carry out and exercise the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the *Local Government Act 2020* and any other Act to the best of my skill and judgement.

Signed
Les McPhee

19/11/2024

Witness
Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer
Swan Hill Rural City Council

19/11/2024



Swan Hill Rural City Council

Oath of Office

Hugh Broad

I swear by Almighty God that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the municipal community. I will abide by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and uphold the standards of conduct set out in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct. I will faithfully and impartially carry out and exercise the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the *Local Government Act 2020* and any other Act to the best of my skill and judgement.

19/11/2024

Signed
Hugh Broad

19/11/2024

Witness
Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer
Swan Hill Rural City Council



Swan Hill Rural City Council

Affirmation of Office

Peta Thornton

I solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the municipal community. I will abide by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and uphold the standards of conduct set out in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct. I will faithfully and impartially carry out and exercise the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the *Local Government Act 2020* and any other Act to the best of my skill and judgement.

_____ 19/11/2024

Signed
Peta Thornton

_____ 19/11/2024

Witness
Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer
Swan Hill Rural City Council



Swan Hill Rural City Council

Oath of Office

Lindsay Rogers

I swear by Almighty God that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the municipal community. I will abide by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and uphold the standards of conduct set out in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct. I will faithfully and impartially carry out and exercise the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the *Local Government Act 2020* and any other Act to the best of my skill and judgement.

Signed
Lindsay Rogers

19/11/2024

Witness
Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer
Swan Hill Rural City Council

19/11/2024



Swan Hill Rural City Council

Affirmation of Office

Philip Englefield

I solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the municipal community. I will abide by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and uphold the standards of conduct set out in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct. I will faithfully and impartially carry out and exercise the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the *Local Government Act 2020* and any other Act to the best of my skill and judgement.

_____ 19/11/2024

Signed
Philip Englefield

_____ 19/11/2024

Witness
Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer
Swan Hill Rural City Council

1.2 Acknowledgement Of Country

“Swan Hill Rural City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, and pays its respects to their elders, past and present.”

1.3 Opening Declaration

“We beseech you Lord, that we may be granted wisdom, understanding and sincerity of purpose, in the decisions we are called on to make for the welfare of the people of the Rural City of Swan Hill.”

Or

“We, the Councillors of Swan Hill Rural City Council, declare that we will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor, in the best interests of our community, and faithfully, and impartially, carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in us, to the best of our skill and judgement.”

1.4 Apologies / Leaves of Absence

None when the Agenda was distributed.

1.5 Directors / Officers Present

1.6 Confirmation of Minutes

1.6.1 Confirmation of Minutes

Recommendation/s

That the minutes of the Scheduled Council Meeting held on Tuesday 15 October 2024 be confirmed.

1.7 Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

1.8 Joint Letters and Reading of Petitions

Nil.

1.9 Public Questions Time

You can access the form Public Question Time form from:

<https://forms.swanhill.vic.gov.au/council-meeting-public-question-time/>

Please note

- Only ONE question per form submission.
- Submission must be received no later than 10:00am on the day prior to the meeting.
- A time is set aside for public questions during a Council meeting at which time each question will be read after the Chairman has looked at its contents and determined that the question is appropriate.
- Statements and opinions are not permitted during question time and will not be read to the meeting.
- The Chairman may disallow any question. This may be because the question is repetitive of a question already asked, objectionable, irrelevant, raises an issue of a confidential nature or is asked to embarrass a Councillor or Council officer. The Chairman will provide reasons where a question is disallowed. Questions considered to be inappropriate will be made available to Councillors on request.
- The Chairman will nominate the appropriate Councillor or Council officer to answer the question or elect to answer it himself/herself.
- No debate or discussion of the questions or answers is permitted.
- The Chairman may elect to take a question on notice in which case a written response will generally be provided within 10 working days.
- A summary of the text of the question and the response will be recorded in the minutes of the Council meeting.

Who can use this form

- Any community member

While completing this form, we will request

- Your contact details (including your name, address, phone and email)
- Your question

It will take about 5 minutes to complete this form.

After you submit this form

- We will send you an email receipt to confirm we have received your submission

What happens with your information?

The information requested in this form is collected by Swan Hill Rural City Council to assist us in responding to your question.

Your name, suburb and question may be read out at the Council meeting and will be recorded in the Council meeting minutes but will not be used for any other purpose unless required by law.

We will handle any personal information you provide on this form in accordance with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014. We record this information on our customer databases and make it available to relevant Council staff in line with our [Privacy Statement](#).

You can access your personal information by [contacting our Privacy Officer](#).

1.10 Open Forum

Please see below “Governance Rules 2023 – Section 7 referring to Open Forum” which outlines the rules and procedure of open forum.

7. Community questions and submissions

7.1. Open Forum and Questions Of Council Time To Be Held

- (1) The Council will hold Open Forum and Questions of Council Time for up to 30 minutes duration at the beginning of each Scheduled Meeting to allow public submissions and questions of Council. Extension of time may be granted by resolution of Council.
- (2) Open Forum is an opportunity for the general public to present to Council on a matter listed on the Agenda or any other matter.
- (3) Questions of Council are an opportunity for the general public to submit a question prior to the Scheduled Meeting and receive a response from Council in the Questions of Council time.
- (4) Council meetings are recorded and broadcasted to the public; this includes community questions and submissions.

Open forum and questions of council guidelines

7.2. Questions of Council time and Open Forum will not apply during any period when the Council has resolved to close the meeting in respect of a matter under section 66 (1) of the Act.

7.3. Submissions as part of Open Forum and Questions of Council may be on any matter except if it:

- (a) is considered malicious, defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial, or objectionable in language or substance;
- (b) relates to confidential information as defined under the Act;
- (c) relates to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer; or
- (d) relates to any other matter which the Council considers would prejudice the Council or any person;
- (e) If a person has submitted more than 2 questions to a meeting, the third and further questions may, at the discretion of the Chairperson be deferred until all other person who have asked a question have had their questions asked and answered and not be asked if the time allotted for public question time has expired.

7.4. Where the Mayor does not accept a question, the submitter is to be informed of the reason or reasons for which their question was not accepted.

7.5. The Mayor reserves the right to cease a submission as part of Open Forum if they deem the submission inappropriate.

7.6. Where possible Copies of all questions allowed by the Mayor will be provided in writing to all Councillors.

- 7.7. A submission or question submitted in writing by a member of the public, which has been disallowed by the Mayor will be provided to any Councillor on request.

Open forum

- 7.8. For any member of the public who wishes to be heard at Open Forum they must give prior notice:
- (a) in written form;
 - (b) contain the name, address and email or contact telephone number of the person to be heard;
 - (c) by online request <https://www.swanhill.vic.gov.au/>;
 - (d) in a letter to the Chief Executive Office, 45 Splatt Street, Swan Hill, Vic 3585; or
 - (e) in an email council@swanhill.vic.gov.au; or
 - (f) hand delivery to the Council's Office, 45 Splatt Street, Swan Hill or 72 Herbert Street, Robinvale.
- 7.9. It is preferable for any group or association that wishes to be heard at Open Forum to nominate a spokesperson for an issue upon which the group or association may wish to be heard.

Open Forum Procedure

7.10. Public addressing the Meeting

- (1) Any member of the public addressing Council must extend due courtesy and respect to Council and the processes under which it operates and must take direction from the Chairperson whenever called on to do so.
- (2) Council may suspend standing orders to hear from a community member or representative of an organisation, on matters of significance to the Council, only if prior arrangements have been made by written request to the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer.

- 7.11. The Chair will allocate a maximum of 3 minutes to each person who wishes to address Council.

- 7.12. The Chair will first invite any person who has given prior notice to present to Council.

- 7.13. The Chair will then invite members of the gallery who would like to present to Council.

- 7.14. The Chair has the discretion to alter the order of persons to be heard.

- 7.15. The person in addressing the Council:

- (a) must confine their address to the 3-minute allocation of time;
- (b) shall extend due courtesy and respect to the Council and the processes under which it operates; and
- (c) shall take direction from the Chair whenever called upon to do;
- (d) There will be no discussion or debate with the attendees to Open Forum however Councillors may ask questions of clarification of the attendee;
- (e) Standing Orders do not need to be suspended to allow discussion for the purposes of clarification.

2 Officer Reports for Decision

2.1 Mayoral Term of Office

Directorate: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S24-19-00
Purpose: For Decision

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

4. Leadership - We will ensure accountable leadership, advocacy and transparent decision making.

4.1 Excellent management and administration

4.1.2 Provide robust governance and effective leadership

Current Strategic documents

Council Plan

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

Summary

Council must determine if the Mayoral term is for one (1) year or two (2) years.

Discussion

In accordance with Local Government Act 2020 Sections 25 and 26 (pages 47 and 48 of the LGA 2020):

1. At a meeting of the Council that is open to the public, the Councillors must elect a Councillor to be the Mayor of the Council.
2. Before a Mayor is elected under this section, the Council may resolve to elect a Mayor for a one (1) year or two (2) year term.
3. The Mayor is to be elected;
 - a. No later than one month after the date of a general election.
 - b. If the Mayor is elected for a one (1) year or two (2) year term, the next election of the Mayor must be held on a day to be determined by the Council that is as close to the end of the term as is reasonably practicable.

- c. A Mayor is to be elected within one month after any vacancy in the office of Mayor occurs.

Financial Implications

Costs associated with Mayoral allowances and ancillary costs are included in the budget each year.

Section 39 of the Local Government Act 2020 states that a Mayor or a Deputy Mayor is entitled to receive from the Council an allowance as a Mayor or a Deputy Mayor in accordance with a Determination of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal under the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019.

Councils are divided into four categories based on the income and population of each Council – Swan Hill is in Category 2.

Base Allowances (\$ per annum)

	Current value	From 18 December 2024
Mayor	\$109,114	\$111,987
Deputy Mayor	\$54,558	\$55,994
Councillor	\$34,028	\$34,028

Source: <https://www.vic.gov.au/allowances-mayors-deputy-mayors-and-councillors-annual-adjustment>

The value of the allowance payable to a Council member is inclusive of any Superannuation Guarantee Contribution amount, or equivalent, that may be payable under Commonwealth law.

Attachments: Nil

Options

Council may elect the Mayor for either a one (1) year or two (2) year term.

Recommendation/s

That Council elects a Mayor for a term of one (1) year, with the next election of Mayor to be held as close to the end of the term as is reasonably practicable.

2.2 Election of Mayor 2024/25

Directorate: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S24-19-00
Purpose: For Decision

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

4. Leadership - We will ensure accountable leadership, advocacy and transparent decision making.

4.1 Excellent management and administration

4.1.2 Provide robust governance and effective leadership

Current Strategic documents

Council Plan
Governance Rules

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

Summary

This report outlines the process and statutory requirements for the election of Mayor. The election of the Mayor will take place as part of this report.

Discussion

Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2020 provides that the Councillors must elect a Councillor to be the Mayor of the Council, at a Council meeting open to the public,

Section 18 of the Local Government Act 2020 states that the role of the Mayor is to:

- Chair Council meetings;
- Be the principal spokesperson for the Council;
- Lead engagement with the municipal community on the development of the Council Plan;
- Report to the municipal community, at least once a year, on the implementation of the Council Plan;
- Promote behaviour among Councillors that meets the standards of conduct set out in the Model Code of Conduct;
- Assist Councillors to understand their role;
- Take a leadership role in ensuring the regular review of the performance of the Chief Executive Officer;

- Provide advice to the Chief Executive Officer when the Chief Executive Officer is setting the agenda for Council meetings; and
- Perform civic and ceremonial duties on behalf of Council.

Section 27A of the Act requires the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Acting Mayor (acting for one (1) month or more) to complete mandatory mayoral training within one month of election or appointment to these roles. This training requirement applies, whether or not the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Acting Mayor has been re-elected or ever held the office before.

Prior to the election of the Mayor it is customary to allow the outgoing Mayor the opportunity to speak of their time in the role.

The process to elect a Mayor will be conducted by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2020 and the Swan Hill Rural City Council's Governance Rules 2023.

Financial Implications

Section 39 of the Act states that a Mayor or a Deputy Mayor is entitled to receive from the Council an allowance as a Mayor or a Deputy Mayor in accordance with a Determination of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal under the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019.

Costs associated with Mayoral allowances and ancillary costs are included in the budget each year.

Recommendation/s

That Council, elect a Councillor to be the Mayor in accordance with section 25 of the Local Government Act 2020 and Swan Hill Rural City Council Governance Rules 2023, upon the completion of the election process;

- 1. Announce Councillor <td> as the Mayor of Swan Hill Rural City Council; and**
- 2. Suspend standing orders (time) to robe the Mayor.**

2.3 Election of Deputy Mayor 2024/25

Directorate: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S24-19-02
Purpose: For Decision

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

4. Leadership - We will ensure accountable leadership, advocacy and transparent decision making.

4.1 Excellent management and administration

4.1.2 Provide robust governance and effective leadership

Current Strategic documents

Council Plan
Governance Rules

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

Summary

Section 20A of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) enables a Council to establish an office of Deputy Mayor. If established, the provisions of the Act relating to the office of Deputy Mayor apply; if not established, the provisions in section 20B for the Acting Mayor apply.

Section 27 of the Act set out the requirements for the election of the Deputy Mayor.

