



HEPBURN SHIRE COUNCIL  
ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL  
PUBLIC MINUTES

Tuesday 18 October 2022

Daylesford Town Hall  
76 Vincent Street Daylesford

5:30PM

A LIVE STREAM OF THE MEETING CAN BE VIEWED  
VIA [COUNCIL'S FACEBOOK PAGE](#)

Confirmed at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 22 November 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Hood".

Chair, Cr Brian Hood, Mayor

# MINUTES

Tuesday 18 October 2022

Daylesford Town Hall

76 Vincent Street Daylesford

Commencing at 5:30PM

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**BRUCE LUCAS**

ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Tuesday 18 October 2022

## CONDUCTING HYBRID COUNCIL MEETINGS

In the spirit of open, transparent and accountable governance, this meeting will be live-streamed on Council's Facebook page. The meeting will also be recorded and made available on Council's website as soon as practicable after the meeting.

- Council's meeting will be conducted tonight in accordance with:
- The Local Government Act 2020
- The Minister's Good Practice Guideline MGPG-1: Virtual Meetings
- Council's Governance Rules; and
- The Hepburn Shire Council Councillor Code of Conduct.

## 1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. On these lands, Djaara have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We recognise their resilience through dispossession and it is a testament to their continuing culture and tradition, which is strong and thriving.

We also acknowledge the neighbouring Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri to our South East and the Wadawurrung to our South West and pay our respect to all Aboriginal peoples, their culture, and lore. We acknowledge their living culture and the unique role they play in the life of this region.

## 2 SAFETY ORIENTATION

Emergency exits and convenience facilities at the venue to be highlighted to members of the public in attendance.

## 3 OPENING OF MEETING

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Cr Brian Hood, Cr Don Henderson, Cr Jen Bray, Cr Juliet Simpson, Cr Tessa Halliday, Cr Tim Drylie

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mr Bruce Lucas - Acting Chief Executive Officer, Mr Andrew Burgess - Director Organisational Services, Mr Tristan May - Acting Director Infrastructure and Delivery, Ms Natalie Walker - Director Community and Development, Mr Chris Whyte – Manager Information and Communication Technology, Ms Rebecca Smith - Manager Governance and Risk.

The meeting opened at 5:31pm.

### STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

“WE THE COUNCILLORS OF HEPBURN SHIRE  
DECLARE THAT WE WILL UNDERTAKE ON EVERY OCCASION  
TO CARRY OUT OUR DUTIES IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE COMMUNITY  
AND THAT OUR CONDUCT SHALL MAINTAIN THE STANDARDS OF THE CODE OF  
GOOD GOVERNANCE  
SO THAT WE MAY FAITHFULLY REPRESENT AND UPHOLD THE TRUST PLACED IN THIS  
COUNCIL BY THE PEOPLE OF HEPBURN SHIRE”

## 4 APOLOGIES

Mr Bradley Thomas - Chief Executive Officer, Councillor Lesley Hewitt

## 5 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Cr Tim Drylie declared a general conflict of interest in relation to item 12.1 General business as it is in relation to his personal leave request.

## 6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Go to 00:03:56 in the meeting recording to view this item.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 20 September 2022 (as previously circulated to Councillors) be confirmed.*

### **MOTION**

*That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 20 September 2022 (as previously circulated to Councillors) be confirmed.*

**Moved:** Cr Jen Bray

**Seconded:** Cr Juliet Simpson

**Carried**

**Voted for:** Cr Jen Bray, Cr Juliet Simpson, Cr Tessa Halliday and Cr Tim Drylie

**Voted against:** Cr Brian Hood and Cr Don Henderson

**Abstained:** Nil

## 7 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

## 8 COUNCILLOR AND CEO REPORTS

### 8.1 MAYOR'S REPORT

#### **Councillor Tim Drylie, Creswick Ward**

It has been an incredibly difficult week for communities in our shire with the floods that have also affected large parts of Victoria. Our shire was spared the worst of the inundation given the extensive damages caused to homes, businesses, and livelihoods elsewhere to the north of us. The biggest impacts we are facing will be the repairs required to many roads, paths and green spaces that have been washed away, or severely degraded. The full cost of this to us as a community will be known when a more detailed assessment is completed over the coming weeks and months. However, depending on the level of external funding available to cover these costs, the shortfall gap that Council is required to meet, will mean we need to review our budget and the associated services and projects we have planned.

The psychological impact of this most recent event is also being felt very strongly in our communities as it comes on top of other recent storm events in Trentham and Creswick over the past year. While the state government is offering residents some immediate financial support to eligible residents, the need for psychological and social supports will continue. I strongly hope that people will reach out to our storm recovery team, your own social networks and health professionals, while also looking out for the more vulnerable and isolated members in our community who might not be on social media or own a smart phone to keep them connected.

There are many people and agencies to thank for their efforts in helping to minimise the impacts of this event and the measures they put in place to help keep our community safe. I'd like to acknowledge the tremendous efforts of Hepburn Shire staff members who worked long hours in incredibly difficult and volatile circumstances. The need to be adaptable and make quick thinking decisions is critical in extreme weather situations and it is a testament to staff skill level and commitment that has helped us be in a better position now than we otherwise might be. Thanks also to the amazing efforts of the CFA who pumped water away from properties in danger, sand bagged homes and helped residents where required regardless of the time of day, or the inhospitable working environment. To the other agencies, the SES, Victoria Police, Red Cross, and the ABC we thank you too as together we rely on each other to play our respective roles for the greater good and in the best interests of our community.

Speaking of community, we saw during the past few days just how amazing we can be when we work together at a grass roots level. I saw so many examples where individuals, community groups and local businesses rallied together to act and support others in a time of great need. People turned up in droves, some taking time off work, to fill sandbags and deliver them. Biggin and Scott in Creswick bought truckloads of sand and the Creswick Football Club came to the aid of vulnerable Moore Street residents. There are many other examples and I thank you all for choosing to participate and not just sit on the sidelines as passive observers and armchair critics. As a council we know that emergency situations can be messy and stressful affairs and we are aware that learnings that need to happen and improvements made to our processes and communications. We value your feedback

and understand that we all need to be better prepared and willing to address over the next few weeks, months, and years for the growing effects of climate change and its direct impacts on health and wellbeing and our surrounding environment and ecosystems.

Several other things happened during the month including the announcement that Creswick will host the Mountain Biking event for the 2026 Commonwealth Games, that Daylesford will be the home to the Big Rainbow after a community engagement process to select a site and continued meetings and a tour to discuss issues and advocacy against the VNI West project and Western Renewable Links.

I'd also like to pay tribute to Uncle Jack Charles and his contribution to the arts and community on this day a State Funeral Service was held to honour and celebrate his life. Uncle Jack Charles was a proud Boon Wurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Woiewurrung and Taungurung man. He was also a highly respected Elder, actor, musician, potter, gifted performer and activist. He was also a survivor of the Stolen Generations. I pay my respects.

As this is the last ordinary meeting in the twelve-month Mayoral cycle, I'd like to thank my fellow Councillors, staff and the community for the support, advice, and feedback they have provided me over that time. There have been considerable social challenges during my term as Mayor including two climate change related storm events, the ongoing effects of COVID and the incredible pressures associated with the rising costs of living and construction, and housing affordability. However, I am proud of our many achievements and successes as a Council and community over the past twelve months many of which are outlined in our Annual Report being ratified tonight.

We must of course keep pursuing the fundamentals and get our house in order given our delicate financial position. However, we must also continue to fight for social justice, remove barriers to participation, reduce our emissions, get off gas, and heal our fragile environment and ecosystems.

## **8.2 COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

Go to 00:08:30 in the meeting recording to view this item.

### **Councillor Jen Bray, Birch Ward**

Presented a verbal report.

### **Councillor Tessa Halliday, Cameron Ward**

This month started with a Heritage Bus Tour of Kingston & District hosted by Friends of the Avenue. The tour was fantastic and a great opportunity to see the historic sites that will be impacted by the Ausnet towers. Thank you very much to the Friends of the avenue group for arranging this.

The health and wellbeing advisory group met on the 29 September 2022 and it was really encouraging to see how many actions are already being implemented from the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

I attended and spoke at the Clunes Ceramics award opening on the 1 October 2022. The works as always were of an incredibly high standard and we are lucky to have such a prestigious event in Clunes.



I met with the Acciona engagement team to discuss community engagement for the proposed wind farm to the west of Mt Beckworth and I am hoping you will see some good engagement coming from them in the new year.

We have all just experienced a stressful couple of weeks with some flooding and damage to property 2 weeks ago and then further flooding and much more damage last Thursday. This was an incredibly stressful time for us all and I am very thankful that all community members were safe and no houses were flooded above floor level.

The flood event last week highlighted some areas where council can make improvements in the way they support and communicate with the community and council officers are already working toward improvements. I am incredibly grateful to hear that a supply of sand for Clunes and Creswick is already being arranged prior to upcoming extreme weather events.

I would like to thank the community members who stepped up during the event to help fill sandbags, collect sandbags from Ballarat, deliver and place sand bags and check in on the vulnerable in our community. A big thanks to our CFA who ran the evacuation and attended to calls from the community for help with sand bags and dangerous roads. Finally a big thank you to the council staff, Councillors, SES and Victoria police who all assisted to keep everyone informed and safe.

### **Councillor Don Henderson, Creswick Ward**

Councillor report October 2022

Sadly many people in our shire have been impacted by recent storms that have caused havoc.

Due to the great community teamwork Creswick was saved from what could have been very serious inundation of homes. The community turned out to fill sand bags and deliver them to front line workers.

There are too many people to name but standout organisations were SES, CFA, Red Cross, Salvation Army and police. Last but not least our staff from many departments went into action and I cannot speak more highly of them all from Acting CEO Bruce Lucas right through all of the ranks. I use that term because it was like a military operation.

On Saturday Martha Haylett Labor candidate for Ripon and Minister Jaala Pulford met up with myself and Bruce Lucas to see first hand what some of the damage was and what action was needed short, medium and long term. I have since heard back to let me know that information was being taken straight to the premier Daniel Andrews. I wish to thank Bruce for giving up much needed and earned rest in order to advocate on behalf of the shire and not just Creswick. The sad thing is that it seems that the largest impact could be the mental trauma and I urge those suffering to seek professional help.

Once again the clean up and repairs to infrastructure begins.

The bad weather has highlighted the sheer lunacy of choosing a site that was well under water on which to build a terminal station for the Western Renewables project. One local took to his kayak to highlight just how much water gathers on this site. It has also come to light that Ausnet is determined to threaten landholders into either giving access or face compulsory acquisition.

Dean once again put on sheepdog trials and competitors and visitors really enjoyed watching some very determined sheep being expertly rounded up by some of the best dogs and handler in the country. Brian Mahar was on hand to give folk a much needed laugh with his rendition of Old Sniff. It was fantastic to see so many local volunteers pitching in to make this the best show to date. A good sum was also raised for charity Cops For Kids.

What was to be a very good news story was the announcement that Creswick will be the site of the Commonwealth Games Mountain Bike events was overshadowed by the rain and storms. I know that the trails project has been a long time coming but the announcement will now give us the opportunity to build a better facility that will be world class. Our friends in other councils have given great support to our bid so a big thank you to them.

The events of recent times just shows how patient and resilient our community is when it really counts.

### **Councillor Brian Hood, Coliban Ward**

Councillors,

My attention in the past month has been drawn to pleasant and rewarding duties such as presenting prizes at a photography competition that centred on experiences in and after the storm event and working with council officers assisting local businesses and traders in the creation of an online business directory.

There has also been the unfortunately customary need to advise residents as they prepare objections to inappropriate and undesirable planning applications.

But the major focus in the past month or so has been participating in discussions with my Councillor colleagues to formulate strategies and priorities to address the various challenges currently facing council. These include, but are not limited to, fundamentally important matters such as improving council's financial sustainability, ensuring council is compliant with its regulatory obligations and finding ways to improve customer service.

The cumulative impact of rate capping, cost shifting by other levels of government, the lack of economies of scale and geographical realities make the delivery of services for which Council is responsible increasingly difficult and less than satisfactory in the community's eyes. The post-Covid population rush into regional Victoria puts further strain on Council's resources. Addressing the underlying problems will require action from the State Government and appropriate strategies by Council.

Clear, informative communication and consultation will be key, as it could be argued that in its absence the disparity between community expectations and Council's financial and human capacity will only linger. I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that such corrective action is implemented, and with appropriate urgency. It is critical that we act now if Council is to be financially sustainable and capable of delivering the services our community needs.

### **Councillor Juliet Simpson, Holcombe Ward**

I met a new member of the Council executive team at the Glenlyon Recreation Reserve and we had a look around.

I attended two CEO remuneration committee meetings

On the 10 October 2022, I chaired a mineral springs reserve Advisory committee meeting in the Council Chambers.

I attended three briefings

In the evening of Wednesday 12 October 2022, I attended two sessions on the Victoria to NSW Interconnector West(VNIWest) project at the Yandoit Hall. It was organized by the Hepburn Shire Council and the community had the chance to ask three representations of AEMO(Australia Energy market operator) questions.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council receives and notes the Mayor's and Councillors' reports.*

### **MOTION**

*That Council receives and notes the Mayor's and Councillor Reports.*

**Moved:** Cr Jen Bray

**Seconded:** Cr Juliet Simpson

**Carried**

**Voted for:** Cr Don Henderson, Cr Jen Bray, Cr Juliet Simpson, Cr Tessa Halliday and Cr Tim Drylie

**Voted against:** Nil

**Abstained:** Cr Brian Hood

### 8.3 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Go to 00:24:31 in the meeting recording to view this item.

The Chief Executive Officer Report informs Council and the community of current issues, initiatives and projects undertaken across Council.

#### ATTACHMENTS

- Nil

#### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER UPDATE

This month's CEO report is shorter than usual as I'm taking three weeks of annual leave during October.

Some of the meetings I have attended since the September Council meeting include:

- 'Listening Post' meeting
- Meeting with Hepburn Matters
- Council briefings
- Council meeting
- Internal Audit Meeting
- VNI West Monthly Roundtable Meeting
- Meeting to discuss food related initiatives within the Shire
- Introduction to Matrix Residential Research Institute for Mathematical Sciences in Creswick
- Commonwealth Games 2026 Stakeholder Session
- Meeting with Martha Haylett, Labor Candidate for Ripon

We're really excited to have won the Australia-wide vote to have The Big Rainbow, Australia's first "big" landmark dedicated to the celebration of regional LGBTIQA+ pride and inclusion, which was designed with members of the LGBTIQA+ and First Nations communities.

Daylesford was chosen after 16,000 public votes were cast ahead of fellow shortlisted towns Broome (WA), Hay (NSW) and Katherine (NT).

The Big Rainbow was first unveiled in its temporary home in Sydney in March ahead of a call for submissions to find its new home somewhere in regional Australia. We are currently taking submissions from the community as to where the big rainbow will be located.



Creswick Ward Councillors Tim Drylie and Don Henderson, and I were recently treated to a tour of the University of Melbourne Creswick Campus.

The site is a well utilised and really growing because the Pandemic resulted in a number of closures to other sites. The campus is home to a lot of training, houses medical students and forestry research.

The site is also home to MATRIX, which is a residential research institute for the mathematical sciences in Australia, bringing brilliant and creative minds together at residential research institutes worldwide is the optimal way to deepen mathematical knowledge, initiate collaborations and stimulate innovative thinking.



Bruce Lucas is taking on the role of Acting CEO whilst I'm away on leave.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council receives and notes the Chief Executive Officer's Report for October 2022.*

### **MOTION**

*That Council receives and notes the Chief Executive Officer's Report for October 2022.*

**Moved:** Cr Don Henderson

**Seconded:** Cr Brian Hood

**Carried**

**Voted for:** Cr Brian Hood, Cr Don Henderson, Cr Jen Bray, Cr Juliet Simpson, Cr Tessa Halliday and Cr Tim Drylie

**Voted against:** Nil

**Abstained:** Nil

## 9 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME

This part of the Ordinary Meeting of Council allows for the tabling of petitions by Councillors and Officers and 30 minutes for the purposes of:

- Tabling petitions
- Responding to questions from members of our community
- Members of the community to address Council

Community members are invited to be involved in public participation time in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

Individuals may submit written questions or requests to address Council to the Chief Executive Officer by 10:00am the day before the Council Meeting.

Some questions of an operational nature may be responded to through usual administrative procedure. Separate forums and Council processes are provided for deputations or for making submissions to Council.

Questions received may be taken on notice but formal responses will be provided to the questioners directly. These responses will also be read out and included within the minutes of the next Ordinary Meeting of Council to make them publicly available to all.

### **BEHAVIOUR AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Council supports a welcoming, respectful and safe environment for members of the community to participate at Council Meetings regarding issues that are important to them. Council's Governance Rules sets out guidelines for the Mayor, Councillors, and community members on public participation in meetings. It reinforces the value of diversity in thinking, while being respectful of differing views, and the rights and reputation of others.

Under the Governance Rules, members of the public present at a Council Meeting must not be disruptive during the meeting.

Respectful behaviour includes:

- Being courteous when addressing Council during public participation time and directing all comments through the Chair
- Being quiet during proceedings
- Being respectful towards others present and respecting their right to their own views

Inappropriate behaviour includes:

- Interjecting or taking part in the debate
- Verbal abuse or harassment of a Councillor, member of staff, ratepayer or member of the public
- Threats of violence

## 9.1 PETITIONS

No petitions were tabled.

## 9.2 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair will read out responses to questions taken on notice from the last ordinary meeting, and then read and respond to new questions received in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

The following questions were received for tonight's Council Meeting:

### **Question 1 – Jennifer Beacham**

In 2012/2013 as a member of the Mineral Springs Advisory Committee, we discussed with Parks (Now DWELP) their conditions on rental of the Mineral Springs Reserve cottage. Their only prerequisite was 3 months limit on tenancy, not on who the tenants should be. In 2013 the Council called for Expressions of Interest for the use of the cottage.

Has the Council now rejected the use of the cottage for homeless people on a short term basis? It has some advantages over sleeping in a car and they could receive support from local agencies until they can move on to more appropriate shelter within three months. The provision of showers at Clunes and Daylesford Neighbourhood Centres is not a solution to this problem.

### **Response – Mayor Tim Drylie**

The building is not suitable for any kind of residential use, including use for short term accommodation.

Council is working to respond to the increasing number of homeless and rough sleepers and has recently facilitated several key stakeholder meetings to provide a solution for people to have access to shower and laundry facilities.

The key stakeholders involved are in further discussions to establish a regular network to increase communication and outcomes for people experiencing homelessness/rough sleeping.

Child and Family Services (CAFS) are the funded agency to provide support with emergency housing and have a permanent office in Daylesford. They are also supported by Daylesford Op shop who do a great job of providing community support with emergency housing.

Council has commenced work on its affordable housing strategy and encourages the community to provide feedback on this strategy when consultation is undertaken.

Officers will provide some additional detail in the written response to you.

### **Question 2 – Jennifer Beacham**

I apologise if no response has been provided so far as Council understood contact had been made. The matter will be raised with the relevant area and Officers will provide this information to you as soon as possible.

### **Response – Mayor Tim Drylie**

I apologise if no response has been provided so far. The matter has been raised with the relevant area and Officers will provide this information to you as soon as possible.

### **Question 3 – David Moore**

Can the Council guarantee that there will be a statement of significance for its heritage listed property at the Rex before the land on which it stands is sold?

### **Response – Mayor Tim Drylie**

The site is individually listed under Heritage Overlay (amongst other planning controls) under the Hepburn Planning Scheme. The Council will make available any information it holds on the heritage values of the building to any prospective purchaser. A statement of significance is included in Hepburn Springs Daylesford Conservation Heritage Study. Council also holds additional information from Heritage Victoria from its assessment of the significance of the building in 2007. These documents can be made available.

### **Question 4 – David Moore**

Will the Council make sure the Rex's heritage standing in the planning scheme both internal and external are respected and save it either in private hands or in public hands from the ravages of the bulldozer?

### **Response – Mayor Tim Drylie**

Council will consider the merits of any future planning permit application in accordance with the requirements of the Hepburn Planning Scheme. The Heritage Overlay that applies to this site requires any decision maker (such as Council, VCAT or the Minister for Planning) to consider a range of matters including whether the proposal will adversely affect the significance of the heritage place, is in keeping with the character and appearance of adjacent buildings and the heritage place or whether alteration will adversely affect the significance of the heritage place.

## **9.3 REQUESTS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL**

Members of our community who have submitted a request in accordance with Council's Governance Rules will be heard.

Ms Galena Debney addressed Council in support of the introduction of a cat curfew.



## **10 A HEALTHY, SUPPORTED, AND EMPOWERED COMMUNITY**

### **10.1 ADOPTION OF DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021-2025**

Go to 00:35:22 in the meeting recording to view this item.

#### **ACTING DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DELIVERY**

*In providing this advice to Council as the Coordinator Health and Community Safety, I Lisa Sparkes have no interests to disclose in this report.*

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 FINAL [**10.1.1** - 38 pages]
2. Community Engagement Report [**10.1.2** - 18 pages]

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with the proposed four-year Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) for adoption.

This plan has been developed to provide a strategic framework for Council to guide policy direction, service programs, initiatives and action plans related to animal management.

