

27 October 2021

## COUNCIL ADOPTS COMMUNITY VISION AND COUNCIL PLAN

Hepburn Shire Council has adopted its four-year Council Plan and ten-year Community vision, including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, wrapping up 11 months of work on the Hepburn Together Project.

Mayor, Cr Lesley Hewitt, said the strategic documents were developed through input from ten percent of the community, and capture the aspirations of the community for the Shire now and in years to come.

“After such an extraordinary amount of work, we are very pleased to have adopted these important documents,” said Cr Hewitt.

“We’ve held community drop-in sessions, hosted surveys, undertook our first deliberative engagement process made up of citizens reflective of our community, and reached out to the broader community, in so many different ways. Thank you to everyone who took the time to be involved. We could not have done it without the contribution from our community and dedicated staff,” said Cr Hewitt.

The Community Vision is: Hepburn Shire – an inclusive rural community located in Dja Dja Wurrung country where all people are valued, partnerships are fostered, environment is protected, diversity supported, and innovation embraced.

“The vision is aspirational and includes the elements that we heard were important to our community - partnerships, the environment, our community, diversity and innovation,” said Cr Hewitt.

The Council Plan 2021-2025 describes how Council will strive towards the vision during the four-year term, where to focus efforts, and how to measure progress.

“We have identified five key Focus Areas that will be critical to reaching the goals set out in the Community Vision and Council Plan,” said Cr Hewitt.

Focus areas are:

- A resilient, sustainable and protected environment.
- A healthy, supported and empowered community.
- Embracing our past and planning for the future.
- Diverse economy and opportunities.
- A dynamic and responsive Council.

“Each Focus Area has a series of priority statements, with actions against each item,” said Cr Hewitt.

“We will measure our progress as we go and we will report back to the community through our regular quarterly updates and the Annual Report,” said Cr Hewitt.

For the first time Council chose to integrate the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) into the Council Plan, recognising the importance of the health and wellbeing of citizens, and that health and wellbeing impacts every area of Council’s operations.

“Our health and wellbeing plan is embedded throughout the Council Plan, and you can see clearly which actions will help to support positive health and wellbeing outcomes for our community,” she said.

“I urge all of our community to look at our plan for the coming years. We have thought deeply about this, we have debated and discussed all of the details.

“It’s great to have a document that reflects what is important to our community. Our priority now is to deliver on these commitments and bring this vision and plan to life,” she said.

Chief Executive Officer Bradley Thomas said he is incredibly proud of the work that has gone into the Community Vision, Council Plan and MPHWP.

“Staff and Councillors have worked tirelessly to produce these strategic documents. We’ve brought the community with us throughout this journey and have ended up with some exciting priorities for the years ahead,” said Mr Thomas.

“Thank you to everyone who had a say and got involved in this work. We have some terrific projects planned for the next few years and we look forward to continuing to deliver for our community,” he said.

Council also adopted the Financial Plan 2021-2031 at the Special Council meeting last night. The plan outlines Council’s financial position and the resources required to deliver the Council Plan and other strategic work.

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