Discussion

The position of Deputy Mayor is necessary to facilitate the smooth and uninterrupted civic, statutory and policy-making functions of Council in the absence of the Mayor.

Section 21 of the Act sets out the role and powers of the Deputy Mayor. If the office of Mayor is vacant, or the Mayor is unable or is incapable of attending a Council meeting, or part thereof, or performing the duties of the office of Mayor, the Deputy Mayor must perform the role of the Mayor.

Section 5.2 and 5.4 of Swan Hill Rural City Council's "Governance Rules 2023" stipulate the procedure for the election of Deputy Mayor.

Section 20B of the *Local Government Act 2020* provides that a council may appoint a Councillor to be Acting Mayor if the office of Mayor is vacant, or the Mayor is unable or is incapable of attending a Council meeting, or part thereof, or performing the duties of the office of Mayor. An appointment of an Acting Mayor must be for a

period specified by the Council until the circumstances for the Mayors absence no longer apply, or the period of the appointment expires, whichever occurs first.

Section 27 of the Act specifies that the election of the Deputy Mayor will follow the same process as the election of the Mayor except that the Mayor will chair the election.

Section 27A of the Act requires the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Acting Mayor (acting for 1 month or more) to complete mandatory training within a month of occupying these roles. This training requirement applies whether or not the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Acting Mayor has been re-elected or ever held the office before.

Governance Rules 2023 provides that if a Council resolves to establish the office of Deputy Mayor, the provisions of sub rules (2) and (4) apply. This means that the Mayor may chair the election of the Deputy Chair, the Chief Executive Officer must invite and confirm nominations, but there is no provision for nominees to address Council.

Financial Implications

Section 39 of the Act states that a Mayor or a Deputy Mayor is entitled to receive from the Council an allowance as a Mayor or a Deputy Mayor in accordance with a Determination of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal under the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019*.

Costs associated with Deputy Mayor allowances and ancillary costs are included in the budget each year.

Attachments: Nil

Options

1. That Council, elect a Councillor to be the Deputy Mayor in accordance with section 25 of the Local Government Act 2020 and Swan Hill Rural City Council Governance Rules 2023, upon the completion of the election process.
2. That Council establishes an office of Deputy Mayor and elects a Deputy Mayor for a term of two (2) years; or
3. That Council does not establish an office of Deputy Mayor.

Recommendation/s

That Council, elect a Councillor to be the Deputy Mayor in accordance with section 25 of the Local Government Act 2020 and Swan Hill Rural City Council Governance Rules 2023, upon the completion of the election process;

1. **Announce Councillor <tbd> as the Deputy Mayor of Swan Hill Rural City Council.**

2.4 Council Scheduled Meeting Dates, Times and Locations

Directorate: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S16-05-01
Purpose: For Decision

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

4. Leadership - We will ensure accountable leadership, advocacy and transparent decision making.

4.1 Excellent management and administration

4.1.2 Provide robust governance and effective leadership

Current Strategic documents

No strategic documents applicable.

Declarations of Interest:

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

Summary

Each year Council determines, in advance, the locations and times for its Scheduled meetings.

Council meetings currently commence at 2pm usually on the third Tuesday of each month.

This report provides Council with the opportunity to set meeting dates, times and locations.

Discussion

Last year Council held its scheduled meetings on the third Tuesday of the month (unless otherwise indicated on the table below), commencing at 2pm.

The following table includes meeting locations for 2023, 2024 and proposed meeting locations and times for 2025:

Council welcomes community participation in local democracy and shall encourage the community to attend Council meetings.

Third Tuesday of the Month at 2:00pm unless indicated otherwise.			
Month	2023	2024	2025
January	No Meeting	No Meeting	No Meeting
February	Swan Hill	Swan Hill	Swan Hill
March	Swan Hill	Robinvale	Robinvale
April	Swan Hill	Swan Hill (Second Tuesday of month)	Swan Hill
May	Swan Hill	Swan Hill	Swan Hill
June	Swan Hill	Swan Hill	Swan Hill
July	Swan Hill	Swan Hill	Swan Hill
August	Swan Hill	Swan Hill (Second Tuesday of month)	Swan Hill
September	Swan Hill	Swan Hill (Second Tuesday of month)	Swan Hill
October	Swan Hill	Swan Hill	Swan Hill
November	Swan Hill	Swan Hill (Fourth Tuesday of month)	Swan Hill
December	Swan Hill	Swan Hill	Swan Hill

The requirement for Council to record, livestream (where practical) and post the Council Meetings on the website is a positive step. The practice has increased the communities' visibility of Councils democratic processes.

Council will create other opportunities to visit and engage with our various communities outside of the normal Council Meeting cycle, as part of its community engagement strategy.

Financial Implications

Costs associated with conducting Council meetings are included in the budget each year.

Attachments: Nil

Options

1. Continue meetings on the third Tuesday of the month or another day.
2. Continue commencing meetings at 2.00pm or at another time.

Recommendation/s

That Council determines that the Scheduled Meetings for 2025 will be held at the locations, dates and times specified in the table in this report.

2.5 Annual Appointment of Councillor Representatives to External and Internal Committees

Directorate: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S16-20-01
Purpose: For Decision

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

4. Leadership - We will ensure accountable leadership, advocacy and transparent decision making.

4.3 Bold leadership, strong partnerships and effective advocacy

4.3.1 Create meaningful partnerships across our communities

Current Strategic documents

No strategic documents applicable.

Declarations of Interest:

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

The purpose of the report is to consider the appointment of Councillors to outside organisations and community groups.

Discussion

Council makes appointments to various external organisations and community groups. This assists Council in working closely with its community and taking part in a wide range of activities associated with the development of the Municipality.

Council has recommended the appointment of a Councillor delegate to the following groups. Councillors can choose to attend other Community Groups / Committees (External Groups) meetings by invitation.

TOWN REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS		
Group Name	2024 Representative	2025 Representative
Nyah District Action Group (including Nyah West, Koraleigh and District) 2nd Monday of month 7.30pm	Cr McKay	Cr King
Lake Boga and District Association Inc Bi-Monthly 4th Monday of month 7.30pm	Cr McPhee	Cr Broad

Ultima Progress Association 4th Tuesday of month 7pm	Cr Young	Cr McPhee
Manangatang Improvement Group As needed	Cr Kelly	Cr Jennings
Woorinen & District Progress Association Inc 3rd Wednesday of month at 7.30pm	Cr Jeffery	Cr Thornton
Boundary Bend Progress Association 1st Tues of the month (Except Nov) @ 7.30pm	Cr McKay	Cr Englefield
Piangil Community Group (PCG) & Memorial Park Committee of Management (PMPC) 2nd Wednesday of month (bimonthly) 7.30pm	Cr McPhee	Cr Rogers
OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS AND COMMITTEES (EXTERNAL GROUPS)		
Group Name	2024 Representative	2025 Representative
Swan Hill Residents and Rate Payers Association First Tuesday of every month 7.00pm	Voluntary	Cr McPhee
Robinvale Euston Business Association (REBA) First Monday of every month 6.30pm	Cr King (1st) Cr McKay (Sub)	Cr Englefield (1st) Cr Thornton (Sub)
Swan Hill Showgrounds Sport and Recreation Precinct Advisory Committee Meets up to 5 times a year	Cr King(1st), Cr Jeffery (Sub)	Cr King (1st) Cr Jennings (Sub)
Swan Hill Leisure Centre Committee of Management Meets quarterly	Cr Kelly (1st) Cr Jeffery (Sub)	Cr Jennigs (1st) Cr King (Sub)
Swan Hill Incorporated Board Second Tuesday of the month	Cr Young (1st), Cr Jeffery (Sub)	Cr Broad (1st), Cr Jennings (Sub)
Agribusiness Advisory Committee (TBD) Every two months	Cr Moar (1st) Cr Young (Sub)	Cr Thornton (1st) Cr <<tbd>> (Sub)
Ken Harrison Advisory Committee Meets five times a year.	Cr Jeffery (1st) Cr Kelly (Sub)	Cr Broad (1st) Cr McPhee (Sub)
Rail Freight Alliance Meets quarterly	Cr King (1st) Cr McKay (Sub)	Cr King (1st) Cr Englefield (Sub)
Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water Customer and Stakeholder Workshop Meets every 6 months	Cr Moar (1st) Cr McKay (Sub)	Cr Rogers (1st) Cr Englefield (Sub)

Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA): Board and General Committee Meets quarterly	Cr Moar (1st) Cr Kelly (Sub)	Cr Thornton (1st) Cr McPhee (Sub)
Chisholm Reserve Complex Inc. Meets quarterly	Cr King	Mayor
Pental Island Levees management project steering committee Meets quarterly	Cr Moar Cr Kelly	Cr McPhee (1st) Cr Thornton (Sub)
Murray River Group of Councils (MRGC) Meets monthly on the third Thursday of every month Mayor and CEO's meets quarterly	Mayor* CEO	Mayor* CEO
Rural Councils Victoria Inc (RCV) See appendix 1	Cr McKay (1st) Cr Kelly (Sub)	Cr King (1st) Cr Broad (Sub)
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV). See appendix 2	Cr McPhee (1st) Cr McKay (Sub)	Cr McPhee (1st) Cr Thornton (Sub)
Central Murray Regional Transport Forum (CMRTF) Steering Committee meets once a year Technical Working Group 3 times a year	Cr Young Cr Kelly (Sub)	Cr McPhee (1st) Cr King (Sub)
INTERNAL COMMITTEES		
Group Name	2024 Representative	2025 Representative
Community Development Fund Meets once a year	Mayor and Cr Jeffery	Mayor* and Cr Englefield
Event Support Fund Meets once a year	Mayor and Cr Moar	Mayor* and Cr Broad
Audit and Risk Committee Meets quarterly	Cr King Cr Kelly (This position is for the period of January 2024 to the end of Councillor term 2024)	Cr Jennings Cr Rogers (This position is for the period of December 2024 to December 2025)
CEO Employment and remuneration Committee 2 meetings in June.	Mayor King Cr McPhee Cr Young	Mayor* Cr Rogers Cr Englefield
Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery Advisory Committee Bi-Monthly (2nd or 3rd Monday of the Month)	Cr Young (1st) Cr McKay (sub)	Cr Thornton (1st) Cr McPhee (Sub)
Swan Hill Regional Livestock Exchange Meets quarterly	Cr Moar Director of Infrastructure	Cr Rogers (1st) (Chairperson), Cr King (Sub) Director Infrastructure

Joint Bridge Committee between Murray River Council and Swan Hill Rural City Council. As needed	Cr McPhee Cr Moar	Cr Rogers Cr King
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*Mayor will be sub-delegated by Deputy Mayor. If Council chooses not to have a Deputy Mayor, then sub-delegates will be selected by the Mayor or the CEO if the Mayor is unavailable.

Consultation

Council Briefing held on 19 November 2024.

Financial Implications

Travel and accommodation costs incurred by Councillors are reimbursed. These costs are budgeted for annually.

Social, Economic and Environmental Implications

Appointments to external organisations will assist Council in achieving its economic, social and environmental objectives.

Risk Management Implications

Nil.

- Attachments:**
1. Summary of Rural Councils Victoria 2024 [2.5.1 - 1 page]
 2. MAV Delegates information sheet [2.5.2 - 8 pages]
 3. RFA Delegates Information 2024 25 [2.5.3 - 2 pages]

Options

Some appointments are mandatory (e.g. Audit and Risk Committee) while others are optional.

Recommendation/s

That Council appoint Councillors to external organisations and internal committees as shown in the table below:

TOWN REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS		
Group Name	2024 Representative	2025 Representative
Nyah District Action Group (including Nyah West, Koraleigh and District) 2nd Monday of month 7.30pm	Cr McKay	Cr King
Lake Boga and District Association Inc Bi-Monthly 4th Monday of month 7.30pm	Cr McPhee	Cr Broad
Ultima Progress Association 4th Tuesday of month 7pm	Cr Young	Cr McPhee
Manangatang Improvement Group	Cr Kelly	Cr Jennings

As needed		
Woorinen & District Progress Association Inc 3rd Wednesday of month at 7.30pm	Cr Jeffery	Cr Thornton
Boundary Bend Progress Association 1st Tues of the month (Except Nov) @ 7.30pm	Cr McKay	Cr Englefield
Piangil Community Group (PCG) & Memorial Park Committee of Management (PMPC) 2nd Wednesday of month (bimonthly) 7.30pm	Cr McPhee	Cr Rogers
OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS AND COMMITTEES (EXTERNAL GROUPS)		
Group Name	2024 Representative	2025 Representative
Swan Hill Residents and Rate Payers Association First Tuesday of every month 7.00pm	Voluntary	Cr McPhee
Robinvale Euston Business Association (REBA) First Monday of every month 6.30pm	Cr King (1st) Cr McKay (Sub)	Cr Englefield (1st) Cr Thornton (Sub)
Swan Hill Showgrounds Sport and Recreation Precinct Advisory Committee Meets up to 5 times a year	Cr King(1st), Cr Jeffery (Sub)	Cr King (1st), Cr Jennings (Sub)
Swan Hill Leisure Centre Committee of Management Meets quarterly	Cr Kelly (1st) Cr Jeffery (Sub)	Cr Jennigs (1st) Cr King (Sub)
Swan Hill Incorporated Board Second Tuesday of the month	Cr Young (1st), Cr Jeffery (Sub)	Cr Broad (1st), Cr Jennings (Sub)
Agribusiness Advisory Committee (TBD) Every two months	Cr Moar (1st) Cr Young (Sub)	Cr Thornton (1st) Cr <<tbd>> (Sub)
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Chisholm Reserve Complex Inc. Meets quarterly	Cr King	Mayor

Pental Island Levees management project steering committee Meets quarterly	Cr Moar Cr Kelly	Cr McPhee (1st) Cr Thornton (Sub)
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Joint Bridge Committee between Murray River Council and Swan Hill Rural City Council. As needed	Cr McPhee Cr Moar	Cr Rogers Cr King



Rural Councils Victoria Summary – for new and returning Councillors

Rural Councils Victoria (RCV) is a representative body of the Victorian LGAs deemed to be Rural.