To initiate the development of the draft management plan, Council invited community feedback to help identify local issues in early 2021. There was extensive feedback received which was used to inform the direction of the new plan.

Following the development of the draft management plan which included input from various stakeholders, the plan was put on public exhibition for a period of three weeks in August 2022 and open for comment.

The Domestic Animal Management Plan presented to Council tonight for adoption includes minor amendments following the public exhibition period in relation to the Cat Curfew Program and Off Lead Dog Parks which are clarified in the body of the report below.

The plan aligns with the Council Plan 2021-2025 under the focus area of a healthy, supported and empowered community. It seeks to increase the availability and accessibility of services in the municipal area to support liveability, health and wellbeing.

#### **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council:*

1. *Acknowledges the community members who have provided input and feedback into new Domestic Animal Management Plan;*
2. *Notes the Community Engagement Report which outlines input and feedback received from the community during the development of the plan;*

3. *Notes the changes that have been made to the final plan following community feedback on the Draft plan; and*
4. *Adopts the new Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025.*

## **MOTION**

*That Council:*

1. *Acknowledges the community members who have provided input and feedback into new Domestic Animal Management Plan;*
2. *Notes the Community Engagement Report which outlines input and feedback received from the community during the development of the plan;*
3. *Notes the changes that have been made to the final plan following community feedback on the Draft plan; and*
4. *Adopts the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025; and*
5. *Requests that Officer's bring a report to a future Meeting of Council exploring the impacts and implications of bringing forward the introduction of a 24 hour cat curfew.*

**Moved:** Cr Don Henderson

**Seconded:** Cr Jen Bray

**Carried**

**Voted for:** Cr Brian Hood, Cr Don Henderson, Cr Jen Bray, Cr Juliet Simpson, Cr Tessa Halliday and Cr Tim Drylie

**Voted against:** Nil

**Abstained:** Nil

## **BACKGROUND**

The Domestic Animal Management Plan describes how Council will meet its responsibilities under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and aims to support improvements in responsible pet ownership and animal welfare by focussing on eight key themes. These themes have been derived from the State Template for development of a Council Domestic Animal Management Plan and include:

- *Training of Authorised Officers*
- *Registration & identification of domestic animals*
- *Nuisance animals*

- *Dog attacks*
- *Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs*
- *Over population & high euthanasia*
- *Domestic animal businesses*
- *Responsible pet ownership and compliance with legislation*

As part of the process of developing the new management plan, Council invited community feedback in 2021, to help inform the direction of domestic animal management in the municipality. The feedback was used to identify local issues in relation to animal management and develop a range of new actions that relate to these issues.

Following development of the draft management plan, the draft plan was put on public exhibition for a period of three weeks and received a significant amount of feedback and interest by local media.

Council received over 80 pieces of feedback on draft plan during the public exhibition period with some of the most common themes including;

- Varied views when it comes to Cat Curfews and Cat Containment Programs and how these should be implemented.
- Greater action on feral cats
- Stronger action regarding dogs on leads in public spaces
- Objections to Dog Parks and prohibiting dogs on sporting grounds.
- Reminding dog owners of their responsibility.
- An increase in enforcement relating to both cat and dog issues

## **KEY ISSUES**

As a result of receiving all feedback from various stakeholders following the public exhibition period, there has been two notable amendments to the draft management plan summarised below.

Our Plan for Nuisance Animals

- a) Objective 2 has been amended to the following:

*Develop and implement a Cat Curfew Program that includes education, after hours procedures and enforcement actions*

New actions under this objective include:

- Develop a Cat Curfew Program and draft Cat Curfew Policy (2022/2023)
- Implement actions of the cat curfew policy once it has been adopted (July 2023)
- Work towards development of a 24hr hour cat containment policy (2025)
- Continue to work with community and external organisations on actions relating to reduction of feral cat population throughout the Shire (Ongoing)

- b) Objective 3 has been amended to remove the action regarding identification of suitable interim off-lead dog areas. This is proposed to form part of the current Off-leash Dog Park planning project.
- c) There have been some other minor changes and editing to the formatting and wording of the report which has no material impact on the report.

### **POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

This plan will meet Council's obligations under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*. The plan will also meet the following priorities of the Council Plan 2021–2025:

- Focus Area - A healthy, supported and empowered community
  - Priority Statement - 2.2 Increase the availability and accessibility of services in the Hepburn Shire area to support liveability, health and wellbeing
  - Priority Statement - 2.2.8 Continue services to build strong, safe and resilient communities

### **GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

Adopting the Domestic Animal Management Plan is expected to have a positive impact on economic, social and environmental sustainability measures as the plan outlines a series of objectives and actions that provide a simple and easy to understand strategic framework that aims to improve Council's performance against the eight key areas of the plan.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Council currently meets its obligations under the Act through the provision of Community Safety Officers within the Community Safety Team. The majority of the actions outlined within the management plan will fall within the existing budget.

All first-year actions will be carried out within the existing budget, although any significant future actions, such as introduction of a cat curfew or construction of off lead dog parks, will be appropriately investigated, designed and a plan developed which will include a budget proposal for implementation in future years.

Council currently has a project underway in the 2022/2023 program for an Off-Leash Dog Park Planning Project which will assess the feasibility of off lead dog parks across the municipality.

## **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Once the Domestic Animal Management Plan is finalised and adopted, this will assist in mitigating further risk for Council, as it demonstrates a clear framework and initiatives for Council's Community Safety Team to operate and ensures compliance with our legislative requirements.

## **COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Community and Stakeholder engagement was carried out in 2021. Close to 500 residents (both pet owners and non-pet owners) have contributed to the plan by completing the online survey or by making a written submission which can be viewed in the summary report attached.

The draft Domestic Animal Management Plan, which has been derived from the engagement process referenced above, was placed on public display for comments through Council's participate Hepburn page.

Hepburn

SHIRE COUNCIL



Domestic  
Animal Management

Plan

2021/2025



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. On these lands, Djaara have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We recognise their resilience through dispossession and it is a testament to their continuing culture and tradition, which is strong and thriving.

We also acknowledge the neighbouring Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri to our South East and the Wadawurrung to our South West and pay our respect to all Aboriginal peoples, their culture, and lore. We acknowledge their living culture and the unique role they play in the life of this region.

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# Executive Summary

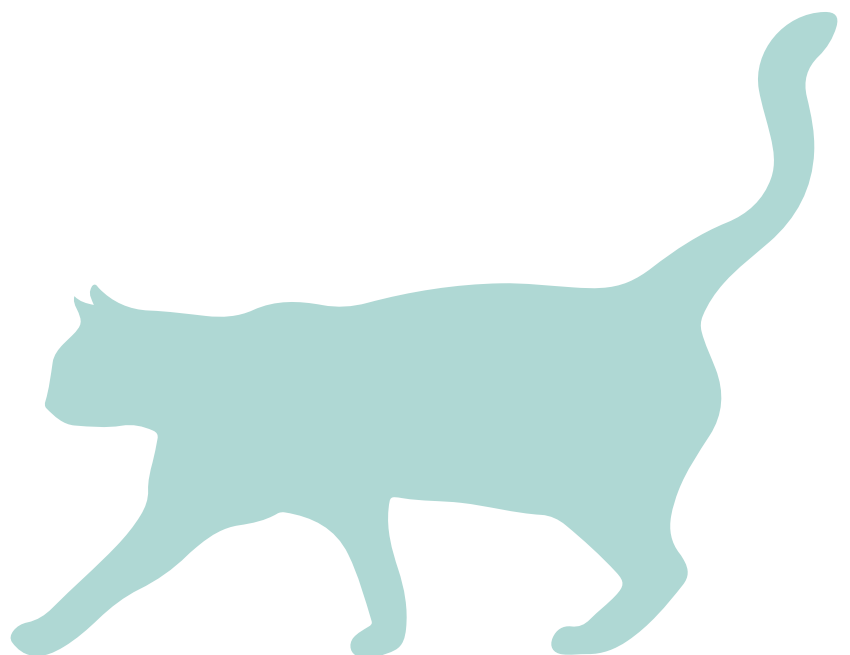
Domestic Animals are considered a part of society and play an integral role in the day to day lives of many Hepburn Shire residents.

Council understands the importance of meeting the expectations of the community, including the needs of pet owners, domestic animals that are such a significant part of peoples lives, as well as those that do not own pets but may be impacted by them. Therefore, it is vital that Council undertakes sensible planning to ensure that pets, pet owners and non-pet owners can co-exist in a harmonious way.

Hepburn Shire has developed this Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) as a statutory requirement under the Domestic Animal Act 1994. It is intended to provide Council with a management plan for all dogs, cats and domestic animal businesses within the municipality. The current DAMP builds on work undertaken in the previous plan and describes how Hepburn Shire will meet its responsibilities under the Act while ensuring its services also meets the expectation of the community.

This document outlines the scheduled programs and initiatives relating to Animal Management. Each key issue area has one or multiple objectives and action plans that detail the actions to be undertaken by the Hepburn Shire Council over the next four (4) years. Furthermore, the plan will be reviewed annually and evaluated against its targets.

The Plan comprises a set of activities which will be implemented to monitor the Hepburn Shire's progress in achieving the Plans goals and objectives over the four year period.



# 1. Introduction & Context



## 1.1 Purpose of Domestic Animal Management Plan

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 (the Act) requires council to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan every four years.

The plan must set out a method for evaluating whether the animal management services provided by council are adequate to give effect to requirements of the Act and the Domestic Animal Regulations 2015.

The plan must also outline programs for the training of authorised officers along with programs, services and strategies to:

- ensure that people comply with the Act, the regulations and any related legislation; and
- minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and
- address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and
- encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and

- minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and
- effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations; and
- provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and
- provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it deems necessary; and
- provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.

Council is also required to review and where appropriate amend the plan and publish an evaluation of the implementation of the plan in the council annual report.

This Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) has been prepared to provide a strategic framework to the Hepburn Shire Council for policy direction, service programs, initiatives and action plans related to animal management during the period 2021-2025.

The following guiding principles will continue to underpin the delivery of domestic animal management services at Hepburn Shire Council:

- Working towards providing safe places for dog owners to exercise their dogs off lead
- Proactive in supporting and promoting responsible pet ownership
- Using education to increase compliance with legislation
- Balance the needs of pet owners with the needs of other community members and the environment
- Protecting the environment from any negative impacts of domestic animals
- Recognising the physical, mental and social benefits of pet ownership
- Reducing the number of stray cats throughout the Hepburn Shire
- Adopting a whole community approach to animal management



## 1.2 Process Applied in Developing the Plan

As part of the process of developing the new DAMP, Hepburn Shire Council invited community feedback, to help inform the direction of domestic animal management in the Hepburn Shire. Community feedback provides valuable insight into local issues and allows Council the opportunity to identify and address animal concerns, while continuing to be an inviting place for people with and without pets.

Council used a variety of methods to invite the community to provide feedback in the development of the new DAMP, primarily local newspapers, Council's Facebook page, Participate Hepburn Website and the Hepburn Life newsletter.

Through this community engagement, the following responses were received:

- 440 responses via Participate Hepburn website
- 10 hardcopy surveys
- 2 written submissions via email

### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The feedback received through this community engagement has been used to inform the priorities and actions outlined in this plan. A full engagement report which outlines the community feedback is available. The key themes identified across the engagement process are outlined below.

### DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT SURVEY RESULTS -THEMES IN ORDER OF FREQUENCY

Nuisance Cats	Aggressive Dogs	Dog Walking / Dogs off lead	Suggested Improvements for Pet Owners	Suggested Improvements for the General Community	Further Comments
Attack on birds and native wildlife	Dogs Rushing	Enforcement of dog on lead laws	Increased enforcement	Enforcement and reporting	Pet ownership issues relating to holiday accommodation
Cats out at night (including feral cats)	Dog Attacks (including people, pets, livestock and wildlife)	Education and responsible dog ownership	Improved facilities (including increase of off lead dog parks, tracks or areas)	Improved facilities (including increase of off lead dog parks, poo bins and 24hr accessible pound)	Visitor expectations
General nuisance (fighting, annoying indoor pets, defecating)	Dogs off lead	Improved facilities (including increase of off lead dog parks, tracks or areas)	Incentives	Responsible pet ownership education	Lack of an appropriate dog park in Trentham
Increased Council intervention (cat curfew, responsible pet ownership)	Increased Council intervention		Community education		Lack of dedicated dog parks or tracks in Creswick and Daylesford
90% community support for a night-time cat curfew	Dogs not confined		Reporting systems and 24/7 hotline		Importance of pets to promote positive health and wellbeing

## PUBLIC EXHIBITION

To finalise the plan and ensure that community feedback was captured in the first round of community engagement, a formal public exhibition period was held. During this time the draft plan was available for comment via Participate Hepburn. The draft was also emailed directly to those who provided an email address as part of the initial community consultation process and shared via social media.

Council received 82 submissions on the draft plan which related to the following topics:

- Proposed cat curfew
- Education initiatives
- Dog parks and walking paths
- Dogs off leash
- Enforcement actions

## 1.3 Hepburn Shire Profile

Hepburn Shire is a small rural Shire, with a population of 16,157. The population is projected to reach 17,700 by 2036. The Shire covers an area of 1,473 square kilometres which includes Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford, Hepburn Springs and Trentham, and the villages of Glenlyon, Allendale, Kingston, Leonard's Hill, Lyonville, Newlyn, Denver and Smeaton. Located in central Victoria, the Shire is ideally situated within easy access to Melbourne, Ballarat and Bendigo. It's a great place to live, work, invest and visit.

Hepburn Shire has a rich cultural history which began with the Dja Dja Wurrung People, the Traditional Owners and custodians of the area. Mass migration during Victoria's goldrush era saw many cultures settle in the region, which created a distinctive architecture and culture, still present throughout the Shire today. The Shire is renowned for its native forests, mineral springs reserves and waterways, botanical gardens, volcanic plains with rich soils, gold and many spectacular heritage buildings. It is a popular tourist destination that has a reputation for indulgence and relaxation, festivals and outdoor recreational activities.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted Hepburn Shire. Some of the biggest impacts on our community included social isolation, along with heightened financial

and emotional stress on families and local businesses. Another significant consequence of the pandemic was the impact on housing affordability and availability due to an influx of new residents choosing to move to our Shire.

## 1.4 Integration with Council Plan

Council in consultation with the community, recently developed and adopted the Community Vision 2021 – 2031 and Council Plan 2021 - 2025. The Council Plan outlines five focus areas to set the direction for the next four years and to create strong alignment with the needs and aspirations of the community and the services Council delivers:

- 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

The DAMP aligns with the focus area of a healthy, supported and empowered community. It seeks to increase the availability and accessibility of services in the Hepburn Shire area to support liveability, health and wellbeing.

## 1.5 Context and Current Situation

Animal management at Hepburn Shire is overseen by the Health and Community Safety Team. Within this team the officers that relate to animal management include a Coordinator, two full time Community Safety Officers, one full time and one part time Administration Officers.

Programs and services currently provided include:

Program / Service:	Service Level:
Identification and registration	Currently 3,088 dogs and cats registered
Domestic animal complaints	General complaints are actioned within 3 business days, subject to staff availability
Dangerous dog complaints	Dogs acting aggressively or that have attacked are actioned within 1 hour
Routine street, park and lake patrols	Once per month, subject to staff availability
Micro-chipping and desexing programs	Proactively promote and refer people to existing programs
Cat trapping program	Available to the community via booking system
After hours emergency service	24-hour after-hours phone service. Officer attendance for livestock on Council roads and dog attacks.

## 1.6 Domestic Animal Statistics

Key statistics for the financial periods 2018 to 2021:

Dogs	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Number of registered dogs	2416	1998	2273
Number of impounded dogs	29	28	22
Number of impounded dogs returned to owner	9	14	3
Number of dogs surrendered	6	2	8
Number of dogs rehomed	2	8	14
Number of dogs euthanised	6	1	2
Number of active declared dogs (dangerous, menacing, restricted)			2
Cats			
Number of registered cats	874	705	817
Number of impounded cats	22	33	73
Number of impounded cats returned to owner	2	4	2
Number of cats surrendered	3	10	1
Number of cats rehomed	7	10	27
Number of cats euthanised	5	9	2
Customer Requests			
Barking dogs	36	67	48
Straying dogs	177	159	109
Straying cats	95	90	68
Dog attacks	40	34	13
Domestic Animal Business			
Boarding establishments	2	2	2
Dog training establishments	1	1	1

## 2. Training of Authorised Officers

In order to deliver animal services that meet the requirements of the Act it is crucial that all authorised officers are adequately trained and have the opportunity to participate in regular further development.

### CURRENT SITUATION

Animal Management sits within the Health and Community Safety Team which forms part of the Infrastructure and Delivery Directorate. The team consists of two full time Community Safety Officers who are supported by the Coordinator Health and Community Safety and Administration Officers. All Officers carry out a multi-disciplinary role which includes animal management, parking and local laws. Council is committed to providing ongoing development to ensure that all staff are adequately trained and able to respond within the requirements of their roles.

Officers are required to participate in Councils corporate training program which incorporates a range of development and learning opportunities. In addition, staff are encouraged to attend industry related information sessions and seminars as they arise to ensure they remain up to date with industry best practice.

All new staff are required to participate in Councils Corporate Induction Program to ensure they are familiar with the relevant standard work practices and guidelines.

Performance Development Plan reviews are carried out annually which review training that has been carried out in the previous year and identify opportunities for development within the forthcoming year.

Councils current training and development activities are designed to ensure that all Officers have the necessary training and qualifications to undertake their duties.

Training activities include:

- Formalised training through accredited registered training organisations
- Short course refresher training on relevant topics
- Industry forums and training sessions
- On-the-job training

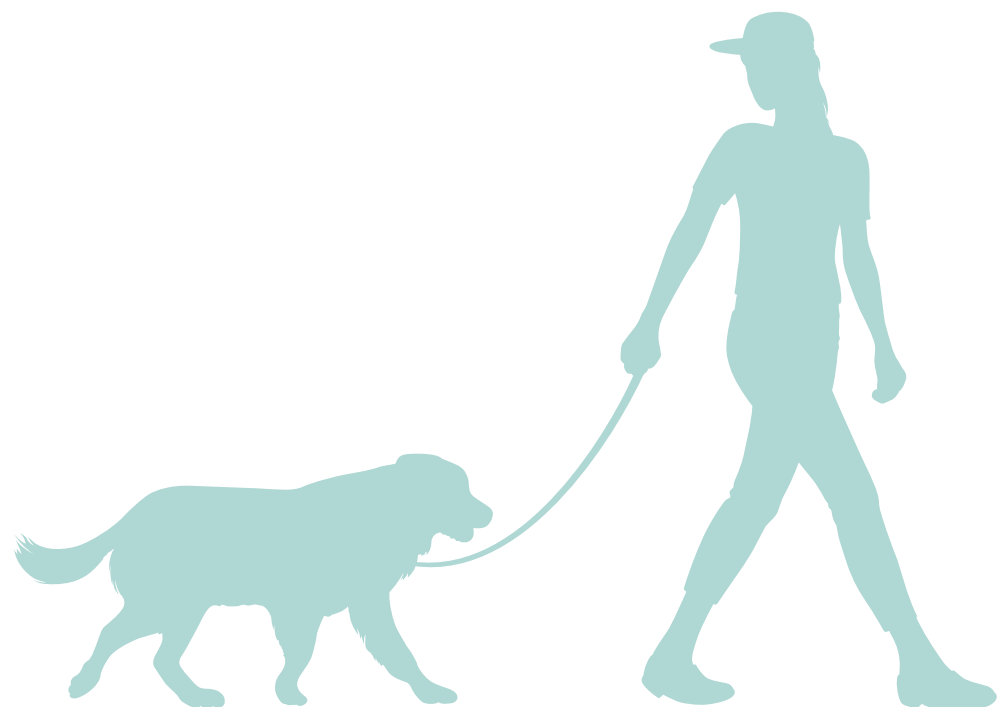
The type of training offered to Officers includes but is not limited to:

- Customer service including conflict resolution
- Dog and Cat handling
- Bite prevention
- Stock handling
- Traffic control and driver safety
- First aid
- Restricted dog breed identification
- Prosecution, statement taking and evidence gathering
- Handling pets in an emergency
- Understanding and working safely with dogs

**OUR PLANS FOR TRAINING**

**Objective 1: Ensure all Community Safety Officers have the skills and knowledge necessary to support the community and effectively perform their regulatory role**

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify minimum training requirements and develop a training schedule for all Authorised Officers	2022	Training schedule developed, approved and incorporated into Officer's Performance Development Plan (PDP).
Identify additional training opportunities e.g. prosecutions training, conflict management, communication / education technique, emergency response, handling animals in an emergency or any other industry specific development opportunities that become available.	Annually	Training activities incorporated into Officers PDP and reviewed annually
Identify training opportunities for recognising and responding to domestic violence	2022 / 2023	Training incorporated into Officers PDP and reviewed annually
Ensure all new Authorised Officers have completed the minimum training requirements within 12 months of appointment	12 months from commencement of new employment	Completion of induction program Identify training requirements and include in Officers PDP
Complete annual Performance Development Plan reviews	Annually	Annual PDP reviewed and submitted to People and Culture





# 3. Registration and Identification of Domestic Animals

A registered and identifiable domestic animal has a much higher chance of being returned home and reduces the stress for both the owner and the pet if found wandering.