Of the 38 rural LGAs in Victoria, 33 are members of RCV and they see the benefit in coming together to advocate for rural communities, lift the profile of small rural councils and ensure that Ministers, Members of Parliament and Department staff understand the difference between rural and regional.

RCVs media presence has been built over a number of years, and often the Chair is sought after for comment on radio, TV and print based media. RCV [media releases](#) can be seen on the website.

RCV holds an annual Forum, generally in July/August/September, in a rural area. This is a sought after event where Councillors and staff come together, learn, connect and share. An EOI process will be undertaken in early 2025 for a member to host the 2025 and/or the 2026 RCV Forum.

RCV prepares submissions on behalf of its members to state and federal inquiries and the Chair has often appeared in front of Committees to support these submissions. Policy documents and election platforms are also produced by RCV to support the work of its members and elevate the voice of rural councils.

RCV has received considerable grant funding in the past and has conducted research, developed tool kits and offered training to councillors and staff. Currently membership subscriptions are the only source of funding for RCV. At \$5,500/year, it is the best value membership that a rural Council can purchase. Sponsorship of events was introduced in 2024 as a new and valued revenue stream.

The RCV Committee

RCV is a representative body and has both CEOs and Councillors on its Committee. RCV has [six regions](#) and a CEO and Councillor from each region is elected onto the Committee for a four year term. This process will occur at the end of 2024. The Committee meets 6-8 times per year.

Each member council can nominate a Councillor for a position on the Committee. If more than one nominee is received for each region, then an election will be undertaken.

Timelines for 2024:

- Nominations open via email to member CEOs: Friday 29 November
- Nominations close: Monday 9 December, including a 200 word statement by the nominee.
- Election conducted (if required): 10-20 December
- Nominees notified of the results: Monday 22 December
- First Committee meeting to be held by 22 January 2025

These timings are dictated by the [RCV Rules of Incorporation](#).

RCV employs The Agenda Group as the Secretariat. The Secretariat conducts the elections, prepares Committee meeting agendas, papers and minutes, provides advocacy and government relations advice and activities, media and communications, plans and conducts the annual Forum/other events and other support actions as required by the Committee.

The Secretariat can be contacted on secretariat@ruralcouncilsvictoria.org.au or 0400 430 584 (Kate Downward).

MAV Delegates Information

November 2024





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we live. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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This document has been prepared by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV). The MAV is the statutory peak body for local government in Victoria, representing all 79 municipalities within the state. © Copyright MAV

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Council's MAV delegate arrangements

With appointments of Councillors to advisory and external committees on the to-do-list for councils at this early stage in the new council term, this information is designed to assist Councillors and officers (with reporting to council), about the appointment of your council's MAV delegate.

We encourage and seek MAV delegate appointments to be made at the Statutory meeting of council or as early as possible given notification about the MAV Board elections in March 2025 will be provided to MAV delegates in mid-January 2025.

The MAV in brief

The [Municipal Association of Victoria](#) (MAV) is a membership association. Formed in 1879, the [Municipal Association Act 1907](#) (MAV Act) officially recognises the MAV as the legislated peak body for councils and the voice of local government in Victoria. Membership is voluntary, with all 79 Victorian councils' members of the MAV.

As the peak body for the Victorian local government sector, the MAV offers councils a one-stop shop of services and support to help them serve their communities.

MAV advocates for local government interests, initiates projects and services across a broad range of areas and supports the development, adoption and implementation of evidence-based research and policy.

The MAV's:

- **purpose** is to mobilise action that supports Victorian councils to create cities, regions and towns that are thriving, resilient and inclusive communities.
- **vision** is to be a nation leading thought leader, partner and resource hub for the Victorian local government sector in strategic foresight, policy and research, leadership and governance, service design and advocacy impact.

The [MAV Strategic Plan 2024-2027](#) sets out the MAV's roadmap for our activities over the four year period and includes the roles the MAV will perform to gear councils and the communities they serve towards more sustainable, resilient and prosperous futures.

In the past year, the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) has achieved significant milestones in key areas. The MAV consulted widely on financial sustainability, advocating for increased Federal and State financial assistance while highlighting the impact of rate capping on essential services. We expanded our Governance Division, introduced a new Legal Counsel role, and initiated webinars to support local government officers. In partnership with all 79 councils we delivered the Stand for Council program and published the MAV Citizen to Councillor Guide 2024 and the MAV Active Citizen Guide 2024. The MAV also launched a Housing Taskforce and established MAVlab to navigate modern challenges. Additionally, we actively engaged in planning reforms to shape vibrant communities across Victoria.

Our services and offerings will continue to grow in the first year of the 2024-2028 council term as we deliver the major initiatives across our 10 strategic directions as detailed in our [MAV Annual Plan 2024-2025](#). This includes a new fit for purpose MAV Mayor and Councillor development program, a new Intergovernmental Relations and Advocacy Framework and continuing to establish MAVLab with a range of founding partners.

The MAV's governance structure

The MAV Act defines the purpose and operation of the MAV and empowers its members to make rules to further clarify its role and processes.

The [MAV Rules 2022](#) prescribe amongst other matters:

- Membership participation and arrangements
- Appointment of MAV delegates
- The MAV Board, its role, function and elections of the President and Board Directors
- The MAV State Council, its role, and functions, and
- MAV management and administrative functions

State Council

State Council is the MAV's overarching governing body consisting of all the appointed delegates of participating member councils.

State Council meetings are held at least twice a year to consider:

- The MAV's annual report and financial affairs, and
- Motions or other items of business proposed by member councils and the Board.

The first meeting of State Council for 2025 will be held on **Friday 16 May** at the Melbourne Town Hall.

MAV Board

The **MAV Board** is elected every two years by MAV delegates. The next **Board elections**, for the MAV President and the ten Directors, are being held on **Friday 7 March 2025**.

Under the MAV Rules 2022:

- The MAV Board comprises the President and ten (10) Directors, with one Director elected from each of the five metropolitan regions and one from each of the five (5) non-metropolitan regions.
- The MAV President is elected by all MAV delegates, whereas the ten (10) Directors are elected by the delegates in the regional participating member council group within which their council is located.

The Board's role is to govern the MAV's operations and includes:

- Developing and giving effect to the strategic direction of the MAV
- Oversight of the administration and financial management of the MAV
- Appointing and overseeing the performance of the MAV's Chief Executive Officer
- Oversight of the provision of MAV services, risk management, adoption of the Annual Budget, and ensuring the legal and ethically integrity of the MAV.

It is important to note that for a Councillor to be eligible to vote in the MAV elections or to be eligible for election to the Board (as the President or a Director) a Councillor must be their council's appointed MAV delegate.

Given the MAV Rules provide that notification is required at least 50 days (16 January 2025) before the election day to all MAV delegates about the method of voting in the President and Director elections, it is highly recommended that appointments of MAV delegates are made as soon as possible in the new council term.

See below for more information about appointment of delegates.

Under the MAV Rules, the **President's role** includes the chairing of meetings of the State Council and Board meetings and providing the annual report about the activities and financial affairs of the Association at the annual meeting of State Council.

In addition, the Board has endorsed the following statements about the President's responsibilities to:

- ensure continuity of leadership at all times;
- be the principal spokesperson for the MAV;
- represent the MAV and sector at meetings with Federal and State Government Ministers;
- promote the MAV and the sector;
- maintain relationships with Federal and State Government Ministers, all political parties and other key stakeholder groups;
- be a conduit for feedback and input from participating member councils;
- facilitate communication and cohesion between MAV Delegates, Directors and the organisation;
- be a member of the ALGA Board to represent the MAV;
- form an executive of the President and the two Deputies for matters that require it;
- be a member of the MAV Insurance Board, WorkCare Board and Audit and Risk Committee.
- ensure Directors are advised of important issues at the first opportunity;
- lead the annual Board performance assessment process;
- lead the performance monitoring and annual review of the CEO's performance and when required the process for recruiting and appointing the CEO in accordance with the adopted Board policy;
- attend a range of meetings with councillors and MAV Delegates in each of the ten regions at least once a year; and
- represent the Board at MAV events including MAV Annual Conference and other events as required.

MAV Board Directors

MAV Board Directors ensure the Association delivers its objectives, promotes the MAV and its policy aims and represent their region. MAV Directors chair regular meetings with their regional delegates; represent and advocate for their region on matters of state-wide and sector importance; attend meetings or functions in their region and participate on working groups and other committees as requested by the Board. The time commitment for a MAV Director typically involves attending monthly Board meetings, briefings, regular regional meetings and State Council.

MAV delegates

Each participating member council must appoint one of its councillors to be their **MAV delegate** at State Council and one of its councillors as a substitute delegate. Appointments must be made by resolution of the council and councils **must notify** the MAV of those appointments on the **notification of appointment form** (refer attachment 1) as soon as possible.

NB: If your council's current delegate is re-elected, they will continue as council's delegate until council resolves otherwise and the MAV receives a new notification of appointment form.

The MAV Rules include the following obligations which apply to **MAV delegates**:

- exercise a vote on behalf of their council for the purpose of electing the President and for the purpose of electing a Director to the Board from their regional grouping;
- regularly report to their council on MAV matters;
- attend meetings of State Council to vote on every matter under consideration (unless unable to do so due to a conflict of interest) and if not able to attend encourage the substitute delegate from their council to attend; and
- attend meetings of their regional grouping that MAV convenes and represent the issues of their council.

Substitute delegates act when their council's delegate is unavailable.

Further Information

Further information about the MAV including our Rules, State Council and MAV services is available on the MAV website (www.mav.asn.au).

If you have any queries about the appointment of your MAV delegate please contact Anne-Maree Neal, Governance Advisor on (03) 9667 5513 or amneal@mav.asn.au

Attachment

1. Notification of appointment form

Municipal Association of Victoria
Level 5, 1 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne VIC 3002
PO Box 24131, 15 Southern Cross Lane, Melbourne VIC 3000
Telephone: 03 9667 5555 Email: inquiries@mav.asn.au
www.mav.asn.au



The Rail Freight Alliance is made up of rural, regional and metropolitan Councils across Victoria.

Members

Ararat Rural City, Buloke, City of Ballarat, City of Melbourne, City of Melton, East Gippsland, Gannawarra, Glenelg, Hindmarsh, Horsham Rural City, Latrobe City, Loddon, Maribyrnong City, Mildura Rural City, Mitchell, Moyne, Northern Grampians, Southern Grampians, Swan Rural City, Warrnambool City, West Wimmera, Wyndham City and Yarriambiack.

History

The Alliance was first formed in 1997 due to growing frustration with the lack of rail connectivity both within Victoria and with the neighbouring State's, and the lack of investment in an antiquated 19th century rail freight system.

RFA Mission

To Advocate for: -

- Rail Standardisation of all key rail lines in Victoria.
- Upgrading and connecting to a National Rail Network.
- A competitive, independent and open access rail freight system.
- A seamless freight logistics that will facilitate efficient rail freight movement.

Benefit to Local Government

- Economic Development through an efficient, competitive and connective rail freight system.
- Significant social, environmental and economic community benefits derived by having fewer trucks on our roads.
- Increased communication with Local, State and Commonwealth stakeholders.
- Reduced congestion and vehicle emissions.
- Increased road longevity and safety.

Benefit to your Council

- The Alliance should be considered a resource to Member Council Officers.

Council nominated Delegate

- Council can nominate a Delegate and Sub Delegate.
- Not all members are represented by an elected delegate.
- Non-Delegates are welcome to attend the meetings, however, have no voting rights.

Delegate Commitment

- The Alliance meets at 4 times per year, being 2 online only meetings and 2 face to face meetings (including the Annual General Meeting)
- Agendas are circulated at least a week before the meeting.

Domestic Animal Management Plan Review 2024

Directorate: Development and Planning
File Number: S24-24-01
Purpose: For Decision

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

1. Liveability - We will be a healthy, connected and growing community supported by a range of infrastructure and services.

1.3 Building Healthy Communities

1.3.1 Encourage active healthy lifestyles for people of all ages, abilities and interests.

1.3.2 Spaces where people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can flourish.

Current Strategic Documents

Domestic Animal Management Plan 2022-25

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

The Domestic Animal Management Plan 2022-2025 was developed in accordance with section 68A of the Domestic Animal Management Act 1994. Under the Act Council is required annually to review its Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP).

Discussion

The Domestic Animal Management Plan 2022-2025 was adopted in November 2021, and this is the third annual review. The plan states that under Section 68A (3) of the Domestic Animals Act, every Council must:

- a. review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan;
- b. provide the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan; and
- c. publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

The DAMP Review 2024 (attached) details the actions that have started, the actions that have been completed.

Achievements within the third year of the plan include:

Cat Containment Order: In June 2024 Council resolved to adopt the implementation of a 24-hour Cat Containment Order, requiring all cats within the municipality to be confined to their owner's property, unless the cat is appropriately restrained in a cat carrier or leashed. The order was gazetted on 11 July 2024 and will come into effect on 1 January 2025. There will be a six-month amnesty period. Enforcement action will commence from 1 July 2025.

There was extensive community consultation completed over a nine-month period regarding cat containment. It was important to gain the community's feedback on cat containment and ensure they were well informed about the negative impacts of roaming cats. Consultation included two surveys (including multi-lingual), community pop up sessions, newspaper articles, various social media posts, radio interviews and a two-week submission period. 82% of survey respondents said they would support the introduction of a cat curfew.

Animal Procedure Manual: The Regulatory Services team are in the final stages of developing a manual to provide Authorised Officers with a framework to follow for the regulation and enforcement of laws relating to domestic animals and livestock. All animal relates policies and procedures have been incorporated into the manual as well as all day-to-day animal management operations.

New Pound Register: Prior to the new Cognito Pound Register going live on 1 October 2024, Rangers were using a very basic register to record data for impounded dogs and cats. Unfortunately, this register could not be modified to gather and extract information for the new mandatory state animal fate data reporting.

Cognito Forms is an advanced online form builder that is fully customisable and sends form entries to SharePoint, creating a register. The Regulatory Services team developed their own Cognito form. The fields on the form were customised to suit our pound operations and procedures, as well as recording the animal fate data. In February 2024 Regulatory Services requested I.T's assistance with setting up more advanced functions, such as automatic calculations, formulas, workflows, creating secondary forms. IT tailored the new form and register to meet the mandatory requirements. The new program has simplified our processes and made our data collection much more efficient. The new register will save time and resources when the new fate date report is due in each year as well as when any other pound information is requested by Council.

Animal Statistics: In 2024 the team developed a new animal statistics spreadsheet. All animal related data is recorded on the spreadsheet including infringements, animal complaints, dog attacks, registrations received and adoptions figures. This has already been proved to be a useful and time-saving tool when specific animal management information has been requested. It was used for the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework, Council request for Local Law data and an FOI request from the Herald Sun for dog attack statistics.

Increase in new animal registrations: There has been an increase in new animal registrations with 447 received in 2023/24 from 416 received in 2022/23. The increase is attributed by a higher social media presence and promotion of responsible pet ownership, including the introduction of online registrations and payments. This has enabled pet owners the convenience to register their pet without the need to physically

attend a service centre. At least half of online animal registrations are received outside business hours.

The increase in new animal registrations can also be attributed to officers conducting quarterly checks with microchipping company Central Animal Records, to obtain a list of pets microchipped within the municipality and identifying those who were not registered and following up accordingly. Council officers also frequently verbally promote pet ownership responsibilities including pet registration requirements, in person and over the phone. In 2024 SMS messages were sent about animal renewals prior to overdue notices being sent, which resulted in a decrease of overdue notices and phone calls required, saving time, money and resources.

Animal Signage: In 2024, 48 new signs were installed throughout the municipality to promote responsible pet ownership. The signs include keep dogs out of playgrounds, keep dogs on leash and clean up after dogs/carry a bag. The signs have phrases, photos and pictures to promote positive behaviour.

Amendments to plan

No changes to the DAMP are required or recommended as a result of the review. A copy of this report and the review will be sent to the relevant State Government department and reported in Councils annual report.

Consultation

Consultation, as required will be undertaken in the remaining steps of the plan.

Financial Implications

Nil.

Social Implications

The intention of the Domestic Animal Management Plan is to provide community safety in relation to responsible pet ownership.

Economic Implications

Nil.

Environmental Implications

Responsible pet ownership leads to improved outcomes for native animals.

Risk Management Implications

Nil.

Attachments: 1. DAMP Plan Review Number 3 2024 [2.6.1 - 15 pages]

Options

That Council

1. Note the Domestic Animal Management Plan Review 2024 and the work carried out over the third year of the plan to ensure the management of domestic animals.
2. Make no amendments to the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2022-25.
3. Provide a copy of the review of the Domestic Animal Management Plan to the Secretary of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

Recommendation/s

That Council endorse the Domestic Animal Management Plan Review 2024 and the work carried out over the third year of the plan to ensure the management of domestic animals and provides a copy of the review to the Secretary, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

Domestic Animal Management Plan 2022 - 25 Action Plan - October 2024

All data correct as at 15/10/2024.

2.3 Our plans for training

OBJECTIVE 1: MAINTAIN TRAINING REGISTER THAT CLEARLY IDENTIFIES MINIMUM TRAINING REQUIREMENTS AND ANY ADDITIONAL TRAINING THAT SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY AUTHORISED OFFICERS						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Comments	Next Step
Identify training requirements during annual staff performance reviews	Annually – June and as required	Current	Add training to training register	2024 Training Completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog behaviour and management • Firearm training • First Aid and CPR Refresher training • Dog bite prevention training 	One Authorised Officer completed Cert IV in Animal Regulation and Management and Cert IV in Local Government and new Authorised Officer commenced same in 2024.	Training register to be reviewed annually at staff performance reviews.
Maintain training register	As required	Current	Update training register when new training has been identified and when Officers complete training	Completed	2024 staff reviews completed.	Training register to be reviewed annually at staff performance reviews.
OBJECTIVE 2: REVIEW OF INTERNAL PROCESSES WITH STAFF TO ENSURE CONSISTENT APPLICATION OF INVESTIGATION, COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT PROCESSES						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Comments	Next Step
Develop and implement new Animal Enforcement Procedure manual	2024	New	Manual developed and implemented	Due for completion in late 2024.	Completed review and audit of current procedures and policies to assess any gaps or missing items. Draft document in progress.	To be completed late 2024
Review investigation, compliance and enforcement policies and procedures to accommodate legal and other changes to ensure operational and service consistency and legislative requirements are met	Annually – July and as required	Current	Policies, procedures and processes updated and approved training undertaken and officers competent.	Policies and Procedures reviewed in 2024: Health Management Plan Swan Hill and Robinvale Animal Pounds	No animal related policies and procedures were reviewed in 2024 as they are implemented into the new Animal Enforcement Procedure Manual.	Complete the Animal Enforcement Procedure Manual to incorporate all animal related policies and procedures.
OBJECTIVE 3: ENSURE NEW AUTHORISED OFFICERS HAVE THE SKILLS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY AND EFFECTIVELY PERFORM THEIR REGULATORY ROLE						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation		Notes	Next Step
Ensure all new Authorised Officers undertake a detailed induction program with Senior Authorised Officers	Upon appointment of new staff	Current	Complete induction documents and evaluate at 3 month induction review	No new staff members commenced in 2024		
Identify minimum training requirements for new officers and ensure completion within 12 months of appointment	Within 12 months of appointment	Current	Evaluate at 3/6 month induction reviews and annual performance review.	No new staff members commenced in 2024		

3.3 Our plans to promote responsible pet ownership

OBJECTIVE: PROMOTE 'SAFE CAT, SAFE WILDLIFE' MESSAGING AMONG RESIDENTS						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Circulate 'Safe Cat, Safe Wildlife' education material throughout the municipality and promote via social media	March 2022 and then annually	New	Decrease in reports of wandering and nuisance cats	<p>2022 (Jan-Sept) 134 cat trap requests 4 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 29 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p>2023 (Jan-Sept) 102 cat trap requests 7 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 27 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p>2024 (Jan-Sept) 114 cat trap requests 1 nuisance complaint (other than cat trap requests) 47 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p><i>Increase in cat trap requests and wandering/stray cat reports but decrease in nuisance cat complaints.</i></p>	Link to Safe Cat, Safe Wildlife on SHRCC website and Facebook post October 2024. Information brochures distributed as required.	<p>Continue promoting Safe Cat, Safe Wildlife and Responsible Pet Ownership messaging in 2025 and enforcement of Cat Containment Order.</p> <p>Cat containment order adopted in 2024, effective from 1 January 2025. Amnesty/ education period for 6 months and enforcement action from 1 July 2025.</p>
OBJECTIVE: INCREASE EDUCATION ABOUT CAT CONFINEMENT RULES						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Increase education about 24 hour cat confinement requirement through media releases, social media, brochures, Council community newsletters	March 2022 then annually	New	Decrease in amount of complaints about cats being at large and reduction in cats trapped	<p>2022 (Jan-Sept) 134 cat trap requests 4 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 29 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p>2023 (Jan-Sept) 102 cat trap requests 7 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 27 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p>2024 (Jan-Sept) 114 cat trap requests 1 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 47 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p><i>Increase in cat trap requests and wandering/stray cat reports but decrease in nuisance cat complaints.</i></p>	<p>Cat containment order adopted in 2024, effective from 1 January 2025.</p> <p>Amnesty/education period for 6 months and enforcement action from 1 July 2025.</p>	<p>Continue promoting cat confinement and responsible cat ownership messaging to the community.</p> <p>Cat Containment Order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> November-December 2024 - Mail out/text messages to registered cat owners about Cat Containment Order 1 January 2025 Cat Containment Order commences (6 month amnesty period to 30 June 2025) March 2025 Information brochure sent out with animal renewal notices. 1 July 2025 Commence enforcement action, when appropriate

OBJECTIVE: PROVIDE EDUCATION MATERIALS IN LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation		Notes	Next Step
Develop multi-lingual education materials including registration requirements and the difference between registration and microchipping.	February 2022 then annually as required	New	Increase in animal registrations, decrease in nuisance complaints	<p>In 2023/24 447 total new animal registrations received, up from 416 in 2022/23.</p> <p>2022 (Jan-Sept) 29 dog nuisance complaints (off-leash, barking, excess dogs, at large causing nuisance) 134 cat trap requests 4 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p>2023 (Jan-Sept) 50 dog nuisance complaints (off-leash, barking, excess dogs, at large causing nuisance) 102 cat trap requests 7 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p>2024 (Jan-Sept) 47 dog nuisance complaints (off-leash, barking, excess dogs, at large causing nuisance) 114 cat trap requests 1 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p><i>Increase in animal registrations. Decrease in cat and dog nuisance complaints.</i></p>	Fact sheets on animal registration requirements were developed in six different languages and are available on website and in service centres, distributed as required. In Robinvale, the most frequently requested translated fact sheets are Vietnamese and Tongan.	Authorised Officers and Customer Service staff to use fact sheets to communicate with customers as required. Fact sheets to be reviewed annually or as required.
OBJECTIVE: INCREASE NUMBER OF NEW ANIMAL REGISTRATIONS AND RENEWALS THROUGH EDUCATION AND PROMOTION CAMPAIGNS						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Develop engaging fact sheets on responsible pet ownership and registration requirements.	2022 and ongoing	New	Increase in new registrations and renewals	<p>2022/23 2755 animals were registered with Council, including 2339 renewals and 416 new registrations. This includes 413 cats and 2342 dogs.</p> <p>2023/24 2716 animals were registered with Council, including 2269 renewals and 447 new registrations. This includes 426 cats and 2290 dogs.</p> <p><i>Increase in new animal registrations and decrease in renewals.</i></p>	<p>In 2022 and 2023, Responsible Pet Ownership brochures were sent out with all renewal notices (2800+), and made available at services centres, distributed to pet owners as required i.e. with Unregistered Animal Notifications. Various social media posts in 2024 about registration requirements and links to website.</p> <p>Decrease in renewals is due to SMS messages and more people notifying about their animal passing away or relocating.</p>	<p>Distribute as required.</p> <p>Cat containment fact sheets to be sent out to registered cat owners in late November 2024. To be incorporated with Responsible Pet Ownership brochures to be sent with registration renewals in March 2025.</p>
Create new registration packs and make available at vet clinics to be distributed when pets are microchipped	June 2022 and ongoing	New	Number of new animal registrations received via vet clinic	<p>New registration packs created and delivered to Swan Hill Vet Clinic 2022 and Pye Street Vet Clinic in 2023.</p> <p>It is not possible to know how many registrations were received via the vet clinic.</p>	Robinvale does not have a vet clinic to distribute packs.	<p>Council have introduced a new corporate stationary design. 2024 registration packs will be distributed to Swan Hill vet clinics once flyers have been modified to new style.</p> <p>Review annually and seek feedback from vet clinics.</p>