## CURRENT SITUATION

All dogs and cats over the age of three months must be implanted with a microchip and registered with the municipal council in which they reside. Registrations must be renewed annually by the 10th April.

Registration and identification of domestic animals is seen as the foundation of responsible pet ownership. Council has programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats.

Registration is an important function of responsible pet ownership as animal registration fees help fund animal management services provided by Council, the responsible pet ownership campaign and other education programs run by the State government.

## Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

- Section 10C of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 requires cats and dogs to be microchipped as a condition of registration (which is compulsory once the animal is three months of age).
- General Local Law No. 2 - Community Amenity and Municipal Place – Part 6 Animals – Clause 6.1 regulates the numbers of dogs and cats that can be kept at a property without a permit depending on the land size
- Annual registration renewal and reminder notices
- Legislative requirement under the Act for registration of dogs and cats at age of three months

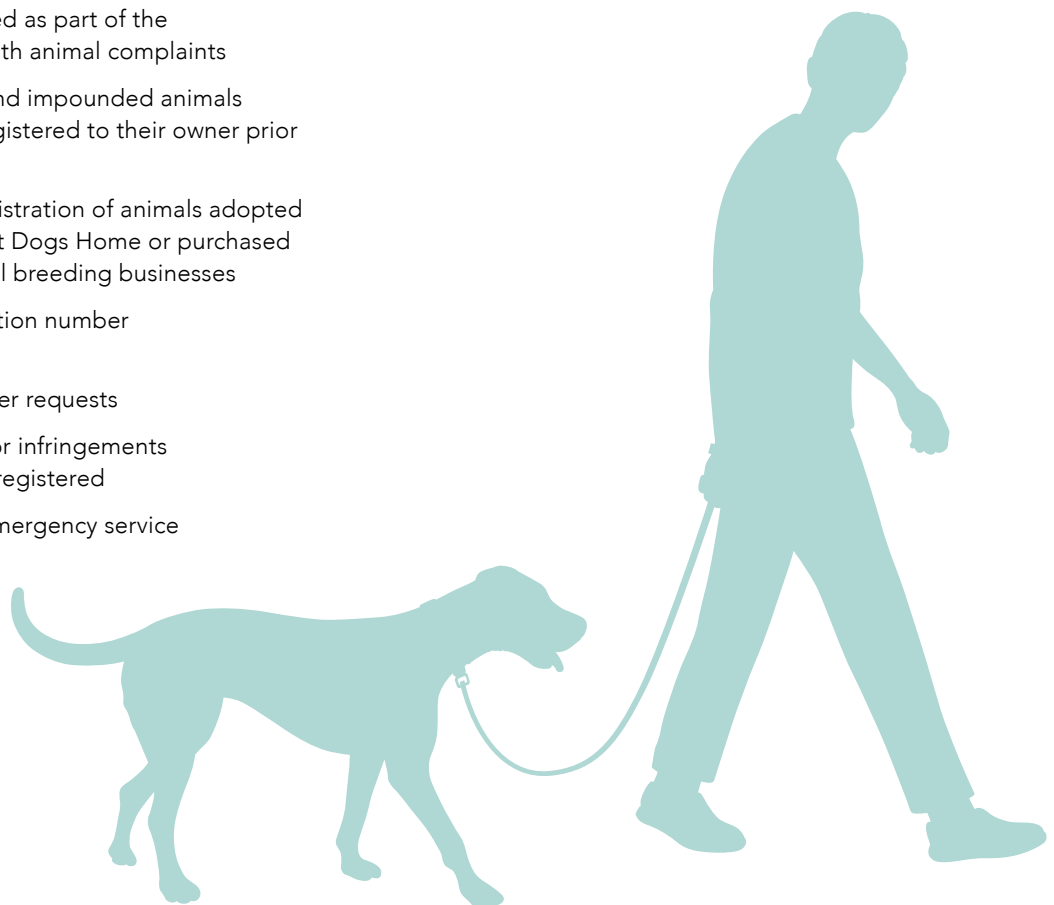
## CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Council provides the following domestic animal services to the local community:

- Animal registration renewals mailed out in March each year to households who have a current animal registration
- Use of social media to promote responsible pet ownership and animal registration requirements
- Responsible pet ownership pamphlets included with any mail outs of a notice to comply, infringement or other relevant correspondence
- Registration fee reduced by 50% for new applications received between 10 October and 9 April each year
- Registration fee waived for the first year for all eligible dogs and cats
- Information about registering animals, including a downloadable registration form available on Council's website
- Providing a range of registration payment methods – BPay, PostBillPay, Credit Card or in person
- Ensuring that registration and identification compliance is checked as part of the process of dealing with animal complaints
- Ensuring all seized and impounded animals are identified and registered to their owner prior to release
- Follow up on the registration of animals adopted from the RSPCA, Lost Dogs Home or purchased from domestic animal breeding businesses
- Permanent identification number registration tags
- Investigating customer requests
- Issuing notices and/or infringements for animals found unregistered
- After hours animal emergency service

## SUMMARY

Council's priority is to reunite lost pets with their owners as quickly as possible. The promotion of pet registration and responsible pet ownership, together with education in ownership obligations, are considered high priority areas. Council aims to increase the number of animals registered across the shire and will continue to support incentives that encourage registration.



## OUR PLANS FOR REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

### Objective 1: Ensure all cats and dogs which are over the age of three months and reside within the municipality are registered with the Hepburn Shire Council.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake a sample review of newly microchipped dogs and cats in the Municipality by contacting registration microchip registries. Check all animals are also listed on Council's pet registration database and follow up those that are not.	2023	Council's registration database cross referenced Number of Notices to Comply issued
Identify unpaid registrations. Follow up of unpaid animal renewal notices from previous year	May/June Annually	2021-2022 – Number of reminder notices sent 2023-2025 Number of reminder notices sent and Notices to Comply issued
Ensure all seized and impounded animals are registered to their owner prior to release	Ongoing	Number of animals registered prior to release
Follow up of reported unregistered animals from customer requests	Ongoing	Number of requests actioned
Advertise pet registration renewals – webpage, Council on-hold message, social media, entry points of Council	February/March Annually	Annual registration renewals advertised
Exploration of alternative methods of payment of renewal notices	2023	Alternative methods identified
Ensure that animal complaints are checked for registration compliance as part of the process of dealing with the complaint. Where appropriate, issue a Notice to Comply for unregistered animals.	Ongoing	Number of Notices to Comply issued
Investigate and determine next steps for the use of SMS messaging of owners who have not renewed their registration	2023	Investigation completed
Provide registration forms and pet ownership information on Council's website	Ongoing	Website updated with current forms and fact sheets
Issue 'Register Your Pet' Notices when unregistered pets are detected. Where appropriate, issue a Notice to Comply for unregistered animals.	Ongoing	Number of notices issued
Provide responsible pet ownership information, animal registration forms and other pet related documents to all new residents	Ongoing	Number of new resident packs distributed
Provide responsible pet ownership information, animal registration forms and other pet related documents to all new residents	Ongoing	Number of new resident packs distributed

## Objective 2: Promote Responsible Pet Ownership.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Promote the benefits of registration and identification including safe return of lost pets and 'free ride home', in various media formats	Ongoing	Website updated Number of social media posts Number of media releases
Provide free registration for eligible animals or 50% fee reduction for the first year as an incentive to register animals and improve responsible pet ownership	Ongoing	Number of reduced fee animal registrations per annum
Provide discounted renewal fees for eligible animals (microchipped and desexed) as an incentive to promote responsible pet ownership	Ongoing	Number of reduced rate renewals received per annum
Use social media as a tool to promote responsible pet ownership	Ongoing	Number social media posts
Identify and promote existing programs that encourage responsible pet ownership e.g. free or discounted desexing programs.	Ongoing	Database of available programs developed and maintained

## Objective 3: Improve the dog and cat registration renewal process to encourage prompt response to renewal invitations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review the Animal Registration processes and procedures to ensure a positive customer experience	Annually	Review undertaken
Advertise pet registration renewals – webpage, Council on-hold message, entry points of Council	Ongoing	Registrations renewals advertised
Investigate and recommend next steps for the use of SMS messaging owners who have not renewed their registration	2023	Investigation completed
Explore alternative methods of payment for animal registrations	2023	Alternative methods identified
Review and benchmark animal registration fees with other local governments	January/February Annually	Council's registration fees reviewed

## Objective 4: Ensure that the Community Safety Team works consistently and fairly implementing the *Domestic Animals Act*.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop and review policies and procedures relating to animal registration and enforcement	2023	Policies and Procedures developed and/or reviewed
Identify unpaid registrations. Follow up animal non- renewal to ensure compliance	May/June Annually	Number of reminder notices. Number of Notices to Comply issued
Ensure all seized and impounded animals are registered to their owner prior to release	Ongoing	Number of animals registered prior to release
Follow up of reported unregistered animals from customer requests	Ongoing	Number of Notices to Comply issued
Ensure that animal complaints are checked for registration compliance as part of the process of dealing with the complaint. Where appropriate, issue a Notice to Comply for unregistered animals.	Ongoing	Number of Notices to Comply issued



# 4. Nuisance Animals

This section outlines the programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance.

## CURRENT SITUATION

### Cats

Large feral/semi-owned cat populations throughout the Hepburn Shire are having an impact on flora and fauna. Community feedback indicates that wandering cats continue to cause a nuisance by spraying, fighting, home invasion and potentially spreading diseases.

Historically, farmers have used cats to control rabbits, rats and mice. If left uncontrolled and un-desexed, these cats can also contribute to the problem.

### New Objective – Cat Curfew

During community consultation it was identified that approximately 90% of respondents were supportive of a cat curfew being introduced. Feedback suggested that the introduction of a cat curfew would address issues such as roaming cats, the impact of cats on wildlife, cats leaving waste on people's property, fighting cats and the number of stray cats in the community.

Therefore, a major action of this plan will be to investigate the introduction of a cat curfew and identify the most appropriate method of implementing this program.

### Dogs

Barking dogs can cause unnecessary stress on the community if left unmanaged and investigating such complaints can take extensive time as officers are required to gather sufficient evidence to prove a nuisance is occurring. Council aims to resolve these complaints as quickly as possible but, in some cases, this may not be possible as the cause of the barking (wildlife/cats trespassing) may be outside the control of the dog owner.

Dogs that are wandering and/or not under effective control may also cause a nuisance in the community by defecating on private property or in public areas, entering private property and aggravating other pets.

Council aims to return as many dogs as possible home without these animals becoming impounded however when an owner is not able to be identified or contacted, Council uses the City of Ballarat Animal Shelter as its dog and cat pound and shelter.

Council provides an after-hours animal emergency service and works with community members to reunite animals with their owners after hours.

### New objective – off lead dog park master plan

During community consultation it was identified that approximately 41% of respondents have witnessed or been personally affected by a dog attack within the past 12 months and 58% have concerns about dogs being walked off lead or not under effective control by the owner. Feedback suggested that the Shire needs improved facilities that provide off lead areas for dogs to exercise and greater enforcement is required for on lead laws where applicable. This may reduce incidents such as dogs rushing, dogs fighting, dogs attacking people, pets and wildlife and dogs defecating on private property.

Therefore, a major action of this plan will be to undertake a dog park planning project which will develop an Off-Lead Dog Park Master Plan for Hepburn Shire.

### Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

- Section 26 Order requiring dogs and/or cats to be restrained in specified public places
- General Local Law No. 2 - Community Amenity and Municipal Place – Part 6 Animals – Clause 6.1 regulates the numbers of dogs and cats that can be kept at a property without a permit depending on the land size
- General Local Law No. 2 - Community Amenity and Municipal Place – Part 6 Animals – Clause 6.2 not to allow dog excrement to remain in a public place within a built-up area
- Cat Trapping Procedure

### CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- Providing advice, education and assistance one on one with animal owners
- Making available Responsible Pet Ownership fact sheets
- Encouraging the de-sexing of cats and dogs to reduce wandering
- Impounding of wandering dogs
- Impounding of nuisance cats through the cat trapping program
- Providing dog poo bags in key parks and reserves
- Encouraging cat owners to confine their cats to their property utilising cat runs
- Provision of cat cages for trapping nuisance cats
- Investigation of barking dog complaints
- Excess animal permit application inspection to reduce the possibility of nuisance complaints
- Providing advice to dog owners/complainants of causes of excess barking, including separation, anxiety, boredom, external factors, territorialism, communication with other dogs etc
- Issuing Notices to Comply under the legislation to gain compliance
- Regular patrols of problem areas

### SUMMARY

The most common customer requests received by Council regarding animals are in relation to barking dogs, uncontained dogs and stray/feral cats. These issues can cause a great deal of stress and irritation and they consume a lot of Council Officers time. Through education pet owners, including farmers, may become more aware of the issues their pets may be causing and find effective ways to reduce the nuisance behaviour.

Council aims to reduce nuisance issues in the Shire by developing a range of programs, services and initiatives that support those who have pets enjoy the benefits they bring but also support the safety and amenity of all residents.



## OUR PLANS FOR NUISANCE ANIMALS

## Objective 1: Promote Responsible Cat and Dog Ownership

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop a social media plan to promote various elements of responsible pet ownership, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picking up after your dog</li> <li>• The importance of socialising and training dogs</li> <li>• What to do if you find a lost pet</li> <li>• Keeping cats out of other people's property</li> <li>• Responsibilities of owning a greyhound</li> <li>• Identifying when a dog is stressed or threatened</li> <li>• How to report dog attacks and potential outcomes if your do attacks</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Number of social media posts Facebook likes, shares and comments Webpage clicks
Increase information on Councils website regarding responsible pet ownership and provide tips on how to reduce barking.	2022	Website updated
Circulate Safe Cat, Safe Wildlife education material throughout the Shire	2023	Less reports of stray / nuisance cats
Audit signage and placement of dog faeces bag dispensers in municipality	Annually	Audit undertaken Number of signs and dispensers installed or replaced
Promote free or low-cost de-sexing and microchipping programs	Ongoing	Database of current programs identified and maintained
Investigate and recommend improvement opportunities for alternative options for the community to report nuisance animals to encourage increased reports	2023	Investigation complete
Develop a community education program e.g colouring in competitions, education in schools etc	2023	Successful implementation of program



## Objective 2: Develop and implement a Cat Curfew Program that includes education, after hours procedures and enforcement actions

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop a cat curfew program and draft a cat curfew policy	2022/2023	Draft policy developed
Implement actions of the of the cat curfew policy once it has been adopted	July 2023	Introduction of cat curfew
Promote the benefits of containing cats to their property using materials developed through Safe Cats, Safe Wildlife and include the resources with registration renewals	2023	Information distributed with registration renewals Social media posts Media releases
Audit the number of cat cages available to residents and determine if supply is sufficient to meet the need	Prior to introduction of cat curfew	Audit complete and new cages purchased if required
Develop and provide education material about cat enclosures and nuisance issues to cat owners in registration information packs	2023 Ongoing	Information Pack developed and on website Number of packs provided
Use social media as a tool to promote responsible cat ownership	Ongoing	Number of social media posts
Continue to provide cat cages to residents for trapping nuisance cats trespassing on their property as per the Cat Trapping Program	Ongoing	Number of cat traps hired Number of cats caught and transported to relevant facility
Investigate opportunities to work with local Veterinaries, animal shelters, animal welfare groups, Parks Victoria and other relevant entities to curb nuisance cat problems	Ongoing	Number of joint projects completed
Work towards development of a 24 hour cat confinement policy	2025	Community consultation completed Draft policy developed
Continue to work with community and external organisations on actions relating to reduction of feral cat population throughout the Shire.	Ongoing	Number of feral cat's collected and transported to relevant facility.



### Objective 3: Undertake a dog park planning project, including development of an Off-Lead Dog Park Master Plan for Hepburn Shire

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake a dog park planning project which will include development of an Off-Lead Dog Park Master Plan	2023	Off-Lead Dog Park Master Plan finalised
Seek to amend either existing Section 26 Order in relation to on lead areas within the Shire OR Seek to amend Local Law 2 to include a requirement for dogs to be on a lead when not in a designated off lead area	Following adoption of the Off-Lead Dog Park Master Plan	Section 26 and/or Local Law 2 amended
Implement recommendations of the Off-Lead Dog Park Master Plan	2024/2025	Development of off-lead areas as determined by the plan

### Objective 4: Ensure that the Community Safety Team works consistently and fairly implementing the *Domestic Animals Act*.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop and review policies and procedures relating to nuisance animals and its general enforcement	Annually	Policies and procedures developed and reviewed
Identify properties that exceed the limit of animals allowed and ensure these properties obtain the appropriate permit	Ongoing	Number of Notices to Comply issued Number of new permits issued
Increase patrols to minimise dogs at large in known hot spots and on leash areas, e.g. Lake Daylesford, Calembreen Park	Ongoing	Number of patrols undertaken per year
Investigate areas for improvement of Council's After-Hours Animal Emergency service, including how to promote contact number	2022	Investigation complete
Liaise with and review other local government processes to identify opportunities for improvement	2023	Review complete

# 5. Dog Attacks

Although not common, unfortunately dog attacks against people, pets, livestock and wildlife do occur. This section outlines programs, services and strategies Council use to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals.

## CURRENT SITUATION

In the most recent year (2020/2021) Council has responded to 13 reports of a dog attack, which is a significant reduction on previous years. Dog attack complaints vary in severity and as such only two proceeded to court.

Dog attacks remain a high priority for Council with officers responding immediately, where possible, to all reports, including after hours.

Community feedback indicated that approximately 41% of respondents have witnessed or have been personally affected by a dog attack within the past 12 months and 58% have concerns about dogs being walked off lead or not under the control of the owner.

In responding to dog attack reports, Officers often find that the alleged attacking dog had attacked previously, however was not reported to Council. If initial attacks are reported, subsequent attacks may not have occurred. Education is required to encourage the community to report dogs at large, dogs rushing and dog attacks of all types.

The below table displays the number of dog attack reports received by Council over the last 3 years.

Dog Attack Reports	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Hepburn Shire	40	34	13*

*\*Reduction in reported dog attacks in 2020/2021 may be due to people being at home with their pets more during the COVID-19 restrictions. This may also relate to the reduction in stray dogs collected during the same period.*

## Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

- General Local Law No. 2 - Community Amenity and Municipal Place – Part 6 Animals – Clause 6.1 regulates the numbers of dogs and cats that can be kept at a property without a permit depending on the land size.
- Section 26 Order requiring dogs and/or cats to be restrained in specified public places
- After Hours Animal Emergency Response Procedure

**CURRENT ACTIVITIES**

- Responding promptly to notifications of a dog attack
- After hours animal emergency response
- Provision of education and information to community about responsible pet ownership
- Encourage dog de-sexing to assist in reducing the incidence of wandering animals
- Promoting effective confinement and control of dogs
- Promoting de-sexing of dogs to reduce aggressive tendencies and wandering
- Promoting early socialisation of dogs with other animals and humans
- Impounding dogs that are not confined to their property

- Investigation of reported attacks, and follow up on compliance
- Ensuring suspected attacking dogs are effectively secured or seized pending investigation outcome
- Issuing warnings/infringements for wandering or unsecured dogs
- Declaring dogs as menacing, dangerous or restricted as required
- Inspecting property where declared dangerous dogs reside

**SUMMARY**

Dog attacks are taken seriously by Council and reducing the risk will remain a high priority. Officers will respond immediately to all dog attack reports where possible and will raise awareness in the community on how to reduce the risk of a dog attacks.