<p>Advertise animal registration renewals – website, radio, community newsletters, newspaper ads, social media and media releases</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Record number of media releases, social media posts, ads and articles</p>	<p>Media in 2024 (As at 17 October):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x social media posts on registration renewals • 1 x media release, 1 x newspaper article, 2 x social media posts promoting council free microchipping program (incl. free animal registration) • 1 x social media post + media release & newspaper article on half price animal registrations • 2 x social media posts on free ride home incentive • 1 x social media post about safe cat, safe wildlife • 1 x social media post on domestic animal businesses • 2 x social media posts on pets and fireworks • 1 x social media post on international dog day • 1 x social media post on Council goats • 6 x social media, 1 media release, 1 newspaper article and 1 mayoral column on dog park updates • 5 x social media posts, 3 mayoral columns and 3 media release & newspaper articles on cat containment (surveys, consultation etc.) • 1 x social media NDN program promotion 	<p>Local radio picked up the animal registration renewals but it is not possible to find out how many times they spoke about the renewals. The renewals were also part of the Mayor's column and radio discussions.</p> <p>Local newspaper ran an article on free microchipping which included information about animal registrations.</p>	<p>Continue promoting animal registrations, renewals and the microchipping program to community annually.</p>
<p>Follow up unpaid animal registration renewals</p>			<p>Reduction in number of phone calls, doorknocks and infringement notices issued</p>	<p><i>There has been a reduction in overdue notices, follow up and infringement notices issued for failure to renew registration.</i></p> <p>2022 713 overdue notices 387 phone calls/doorknocks 52 infringement notices issued</p> <p>2023 705 overdue notices 363 phone calls/doorknocks 72 infringement notices issued</p> <p>2024 439 overdue notices 276 phone calls/doorknocks 66 infringement notices issued</p>	<p>Common reasons reported to officers on why people hadn't paid their animal renewals included; couldn't afford it due to increase in cost of living, moved house and didn't update contact details, received notice and forgot to pay, animal was deceased and didn't realise that they had to contact Council to report it, and said that they didn't receive the original or reminder notices.</p> <p>In 2024, a new text message service was implemented as part of animal registration follow up. 654 SMS reminders were sent to pet owners about registration renewals prior to overdue notices being sent.</p> <p>A second SMS was sent prior to infringements being issued.</p>	<p>Continue to utilise the SMS system in 2025 and beyond after the high success rate in 2024.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE: INCREASE ONLINE MATERIALS AND PROMOTION</p>						
<p>Activity</p>	<p>When</p>	<p>New/ Current</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>Outcome</p>	<p>Notes</p>	<p>Next Step</p>
<p>Increase online education material and promotion in the community about responsibilities of dog owners when walking/exercising their dogs, on leash/off leash areas and the rules, the importance of desexing and cat curfews</p>	<p>2022 and ongoing</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Material made available online and throughout the community</p>	<p>In 2024, Council have provided education regarding cat curfews and enclosures throughout the cat containment consultation campaign. There were a number of fact sheets on Lets Talk platform.</p> <p>New agility equipment was installed at the Swan Hill off leash dog park and included information on the benefits of exercising.</p>	<p>Authorised Officers have been patrolling the most frequent areas where we receive reports of dogs off leash providing education to the community.</p>	<p>Continue promoting Responsible Pet Ownership to the community.</p>

4.2 Our plans to address over population and euthanasia

OBJECTIVE: REDUCE THE EUTHANSIA RATES OF CATS BY 5%						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Continue to encourage desexing of animals and promote new low cost desexing program a through website, local media and social media	Ongoing	New	Reduction in feral cats trapped and euthanased	147 wild and uncontrollable cats have been euthanased as at 30/9/2024, compared to 87 in 2023 (Jan-Sept) and 58 in 2022 (Jan-Sept). Cat trap requests: 2022 (Jan-Sept) - 134 2023 (Jan-Sept) - 102 2024 (Jan-Sept) - 114	The increase in cat trap requests could be attributed to an increase of information about the cat trapping program during the cat containment order consultation.	Continue to promote No Interest Loans Scheme to pet owners. NDN will continue to promote the low cost desexing program and continue their efforts in trying to convince the Swan Hill Vets to become part of the program.
			Number of desexing vouchers redeemed	At 30/9/2024 there have been 92 cats desexed since the program commenced in November 2021. In 2023/24 15 cats were desexed. 2 males and 13 female. 2 being pregnant or in season. In 2022/23 41 cats were desexed. 17 were male cats and 24 were female cats. 14 of the female cats were pregnant or in season. The decrease in cats being desexed is due to one (of the two) participating vets ceasing operation.	Desexing program (and NILS program) was also promoted by officers within the Regulatory Services team directly to customers when discussing registration. Low cost desexing program is currently active with Mildura Vets, which is 2.5 hours from Swan Hill.	
Continuance of Section 84Y agreements with approved animal rescue organisations	Ongoing	Current	Reduction in cats euthanased	2024 (Jan-Sept) 318 collected/impounded 15 returned to owner 154 adopted locally or sent to rescue groups under section 84Y agreements. 2023 (Jan-Sept) 187 cats were collected/impounded 21 cats were returned to their owner 79 were adopted locally or sent to rescue groups under section 84Y agreements. 147 wild and uncontrollable cats have been euthanased as at 30/9/2024.	100% of all suitable unclaimed cats that entered our pound were sent to rescue groups to find new homes.	Authorised Officers continue to work with our rescue partners under Section 84Y agreements to rehome unclaimed domestic cats.
Develop and distribute education material about cat enclosures and nuisance issues to cat owners	July 2022 and ongoing	New	Reduction in cats euthanased	147 wild and uncontrollable cats have been euthanased in 2024 as at 30/9/2024, compared to 87 in 2023 (Jan-Sept) and 58 in 2022 (Jan-Sept).	In 2024, Council have provided education regarding cat curfews and enclosures throughout the cat containment consultation campaign. There were a number of fact sheets on Lets Talk platform. Safe Cat, Safe Wildlife social media in October 2024. 24% increase on cats euthanased in 2024 to date, this may be due to responsible pet owners containing their domestic cats.	Continue promoting cat confinement, Safe Cat, Safe Wildlife and Responsible Pet Ownership to community. Cat Containment Order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> November-December 2024 - Mail out/text messages to registered cat owners about Cat Containment Order 1 January 2025 Cat Containment Order commences (6 month amnesty period to 30 June 2025) March 2025 Information brochure sent out with animal renewal notices. 1 July 2025 Commence enforcement action, when appropriate.

<p>Circulate 'Safe Cat, Safe Wildlife' education material throughout the municipality and promote via social media</p>	<p>March 2022 and then annually</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Decrease in reports of wandering/nuisance cats</p>	<p>2022 (Jan-Sept) 134 cat trap requests 4 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 29 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p>2023 (Jan-Sept) 102 cat trap requests 7 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 27 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p>2024 (Jan-Sept) 114 cat trap requests 1 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 47 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests) at trap requests)</p> <p><i>There has been a decrease in nuisance complaints but an increase in wandering cat reports.</i></p>	<p>Social media campaign about the Safe Cat, Safe Wildlife in October 2024 and articles on SHRCC website.</p>	<p>Continue promoting cat confinement, Safe Cat, Safe Wildlife and Responsible Pet Ownership to community.</p> <p>Cat containment order adopted in 2024, effective from 1 January 2025. Amnesty/ education period for 6 months and enforcement action from 1 July 2025.</p>
<p>Investigate funding opportunities to improve cat adoption rates within the municipality i.e. funding to contribute to desexing costs, bedding etc.</p>	<p>2022</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Increase in animals adopted within the municipality</p>	<p>There have been 2 cats adopted from our pound in 2024 (as at 15/10/2024), up from 1 in 2023 and 0 in 2022</p> <p>There was 4 cats adopted into our municipality via an external organisation in 2024. Up from 1 cat in 2023.</p>	<p>Officers will continue to investigate further opportunities to partner with a rescue group to offer and/or promote a low or no cost desexing programs.</p>	<p>Continue to investigate future funding opportunities.</p>
<p>Conduct community consultation through online survey to gain feedback on the introduction of mandatory desexing of cats in the municipality</p>	<p>2023</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Community feedback received, report to Council</p>	<p>In December 2023 a community consultation campaign was launched to gain the community's feedback on introducing a cat curfew and mandatory desexing of cats. This included online survey, community person pop-up sessions, radio interviews, social media and local newspaper articles.</p> <p>82% of respondents said they would support the introduction of a cat curfew and 82% also said they would support the introduction of mandatory desexing.</p>	<p>Further comments on mandatory cat desexing did include the financial issues with the cost of desexing. Council does currently offer a subsidised desexing program which is advertised through social media. The closest participating vet is Mildura.</p>	<p>Further research in regards to mandatory desexing will be conducted in 2025 after the cat containment order amnesty period concluded in June.</p>

OBJECTIVE: EDUCATE PET OWNERS TO KEEP MICROCHIP AND REGISTRATION DETAILS UP TO DATE						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Promotion campaign of keeping contact details up to date and change of ownership for microchips	2022 and ongoing	New	Increase in animals being reunited with owners before being impounded	<p>Dogs reunited with owners 2022 (Jan-Sept) - 52 2023 (Jan-Sept) - 49 2024 (Jan-Sept) - 54</p> <p>Cats reunited with owners 2022 (Jan-Sept) - 8 2023 (Jan-Sept) - 21 2024 (Jan-Sept) - 15</p> <p><i>There has been an increase in dogs being reunited with their owners but a decrease in cats.</i></p>	<p>In 2022 there was a promotion campaign in 2022 about keeping details up to date. In 2024 there have been several Facebook posts tying into the free microchipping day promotions, animal registration, free ride home incentive etc.</p> <p>Officers also monitor the community Lost and Found Pets Facebook pages in Swan Hill and Robinvale. These pages are very helpful in finding the owners of animals that are not microchipped or when owners details are not up to date on the microchip database.</p>	<p>Continue promoting Responsible Pet Ownership to community.</p> <p>In 2025, investigate to send SMS notification to all pet owners to check their details prior to renewals being sent and link to 'update details' section on website.</p>
Include information on how to update animal owner details on website, renewal notices, SMS notifications	2022 and ongoing	New	Increase in animals being reunited with owners before being impounded	<p>Dogs reunited with owners 2022 (Jan-Sept) - 52 2023 (Jan-Sept) - 49 2024 (Jan-Sept) - 54</p> <p>Cats reunited with owners 2022 (Jan-Sept) - 8 2023 (Jan-Sept) - 21 2024 (Jan-Sept) - 15</p> <p><i>There has been an increase in dogs being reunited with their owners but a decrease in cats.</i></p>	<p>The renewal form has been updated to highlight the process of updating owner details if incorrect.</p> <p>Information about keeping details up to date is also included on Council's website and on renewal notices. There have also been several social media posts in 2024.</p>	<p>Continue promoting Responsible Pet Ownership to community.</p> <p>In 2025, investigate sending SMS notification to all pet owners to check their details prior to renewals being sent and link to 'update details' section on website.</p>

5.3 Our plans for registration and identification

OBJECTIVE: INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF DOG AND CAT REGISTRATIONS IN THE MUNICIPALITY BY 5%						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
<p>Improve the accuracy of Council's pet registration database by contacting Central Animal Records on a quarterly basis and obtaining details of all pets microchipped in the municipality</p> <p>Check that all animals are listed on Council's pet registration database and follow up non-compliance</p>	January 2022 and ongoing	New	Record number of Unregistered Animal Notifications issued and increase in new animal registrations received.	<p>CAR microchip database cross-checked in March and June 2022 and October 2023 and September 2024.</p> <p><i>In 2024 13 follow up phone calls resulted in 5 new animal registrations</i></p>	Completed - September 2024	In 2025 continue cross checking the data from Central Animal Records with our registration system.
<p>Implement incentive program 'A free ride home' - Rangers to adopt a free ride home approach to registered and microchipped animals found wandering for the first time that have not caused a nuisance</p>	March 2022 and ongoing	New	<p>Promotion included in radio advertising, Council website and social media</p> <p>Feedback received</p> <p>Increase in new registrations</p>	<p>Promoted via social media in October 2024, and included in Responsible Pet Ownership brochures. Officers also provide education to community members.</p> <p><i>There has been a increase in new registrations - 447 in 2023/24, compared to 416 in 2022/23</i></p>	Officers informally promoting to community members in person and over the phone.	Continuing promoting 'A Free Ride Home' and animal registration to community.
<p>Develop online animal registration payments capability through Council's website and link to animal registration database</p>	January 2022 and ongoing	New	<p>Increase in new registrations</p> <p>Community feedback received</p>	<p><i>There has been a increase in new registrations - 447 in 2023/24, compared to 416 in 2022/23</i></p> <p>Online animal registration payments completed in May 2022. Informal community feedback received by administration staff and officers has been positive.</p>	<p>Informal community feedback included that the payment process is easier and more convenient. Customers liked being able to complete the registration and payment when it suited them, namely after work when they had more time.</p>	Online payments capability now complete.

<p>Advertise animal registration renewals – website, radio, community newsletters, newspaper ads, social media and media releases</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Record number of media releases, social media posts, ads and articles</p>	<p>Media in 2024 (As at 17 October):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x social media posts on registration renewals • 1 x media release, 1 x newspaper article, 2 x social media posts promoting council free microchipping program (incl. free animal registration) • 1 x social media post + media release & newspaper article on half price animal registrations • 2 x social media posts on free ride home incentive • 1 x social media post about safe cat, safe wildlife • 1 x social media post on domestic animal businesses • 2 x social media posts on pets and fireworks • 1 x social media post on international dog day • 1 x social media post on Council goats • 6 x social media, 1 media release, 1 newspaper article and 1 mayoural column on dog park updates • 5 x social media posts, 3 mayoral columns and 3 media release & newspaper articles on cat containment (surveys, consultation etc.) • 1 x social media NDN program promotion 	<p>Local radio picked up the animal registration renewals but it is not possible to find out how many times they spoke about the renewals.</p> <p>The renewals were also part of the Mayor's column and radio discussions. Local newspaper ran an article on free microchipping which included information about animal registrations.</p>	<p>Continue promoting animal registrations, microchipping and renewals program to community.</p>
<p>Follow up unpaid animal registration renewals</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Reduction in number of phone calls, doorknocks and infringement notices issued</p>	<p><i>There has been a reduction in overdue notices, follow up and infringement notices issued for failure to renew registration.</i></p> <p>2022 713 overdue notices 387 phone calls/doorknocks 52 infringement notices issued</p> <p>2023 705 overdue notices 363 phone calls/doorknocks 72 infringement notices issued</p> <p>2024 439 overdue notices 276 phone calls/doorknocks 66 infringement notices issued</p>	<p>Common reasons reported to officers on why people hadn't paid their animal renewals included; couldn't afford it due to increase in cost of living, moved house and didn't update contact details, received notice and forgot to pay, animal was deceased and didn't realise that they had to contact Council to report it, and said that they didn't receive the original or reminder notices.</p> <p>In 2024, a new text message service was implemented as part of animal registration follow up. 654 SMS reminders were sent to pet owners about registration renewals.</p> <p>A second SMS was sent prior to infringements being issued.</p>	<p>Continue to utilise the SMS system in 2025 and beyond after the high success rate in 2024.</p>
<p>Ensure all impounded animals are microchipped and registered prior to release</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Number of animals registered</p>	<p>In 2024 (Jan-Sept) 69 animals have been returned to owners. 65 of those were registered/microchipped prior to being released.</p>	<p>All animals must be registered and microchipped prior to release from the pound and/or rescue group under the 84Y agreements.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Issuing of Unregistered Animal Notifications for unregistered animals and enforcement action for non-compliance</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Number of animals registered, infringements issued, prosecutions</p>	<p>2023/24 54 Unregistered Animal Notifications issued 1 prosecution 26 infringements for failure to renew and register issued</p>	<p>The UAN Books have been a good initiative as it allows the Authorised officer to give the customer a physical on the spot reminder for when the animal registration is due. The next step is to investigate the possibility of adding a module into Authority to automatically run a monthly report instead of physically running a report to follow up on the outstanding UAN's.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

AGENDA - Scheduled Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Annual free microchipping program	Ongoing	Ongoing	Number of new animal registrations	<p>2024 Swan Hill - 12 Robinvale - 7 This resulted in 19 new animal registrations.</p> <p>This is down from 23 in 2023. However, Robinvale did increase from 1 attendee in 2023.</p>	Completed in April 2024 in Swan Hill and Robinvale.	Continue to offer microchipping program in Swan Hill and Robinvale annually.
Half price registrations 1 October-31 December	Ongoing	Ongoing	Number of new animal registrations	11 new registrations as at 15/10/2024	Half price registrations promoted on social media page with link to councils website and registration form (October 2024). Also conducted Media release in newspaper and Council website.	Half price registration will continue to be offered annually and promoted to community on social media.
Ensure animals adopted through other agencies such as the RSPCA and Lost Dogs Home into our municipality have been registered.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Number of new animal registrations	<p>As of 30/9/2024 Council have received 7 notifications of animal adoptions through external agencies (4 cats and 3 dogs).</p> <p><i>This is an increase from 3 received (1 cat and 2 dogs) in 2023.</i></p>	7 notifications received as at 30/9/2024, these have been followed up and actioned.	Continue following up animal adoption notifications from external agencies.
Publicise the Swan Hill Neighbourhood House 'No Interest loans scheme' for animal registrations	2022 and ongoing	New	Number of vouchers redeemed and new animal registrations	<p>No NILS vouchers used as of 16/10/2024. Compared to 2 in 2023.</p> <p>Social media post promoting NILS program and linking to Swan Hill Neighbourhood House info page scheduled for November 2024.</p> <p>Regulatory Services staff continue to promote the program to pet owners who needed assistance.</p>	NILS loans can be used for registration and desexing	Continue to promote NILS scheme to community.
Research opportunities to increase registration and renewal levels and implement appropriate initiatives	2023	New	Number of new registrations	<i>There has been a increase in new registrations - 447 in 2023/24, compared to 416 in 2022/23</i>		
Research ways to simplify, automate and improve access to animal registration and renewal.	2022 and ongoing	New	Number of new registrations and renewals	<p><i>There has been a increase in new registrations - 447 in 2023/24, compared to 416 in 2022/23</i></p> <p>Online payments now available for customers, as well as improvements made to the online registration form to simplify the process for uploading documents. E-notices are offered for registration renewals direct to email.</p>	Continuing to work with Civica/Authority and our Council IT team to improve our customer experience for animal registrations, renewals and payments.	Investigate further options to simplify, automate and improve customer experience.
Conduct feasibility study on the benefits of rewarding those who have invested in their pets (desexing, obedience training etc.) to receive an even lower registration fee.	2024	New	Number of new registrations and renewals	<i>There has been a increase in new registrations - 447 in 2023/24, compared to 416 in 2022/23</i>	Officers will investigate in 2025 the Vet project - travelling Vet that can desex upto 20 cats her day. Investigations will include budget constraints, comparisons with other councils, etc.	Options for animal registration fees to be considered prior to October 2025 when fees and charges budgets are submitted to Council for approval.

OBJECTIVE: EDUCATE COMMUNITY ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF ANIMAL REGISTRATION						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Develop multi lingual fact sheets explaining the importance of registration and the difference between registration and microchipping.	February 2022 and ongoing	New	Increase in new registrations, in particular in the Robinvale area	<p>2022/23 416 new registrations including 26 for Robinvale</p> <p>2023/24 447 new registrations, including 47 for Robinvale. <i>There has been an increase in new registrations.</i></p>	Authorised Officers and Customer Service staff to use fact sheets to communicate with customers as required. Feedback from Robinvale Officer that the fact sheets are already having positive impact. Vietnamese and Tongan language fact sheets have been the most popular tool.	Fact sheets to be reviewed annually and then as required. Continue promoting animal registration in the Robinvale community.
Increase the distribution of information on Responsible Pet Ownership through media releases, website, social media, brochures, Council community newsletters	2022 and ongoing	New	Record number of media releases, visits to webpage, social media posts and articles in local media	<p>In 2024, 2 media releases/newspaper articles and 5 social media posts.</p> <p>To date there has been 26,100 views to Council animal pages (as at 20/10/2024).</p>	In 2022 and 2023 Responsible Pet Ownership brochures were sent out with all renewal notices (2800+), and made available at services centres, distributed to pet owners as required i.e. with UANs and various social media posts throughout the year.	Continue to monitor number of visits to our registration and pet ownership website pages every year.
Create new registration packs and make available at vet clinics to be given out when pets are microchipped	June 2022 and ongoing	New	Number of new animal registrations received via vet clinic	<p>New registration packs created and delivered to Swan Hill Vet Clinic 2022 and Pye Street Vet Clinic in 2023.</p> <p>It is not possible to know how many registrations were received via the vet clinic.</p>	Robinvale does not have a vet clinic to distribute packs.	<p>Council have a new letterhead style. 2024 registration packs will be distributed to Swan Hill vet clinics once flyers have been modified to new style.</p> <p>Review annually and seek feedback from vet clinics.</p>

6.3 Our plans for nuisance animals

OBJECTIVE: REDUCE CAT NUISANCE COMPLAINTS BY 5%						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Increase education about 24 hour cat confinement requirement through media releases, social media, brochures, Council community newsletters	March 2022 then annually	New	Decrease in amount of complaints about cats being at large and reduction in cats trapped	<p>2022 (Jan-Sept) 134 cat trap requests 4 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 29 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p>2023 (Jan-Sept) 102 cat trap requests 7 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 27 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p>2024 (Jan-Sept) 114 cat trap requests 1 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 47 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p><i>Increase in cat trap requests and wandering/stray cat reports but decrease in nuisance cat complaints.</i></p>	Cat containment order adopted in 2024, effective from 1 January 2025. Amnesty/education period for 6 months and enforcement action from 1 July 2025.	<p>Continue promoting cat confinement and responsible cat ownership messaging to the community.</p> <p>Cat Containment Order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November-December 2024 - Mail out/text messages to registered cat owners about Cat Containment Order • 1 January 2025 Cat Containment Order commences (6 month amnesty period to 30 June 2025) • March 2025 Information brochure sent out with animal renewal notices. • 1 July 2025 Commence enforcement action, when appropriate.
Develop a cat trap hire procedure and promote the availability of cat traps	February 2022 and ongoing	New	Procedure developed, requests for cat traps	<p>Cat trap hire requests can be submitted online via Council's website.</p> <p>In 2024 (Jan-Sept) there have been 114 requests for cat traps, compared to 102 in 2023 (Jan-Sept) and 134 in 2022 (Jan-Sept).</p>	Online cat trap requests are popular with residents.	Review Cat Trap Hire procedure as required. Continue promotion of online cat trap requests.

Conduct community consultation through online survey to gain feedback on the introduction of mandatory desexing of cats in the municipality	2023	New	Community feedback received, report to Council	<p>In December 2023 a community consultation campaign was launched to gain the community's feedback on introducing a cat curfew and mandatory desexing of cats. This included online survey, community person pop-up sessions, radio interviews, social media and local newspaper articles.</p> <p>82% of respondents said they would support the introduction of a cat curfew and 82% also said they would support the introduction of mandatory desexing.</p>	Further comments on mandatory cat desexing did include the financial issues with the cost of desexing. Council does currently offer a subsidised desexing program which is advertised through social media. The closest participating vet is Mildura.	Further research in regards to mandatory desexing will be conducted in 2025 after the cat containment order amnesty period concluded in June.
Develop and distribute education material about cat enclosures and nuisance issues to cat owners	July 2022 and Ongoing	New	Decrease in cat nuisance complaints	<p>2022 (Jan-Sept) 134 cat trap requests 4 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 29 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p>2023 (Jan-Sept) 102 cat trap requests 7 nuisance complaints (other than cat trap requests) 27 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p>2024 (Jan-Sept) 114 cat trap requests 1 nuisance complaint (other than cat trap requests) 47 requests to collect stray/wandering cats (other than cat trap requests)</p> <p><i>Increase in cat trap requests and wandering/stray cat reports but decrease in nuisance cat complaints.</i></p>	<p>Online cat trap requests are popular with residents.</p> <p>Officers are distributing Responsible Cat Ownership brochures to pet owners as required.</p>	<p>Continue promotion of Responsible Ownership of Cats and the requirement for cats to be confined to their properties.</p> <p>Cat Containment Order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> November-December 2024 - Mail out/text messages to registered cat owners about Cat Containment Order 1 January 2025 Cat Containment Order commences (6 month amnesty period to 30 June 2025) March 2025 Information brochure sent out with animal renewal notices. 1 July 2025 Commence enforcement action, when appropriate.
Continue to encourage desexing of animals and promote new low cost desexing program. Continue to promote low cost desexing program through website, local media and social media	Ongoing	Current	Number of vouchers redeemed	<p>In 2023/24 15 cats were desexed. 2 males and 13 female. 2 being pregnant or in season.</p> <p>In 2022/23 financial year 41 cats were desexed. 17 were male cats and 24 were female cats. 14 of the female cats were pregnant or in season.</p> <p>The decrease in cats being desexed is due to one (of the two) participating vets ceasing operation.</p> <p>The low cost desexing program is currently ongoing.</p>	<p>The NDN desexing program funding is currently ongoing, pending funding availability.</p> <p>Officers will continue to investigate further opportunities to partner with a rescue group to offer and/or promote a low or no cost desexing programs.</p>	Subsidised desexing program ongoing, pending funding availability.
Purchase additional cat traps and cat carriers	2022	New	Traps purchased	5 cat carriers purchased 2022.	Nothing required in 2024	Completed