**OUR PLANS FOR DOG ATTACKS**

**Objective 1: To educate the community about dog attacks in order to increase awareness and reporting**

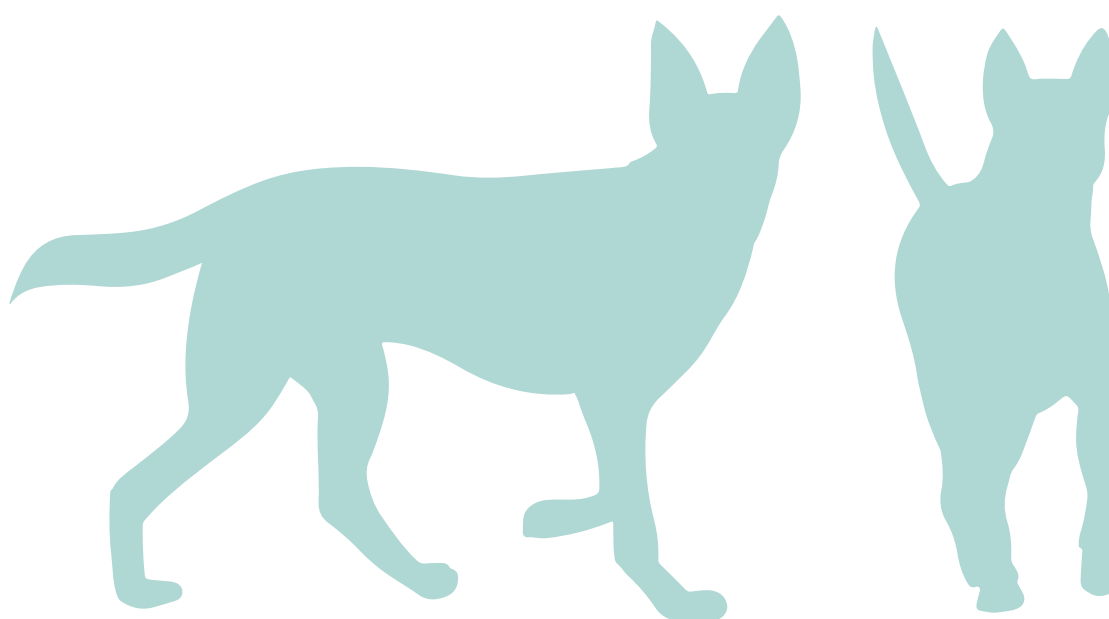
Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct a targeted campaign to improve public awareness of what a dog attack is and how to report one using social media, media releases, website updates and community newsletters	2023	Number of social media posts, media releases and website hits.  Compare number of dangerous dog reports pre and post campaign
Publicise key dog attack prevention messages (e.g. confinement of dogs to property, leash laws etc.)	Ongoing	Number of social media posts  Number of media releases
Distribute responsible pet ownership pamphlets from the Bureau of Animal Welfare online and at each customer service site	Ongoing	Responsible Pet Ownership information available on website and at each customer service site/library
Improve public awareness of dog attack investigations and the associated penalties, and the powers available within the Act for both Council and the community	2023	Number of social media posts  Website content reviewed and updated  Number of mail outs  Number of media releases
Investigate alternatives for the community to report dog attacks to allow for an increase in reports, e.g. Dob in a Dog Line	2024	Investigation complete

## Objective 2: Review of current local laws and orders relating to Animals

Activity	When	Evaluation
Seek to amend either existing Section 26 Order in relation to on lead areas within the Shire OR Seek to amend Local Law 2 to include a requirement for dogs to be on a lead when not in a designated off lead area	Following adoption of Off-Lead Dog Park Master Plan	Section 26 Order reviewed Section 26 and/or Local Law 2 amended

## Objective 3: Ensure that the Community Safety Team works consistently and fairly implementing the *Domestic Animals Act*.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop and review policies and procedures relating to management and enforcement of dog attacks	2023 then annually	Policies and procedures developed Policies and procedures reviewed annually
Liaise with and review other local government processes to identify opportunities for improvement	Ongoing	Improvement opportunities identified
Review Council's After-Hours Animal Emergency service, including communication of the service	2022	Review complete and any improvements implemented



# 6. Dangerous, Menacing & Restricted Breed Dogs

This section outlines programs, services and strategies Council use to effectively identify dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in the municipality and describes how those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

Hepburn Shire currently has only one declared dangerous dog currently registered in the Hepburn Shire, one declared menacing dog and no known restricted breed dogs.

	Menancing	Dangerous	Restricted
Hepburn Shire	1	1	0

Council administers and enforces provisions of the Act to identify and control dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs to ensure the safety of the community.

**Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures**

There are no current orders, local laws, policies or procedures relating to Declared Dogs.

Officers are guided by the Domestic Animals Act 1994 for all declared dog matters.

**CURRENT ACTIVITIES**

- Educating owners of dogs in relation to the laws surrounding declared dogs
- Attend all complaints in relation to suspected Dangerous, Restricted Breed and Menacing dogs
- Inspect all properties where a declared dangerous or restricted breed dog resides annually or as required
- Registration and identification of dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs including
- Ensure compliance with the requirements for keeping dangerous dogs
- All declared dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs to be listed on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry (VDDR)

**SUMMARY**

Declared dogs are not a current problem within the Hepburn Shire. Officers will continue to educate the community about declared dog requirements to raise awareness of what would be required if dog owners do not take precautions to prevent their dog from escaping and attacking.

Annual audits will be undertaken routinely, and any issues of non-compliance will be addressed accordingly.

**OUR PLANS FOR DECLARED DOGS****Objective 1: Identify and register all Declared Dogs in the municipality.**

Activity	When	Evaluation
Cross-reference microchip database information with current Council registration database to identify potential restricted breed dogs	Annually	Council's registration database cross referenced
Community Safety Officers to undertake Restricted Breed dog training to ensure easy identification	When Available	Training completed
Improve public awareness of what a declared dog is using social media, media releases, website updates etc	Ongoing	Number of social media posts Number of media releases
Ensure all declared dogs are recorded on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry (VDDR) and the VDDR is kept up to date	Ongoing	Number of dogs recorded

**Objective 2: Ensure declared dogs are compliant to relevant legislation and regulations**

Activity	When	Evaluation
Continue to declare dogs as Restricted Breed, Dangerous or Menacing in accordance with legislation	Ongoing	All dogs declared in accordance with legislation
Investigate complaints about Menacing, Dangerous Dogs or Restricted Breed Dogs	Ongoing	Investigations completed
Undertake random property inspections of declared dogs to ensure compliance	Annually	Number of inspections undertaken

### Objective 3: Ensure that the Community Safety Team works consistently and fairly implementing the *Domestic Animals Act*.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop and review policies and procedures relating to management of declared dogs	2024	Policies and procedures developed Policies and procedures reviewed annually
Animal Management Officers to undertake Restricted Breed dog training to ensure easy identification and consistent enforcement	When available	Training completed
Follow up all non-compliance until owner complies. Prosecute repeat offenders or serious breaches detected	Ongoing	Compliance achieved or offenders prosecuted
Liaise with and review other local government processes to identify opportunities for improvement	Ongoing	Improvements identified and implemented





# 7. Overpopulation and High Euthanasia

The overpopulation of animals is an ongoing issue that presents challenges within the community such as impacts on wildlife, people and other domestic pets.

There are also impacts on the welfare of cats and dogs if they stray, are semi owned, or malnourished due to limited capacity of owners to care for them. The overpopulation of cats in the stray population is a problem as it leads to higher rates of euthanasia due to low rehoming rates.

## CURRENT SITUATION

Council's pound and euthanasia procedures are guided by the Domestic Animals Act 1994. Council aims to reunite any lost or seized animals with the owner wherever possible. Council will continue to offer this free service to the community. As part of this free service officers also educate the owners on adequate fencing to ensure their animals are kept safe. However, an animal must be identifiable (ID tag or microchip) to enable Council to return the animal to its owner.

When officers are unable to identify an owner, animals are transported to the Ballarat Animal Shelter. Animals that are not reclaimed are offered for rehoming if they meet temperament and health requirements. Animals may be

euthanised if they have an untreatable disease or if they have temperament issues that pose a risk to the community.

Overpopulation of cats and unowned community cats continue to be an issue in the shire and have been identified as a priority area for Council to address.

There is a large unchecked wild cat population which creates a serious problem of uncontrolled breeding. Council assists property owners with cat trapping to remove unwanted and unowned cats. The damage to native fauna from wild cats is significant, together with problems of nuisance, disease and parasites.

For officer safety and to ensure that cats are humanely trapped, officers will only collect cats that have been trapped in Council supplied cages and caught as per Councils Cat Trapping Guidelines.

## Our orders, local laws, council policies and procedures

General Local Law No. 2 - Community Amenity and Municipal Place – Part 6 Animals – Clause 6.1 regulates the numbers of dogs and cats that can be kept at a property without a permit depending on the land size.

All lost and unwanted animals are taken to Ballarat Animal Shelter. Dogs and cats found whilst wandering or lost are held for 8 days to be claimed by the owner and a release fee is payable. Any dog or cat which is impounded and is not claimed within 8 days then becomes the property of the Ballarat Animal Shelter and may be rehomed or euthanised.

All animals impounded must be implanted with a microchip and registered to their owner prior to their release. All animals sold from the shelter must also be vaccinated and desexed.

**CURRENT ACTIVITIES**

- Cat desexing subsidy to reduce the number of unwanted cats
- Provision of low-cost cat traps delivered and collected by authorised officers
- Provision of the Free Ride Home program where animals are able to be reunited with their owner
- Attendance and assistance with situations of animal hoarding
- Excess animal permit system to manage the number of animals per property
- All animals impounded are implanted with a microchip and registered to their owner prior to their release
- All dogs and cats rehoused from the shelter are also desexed prior to being rehomed
- Issuing of caution and infringement notices for dogs and cats found at large and follow up of registration and identification requirements

**SUMMARY**

It is Council's priority to reduce the number of feral/semi-owned cats within our Shire.

Council will also continue to promote animal de-sexing to reduce overpopulation and euthanasia within our community.

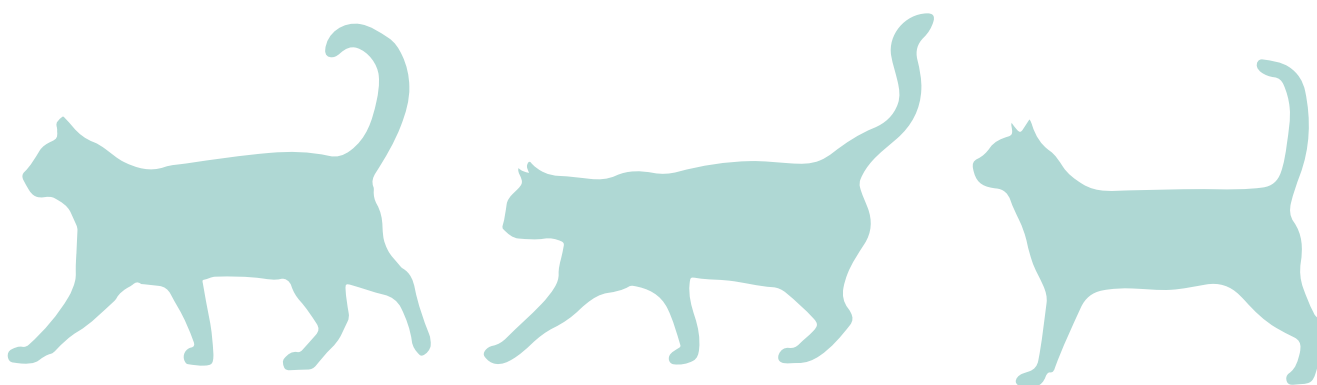
Council will continue to raise awareness with the community, with a strong emphasis on feral/semi-owned cat populations and work with them to reduce the numbers.

**OUR PLANS FOR OVERPOPULATION AND EUTHANASIA****Objective 1: To decrease the number of stray, abandoned and unwanted cats**

Activity	When	Evaluation
Promote discounted fees as an incentive to desex cats and improve responsible pet ownership	Ongoing	Number of new de-sexed cats registered
Promote the benefits of desexing, via media, social media, website	Ongoing	Number of social media posts Number of media articles
Continue to work in partnership with external organisations to identify and address cases of cat hoarding within the shire	Ongoing	Number of property visits Number of cats collected
Implement action of the cat curfew policy once it has been adopted to reduce the number of stray cats breeding within the community	2024	Actions of the policy implemented
Continue to offer low cost cat trapping program to residents	Ongoing	Number of cat traps hired
Liaise with and review other local government processes to identify opportunities for improvement	Ongoing	Improvements identified and implemented

## Objective 2: To minimise the number of animals euthanised

Activity	When	Evaluation
Partner with other Council teams to provide support to community members in caring for their pets	Ongoing	Number of instances of support
Provide assistance to families experiencing domestic violence by providing up to 14 days respite for any domestic pet free of charge	Ongoing	Number of weeks respite care provided
Provide a means for people without a permanent address to register their pets which will encourage de-sexing and minimise uncontrolled breeding	2022	Number of pets registered without a fixed address
Continue to work in partnership with external organisations to identify and address cases of animal hoarding within the shire	Ongoing	Number of property visits Number of animals collected
Promote free or low-cost de-sexing programs that aim to minimise uncontrolled breeding	Ongoing	Database of programs maintained
Liaise with and review other local government processes to identify opportunities for improvement	Ongoing	Improvements identified and implemented



# 8. Domestic Animal Businesses

All Domestic Animal Businesses must register with their local Council. Under the Act, Councils have the authority to:

- Refuse registration of a business if they fail to comply with the legislation and relevant code of practice
- Set special conditions on the registration of any domestic animal business

This section outlines programs, services and strategies which Council intends to pursue in its municipal district to ensure that people comply with this Act and the regulations.

## CURRENT SITUATION

Three Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs) are currently registered within Hepburn Shire consisting of two boarding establishments and one dog training establishment. These businesses are inspected annually to ensure they continue to comply with the regulations.

There are no breeding establishments or pet shops currently registered in the Shire.

## Our Orders, Local Laws and Council Policies and Procedures

- General Local Law No. 2 - Community Amenity and Municipal Place – Part 6 Animals – Clause 6.1 regulates the numbers of dogs and cats that can be kept at a property without a permit depending on the land size.
- Hepburn Shire Town Planning Scheme – requirement for planning permit in certain areas for animal related businesses
- Any new Domestic Animal Business must be inspected prior to registration

## CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- Providing information to registered businesses to ensure compliance
- Annual registration of all Domestic Animal Businesses
- Conducting annual audits of all registered Domestic Animal Businesses within the Shire
- Investigating suspected or reported unregistered animal businesses
- Issuing Notice to Comply/Infringement notices as required
- Liaison with planning department over suspected animal businesses

## SUMMARY

Council is committed to ensuring Domestic Animal Businesses comply with the Act and Code of Practice.

**OUR PLANS FOR DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES****Objective 1: Identify and register all Domestic Animal Businesses within the Hepburn Shire**

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify all businesses that should be registered within the municipality and cross reference against our database of registered businesses	Annually in March	Cross reference complete
Provide a list of all registered Domestic Animal Businesses on Council's website to ensure the community are aware of which businesses are registered and report any that may not be registered	2022	List of DABs on website List reviewed annually
Work closely with planning department of Council to ensure all new planning permit applications for animal related businesses are referred to the Community Safety Team for registration where required	Ongoing	Number of planning referrals received
Investigate any reports of unregistered businesses	Ongoing	Number of requests received and investigated

**Objective 2: Ensure compliance with Domestic Animals Act 1994 in relation to Domestic Animal Businesses**

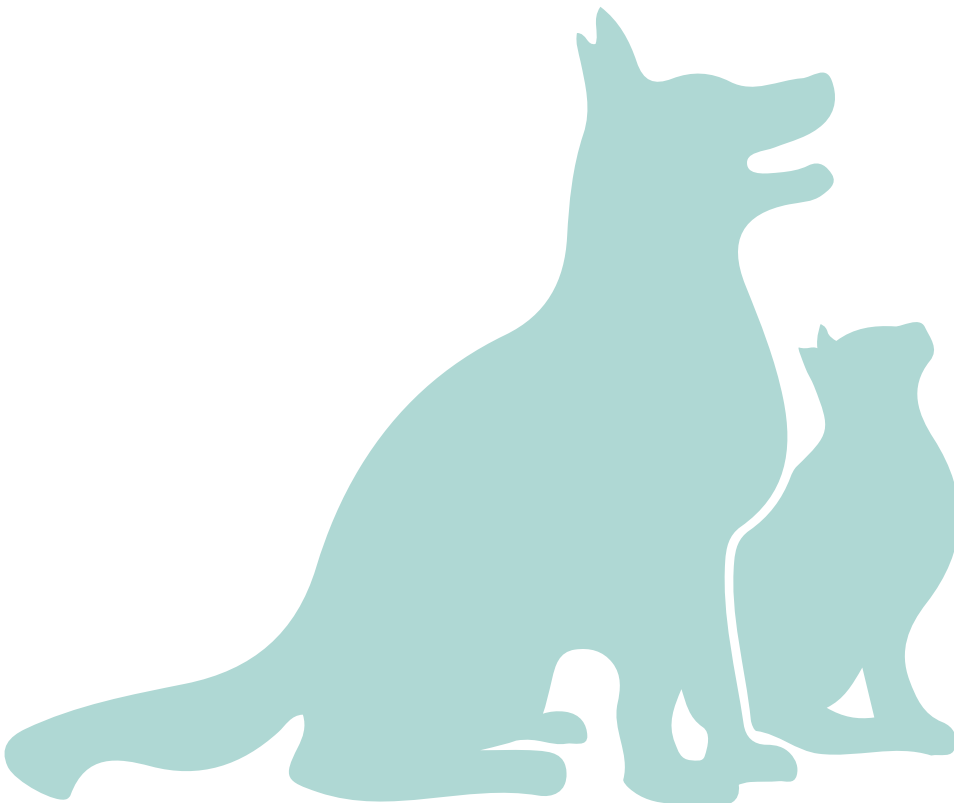
Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct annual audits of all registered Domestic Animal Businesses	Annually	Number of audits completed
Where required, act promptly to address any areas of non-compliance	Ongoing	Compliance achieved
Investigate and act upon public complaints about Domestic Animal Businesses	Ongoing	Number of complaints received and investigated
Inspect properties of new excess animal permit applications to ensure they are not a breeding business	Ongoing	Inspections completed

### Objective 3: Ensure that the Community Safety Team works consistently and fairly implementing the *Domestic Animals Act*

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop policies and procedures relating to Domestic Animal Businesses, including enforcement	2023	Policies and Procedures developed
Ensure Animal Management officers complete audit training	When available	Training completed

### Objective 4: Review of current local laws, orders and fees relating to Animals

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review the Local Law No. 2 to ensure it is consistent with the current community expectations and environment	November 2019	Local Law reviewed
Set Domestic Animal Business registration fees to reflect costs of audits, inspections, visits, etc.	Annually	Annual review of fees undertaken



# 9. Other Matters

This section provides a review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council that is not mentioned in the sections above.

## **EMERGENCY ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Hepburn Shire Council has experienced two major storm and flood events during 2020/2021. The most recent flood event in Creswick highlighted some areas of concern regarding the management of pets during an emergency.

Victoria's emergency management arrangements identify the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions as the primary agency for domestic animal welfare support services during emergency response, however, as the closest level of government to the affected community, local government also has a key role in supporting emergency animal welfare activities.

Evidence from previous emergencies has shown that people's decisions during emergencies are influenced by a number of factors, including their pets. The bond between people and their animals has prompted a greater level of planning for the needs of animals during

an emergency. Animal owners and carers hold the responsibility to prepare their animals for emergencies, however Council is committed to supporting the community during times of emergency through thorough emergency management planning.

Hepburn Shire Council has developed an Emergency Animal Management Plan (EAMP) which covers issues regarding domestic animal management in an emergency. This plan is a sub-plan of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

As part of Council's Emergency Management plans it is Council's responsibility to undertake emergency exercises to ensure that those plans can work effectively in times of emergency. Council undertakes annual emergency exercises and also participates in regional emergency exercises to ensure it is ready for an emergency.

Council is also a member of two Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Groups (Central Victoria and Grampians) where members discuss and share information on emergency management activities, including Animal Emergency Management.

## **ANIMAL WELFARE**

The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTA) allows for the authorisation of local government officers, who are employees of council and authorised under Section 72 of the Act.

Council officers are not currently authorised as POCTA inspectors. The investigation of POCTA offences that occur within the Shire are currently investigated by the RSPCA.

Council has a strong working relationship with the RSPCA and assists them however possible to investigate animal welfare reports. Officers also report any suspected animal welfare offences to the RSPCA as required.