OBJECTIVE: REDUCE DOG NUISANCE COMPLAINTS BY 5%						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Develop a procedure for barking dog complaints	2022	New	Procedure developed. Decrease in need for enforcement action	Postponed to floods/mosquito response in 2022	Procedure will now be incorporated into the Animal Enforcement Procedure Manual	Procedure manual due for completion in 2024
Continually look for opportunities to improve signage in areas where dogs must be on leash and in areas where dogs are prohibited (such as playgrounds) throughout the municipality and update as required	Ongoing	Current	Number of inspections, signage updated as required	New signage - keep dogs out of playgrounds, keep dogs on leash and clean up after your dog installed throughout the municipality in 2024		Install new signage as required in 2025
Monitor compliance at the off leash dog park in Swan Hill	Ongoing	Current	Compliance with dog park rules, reduction in complaints	Officers inspect dog park weekly and speak with pet owners during those visits.	Installation of shade structures and agility equipment installed in July 2024. Compliance required is very minimal due to clear signage displayed for pet owners.	Continue inspections during patrols. Continue promotion of Responsible Pet Ownership during these visits.
Investigate options of establishing off leash dog parks in other areas of the municipality	2022	New	Community consultation, report completed	Council EDU Development Officer is starting the process of community consultation regarding a dog park in Robinvale. To begin 19/11/2024	Community consultation to be conducted November 2024. The Robinvale Dog Park has been listed in the 10 year Major Projects plan for 2029.	Council EDU to lead project and investigate/secure funding
Investigate options and seek community feedback on establishing timed off leash sessions in areas throughout the municipality	2024	New	Community consultation, report completed	Action put on hold due to the floods/mosquito response. This action will be completed in 2025 in conjunction with the Robinvale Off leash dog park planning .	Officers diverted to mosquito response activities. Project moved to 2025	Complete action in 2025
Educate the community through social media, website and local media about the requirement for owners to clean up after their dogs and availability of dog waste bags	Ongoing	Current	Decrease in amounts of complaints regarding dog faeces	Due to the installation of 6 new dog waste bag dispensers in 2023, there have been very minimal complaints received since. Information was added to Responsible Pet Ownership brochure and social media posts in October 2022 and August 2023.	Clean up after your dog' signage also installed throughout the municipality.	Continue promotion of the importance of cleaning up after pets when walking and/or attending the dog park.
Inspect nature reserves throughout the municipality to determine if dogs should be banned in those areas	2023/4	New	Community consultation, report completed	N/A	This will link this with the timed off leash dog sessions investigation and consultation.	To be completed in 2025
Educate the community through social media, website and local media about responsible dog ownership and ways to minimise dogs barking	Ongoing	Current	Decrease in amount of complaints regarding barking dogs	<i>There has been a decrease in barking dog complaints. 30 received as of 30/9/2024, compared with 38 in 2023.</i> Various social media posts about responsible pet ownership including barking dogs in 2024.	Review of barking dog packs completed in 2024	Continue promotion of Responsible Pet Ownership and ways to reduce dog barking. Rangers will continue working with dog owners when complaints are received.
Educate the community through social media, website and local media about required to keep dogs confined to their properties	Ongoing	Current	Decrease in amount of wandering dog complaints	2022 (Jan-Sept) Requests to collect stray and wandering dogs - 204 Dog at large causing a nuisance - 14 2023 (Jan-Sept) Requests to collect stray and wandering dogs - 203 Dog at large causing a nuisance - 13 2024 (Jan-Sept) Requests to collect stray and wandering dogs - 177 Dog at large causing a nuisance - 15 <i>There has been a decrease in requests to collect stray and wandering dogs.</i>	Various social media posts about responsible pet ownership including keeping dogs confined completed in 2024.	Continue promotion of Responsible Pet Ownership.

Increase information on the website about Local Law requirement - all dogs must be on a leash unless in a designated off-leash area and responsibilities of dog owners when walking /exercising their dogs	2022	New	Decrease in complaints about dogs off-leash causing a nuisance	<p>2022 (Jan-Sept) Dog off leash complaints - 2 At large causing nuisance complaints - 14</p> <p>2023 (Jan-Sept) Dog off leash complaints - 4 At large causing nuisance complaints - 13</p> <p>2024 (Jan-Sept) Dog off leash complaints - 1 At large causing nuisance complaints - 15</p> <p><i>There has been a decrease in off-leash complaints</i></p>	New Council website completed in 2024. Full review of Local Law section including off leash areas etc.	Review website as required. Next Local Law review is due in 2027.
Purchase additional dog waste bag dispensers for rural towns	2022	New	Dispensers installed and reduction in complaints	6 new dog waste dispenses installed in 2023.	New mapping system Pozi has all the locations and brochure updated in October 2024. Public have access to Interactive Map via Council's website.	Regularly review locations and update map/brochure as required
Purchase additional dog trap for Robinvale	2022	New	Trap purchased and nuisance dogs trapped	Dog trap currently being shared between Swan Hill and Robinvale.	Dog trap currently in Robinvale.	Will purchase new dog trap when required.
Provide advice to owners of pets with behavioural issues	Ongoing	Current	Disputes/issued resolved	Officers educate community members when they are responding over the phone and in person on how to resolve their disputes.	Ongoing	Continue working with pet owners to educate them on dealing with behavioural issues.

7.4 Our plans to minimise dog attacks

OBJECTIVE: CONDUCT AWARENESS CAMPAIGN FOR BOTH LIVESTOCK OWNERS AND DOG OWNERS ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES FOR DOGS FOUND IN PADDOCKS WITH LIVESTOCK						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Use media releases and social media to educate dog owners on the importance of confining dogs to their rural properties. Inform dog owners that dogs can be destroyed if found in livestock paddocks and owners prosecuted and potential claims for compensation of lost stock	March-May annually	New	Decrease in reports of dogs found in livestock paddocks	<p>During 2022 there were 6 reports of dogs found at or near livestock, 4 were dog attacks against livestock</p> <p>During 2023 there were 8 reports of dogs found at or near livestock, 3 were dog attacks against livestock.</p> <p>As at 30/9/2024 there has been 5 reports of dogs found at or near livestock, 4 were dog attacks against livestock</p> <p>Social media post in January 2023 reminding owners to keep dogs confined to their properties.</p>	There has been a consistent number of dog attacks against livestock over the past 3 years.	Continue promotion of Responsible Pet Ownership.
OBJECTIVE: IMPROVE REPORTING OF DOG ATTACKS						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Improve community awareness through media releases, social media and website of what a dog attack is and how to report it to Council	2022 and ongoing	New	Number of dog attacks reported	<p>2022 26 dog attacks reported 16 were actual dog attacks</p> <p>2023 27 dog attacks reported 20 were actual dog attacks</p> <p>2024 (as at 30/9/2024) 25 dog attacks reported 14 were actual dog attacks</p>	In 2024 there has been a consistent number of dog attacks against livestock, dogs, cats and people compared to previous years.	Continue community awareness campaigns regarding dog attacks
Investigate and recommend alternatives for the community to report dog attacks i.e. The Dangerous Dog Hotline	2022 and ongoing	New	Number of notifications from external agencies	No external notifications received in 2024.	Dangerous Dog Hotline number listed in our Responsible Dog Ownership Brochure. We prefer direct notifications at the time of the attack so that we can gather all information and investigate in a timely manner.	Continue to record number of external notifications

Improve information on Council website relating to dog attack investigations and reporting and develop an online reporting platform	2022 and ongoing	New	Online reporting tool developed and number of dog attacks reported	27 dog attacks reported in 2023. 25 reports in 2024 (as at 30/9/2024).	Reports of dog attacks can be taken 24/7 over the phone by trained officers.	Website information has been reviewed.
OBJECTIVE: REDUCE NUMBER OF DOG ATTACKS						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Publicise key dog attack prevention messages such as laws regarding registration, confinement of dogs to property, on leash in public areas through website, social media and community newsletter	Ongoing	Current	Decrease in number of dog attacks	26 dog attacks reported in 2022, 27 in 2023 and 25 in 2024 (as of 30/9/2024).	In 2024 there has been a decrease in attacks on other dogs, against people and cats and an increase in attacks on livestock and wildlife.	Continue to publicise key dog attack messages when serious dog attacks occur
Improve community awareness of dog attacks and the consequences for owners if their dog attacks another animal or person	Ongoing	Current	Decrease in number of dog attacks	26 dog attacks reported in 2022, 27 in 2023 and 25 in 2024 (as of 30/9/2024).	In 2024 there has been a decrease in attacks on other dogs, against people and cats and an increase in attacks on livestock and wildlife. Social Media campaign conducted in 2023	Continue community awareness campaigns regarding dog attacks
Education campaign via social media and website regarding dog behaviour and what powers Council has to enforce	Ongoing	New	Decrease in number of dog attacks	26 dog attacks reported in 2022, 27 in 2023 and 25 in 2024 (as of 30/9/2024).	In 2024 there has been a decrease in attacks on other dogs, against people and cats and an increase in attacks on livestock and wildlife.	Continue community awareness campaigns
Increase patrols of high risk locations	2022 and ongoing	New	Number of patrols	Number of patrols are not recorded.	Patrols are conducted at random in between jobs. Additional patrols in locations where dogs are reported to roam and locations where previous dog attacks have been reported.	Continue patrols
Publicise dog attack prosecutions through media releases, social media and website articles	Ongoing	Current	Decrease in number of dog attacks	26 dog attacks reported in 2022, 27 in 2023 and 25 in 2024 (as of 30/9/2024). 1 prosecution for non serious injury caused by dog attack in 2024 (as of 16/10/2024).	The Guardian article 'Puppy Attack Nightmare' about a dog attack on Friday 20/10/2023 discussed dog attacks, prosecutions statistics and education on what to do if people are in a similar situation. There has not been any serious dog attacks since then.	Continue to publicise dog attack prosecutions when they occur

8.3 Plans for Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed dogs

OBJECTIVE: ENSURE DECLARED DOGS ARE COMPLIANT TO RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Conduct random property inspections of declared dogs to ensure compliance.	Bi-Annually	Current	Record number of inspections. Compliance with requirements	Only one dog currently on VDDR. Inspection completed in May 2024 and conditions are being complied with		Inspections to be completed in 2024 and ongoing.
Enforcement of non-compliance of declared dogs	As required	Current	Prosecutions undertaken as required	N/A		Complete when required.
Continue to declare dogs as Restricted Breed, Dangerous or Menacing in accordance with legislation.	Ongoing	Current	Number of dogs declared	No dogs were declared Dangerous in 2024. There was one dog declared as Menacing. There are no known restricted breed dogs.		Continue following enforcement processes as required.
Investigate complaints about Menacing, Dangerous or Restricted Breed Dogs	Ongoing	Current	Number of complaints investigated	No complaints received in 2024 (as at 30/9/2024) about declared dogs.		Investigate any complaints received.
OBJECTIVE: ENSURE AUTHORISED OFFICERS WORK CONSISTENTLY AND FAIRLY WHEN DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO DECLARE A DOG DANGEROUS, MENACING OR RESTRICTED BREED						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Develop a procedure relating to dealing with dangerous and declared dogs	2022	New	Procedure developed	Postponed to floods/mosquito response in 2022.	Procedure will now be incorporated into the Animal Enforcement Procedure Manual	Procedure manual due for completion in 2024
Authorised Officers to undertake training to identify Restricted Breed dogs	When available	Current	Training completed	Existing officers have completed this training in recent years. Two new officers to complete Canine Anatomy Identification training when it becomes available through Agriculture Vic		Investigate upcoming training opportunities for new officers.

9.3 Our plans for Domestic Animal Businesses

OBJECTIVE: IDENTIFY UNREGISTERED DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESS OPERATORS						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation		Notes	Next Step
Improve public awareness of what a DAB is via social media and website	2022 and annually	New	Number of social media posts and website updates	Domestic Animal Business social media post was completed October 2024. New website page to be included on Council new website.	Ongoing social media campaign via councils website and Facebook posts	Continue community education of domestic animal businesses.
Follow up possible DABs identified during property inspections and/or notifications from public	Ongoing	Current	Investigations completed	No new DABs identified in 2024		Investigate as required.
Investigate all businesses that should be registered as a DAB – check media sources/social media for advertisements	Ongoing	Current	Investigation completed and business registered, if applicable	Social media and online research completed in October 2024. No new businesses.	2024 review conducted, no new businesses found to be operating.	Continue education and enforcement as required for DABs that have failed to register with Council.
Liaise with planning department to ensure all new planning enquires for animal related businesses are flagged with Regulatory Services	Ongoing	Current	Number of businesses referred	No businesses referred in 2024. Planning team aware of requirements for referral.	2024 review conducted, no new businesses found to be operating.	Investigate as required.
Inspect properties with excess animal permits to ensure they don't have more than 3 fertile female dogs	Ongoing	Current	Inspections completed	Inspections of all properties with excess animal permits completed in May 2024. All were compliant.	Completed for 2024.	Completed
OBJECTIVE: ENSURE ALL DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES ARE REGISTERED AND COMPLIANT WITH LEGISLATION						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation		Notes	Next Step
Conduct annual audits of DABs to ensure compliance with legislation and relevant Code of Practice	Annually	Current	Audits completed and compliance achieved	Inspections of all DABs completed in July 2024. All DABs were compliant with the Act.	Completed for 2024.	Inspect all DABs annually
Ensure Council pound processes reflect best practice standards	Annually	Current	Review pound policy and procedures	Completed review of all policies and procedures that were due for renewal in 2024.	Completed for 2024.	Continue reviewing current policies and procedures, as required. These will be implemented into the Animal Enforcement Procedure Manual.
Review Health Management Plan for Swan Hill and Robinvale animal pounds	Every 3 years	Current	Review completed September 2023			Completed - due again in 2026

10.2 Our plans for Emergency Management

OBJECTIVE: ENSURE CONSIDERATION IS GIVEN TO THE MANAGEMENT OF DOMESTIC ANIMALS IN AN EMERGENCY						
Activity	When	New/ Current	Evaluation	Outcome	Notes	Next Step
Review animal management functions in the MEMP, including contact lists	Annually	New	Review and submit report to Emergency Management Planning Committee.	Desktop review completed at start of the 2022 flood emergency. All contact details correct and holding facilities checked.	Purchase of additional supplies and equipment to ensure the animals were safe and well cared for during the flood event.	Completed
Provide information via website and social media to assist pet owners in an emergency	As required	New	Website updated and social media posts.	Completed in October and November 2022 as part of flood emergency.	Additional posts to be scheduled as required on social media, website and traditional media.	Provide information as required.
Ensure Authorised Officers are trained to manage domestic animals in an emergency.	When available	New	Training completed	Flood emergency in October / November 2022. Existing staff who have worked in previous emergencies completed informal training with new officers. Internal training of officers to be formalised and training for managing domestic animals in emergencies to be investigated. Mental Health Aid Training undertaken in October 2023 to help improve knowledge and skills when assisting people in emergency situations.	17 displaced cats and dogs were looked after during the 2022 flood event.	Investigate formal training for managing domestic animals in emergencies.