**OUR PLANS****Objective 1: To ensure consideration is given to the management of Domestic Animals during emergency events**

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review all emergency management plans relevant to domestic animals, including contact lists	Annually	Emergency Management Plans Reviewed
Provide information on Councils website to assist pet owners in the event of an emergency	2023	Information available on website
Ensure animal management officers are adequately trained to manage domestic animals in an emergency	When Available	Training completed
Up skill other Council Officers (as required) to ensure Council has the resources to assist during an emergency	Ongoing	Training opportunities made available to all emergency management staff
Officers to maintain involvement in emergency management groups within the shire to ensure that the needs of domestic animals in the event of an emergency are met	Ongoing	Coordinator to maintain membership in the Emergency Management Group
Improve awareness about pet safety in an emergency (social media, website)	Ongoing	Number of social media posts Number of media articles

**Objective 2: Work in partnership with the RSPCA to decrease the incidence of cruelty to animals using education and compliance**

Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide information on Councils website regarding animal cruelty including how to report it if required	2022	Website information updated
Liaise with relevant agencies such as RSPCA in relation to prevention of cruelty issues	Ongoing	Number of welfare reports submitted to RSPCA Number of joint inspections undertaken with the RSPCA



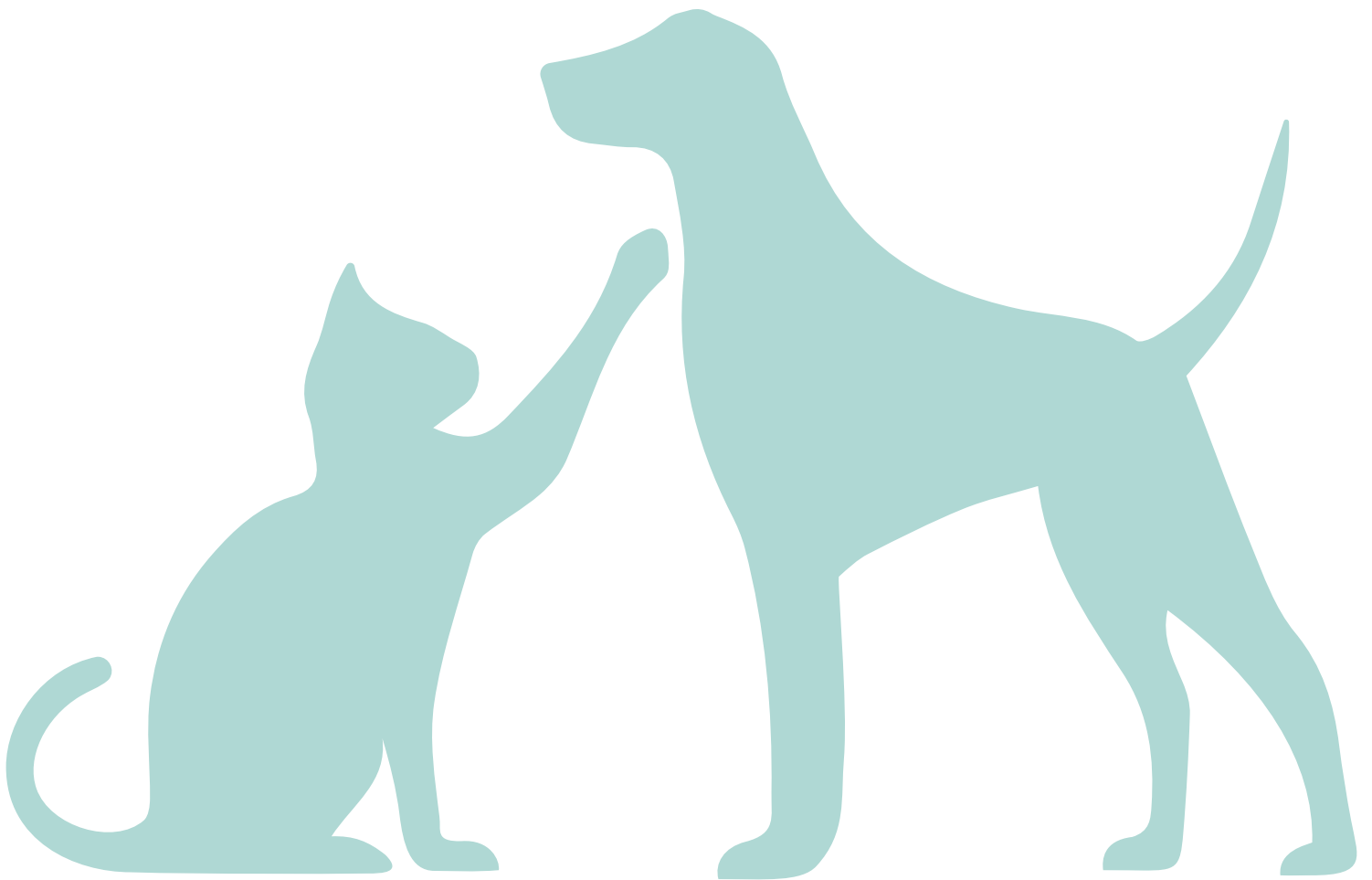
# 10. Annual Review of Plan and Annual Reporting

As required by the Domestic Animals Act, Council must review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and amend the plan as required. The following section outlines how Council will meet these requirements.

## OUR PLANS FOR ANNUAL REVIEW AND REPORTING

### Objective 1: Comply with Section 68A(3) of the *Domestic Animals Act*

Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan	September 2022 and annually	Copy provided to Secretary
Review of the Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and, if required, amend the plan	Annually	Plan reviewed annually
Publish evaluation of the plan in Councils Annual Report	Annually	Evaluation report published
Provide progress reports through Councils Quarterly Reporting framework	Quarterly	Quarterly reports provided
Undertake a major review of the plan after four years	2025	Major review complete





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COUNCIL OFFICES

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DAYLESFORD

Corner Duke & Albert Streets,  
Daylesford

CRESWICK

68 Albert Street,  
Creswick

CLUNES

The Warehouse - Clunes  
36 Fraser Street, Clunes

TRENTHAM

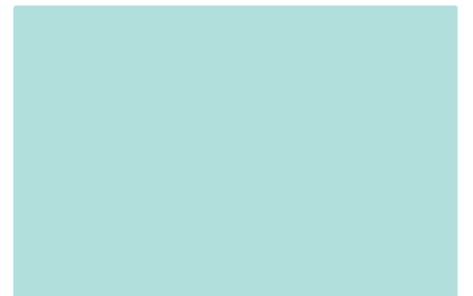
13 Albert Street,  
Trentham

# Hepburn

SHIRE COUNCIL

## DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

FINALISED MAY 2022



## Contents

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# 1 Introduction

As per the statutory requirements of the Domestic Animals Act 1994, all Councils must review their Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) every four years.

The DAMP describes how Council will meet its responsibilities under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and aims to support improvements in responsible pet ownership and animal welfare by focussing on eight key themes. These themes have been derived from the *Template for development of a Council Domestic Animal Management Plan* and include:

- *Training of Authorised Officers*
- *Registration & identification of domestic animals*
- *Nuisance animals*
- *Dog attacks*
- *Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs*
- *Over population & high euthanasia*
- *Domestic animal businesses*
- *Responsible pet ownership and compliance with legislation*

As part of the review process Hepburn Shire Council invited community feedback, to help identify local issues and inform the direction of domestic animal management in Hepburn Shire.

The 2021 – 2025 DAMP will build on achievements in the above themes from the previous plan and will provide a framework to guide future programs and actions for the next four years based on Council priorities and community need.

Pet ownership has many benefits for health and wellbeing. The welfare of pets and their owners is an important consideration, along with the protection of the community and environment from nuisance dogs or cats.

## 2 Invitation for Community Feedback

Council used a variety of methods to invite the community to provide feedback in the development of our new DAMP, primarily local newspapers, the Council’s Facebook page, the Participate Hepburn Website, and the Hepburn Life newsletter.

All community members, regardless of whether they have a pet or not, were invited to take 5 minutes to complete this survey. All participants were informed that their responses would be used to inform development of the Draft plan, which will be provided to the community for feedback later this year.

Around 80% of survey responses were from owners of pets, with around 20% of responses from other community members. Of the pet owners who responded, around 42% own dogs, 19% own cats, and 19% own both cats and dogs.

Community feedback is best informed by consulting a diverse cross section of the community, so we sought feedback from community members who do not own pets, all the way through to owners of multiple pets.

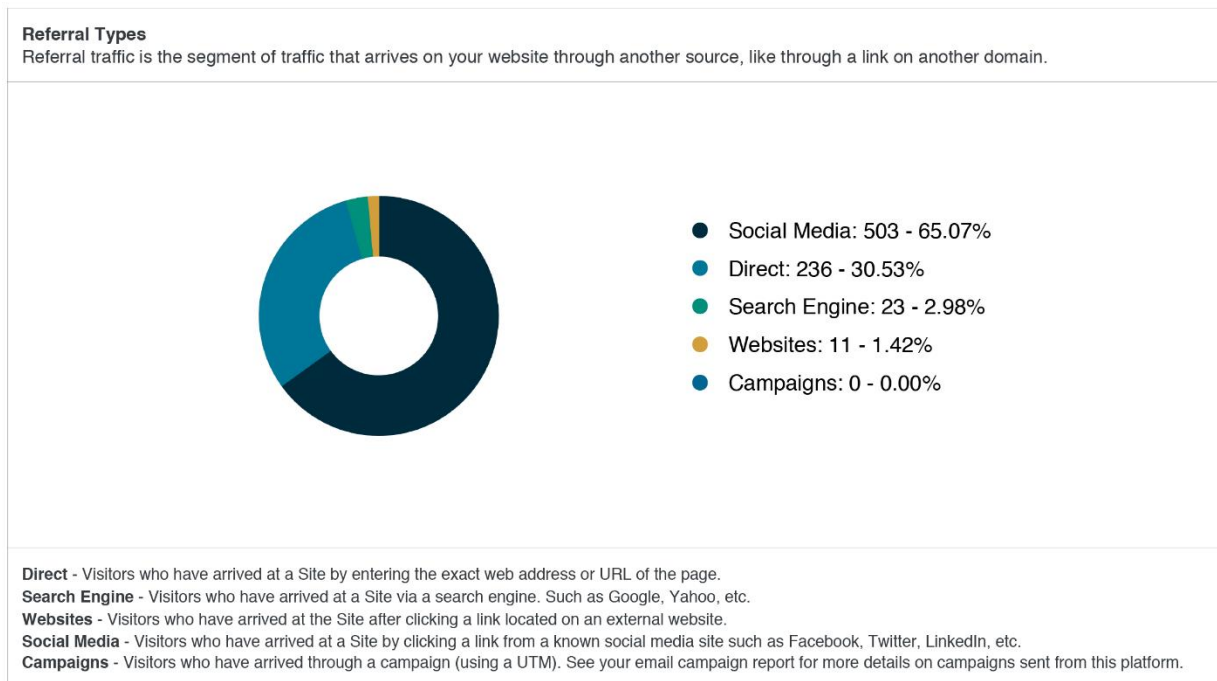

Community members were welcome to submit feedback via the Participate Hepburn website. We received 440 responses via the Participate Hepburn Website. We also received 10 hardcopy surveys, and 2 submissions were received via email. This report outlines the feedback received during the period from 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 to close of submissions on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021.

### 3 Participate Hepburn Project Report


**Performance Summary**  
 Information regarding key visitation and utilisation metrics for your Site or projects.

<b>934</b> Views	<b>867</b> Visits	<b>813</b> Visitors	<b>450</b> Contributions	<b>440</b> Contributors	<b>0</b> Followers
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**Views** - The number of times a Visitor views any page on a Site.  
**Visits** - The number of end-user sessions associated with a single Visitor.  
**Visitors** - The number of unique public or end-users to a Site. A Visitor is only counted once, even if they visit a Site several times in one day.  
**Contributions** - The total number of responses or feedback collected through the participation tools.  
**Contributors** - The unique number of Visitors who have left feedback or Contributions on a Site through the participation tools.  
**Followers** - The number of Visitors who have 'subscribed' to a project using the 'Follow' button.

440 responses were received via the Participate Hepburn portal  
 10 hardcopy surveys completed



Two additional submissions were received via email



Just 2% of responses were from outside the Shire



## 4 Snapshots of Feedback

### Domestic Animal Management Survey Results

#### Top themes in order of frequency

Nuisance Cats	Aggressive Dogs	Dog Walking / Dogs off lead	Suggested Improvements for Pet Owners	Suggested Improvements for the General Community	Further Comments
Attack on birds and native wildlife	Dogs Rushing	Enforcement of dog on lead laws	Increased enforcement	Enforcement and reporting	Pet ownership issues relating to holiday accommodation
Cats out at night (including feral cats)	Dog Attacks (including people, pets, livestock and wildlife)	Education and responsible dog ownership	Improved facilities (including increase of off lead dog parks, tracks or areas)	Improved facilities (including increase of off lead dog parks, poo bins and 24hr accessible pound)	Visitor expectations
General nuisance (fighting, annoying indoor pets, defecating)	Dogs off lead	Improved facilities (including increase of off lead dog parks, tracks or areas)	Incentives	Responsible pet ownership education	Lack of an appropriate dog park in Trentham
Increased Council intervention (cat curfew, responsible pet ownership)	Increased Council intervention		Community education		Lack of dedicated dog parks or tracks in Creswick and Daylesford
90% community support for a night-time cat curfew	Dogs not confined		Reporting systems and 24/7 hotline		Importance of pets to promote positive health and wellbeing

## 5 Community Feedback



Majority of feedback was supportive of the topics addressed in the survey questions. Questions primarily related to sensitive issues such as dog attacks, nuisance complaints against cats, and dogs on lead. Most responses support improvement in these areas.

Some responses to the survey indicated that our communication and processes are working well, however also provided suggestions for improvement.

Several comments expressed the important role animals play in people's lives, recommending a balance between the wellbeing of domestic animals and people in the Hepburn Shire.



Most people who responded feel that the Hepburn Shire Council needs to improve communication about keeping dogs on a leash and increase awareness of responsible pet ownership for dogs and cats.

Several people commented that the survey should have addressed concerns around wandering dogs, due to the increased potential for attacks on people, other domestic animals, livestock and wildlife.

There were many requests for increased presence of Rangers and improved follow-up of customer complaints. There was acknowledgement that Rangers have a vital role to play in educating the community regarding responsible pet ownership.

Two objections were received about the wandering cats' question – one that the definition of wandering was ambiguous, the other that the survey questions were not constructed in a way to minimise bias against cats.

## 6 Themes from Community Feedback

### 6.1 Nuisance Cats

Complaints regarding cats are an ongoing concern in Hepburn Shire. Cats are a popular domestic animal and can be wonderful companions, but it’s important to find the right balance between cat ownership and community amenity.

The Community Safety Team have seen a steady increase in the number of cats they have impounded over recent years as highlighted below:

CATS	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Impounded	9	22	33	73
Returned to owner		2	4	2

Given the minimal number of cats that are returned to their owners, this data indicates that a large majority of impounded cats are likely to be feral or strays.

#### **General Community Feedback**

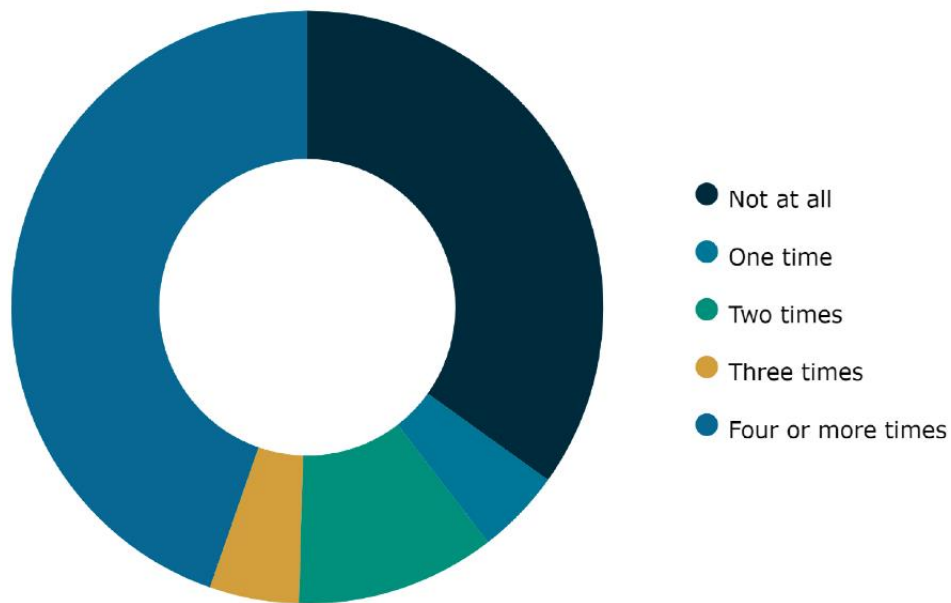
Of the 450 people who responded to the survey, 65% indicated that they had seen at least one cat wandering on their property or on public land in the past 12 months. Of these people, 45% had seen wandering cats four or more times.

56 mentions in the survey comments were in relation to feral cats and 44 mentions were in relation to neighbors’ cats, indicating that feral cats are slightly more of an ongoing issue.

Several respondents used emotive language such as ‘traumatising’, ‘horrible memory’, and ‘it is very frustrating and heartbreaking to see the birds being killed’.

6. Have you been personally affected by a wandering cat or witnessed a wandering cat (not yours) on your property or on public land over the past 12 months? Required

Multi Choice | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 450 (100%)



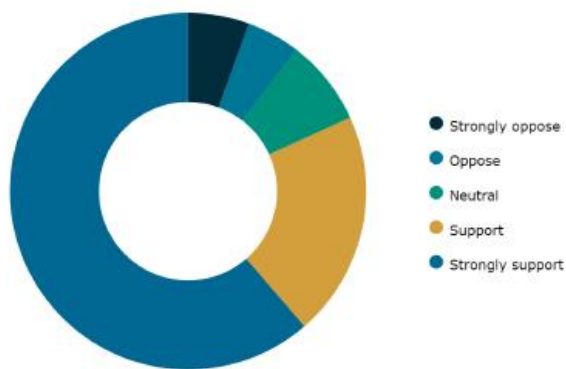
From the 450 submissions, 168 respondents chose to describe the circumstances. The top themes in order of frequency are as follows:

1. **Attack on wildlife** - 58 comments relate to cats attacking birds and/or other native wildlife. Quotes include *'stalking birds in my garden'*, *'killed a sugar glider'*, *'killing a lot of wildlife'*, *'catching lizards'* and *'absolutely terrified irreparably mangled rosella'*
2. **Cats out at night** - 56 people raised concern about cats out at night, including feral cats
3. **Nuisance cats** – 44 mentions were about cats being a general nuisance, including annoying inside pets, fighting, spraying and defecating on private property. Quotes include *'annoys my dog'*, *'irks my pet chickens'* and several reported neighbouring cats using their property *'as their kitty litter tray'*
4. **Council intervention** – 29 comments mention they would like more Council intervention, curfews and responsible cat ownership

### 6.1.1 Cat Confinement Program

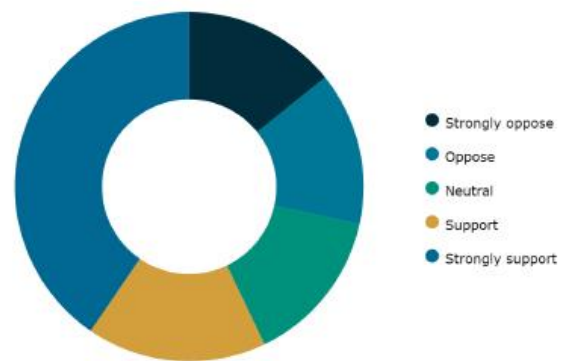
The following results demonstrate strong community support for a cat confinement program, with a preference towards a night-time cat curfew

**Night-Time Cat Curfew**



90% of respondents indicated support of a night-time cat curfew  
 5% strongly opposed

**24hr Cat Confinement**



71% of respondents indicated support of a 24hr cat confinement program  
 14% strongly opposed

## 6.2 Dog Aggression/Attacks

Dog attacks remain a high priority for Council with officers responding immediately, where possible, to all reports, including after hours.

In responding to dog attack reports, officers find that the alleged attacking dog had attacked previously, however was not reported to Council. Had the initial attack(s) been reported, subsequent attacks may not have occurred. Education is required to encourage the community to report dogs at large, dogs rushing and dog attacks of all types.

The below table displays the dog attack reports received by Council over the last 4 years:

Dog Attack Reports	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Hepburn Shire	32	40	34	13*

\*The reduction in dog attacks during 2020/2021 may be a result of more people being home with their dogs during the COVID 19 pandemic.

### **General Community Feedback**

Of the 450 people who responded to the survey, 42% of all respondents indicated that they have witnessed at least one instance of dog aggression or attack. Of these people, 10% have witnessed aggression four or more times.

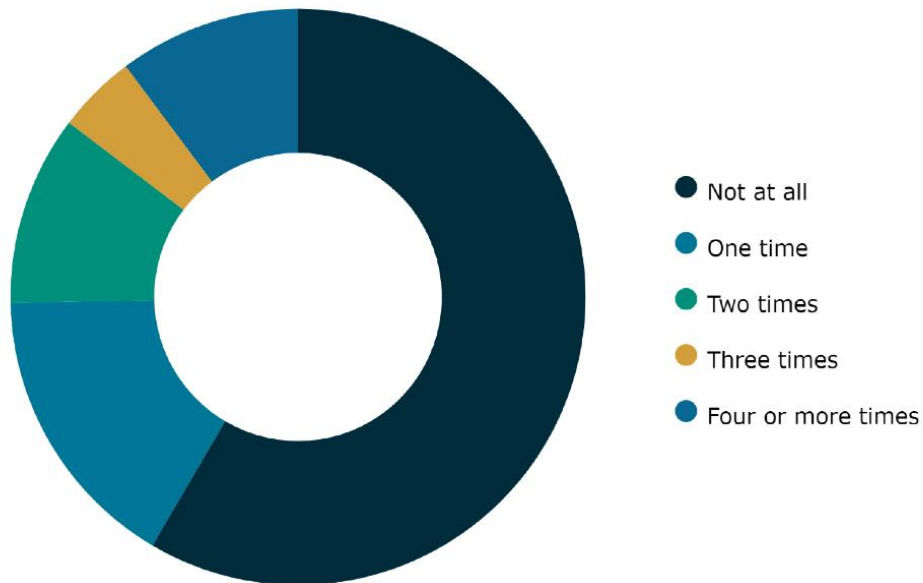
30 respondents used emotive language, such as traumatised, frightened, fear, scared, distressed, threatened, terrified, devastated and distraught.

Included in this category were respondents who expressed that dog aggression / attack impacted their freedom to walk, bike ride or exercise. Also included were phrases such as *'extreme anxiety'*, *'do not feel safe'*, *'children in tears'*, *'ruin my relaxational activity'*, *'diagnosed with PTSD'* and *'requiring psychological counselling.'*

26 responses mentioned incidents that have occurred at Victoria Park or Lake Daylesford.

Off leash or wandering dogs are a potential risk to people, pets, and wildlife. A respondent from the Hepburn Wildlife Shelter said they *'regularly receive animals that have been mauled and/or chased by dogs.'*

10. Have you been personally affected, and/or witnessed dog aggression/attacks in the past 12 months? Required  
 Multi Choice | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 450 (100%)



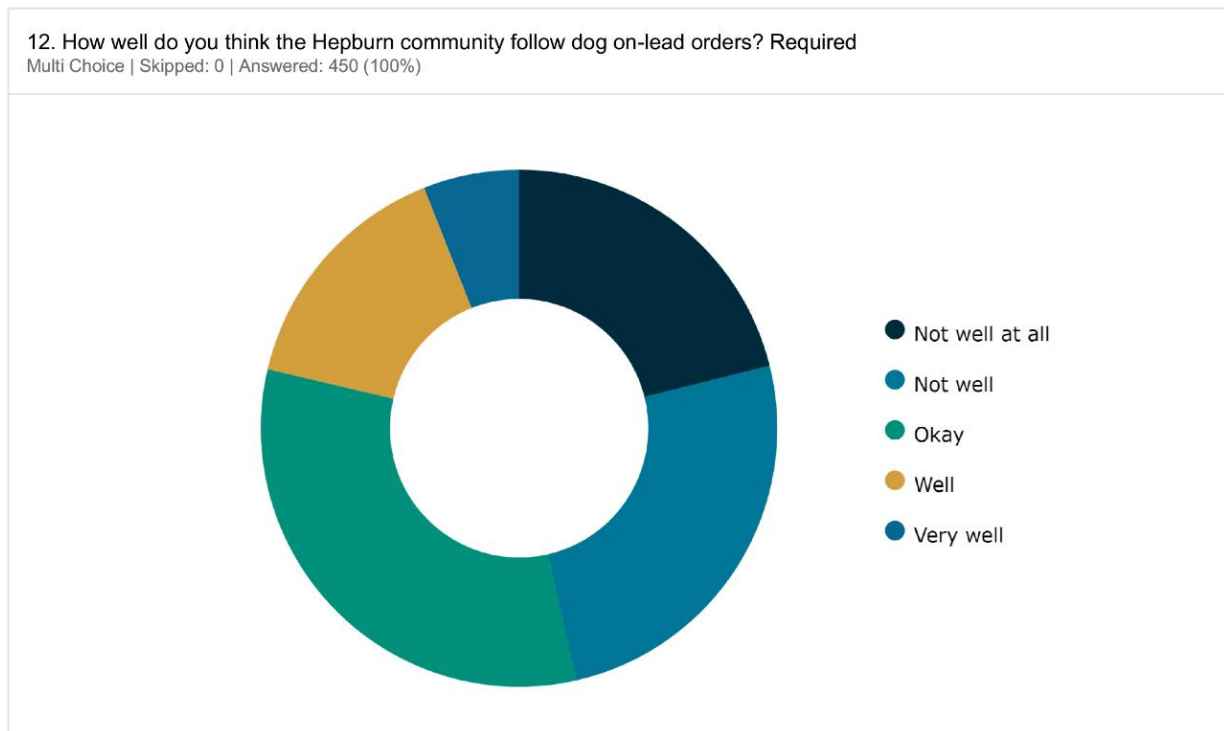
From the 450 submissions, 133 respondents chose to describe the circumstances. The top themes in order of frequency are as follows:

1. **Dogs rushing** - 56 mentions of dogs rushing, including the words: coming out, barking, snarling, nuisance, sniffing and jumping
2. **Dog attacks** - 46 mentions of attacking my dog / pet / farm animal or attacking me. Included were the words mauled and killed my dog / pet / farm animal. Quotes include *'lost part of a finger'*, *'reconstructive surgery'*, *'damaged'*, *'prematurely dead'*, *'dog recovered from multiple bite injuries'*. There were several reports of domestic cats killed by dogs that weren't properly confined to their property
3. **Dogs off lead** – 42 mentions of dogs off lead with many of these expressing that the dogs were not under effective control
4. **Council intervention** – 30 comments mention they would like to see more Council intervention and more responsible dog ownership
5. **Dogs not confined** - 21 mentioned dogs that either weren't confined or weren't properly confined as they were wandering or jumping the fence.

### 6.3 Dogs on Leash

Survey responses indicate that only 21% of people feel that the Hepburn community follow dog leash orders well or very well.

Dog owners self-reported that they follow dog on lead orders consistently 61% of the time.



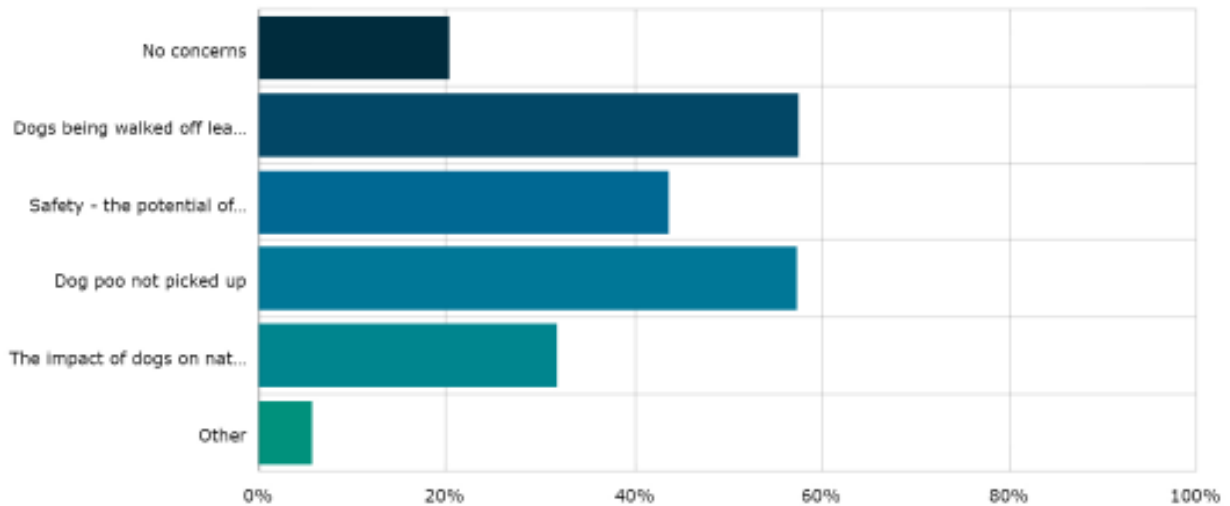
From the 450 submissions, 145 respondents chose to describe the circumstances. The top themes in order of frequency are as follows:

1. **Enforcement** - 66 respondents support enforcement and suggested increased dog on lead law enforcement, increased ranger presence and increased signage
2. **Education** - 41 respondents believed responsible dog ownership and education were important including responsibility for picking up/disposing of dog faeces
3. **Facilities** - 31 respondents suggested more off leash dog parks and designated tracks/areas



**Respondents concerns about dog walking in Hepburn**

As demonstrated below, many respondents expressed a range of concerns regarding dog walking.



The top four comments in order of concern include:

1. Dogs being walked off lead or not under control of the owner (57%)
2. Dog poo not picked up (57%)
3. Safety – the potential of dog aggression or attack (44%)
4. The impact of dogs on native wildlife (31%)

## 6.4 Improvements to Council’s Animal Management Services for pet owners

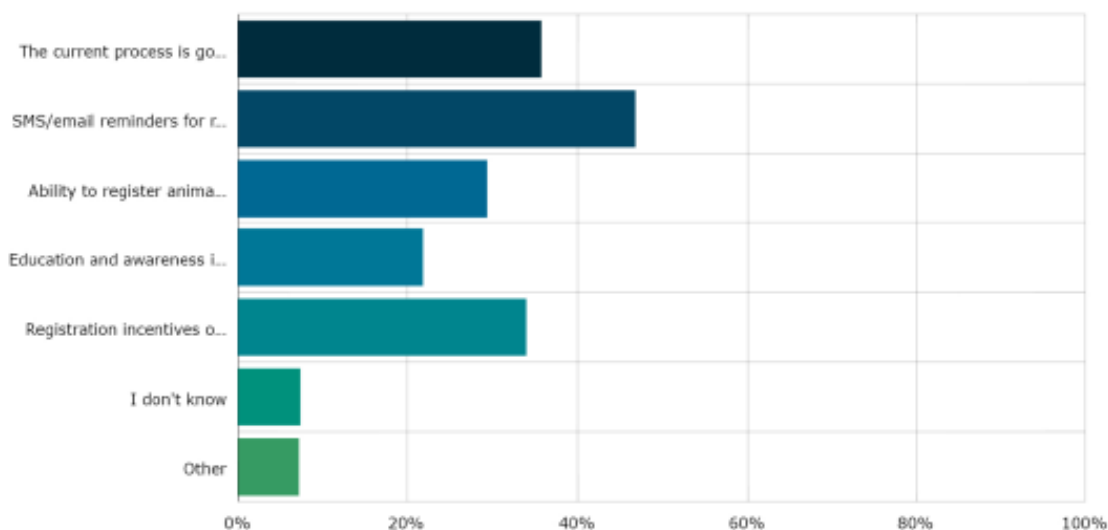
When asked for suggestions on how Council could improve its animal management services for pet owners, 188 of the 450 respondents chose to comment.

Themes in order of frequency include:

1. **Enforcement** - 65 mentions of people wanting increased enforcement action, improved signage and improvements to Councils response to complaints. Some comments also included suggestions of more Rangers and improved Ranger training
2. **Facilities** - 33 mentions regarding the need for more off lead dog parks
3. **Incentives** - 25 mentions of Council offering incentives in the areas of registration, microchipping and de-sexing. They would like Council to explain what registration fees cover and provide an easy online registration process
4. **Education** - 23 mentions in support of more community education and awareness. They would like easy access to information on the Council website, including the rules clearly stated
5. **Reporting** - 18 mentions proposing the implementation of a community reporting system, repeat offender strike system, lost/found pets reporting system and a 24-hour Hotline/Helpline. This category also included respondents wanting a holding facility for lost pets and a 24-hour accessible pound

### ***Pet Registration***

When asked ‘What would make it easier for residents to register their pets?’ the following responses were provided:



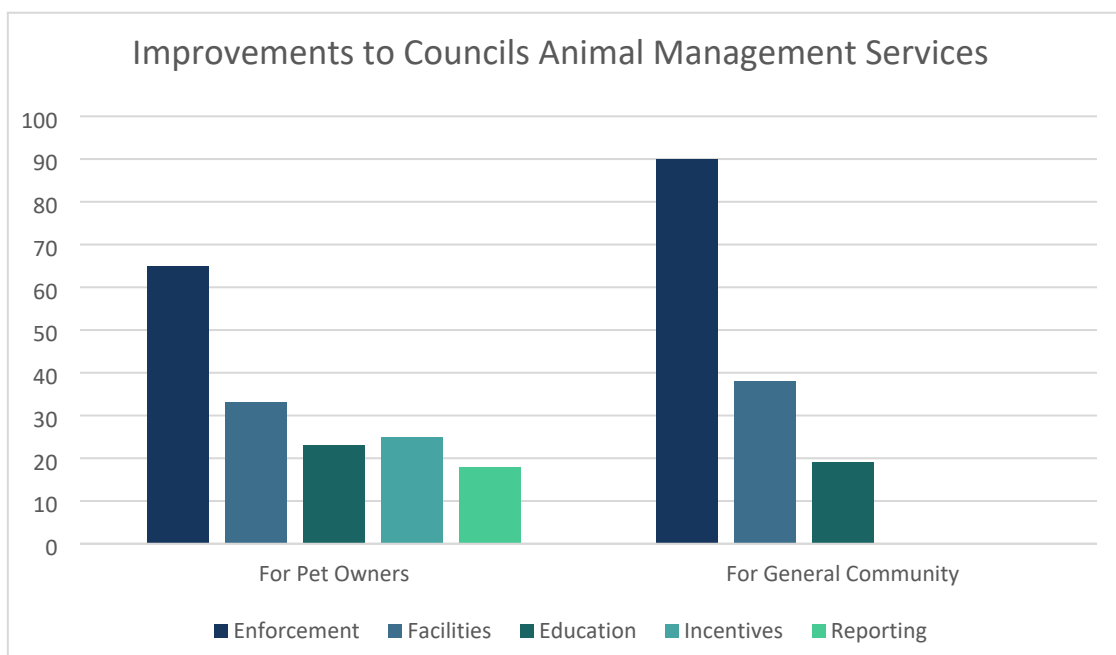
The top five comments in order of preference include:

1. SMS/email reminders for registration renewals (47%)
2. The current process is good (36%)
3. Registration incentives or discounts (34%)
4. Ability to register animals at vet clinics (30%)
5. Education and awareness incentives in the community (22%)

## 6.5 Improvement to Councils Animal Management Services for the Benefit of the General Community

When asked for suggestions on how Council could improve its animal management services for the benefit of the general community, 157 of the 450 respondents chose to comment. Themes in order of frequency include:

1. **Enforcement and reporting** - 90 mentions supporting Council intervention and enforcement action. This category also includes recommendations of more ranger presence with the work 'policing' frequently used. Support for a local pound and a 24/7 hotline or online registry / reporting system
2. **Facilities** - 38 mentions encouraging Council to provide more resources such as poo bins and bags, more off lead areas and better signage
3. **Education** - 19 mentions in favour of more responsible pet ownership education



## 6.6 Further Comments or Feedback

When invited to write further comments or feedback in relation to pet management in the Shire, 89 respondents provided a comment. There were a variety of themes, most of which were a repeat of previous comments.

A few new themes emerged, including:

- Pet ownership issues relating to people staying in holiday accommodation
- Visitors expectations when they visit our Shire
- A few mentions were made regarding the dog park in Trentham: *‘The main concern is the lack of dedicated off lead park areas for dogs to play and socialise in Trentham. There is a fenced area however, this is a shared area that includes access to the tennis courts and children’s’ play equipment.’*
- Several comments suggested dedicated dog parks and tracks are needed in Creswick and Daylesford
- 12 respondents mention that pets are important for people, their health and well-being. These comments reflected a sense of *‘living with’* and finding solutions

*‘The benefits of pet ownership can’t be underestimated. However, I worry that owners think their pets can do no wrong, no matter what the circumstances. Continued education around the negative impact pets have on wildlife, and the importance of keeping pets under  
 CONTINUED control in public areas is vital.’*

## 7 Conclusion

Council appreciates the time taken by the community to provide feedback on domestic animal management in the Hepburn Shire. This community engagement report will help inform the new actions of the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021 - 2025.



## **11 A DYNAMIC AND RESPONSIVE COUNCIL**

### **11.1 ADOPTION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT - REPORT OF OPERATIONS 2021/2022**

Go to 00:45:35 in the meeting recording to view this item.

#### **ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

*In providing this advice to Council as the Director Organisational Services, I Andrew Burgess have no interests to disclose in this report.*

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Annual Report 2021/2022 [**11.1.1** - 92 pages]

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is for Council to receive and note the 2021/2022 Annual Report.

Council is required to prepare an Annual Report each financial year that details the performance of the organisation. This report of Council must be completed and adopted by 31 October 2022 in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. The report is required to be submitted to the Minister for Local Government and received and noted by Council.

Council Officers have prepared the Annual Report (attached) for the 2021/2022 financial year.

#### **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council receives and adopts the Annual Report 2021/2022.*

#### **MOTION**

*That Council:*

1. *Receives and adopts the Annual Report – Report of Operations 2021/2022;*
2. *Notes the document will be amended to include the following sections as previously circulated to Councillors;*
  - a. *Sustainable Capacity Indicators*
  - b. *Service Performance Indicators*
  - c. *Financial Performance Indicators*
  - d. *Council Plan and Community Vision.*
3. *Notes the document will be amended on page 89 of the Annual Report – Report of Operations under Financial Position to read: “Council is in a delicate financial position which must continue to be managed for the coming years.”;*
4. *Notes that the Performance Statement 2021/2022 and Financial Statements 2021/2022 also form part of the Annual Report and were adopted at the Ordinary Council Meeting in September 2022; and,*
5. *Notes that all documents that make up the Annual Report will be published on Council’s website.*

**Moved:** Cr Brian Hood

**Seconded:** Cr Tessa Halliday  
**Carried**

**Voted for:** Cr Brian Hood, Cr Don Henderson, Cr Jen Bray, Cr Juliet Simpson, Cr Tessa Halliday and Cr Tim Drylie

**Voted against:** Nil

**Abstained:** Nil

## **BACKGROUND**

Annual reports and performance reporting data are key mechanisms to allow Victorian councils to demonstrate accountability and transparency to their local communities.

Section 98(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires councils to prepare an annual report in respect of each financial year. The annual report must be presented to a council meeting (open to the public) by 31 October 2022.

Please note there is no provision in the Act to extend this deadline and failure to do so may be treated as a breach of the Act.

The Act no longer requires Councils to submit their Annual Report or Annual Budget to the Minister for Local Government. Each council must comply with its own public transparency policy and the public transparency principles in section 58 of the Act.

The Annual Report provides an overview of highlights, achievements and challenges that were experienced in the previous financial year. The report also measures our performance and progress against the objectives and priorities, as set out in our Council Plan, along with the Budget. The Annual Report also provides data against the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework. There are minimum inclusions within the Annual Report, which is governed by the *Local Government Act 2020*. All mandatory inclusions have been met in the compilation of the report.

## **KEY ISSUES**

The Annual Report is broken up into six sections:

1. Introduction
  - a. Details the Community Vision, Plan and introductions from Mayor and CEO
2. Year in Review
  - a. Provides a summary of highlights and key events from each month
3. Our Shire
  - a. Demographic details of our Shire
4. Our People
  - a. Details about the organisational structure and workforce
5. Performance

- a. Detail of how we are progressing against the Council Plan
  - b. Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (Know your Council) results
6. Governance
- a. Governance, financial and statutory information – noting that the financial and performance statements were placed on our website following their adoption at the September Council meeting and signed off by the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO).

Although we experienced a number of challenges during the 2021/2022 financial year, Council has made progress against many of the Council Plan actions as detailed in the Performance section of the report.

## **POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

Council Plan 2021-2025

A dynamic and responsive Council

5.2 Actively communicate, inform and engage with our community about events and decision-making

5.3 A sustainable and agile organisation with strong corporate governance that supports excellent operations

## **GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk implications associated with this report.

## **COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

The Annual Report 2021/2022 is being considered for adoption at the 18 October 2022 Ordinary Council Meeting. The final report will then be uploaded to Council's website and shared with the community via social media. Articles announcing its adoption will also be included in other communications channels, including community newsletters and Hepburn Life.



*Hepburn*

SHIRE COUNCIL



# Annual Report

REPORT OF OPERATIONS

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2021/2022

## Acknowledgement of Country

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. On these lands, Djaara have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We recognise their resilience through dispossession and it is a testament to their continuing culture and tradition, which is strong and thriving.

We also acknowledge the neighbouring Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri to our South East and the Wadawurrung to our South West and pay our respect to all Aboriginal peoples, their culture, and lore.

We acknowledge their living culture and the unique role they play in the life of this region.

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# Community Vision and Council Plan

## 01 INTRODUCTION

◀ CEO Bradley Thomas with Mayor Cr Tim Drylie

## 01

## COMMUNITY VISION AND COUNCIL PLAN

After 11 months of work, Council adopted our ten-year Community Vision and four-year Council Plan, including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The plan and vision came out of the Hepburn Together Project, where we heard from ten per cent of the Shire's community.

Council held community drop-in sessions, hosted surveys, undertook a deliberative engagement process made up of citizens reflective of our community, and reached out to the broader community in many different ways.

The ten-year 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.

The Council Plan 2021-2025 describes how Council will strive towards the vision during the four-year term, where to focus efforts, priority actions and how to measure progress. This includes five key focus areas of:

- 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.

For the first time Council integrated the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 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.

## 01

# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



The Annual Report gives us the chance to reflect, celebrate and learn from all that we have achieved in 2021/22. I am pleased to present this report on behalf of my fellow Councillors.

While the COVID pandemic has continued to impact our Shire and residents, we have also had to deal with recovery from not one, but two major weather events. These significant events impacted large sections of our Shire on both the eastern and western sides. We are grateful for the support we received from the Victorian and Australian Governments and have worked closely with the community through our dedicated Storm Recovery Teams. An emphasis has been on helping the community not only get through the event, but also deal with the challenges of repairs, dealing with insurance companies, clearing fallen trees and flooded homes, along with the psychological trauma of living through and surviving such events. We are very mindful of the ongoing impacts of these events on our community and understand that recovery will take a long time.

Aside from weather events, we have also had another battle on our hands, with the prospect of overhead powerlines and a large terminal station planned for our Shire as part of the Western Renewables Link (formerly known as Western Victoria Transmission Network project). While Council is highly supportive of renewable energy, our clean energy future must be based on trust. Like many in our community, we are strongly opposed to the transmission lines being above ground along the proposed route and the extremely large terminal station at Mount Prospect, which is just minutes from Creswick and Daylesford. It will have a significant impact on our valuable agricultural land, significant landscapes and the health and wellbeing of local people. We will continue to advocate strongly on behalf of the community and will make a strong submission to the Environmental Effects Statement when it opens.