3 Officer Report for Noting

3.1 Quarterly Major Projects Program Update - September 2024

Directorate: Corporate Services
File Number: S15-28-04
Purpose: For Discussion
Information Only

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

4. Leadership - We will ensure accountable leadership, advocacy and transparent decision making.

4.1 Excellent management and administration

4.1.1 Well managed resources for a sustainable future

4.1.2 Provide robust governance and effective leadership

4.1.3 Sound, sustainable:

- Financial management • Excellence in service delivery • Strategic planning

Current Strategic Documents

10 Year Major Project Plan

Declarations of Interest

Council Officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

Summary

This report provides an update on the status of projects managed by various teams across the Swan Hill Rural City Council, focusing on those considered large, specialized, or challenging.

Discussion

In last three months, from June to September 2024, there has been substantial progress in projects managed by the teams. Few of the major milestones achieved are as mentioned below:

1. Award of Contract for Art Gallery Redevelopment Works;
2. Award of Contract for Swan Hill Tourism & Cultural Hub;
3. Practical Completion of Butterworth Street Drainage & Road upgrade works;
4. Practical Completion of Boundary Bend – Kooloonong Road works.

A major highlight of the quarter is that the Robinvale Caravan Park Bank Protection

project has been re-kindled with a focus to complete the designs which will enable further scoping and budgeting for this project. The aim is to complete the designs by January 2025.

With the meter altered for power, the solar panel projects for the Aquatics & Recreation centres (Swan Hill & Robinvale) are complete. Power bills can be monitored to compare cost savings and benefits realisation can be done over the next six to twelve months period.

An internal audit has been undertaken by AFS (Bendigo), in relation to capital projects. The audit panel reviewed Council's Project Management Governance Framework, performed a gap analysis, reviewed project risk management and alignment with Council's Risk Management framework. Further, the audit also focussed on three sample projects, and reviewed documents related to scoping/planning, as well as delivery phase. The audit is complete now and a draft report is expected by late October 2024 (received).

Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken with respective project managers and the executive leadership team.

Financial Implications

Nil.

Social Implications

Nil.

Economic Implications

Nil.

Environmental Implications

Nil.

Risk Management Implications

Nil.

Attachments: 1. CA MPP Monthly Report Sep 2024 (1) [3.1.1 - 2 pages]

Options

1. That Council notes the progress made on projects reported.

Recommendation/s

That Council notes the progress made on projects reported.

Major Projects Progress Update – September 2024

Major Projects Plan (MPP) - Quarterly Report - Ending 30th September 2024					
Location	Project Title	Overall Project Status	Work completed %	Project status as at 30th September 2024	Forecasted completion date*
Swan Hill	Butterworth St-Drainage & Road upgrade works	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	100%	Works completed on 13th Sep, Few defects noted which will be rectified by contractor.	Complete
Swan Hill & Robinvale	Solar Panel for Leisure Centres - Swan Hill, Robinvale	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	100%	Metering alteration done by energy retailer. Works Completed. Benefits realisation to be monitored over next six to twelve months period.	Complete
Swan Hill	Swan Hill Outdoor Pool Starter Blocks	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	10%	A local contractor has been engaged for installation of Starter Blocks. Works to be done in winter 2025.	Jun-25
Swan Hill	SH Tourism and Cultural Hub @ Pioneer Settlement - Design & Construction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	Design - 100% Construction - 0%	Building construction contract awarded to Keystone Building Group From Shepparton. Documents & Permits awaited to proceed construction	TBC
Swan Hill	SH Art Gallery Redevelopment - Design & Construction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	Design - 100% Construction - 0%	Contract awarded to Keystone Building Group. Documents being finalised to proceed with works.	TBC
Lake Boga	LRCIP3 - Lake Boga Southern Entrance Beautification Project	On Budget, Behind Schedule, Agreed Scope	80%	Works in progress for irrigation lines	Dec-24
Robinvale	Ronald Street Housing, Lots 5 to 8	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	85%	Finishing touches in progress for Units 5 & 6. Units 7 & 8 - Internal: Tiling, painting underway, External: Rendering, groundwork and painting is underway.	Dec-24
Nyah	Nyah Community Centre Renewal	On Budget, Behind Schedule, Agreed Scope	10%	From our release to market, there was only the one submission that was received, the evaluation panel have decided to re-tender.	TBC
Swan Hill	Jennings Road Reconstruction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	10%	Contract awarded, Documentation in progress to execute the contract.	Dec-24
Robinvale	New Britain Road Reconstruction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	10%	Contract signed, Works to start soon.	Dec-24
Robinvale	Robinvale Centenary Park Playground	On Budget, Behind Schedule, Agreed Scope	Design - 100% Construction - 0%	Three components – A - Earthworks & Concrete works B – Play Elements C – Landscaping & Associated works Only Component B Awarded, Component A & C out to tender as a suitable contractor could not be engaged in first attempt.	Mar-25
Robinvale	Robinvale Skate & Nature Play Shade Implementation	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	15%	Works awarded, contractor working to obtain building permits.	Jun-25
Swan Hill	Milloo Street Boat Mooring Platform - Design only	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	65%	Consultant working on detailed designs.	Dec-24
Boundary Bend	Boundary Bend – Kooloonong Road Reconstruction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	100%	Practical completion walkthrough is complete and certificate has been issued.	Sep-24
Swan Hill	Woorinen Road Construction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	95%	Initial Site works complete. Some remedial works to be undertaken early 2025.	TBC
Swan Hill	Long Street Reconstruction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	10%	Contract has been awarded and the contractor is waiting on the DTP approval to start the works. Anticipated start date is 21/10/2024.	Dec-24
Robinvale	Robinvale Caravan Park Bank Protection - Design Only	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	0%	Vendorpanel enquiry out to engage a consultant.	Jan-25

Major Projects Progress Update – September 2024

Major Projects Plan (MPP) - Quarterly Report - Ending 30th September 2024					
Location	Project Title	Overall Project Status	Work completed %	Project status as at 30th September 2024	Forecasted completion date*
Multiple Towns	Connectivity Enhancement Project	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	10%	<p>Component 1 (kerb & Channel at Adams Street, Stradbroke Avenue, Footpath at Coronation Avenue): Tender advertisement package ready, to be advertised subject to approval.</p> <p>Component 2 and 3 (footpaths at Manangatang, Ultima, Woorinen South): Design Consultant engaged, preliminary design provided by the consultant; being reviewed.</p>	TBC
Woorinen South	Station Street Reconstruction	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	10%	Contract awarded, Documentation in progress to execute the contract.	Mar-25
Nyah West	Revitalising Nyah West Shopping Precinct	On Budget, Behind Schedule, Reduced Scope	90%	Tree lighting component & tree planting delayed. Anticipated to be completed in Oct'24	Oct-24
Swan Hill	Tower Hill Stage 15	On Budget, Behind Schedule, Agreed Scope	80%	<p>Stage 15 Major construction works complete. Inspection and Audit pending, followed by Title registration</p> <p>Public Open Space Completed: Concept design, Community consultation, Detailed design To complete: Tender & Construction of POS</p>	May-25
-	Swan Hill Early Years Services Consultation	On Budget, On Schedule, Agreed Scope	75%	Community consultation almost complete. Remaining 1:1 interviews with families and service providers to complete. Total of 637 parents / carers have participated to date.	Sep-24

*Subject to contract agreement, weather conditions and any other unforeseen delays

4 Decisions Which Need Action / Ratification

4.1 Sign and Seal

Directorate: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S16-05-01
Purpose: For Noting

Declarations of Interest:

Council officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the subject of this report.

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 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
1169	Contract – Construction of the Swan Hill Tourism and Cultural Hub	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and Keystone Building Group Pty Ltd.	15/10/24
1170	Contract – Swan Hill Art Gallery Redevelopment Construction	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and Keystone Building Group Pty Ltd.	22/10/24
1171	Section 173 – private assets in Road Reserve (pipeline Long Lake Road, Lake Boga)	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and Redland Fruit Pty Ltd	19/11/24

1172	Section 173 – PLN 2024038 Condition 8 (subdivision) - 13 Ashton Street, Swan Hill	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and FM Developments Pty Ltd	19/11/24
1173	Section 173 – 2021-119-2 Condition 12 – 9B Naretha Street Swan Hill	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and Northvic Developments Pty Ltd	19/11/24
1174	Section 173 – 13 River Oaks Drive, Swan Hill.	Between Swan Hill Rural City Council and MJ and J Witney	19/11/24

Note: A Section 173 Agreement is typically a contract between the Council and a landowner that places use or development restrictions on the land.

They are intended to ensure compliance with conditions contained in permits granted by the Council and are often used in subdivision matters. These agreements refer to Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Consultation

Council authorise the signing and sealing of the above documents.

Recommendation/s

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

4.2 Councillor Assemblies - Record of Attendance and Agenda Items

Directorate: Chief Executive Officer
File Number: S15-05-06
Purpose: For Noting

Declarations of Interest:

Council officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

Summary

The following report provides attendance 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 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.

Council Plan Strategy Addressed

4. Leadership - We will ensure accountable leadership, advocacy and transparent decision making.

4.1 Excellent management and administration

4.1.1 Well managed resources for a sustainable future

4.1.2 Provide robust governance and effective leadership

4.1.3 Sound, sustainable:

- Financial management • Excellence in service delivery • Strategic planning

Current Strategic documents

No strategic documents applicable.

Key Legislation

There is no key legislation applicable

Attachments: 1. COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
November [4.2.1 - 2 pages]

Options

Council Assemblies are reported to ensure good governance and transparency.

Recommendation

That Council note the contents of the report.

COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
22 October 2024 at 1.00pm, Swan Hill Town Hall – Council Chambers

AGENDA ITEMS

- Robinvale Playground Design
- Regulatory Services Reporting on Local Law Statistics
- Greening and Cooling Urban Forest Strategy
- Little Murray Urban Frontage Rehabilitation and Landscape Plan
- 15 McCallum Street Water Tower – Heritage Listing
- Regional Workers Accommodation Fund

ADDITIONAL ITEMS DISCUSSED

- Nil

ATTENDANCE

Councillors

- Cr Les McPhee
- Cr Chris Jeffery
- Cr Jacquie Kelly
- Cr Stuart King

Apologies / Leave of Absence

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

OFFICERS

- Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer
- Bruce Myers, Director Community and Cultural Services
- Leah Johnston, Director Infrastructure
- Bhan Pratap, Director Corporate Services
- Michelle Grainger, Director Development and Planning
- Awais Sadiq, Development Manager
- Dione Heppell, Liveability and Project Development Coordinator
- Anusha Samel, Environment and Sustainable Officer

Other

- Nil

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Nil

**COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA
19 November 2024 at 12.30pm, Swan Hill Town Hall – Council Chambers**

AGENDA ITEMS

- Oath or Affirmation of Office and the Model Councillor Code of Conduct declaration / signing document
- Mayoral Term of Office
- Election of Mayor 2024/25
- Election of Deputy Mayor 2024/25
- Council Scheduled Meeting Dates, Times and Locations
- Annual Appointment of Councillor Representatives to External and Internal Committees Council Office Improvements
- Regional Worker Accommodation Fund – Approval to use surplus Councillor/Directors question time
- Christmas Update Decorations Update
- Domestic Animal Management Plan
- Greg Kuchel Audit and Risk Renewal of Term
- Major Projects Plan Updates for September 2024

ADDITIONAL ITEMS DISCUSSED

- Nil

ATTENDANCE

Councillors

- Cr Les McPhee
- Cr Stuart King
- Cr Peta Thornton
- Cr Philip Englefield
- Cr Hugh Board
- Cr Terry Jennings
- Cr Lindsay Rogers

Apologies / Leave of Absence

- Nil

OFFICERS

- Scott Barber, Chief Executive Officer
- Bruce Myers, Director Community and Cultural Services
- Leah Johnston, Director Infrastructure
- Bhan Pratap, Director Corporate Services
- Michelle Grainger, Director Development and Planning
- Helen Morris, Organisational Development Manager
- Melinda O'Dowd, Governance and Compliance Officer
- Dennis Hovenden, Manager Economic & Community Development
- Dione Heppell, Liveability and Project Development Coordinator
- Stephen Colombo, Business Development Manager, Swan Hill Incorporated
- Azam Suleman, Manager - Project Management Office

Other

- Nil

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Nil

5 Notices of Motion

6 Foreshadowed Items

7 Urgent Items Not Included In Agenda

8 To Consider and Order on Councillor Reports

9 In-Camera Items

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, in accordance with sections 66(1) and 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the meeting be closed to members of the public for the consideration of the following confidential items:

Regional Workers Accommodation Fund 2024

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM This item is to be considered at an In Camera meeting in accordance with Section 3(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2020, this item is to be considered in an In Camera meeting on the grounds that the item concerns Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.

Audit and Risk Committee - Membership Renewal - Greg Kuchel

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM This item is to be considered at an In Camera meeting in accordance with Section 3(1) (f) of the Local Government Act 2020, on the grounds that the item concerns personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

10 Close of Meeting