There have been plenty of business-as-usual activities throughout the year as well, as we continue to provide important services to our community, including construction and maintenance of roads and footpaths, regular waste collection, maintenance and beautification of our many parks and open spaces, the delivery of library and youth programs.

We worked on a number of strategies throughout the year, including Sustainable Hepburn and our Positive Ageing strategies, which were adopted by Council in August 2022. Throughout 2021/22 we adopted our ACE Youth Strategy and Early Years and Middle Years Strategy, which demonstrate our commitment to working with the community and other agencies towards the development of children in our Shire, from birth right through to adulthood.

## 01

We officially opened the Manna Gums Frontier Wars Memorial Avenue, Australia's first Avenue of Honour to acknowledge the Aboriginal lives lost in defending their traditional lands during early contact and settlement. We also worked closely with local businesses to attract visitors back to our Shire after some very quiet years due to the COVID pandemic. This included partnering with Daylesford Macedon Tourism to distribute 1,000 \$50 dining gift cards, to help inject much-needed funds back into our local economy and bring Borealis to our shire.

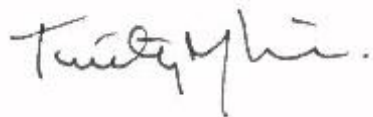
We also began construction on major projects, including the Hammon Park mountain bike trailhead at Creswick, the Trentham Community Hub, and a new pavilion at Trentham Sportsground Reserve. We also made some difficult decisions such as to cancel the Hepburn Hub at The Rex project and to cease provision of the Commonwealth Home Support Program and Home and Community Care Program for Younger People. Councillors thought long and hard about these matters and the decisions were not made easily.

We are continuing to innovate and grow the skills of staff and Councillors in community engagement. Our e-newsletter Hepburn Life is distributed to more than 3,500 subscribers on a monthly basis, and we have recently redeveloped our website with a focus on the information that our community wants and needs.

Participate Hepburn allows the community to engage with us at any time – day or night. We understand the value and importance of engagement, and this has been a really successful way for the community to provide input into current topics.

Acknowledging we still have a way to go on many areas as evidenced by the community satisfaction survey, we believe it is important to give residents the opportunity to share their thoughts and expertise, so we can take community knowledge into consideration and act on it when making decisions.

I encourage you to read through our Annual Report and take a look at some of the valuable work we have achieved over the last 12 months.



Cr Tim Drylie  
Mayor

## 01

# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



I am pleased to present Council's Annual Report 2021/2022. The Annual Report provides a detailed insight into Council's operations and illustrates how we are performing against the Council Plan, Budget and Local Government Performance Reporting Indicators.

It has been another challenging year for Council with the recovery from storm and flooding events in separate parts of our Shire continuing and issues with staffing associated with COVID. Despite these challenges, the Council team has been hard at work delivering services and many important projects on behalf of the community. In addition to the performance indicators that we are reporting on, the highlights section of this Annual Report provides a snapshot of what we've accomplished.

Improvements to service delivery and community engagement have been a focus over 2021/22.

We continue to get fantastic engagement from the community when initiating consultations, and have reinstated Listening Posts and Meet the Mayor sessions, to build our relationship and trust with the community. We produce a regular e-newsletters (Hepburn Life), publish community updates in local newsletters, host Participate Hepburn, an engagement platform, and have developed a new website, which is something we heard from the community was needed.

Some the highlights for me as CEO over 2021/22 have been the adoption of key strategies covering Early and Middle Years, Youth and Positive Ageing. Following extensive community consultation, staff and Councillors feedback we also adopted the Community Vision and the Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan as well as the Financial Plan and Asset Plan.



## 01

It was exciting to see construction begin on intergenerational community assets – Trentham Sportsground Reserve Pavilion, Trentham Community Hub and Hammon Park Trailhead in Creswick.

We have transferred clients to a values-aligned service providers for aged care services and worked with clients and family members, seniors groups, positive ageing groups, staff and funding bodies to keep them informed throughout the process. We have significantly improved our community engagement and communications including the development of a new corporate website and roll-out of the e-newsletter Hepburn Life and launched and undertook Community Reference Groups as part of community engagement for the Sustainable Hepburn Strategy.

I am proud of our organisation's continued response to the COVID Pandemic, including transitioning and adjusting to a hybrid way of working for many.

We know we have more to do to respond to community and improve our engagement outcomes and customer service, so I look forward to leading the organisation over the coming year and providing future reports on performance.



Bradley Thomas  
Chief Executive Officer



events  
in our  
community  
each month

.....

# 02 THE YEAR IN REVIEW

# 02

## JULY 2021

- Continued the clean-up from the June 2021 extreme weather event, which devastated the eastern part of the Shire. Council established a Storm Recovery Team to lead the clean-up of local roads and reserves, and delivered community recovery activities, including drop-in sessions, a recovery centre, information on support for impacted community members, personal support and counselling. Council worked closely with Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV) during clean-up activities which continued throughout the year.
- Opened the Manna Gums Frontier Wars Memorial Avenue, Australia's first Avenue of Honour to acknowledge the Aboriginal lives lost in defending their traditional lands during early contact and settlement. The Memorial Avenue is along the Daylesford-Malmsbury Road near Coomoora.
- Sought feedback on local tracks and trails, and the Central Springs Reserve Masterplan.
- Opened an artisan agriculture business mentor program and advisory group.
- Awarded contracts for road reconstruction in Smeaton and strengthen two bridges in Mount Prospect and Rocklyn.
- Secured funding of \$500,000 from Victorian Government for the Creswick Town Hall upgrade.



Cr Lesley Hewitt (Mayor at the time) speaking at the unveiling of the Manna Gums Frontier Wars Memorial (July 2021) opened Australia's first memorial avenue to honour Aboriginal lives lost in defending traditional lands.



BRV Trentham

L-R James Wicker Storm Recovery

Project Lead - Amanda Western Storm Recovery

Manager - Paul Rogers Regional Director BRV

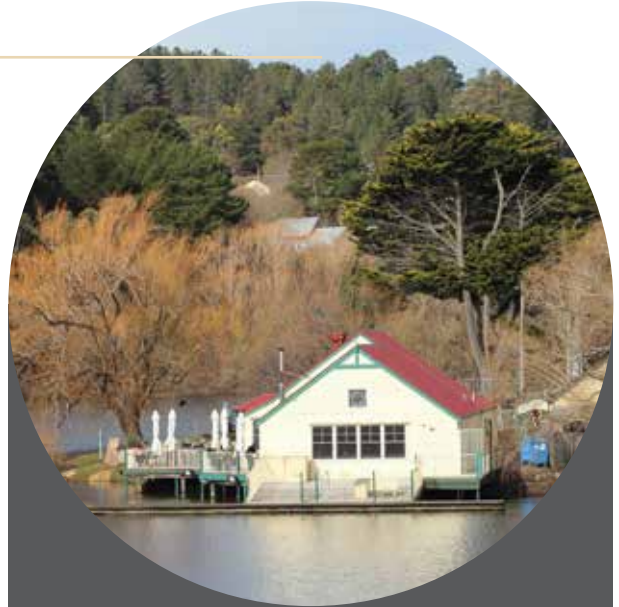
Council worked with Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV) on the clean-up response following the storm in the east of the Shire in June 2021. Pictured are Council's James Wicker and Amanda Western with BRV Regional Director Paul Rogers.



# 02

## AUGUST 2021

- Partnered with Daylesford Macedon Tourism on a dining gift card campaign as part of the COVID recovery efforts. A total of 800 \$50 gift cards were given away to spend in local businesses. A further 200 \$50 gift cards were divided among eligible local businesses to promote or market their business.
- Partnered with Macedon Ranges Shire Council and City of Greater Bendigo to deliver the Healthy Landscapes program, which offers a range of practical advice for regenerative agriculture practices through on-farm advice, webinars, workshops and field days, along with short courses on holistic grazing management and farmer discussion groups.
- Activated the Hepburn Community Events Recovery Program to help event organisers to plan and run events that were on hold due to the COVID pandemic.
- Announced contracts of \$270,000 towards our footpath expansion and renewal program.
- Announced our Towards Zero grants, which saw \$26,000 contributed to environmental projects for Trentham Sustainability Group, Rotary Club Daylesford and Hepburn Wholefoods Collective.
- Appointed members to our inaugural Gender Equity Advisory Committee.



One thousand \$50 gift cards were given away to encourage spending in the Shire.



Solar panels installation



# 02

## SEPTEMBER 2021

- Completed works on the Blampied-Molongghip Road bridge over Rocky Lead Creek and began upgrades to the Telegraph Road bridge over Langdons Creek.
- Commenced works on the widening of around 1.6 kilometres of Daylesford-Clunes Road.
- Completed a new footpath along High Street in Trentham and began works to construct a new path along Market and Horvaths streets.
- Announced members of the Heather Mutimer International Women’s Day (IWD) Advisory Committee, which recommends additions to the IWD Honour Roll.
- Sought feedback on our Domestic Wastewater Management Plan, which sets out how to manage potential risks from the use of septic tank systems.
- Celebrated Women’s Health Week.
- Presented Council’s Financial and Performance statements detailing our performance and position of the last 12 months.
- Hosted online hip hop sessions to build connections during the COVID lockdown restrictions.



This new footpath in Trentham was one of many installed around the Shire.



Templeton Street, Clunes



# 02

## OCTOBER 2021

- Adopted our ten-year Community Vision and four-year Council Plan, which had input from around ten per cent of our Shire. This important strategic document included our Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.
- Provided residents and community groups with free firewood salvaged as part of the clean-up activities following the storm in June 2021. The timber was processed locally, with 7,000 tonnes of firewood given to residents and community groups, which was used to fundraise or donated to vulnerable community members.
- Endorsed the Local Law No.2 guidelines that govern planting on nature strips, firewood collection and salvaging at our transfer stations.
- Installed a section of footpath along Templeton Street in Clunes as part of our footpath renewal and expansion program and began work on paths along Hall and Napier streets in Creswick.
- Carried out a youth census to guide the development of our ACE Youth Development Strategy.
- Adopted a masterplan to guide future improvements to Central Springs Reserve, a popular destination for locals and visitors, located at the southern end of Lake Daylesford.
- Tabled Lyonville’s new Community Plan to guide future investment and improvements to this lovely township in the Shire.
- Commenced community consultation on the proposal to rename Jim Crow Creek to Larni Barramal Yaluk.
- Reopened Council facilities including Customer Service and Libraries that had been closed due to COVID restrictions.



Council’s ten-year Community Vision and four-year Council Plan.



Around 7,000 tonnes of firewood was distributed to the community following the storm in June 2021. Pictured is Ed from Kingston.



# 02

## NOVEMBER 2021

- Made an in-principle decision to withdraw from aged and disability services in response to the Australian Government’s aged-care reforms. Began the process to recommend values-aligned service providers to state and commonwealth governments and worked with clients and family members, seniors groups, positive ageing groups, staff and funding bodies to keep them informed throughout the process.
- Launched engagement for development of the new strategy to outline Council’s commitment to environmental sustainability, Sustainable Hepburn. The strategy encompassed activities towards a zero emissions council, a Shire in harmony with our environment, and a low waste and climate resilient Shire.
- Made a clear and strong position on the Western Renewables Link (formerly known as Western Victoria Transmission Network project) stating that Council is strongly opposed to the proposed route of overhead transmission lines and the extremely large terminal station to be located at Mount Prospect.
- Began construction on the redevelopment of the Trentham Sportsground Reserve Pavilion, to accommodate sports club use and broader community use for functions and events. The pavilion will have multi-purpose dividable community meeting spaces, along with a functional catering kitchen, canteen and bar, covered outdoor spectator area and more.
- Held our first storm recovery session in Trentham to hear psychologist Dr Rob Gordon speak on community recovery after trauma. We went on to hold several more of these sessions in and around Trentham and Creswick over the rest of 2021/22.
- Led community walks in Clunes, Creswick, Trentham and Daylesford in recognition of 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence. In partnership with community

- groups, we also placed orange decorations and signs on buildings, stickers on footpaths and messages of support on Council vehicles.
- Welcomed new Mayor, Cr Tim Drylie, and Deputy Mayor, Cr Jen Bray.
- Offered residents free green waste disposal to prepare for the Fire Danger Period.
- Ran a series of artisan agriculture webinars throughout the month to build skills of small-scale producers.
- Completed footpaths in Clunes, Creswick and Trentham.
- Council decided to not proceed with final construction works of the Hepburn Hub at The Rex project, and to instead sell the historic building.



Psychologist Dr Rob Gordon made a number of visits to help the community recover from the weather events that occurred in the east and west of the Shire.



Illustrator’s impression of the new pavilion at Trentham Sportsground Recreation Reserve.



# 02

## DECEMBER 2021

- Met with nearby mayors, former Victorian Premier The Hon Denis Napthine AO, and Dja Dja Wurrung CEO Rodney Carter, in Clunes to show support for the Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid. The partnership of 13 councils and regional tourism body Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive, aims to raise the profile of the Goldfields and the associated social, cultural and economic benefits of the bid.
- Kicked off a five-pronged project to enhance the Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens in line with the masterplan, which started with installation of a formal stairway from the main entry of the gardens to improve access and connections. The project was delivered in partnership with the Friends of Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens Daylesford, with generous funding from the Friends group, the Victorian State Government and Council.
- Named as finalists in the 2022 LGPro Awards for Excellence Outstanding Small Rural Council Initiative for the Manna Gum Frontier Wars Memorial Avenue; and the First Nations Community Partnership Initiative for the video series of Peaks, Wetlands and Rivers.
- Announced members of our Sustainable Hepburn Technical Working Groups.
- Commenced our pool season and again offered free entry to pools at Daylesford, Clunes, Trentham and Creswick Toddlers' Pool and splash park.
- Invited applications for an LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee and a Mineral Springs Reserves Advisory Committee.
- Contract awarded for Trentham Community Hub.



Charles at work on the new stairs at Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens



Mayors and representatives at the Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid.





# 02

## JANUARY 2022

- Worked with emergency agencies to provide community support and clean-up following heavy rainfall and flash flooding in the west of the Shire on 5 January. Close to 150 homes were damaged in the storm, including 35 partially destroyed or uninhabitable. The storm resulted in around \$10 million of damage to Council assets alone and around \$25 million damage to crops.
- Assisted people to leave damaged homes and established a Relief Centre in Creswick, while crews cleared roads, removed fallen trees from powerlines and hazards, and removed debris out of Creswick Creek. Response groups included Victorian State Emergency Services, Country Fire Authority, Victoria Police, DELWP, Ambulance Victoria, Salvation Army, Powercor and Parks Victoria.
- Carried out 437 secondary impact assessments on private residences damaged by the January storm. Teams met with residents to understand any assistance required and to assess damage to property.
- Offered free waste and green waste disposal for storm-affected residents at the Creswick Transfer Station.
- Announced the 2022 Community Award winners at a special ceremony at Hepburn Springs. The recipients were Citizen of the Year - Danny Moynihan, Young Citizen of the Year - Katie Topp, Community Event of the Year - Feast on Fraser Street – Christmas in Clunes organised by Clunes Neighbourhood House, with a Life membership award for services to Town Crying and the Community to Philip Greenbank on behalf of the Australasian Guild of Town Criers.
- Commenced the annual road resealing maintenance program throughout the Shire to prolong the life of our sealed road network.
- Begonia season kicked off, with an incredible display in the conservatory at Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens, bringing thousands of flower-lovers to the Shire.
- Welcomed eight new citizens to the Shire.
- Issued a planning permit for the 60km network of mountain bike trails as part of the Creswick Trails project.



Council's Community Awards were announced at a civic ceremony at Hepburn Springs. (L-R) Hon Catherine King MP, Mayor Cr Tim Drylie, Danny Moynihan, Deb Bright, Katie Topp and Mary-Anne Thomas MP at the civic award ceremony.



Creswick was inundated with rain during a storm in January which damaged homes and infrastructure in the west of the Shire. Image: Cmdr Wayne Rigg FRV.



# 02

## FEBRUARY 2022

- The Minister for Planning approved the Hepburn Shire C80hepb Planning Scheme Amendment, which meant the new planning scheme came into effect. The planning scheme sets out the way land can be used, developed and protected, and guides planning and development decisions.
- Began construction of the Trentham Community Hub, which will incorporate a community library, Council customer service centre, visitor information services, large community hall, commercial-style kitchen, playgroup area, on-site parking and landscaped surrounds. A Project Advisory Group worked together with Council to develop a design that met the needs and expectations of the community. The Victorian Government committed \$3.5 million funding towards the project through the Regional Infrastructure Fund.
- Started works to upgrade the Glengower and Cotswold roads intersection to realign the road and improve line of sight, particularly for large vehicles. The project is funded by Council and Agriculture Victoria as part of the AgriLinks program.
- Launched an online planning portal to allow community members to submit documents or search any planning matter, online, anytime.
- Started a series of drop-in sessions and pop-up events, an online survey and focus groups with 14 community organisations as part of the work to inform development of Sustainable Hepburn.
- Held drop-in sessions at Creswick, Newlyn, Smeaton and Clunes to answer questions about the Western Renewables Link (formerly Western Victorian Transmission Network Project) and talk to residents about how to make a submission to the Environmental Effects Statement once released by AusNet.
- Sought feedback on the draft Aquatics Strategy.



Council held pop-up events, surveys and focus groups to help develop Sustainable Hepburn.



Beautiful Begonias



# 02

## MARCH 2022

- Inducted Bullarto Primary School Principal Joanne Pegg into the Heather Mutimer Honour Roll as part of Council's International Women's Day celebrations. The presentation was made at a special event in Daylesford and attended by around 100 people.
- Hosted the 25th ChillOut Festival, which is the largest and longest-running pride festival in regional Australia. Celebrations included the well-known Parade and Carnival Day, along with commemorations, talks, workshops, exhibitions, bushwalks, horse rides, golf and tennis tournaments, theatre, cabaret, music, fashion parades, drag shows, quiz nights, bush dances and dance parties and more. The iconic annual festival is a boon for accommodation, hospitality, retail and tourism businesses and generates a powerful sense of belonging in the Shire.
- Commenced works on the new \$1.9 million trailhead at Hammon Park in Creswick, with the community space to feature nature play, cycling jumps course, a learn to ride circuit, shaded seating, cycle wash area and additional parking.
- Hit the road to speak with the community about people's experiences of ageing in our Shire. The pop-in sessions were held throughout the Shire and a survey collected feedback to inform the development of Council's Positive Ageing Strategy.
- Announced winners of a truck art competition with a theme of reducing landfill for a sustainable Hepburn Shire. Congratulations to Xanthe Dalton from Daylesford College, and Hepburn Kindergarten class of 2021 for creating fabulous pieces of art that are now gracing two of our kerbside collection trucks.
- Arranged joint visits with the Small Business Bus and Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance to allow local businesses to drop in and understand the opportunities on offer and available support through these two organisations.
- Invited the community to provide feedback on artisan agriculture and the Western Renewables Link.
- Reopened the main netball court at Hepburn Recreation Reserve after a major redevelopment of the court.
- Announced members of our first LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee.
- Council made a final decision to withdraw from delivering aged and disability services.

International Women's Day celebration. Cr Tim Drylie, Heather Mutimer, Claire Culley, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Hon Catherine King MP, Joanne Pegg, Jack Pegg and Elaine Morrison at the event.



Congratulations to Xanthe Dalton from Daylesford College, whose artwork is displayed on rubbish trucks as part of our truck art competition.

The newly upgraded netball court at Hepburn Recreation Reserve.



Cr Tessa Halliday, Chair of Council's LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee and ChillOut volunteer



**OUR VISION**

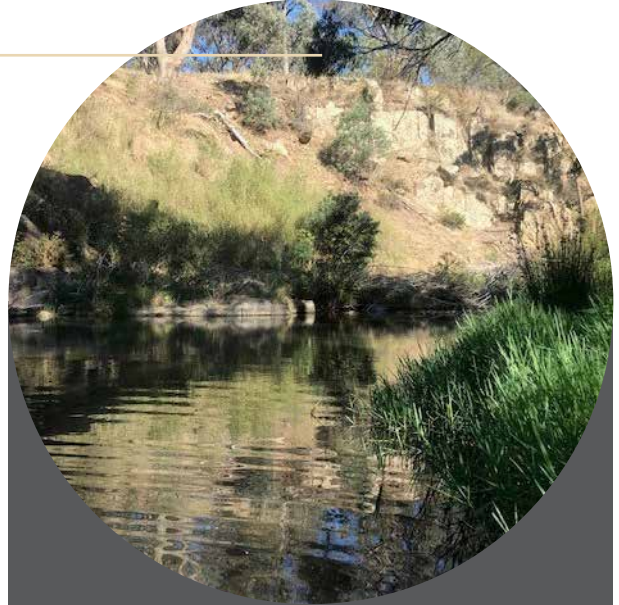
An inclusive rural community in Dja Dja Wurrung country where all people are valued, partnerships are fostered, environments protected, diversity supported and innovation embraced.

We are proud of our Shire's diversity. We are enriched when all people, regardless of background or identity are embraced and supported to participate and...

# 02

## APRIL 2022

- Adopted the Aquatics Strategy, outlining a ten-year priority plan to guide the future direction for aquatics facilities in the Shire. During consultation the community highlighted its desire for year-round access to an aquatic facility. The strategy includes a vision to provide access to sustainable, affordable year-round aquatic facilities that brings residents together to enjoy health, wellbeing, education and leisure experiences.
- Resolved to rename Jim Crow Creek to Larni Barramal Yaluk - which means 'Home or habitat of the Emu Creek'. The decision recognises Aboriginal heritage, the importance of reinstating Dja Dja Wurrung language, and removes a name that many people agree is racist and derogatory. The name change request was forwarded to Geographic Names Victoria for review and a final decision.
- Commenced community engagement on the Creswick Structure Plan, which will manage residential growth, provide for sufficient zoned land for employment and community infrastructure to 2042, whilst protecting and enhancing the town's unique historic character and biodiversity.
- Launched an online search 'find my bin day' function on our website along with an online appointment booking system for the community to meet with a planner so they can better understand planning permit application requirements.
- Awarded contracts for a bridge replacement at Old Ballarat Road bridge at Evansford and intersection realignment along Kingston Road at Kingston.
- Invited feedback on the draft ACE Youth Development Strategy.
- Began works on the Calemben Park change facilities project, which included an internal refurbishment of the toilet block to include three unisex accessible toilets and change facilities, an accessible footpath and parking space, along with upgrades to outdoor furniture near the BBQ area and toddler's pool. The project received support through the Victorian Government Local Sports Infrastructure Fund.



Council has requested Geographic Names Victoria to rename Jim Crow Creek to Larni Barramal Yaluk.



Council's ACE Youth Strategy was co-designed with young people.



# 02

## MAY 2022

- In support of Reconciliation Week, Mayor Drylie raised the Aboriginal flag at the Creswick Hub. Council also ran a series of events at local libraries including a special story time.
- Adopted our Early and Middle Years Strategy, outlining Council's commitment to support children aged 0 to 12 years in partnership with other agencies.
- Held a drop-in session to explain the plans to reinvigorate the forecourt of the Pioneer Memorial Tower and day basin at Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens. The day basin will become a water feature, and a rill will be installed between the day basin and cascade fernery. The tower forecourt will be landscaped and paved to create a welcoming entrance.
- Introduced plant labels at the Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens for significant trees and plants, building further on the educational value of the gardens. The plant label project was supported and funded by the Growing Victoria's Botanic Gardens grants program through the Victorian Government.
- Raised the rainbow flag in Daylesford on 17 March to recognise IDAHOBIT Day - the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia.
- Celebrated and profiled local groups as part of National Volunteer Week between 16 and 22 May.
- Began community consultation on the shires first Arts and Culture strategy.
- Participated in National Simultaneous Storytime at our libraries across the Shire on 25 May with the book Family Tree by Josh Pyke.
- Provided free training in Youth Mental Health First Aid to guide and educate adults in how they can assist and support young people experiencing mental health crises. The Youth Mental Health First Aid training was cancelled in February and held on 22 May 2022.

Council hosted a drop-in session for the community to learn about the works planned for Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens. (L-R) Council's Sean Ludeke, Friends of Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens Denise Purdey and Sally Malcher, architect Ashley Sheldrick from GBLA Consulting, Mayor Cr Tim Drylie and Council's Daniel Owe-Young.



▲ Councillors, staff and community members raised the rainbow flag on 17 May for IDAHOBIT Day.

Books and craft brought children from around the Shire together as part of National Simultaneous Story Time in May 2022.



# 02

## JUNE 2022

- Adopted the \$49.59 million budget for 2022-23, which included a record \$18.8 million of capital works made possible by a considerable injection of State and Australian capital grants (\$12.06 million).
- Mayor Cr Tim Drylie and Council Chief Executive Officer Bradley Thomas attended the 28th National General Assembly of Local Government in Canberra. More than 1,000 councillors from around Australia participated in the event and committed to partner with the Australian Government to progress critical reforms, including national productivity, climate change transition, Closing the Gap and supporting the Uluru Statement from the Heart, housing affordability (including increased social housing), appropriate road safety reforms, restoring integrity of federal funding to local government, and improved local delivery of community services.
- Awarded the tender to construct new amenities at Hammon Park Trailhead, which will include three ambulant cubicles, one accessible cubicle with a shower and a Changing Place. All facilities are unisex. A Changing Place offers the highest level of accessibility, including an adult change table, hoist, accessible toilet and shower with ample space for carers.
- Launched our new corporate website which included a rewrite of all content, enhanced search function, easier navigation and updated online forms.
- Adopted our 2022-2025 ACE Youth Strategy. ACE is an abbreviation of Advocate, Celebrate and Elevate, which guides practical ways that Council will work to address the challenges that young people face.
- Commenced our annual street tree planting program across Smeaton, Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford, Trentham and Coomoora.
- Opened expressions of interest to join our Gender Equity Advisory Committee and Reconciliation Advisory Committee.
- Announced the fourth and final round of community grants for 2022-23. Council provided \$65,000 through the Community Grants program, supporting a wide variety of local programs and activities that support residents in the Shire and improve liveability.
- Awarded \$45,000 in the Towards Zero Community Grants, which support community groups to reduce emissions and environmental impacts. Projects include installation of solar power, off-grid software and hardware.



Council launched a photography competition for storm recovery



The Ace - Youth Development Strategy



- Launched a storm recovery photography competition and invited residents to submit images from the storm event, the aftermath, the intervening period or an emotion that has arisen from it.
- Released the draft Sustainable Hepburn Strategy, following community engagement and draft by the Community Reference Group (the strategy would be adopted in August).
- Works underway on Trentham Community Hub.

## 02

# STORM RECOVERY

Hepburn Shire was impacted by two extreme weather events, in Trentham and Creswick that affected approximately 45 per cent of our footprint.

Trentham saw a storm in June 2021 and there was a storm and flooding event in Creswick in January 2022.

During these periods Council opened and operated relief centres, to provide support and shelter as well as access to services including the Red Cross, food relief and other health and wellbeing services.

Resources were redirected into relief and recovery activities to support the communities that were affected.

Support was also provided from other local governments, the State and Australian Government as well as community groups.

Recovery from both events still continues and Council is providing ongoing support to storm and flood affected areas across the Shire. Support was provided from other local governments.

Recovery from both events still continues.



# 02

## STORM RECOVERY TRENTHAM

### TRENTHAM STORM - JUNE 2021

The severe weather event that impacted many parts of Victoria in June 2021, caused significant damage in Hepburn Shire, particularly in Trentham and surrounding townships.

There was significant damage in the region, including trees on roads and roadsides, damaged powerlines, fencing, structures, homes, tourist operators and local traders.

Over the storm recovery period, Council produced 4,000 meters of fence posts, created and distributed 25,000 cubic meters of mulch to local farms and provided residents and community groups with 7,000 tonnes of firewood.



Cr Brian Hood at the Trentham Relief Centre





# 02

## Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning Infrastructure Projects

- Proposed upgrades to Victoria Park and Trentham Mechanics Hall as relief centres and other local facilities and infrastructure to support power and telecommunications for future events.
- Road, track clearing and access.
- Undertaken hazardous tree assessment and treatment over 792km of impacted roads and tracks.
- Cleared over 60km of roads and tracks – work which is ongoing today with the use of heavy machinery.
- All strategic fire access roads were cleared and accessible by the commencement of the Fire Danger Period.
- Works are continuing to clear smaller, less accessible tracks as weather permits (works in these areas has been slowed due to the wet Spring).
- Contracted arborists to independently and thoroughly assess and report on trees in important visitor areas.
- Identified tree works in visitor nodes have commenced or been completed in many sites, works in others is ongoing.

## Central Highlands Rural Health

- CHRH is supporting 352 people from 154 impacted households (60% from Hepburn Shire). Currently, there are 53 active households involving 91 residents receiving support from CHRH.



Storm damage in O'Leary's Lane, Trentham



Firewood generated from the storm damaged trees



# 02

## STORM RECOVERY CRESWICK

### CRESWICK STORM - JANUARY 2022

The severe thunderstorm on 5 January caused widespread damage in Hepburn Shire, particularly in and around Creswick and Clunes.

A coordinated response from emergency agencies, including Council, allowed teams to quickly provide support to the community and lead the clean-up required following heavy rainfall and flash flooding.

The immediate response involved assisting people to leave damaged homes and the establishment of a Relief Centre in Creswick, while crews focused on clearing roads, removing fallen trees from powerlines and hazards, along with pulling debris out of Creswick Creek.



Flooding in Creswick after the storm event



# 02

Works have started on some of the drainage issues into Creswick Creek and around Moore Street to prevent future inundation from the street level. Two grant applications for \$240,000 for a further flood study to be completed have been submitted.

In the immediate aftermath, there were:

- 60 cubic metres from a range of locations in Skip Bins
- 127 road defects
- 180 drainage defects

### Agricultural Impacts:

There were 77 impacted farmers with an estimated 10,000 ha impacted area with crops ranging from potatoes, pyrethrum, wheat, canola and other Fodder crops.

In addition to the crop damage, there was significant topsoil loss, damage and silt build up in dams and watercourses as well as road infrastructure and laneways impacting on harvest operations.

### Referrals:

To date Hepburn Shire Council has referred, 30 residents to Central Highlands Rural Health and 31 cases to Child and Family Services (DFFH).

### Future mitigation:

In addition to repairs and recovery, drainage upgrades and further mitigation works are proposed, including Moore Street levee repairs, culvert upgrades and funding applications have been submitted for further flood mitigation studies.

Our storm/flood recovery office remains open to support ongoing community recovery.



Flooding in Creswick after the storm event



After the storm Photo: Anthony Miller





yearly  
statistics  
within  
our shire

03 OUR SHIRE

# 03



TOTAL POPULATION



50.9% FEMALES  
49.1% MALES



MEDIAN WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME



MEDIAN AGE



YEAR 12 EDUCATION



PRIVATE DWELLINGS



FAMILIES



MOST COMMON CHILDREN PER FAMILY



MEDIAN WEEKLY RENT



MOST COMMON PEOPLE PER DWELLING



MOST COMMON VEHICLES PER DWELLING



MEDIAN MONTHLY MORTGAGE REPAYMENTS

Source: ABS 2021 Census, Release July 2022. ABS Community Profiles LGA22910 (\*) figures from 2016 Census. 2021 Census data not yet available. Data output from the sex question will be reported in Census products as male and female.

## HEPBURN SHIRE COUNCILLORS



**CRESWICK WARD**

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*Mayor*

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**BIRCH WARD**

**Cr Jen Bray**  
*Deputy Mayor*

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**BIRCH WARD**

**Cr Lesley Hewitt**  
*Mayor from July – November 2021*

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**COLIBAN WARD**

**Cr Brian Hood**  
*Deputy Mayor from July – November 2021*

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# 03



**CAMERON WARD**

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**CRESWICK WARD**

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organisational  
structure &  
workforce

# 04 OUR PEOPLE

◀ Cr Jen Bray with the  
Shepherds Flat Landcare –  
Jubilee Tree Planting  
Commemorative Event

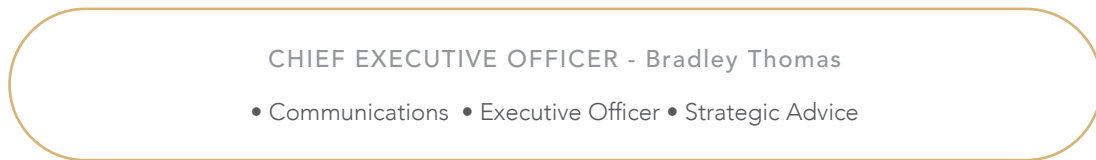


# 04

## ORGANISATIONAL RESTRUCTURE

During 2021/22 the Executive Team undertook a review of the organisational structure to increase the Directorates from two to three, improve the composition of some management and officer positions, and reconfigure reporting lines to align service areas.

These changes allowed better alignment of functions for greater efficiency, productivity and access to leadership with the addition of a third directorate. The restructure responded to community and Councillor feedback received through the Hepburn Together Project. The overall organisation full-time equivalent (FTE) positions were increased by 7.7 including 4.7 FTE permanent positions and 3 FTE fixed term positions to provide greater support to meet Council’s objectives and service delivery targets.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER - Bradley Thomas

- Communications
- Executive Officer
- Strategic Advice



DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

Andrew Burgess

- Financial Services
- Governance and Risk
- Information Management
- People and Culture
- Work Health and Safety
- Customer Experience
- Libraries
- ICT
- Grants
- Community Engagement



DIRECTOR COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Leigh McCallum

(Natalie Walker)  
commenced  
29 August 2022

- Economic Development
- Sport and Recreation
- Artisan Agriculture
- Events
- Visitor Experience
- Aquatics
- Early Years and Youth
- Positive Ageing
- Community Partnerships
- Reconciliation
- Cultural Development
- Inclusion
- Strategic Planning
- Statutory Planning
- Building Surveying



DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DELIVERY

Bruce Lucas

- Waste and Environment
- Sustainability
- Emergency Management
- Facilities Management
- Major Projects
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Road Works
- Assets and Engineering
- Storm Recovery

# 04

## WORKFORCE

### Enterprise Agreement renegotiation

Council successfully negotiated a four-year Enterprise Agreement with improved terms and conditions for staff, including annual salary increments, paid parental leave increased to 18 weeks for primary carers with paid superannuation during the unpaid period of parental leave up to 34 weeks, an increase in paid compassionate leave, paid leave for an employee caring or supporting someone who is experiencing family violence, transition to retirement provisions, and paid leave for employees undergoing gender transition.

### HR Strategy and Workforce Plan 2021-2025

The Hepburn Shire Council HR Strategy and Workforce Plan 2021-2025 was developed in consultation with the Leadership Team and staff across the organisation. The Workforce Plan was finalised in November 2021. It identifies Council’s long-term workforce and human resources needs for the next four years. The plan was informed by the development of internal Department Business Plans and identifies key strategies and initiatives to meet the challenges and future workforce needs to deliver the Council Plan and Departmental Plan objectives.

The completed actions from this plan includes:

- Reviewed the recruitment policy and practices to encourage diverse applicants and to strengthen diversity in recruitment processes. Strengthened the partnership with Daylesford College to host work experience students, along with the development of a trainee program.
- Encouraged participation in Council's Leadership Program and expanded the program to include coordinators.
- Provided staff with access to learning opportunities including superannuation information sessions and EAP seminars.
- Increased investment in staff Professional Development; and
- New policy to respond to the new hybrid way of working, with staff (where role allows) to work from home up to 50% of their work week.



Cr Don Henderson presenting a Student Citizenship Award to Angus from St Augustine's Primary School (December 2021)



# 04

## People and Culture Policy review

The People and Culture policies were reviewed to ensure alignment with the changes in the new Enterprise Agreement, the Council's Instrument of Delegations by the CEO, the new Local Government Act 2020 and other relevant legislation.

During the year, seven policies and procedures were adopted, including the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy and a new Sexual Harassment Policy to respond to the Victorian Auditor General's Office 2020 review.

## Council employees

See the below graphs for a summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council employees by organisation structure, employment type and gender. A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council employees categorised by employment classification and gender is set out below.

## FTE by Employee Classification

		Male	Female
Band 1	2.1		2.1
Band 2	6.4	6.4	0
Band 3	19.1	18.1	1
Band 4	28.4	11.06	17.34
Band 5	28.1	7.3	20.8
Band 6	26.4	9.1	17.3
Band 7	19.9	4.79	15.11
Band 8	2.8	0.6	2.2
Band n/a	14.3	6.8	7.5

## FTE by Organisational Structure

Office of CEO	Male	Female
Fixed Term	0	0
Permanent	1	3
Temporary	0	0

## Organisational Services

Fixed Term	2	1
Permanent	6.7	24.6
Temporary	0.1	2.1

## Community and Development

Fixed Term	3.8	3.2
Permanent	7.5	16.2
Temporary	0	1.3

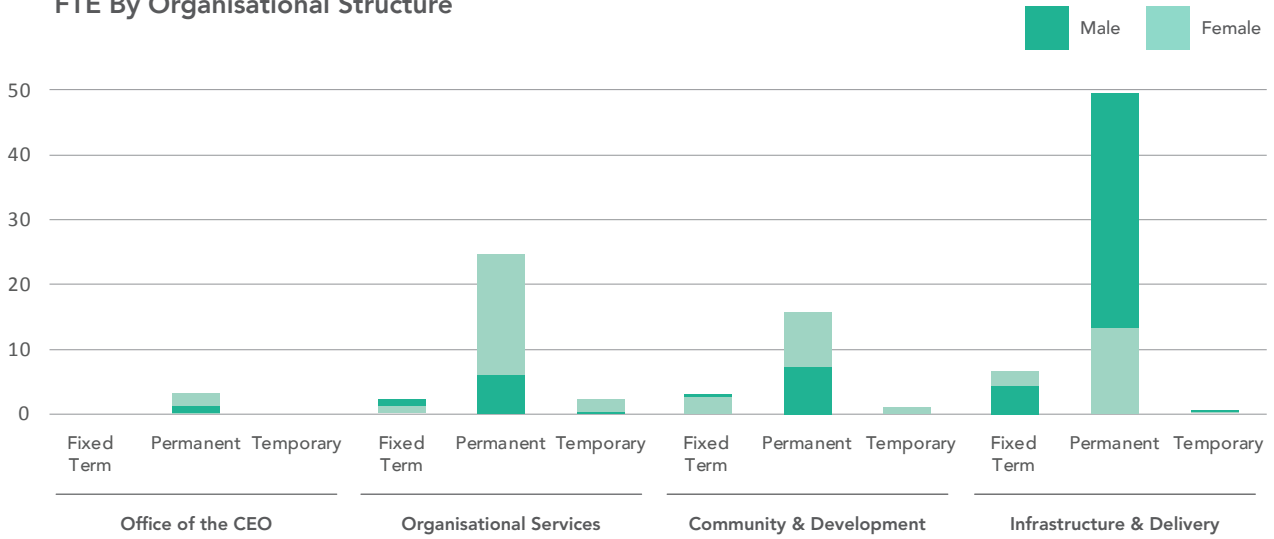
## Infrastructure and Delivery

Fixed Term	4	6.6
Permanent	49.6	13.4
Temporary	1.3	0.3

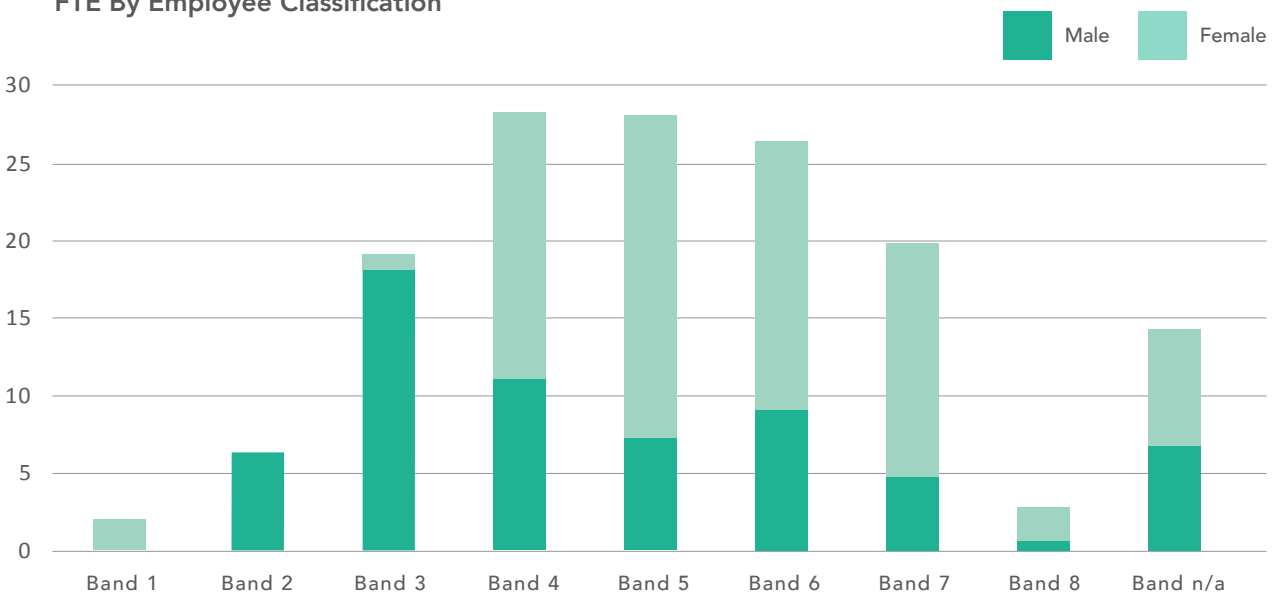


# 04

FTE By Organisational Structure



FTE By Employee Classification



# 04

## EMPLOYMENT

During 2021/22, Council advertised 116 positions attracting a total of 1011 applications.

The permanent employee turnover rate (resignations) for 2021/22 was 35.26% which was 15.21% higher than the previous year of 21.05%. This higher than usual figure reflects Council's decision to exit aged care which resulted in redundancies, and terminations as a result of COVID Health protocols that Council was required to follow. Taking this into consideration, the balance of terminations results in a turnover rate of 25.67% which is 4.62% higher than 2020/21. This result, although higher than previous years is consistent with trends reported across the sector and is consistent with increased employee turnover currently being experienced by key sectors across the broader community.

Council continues to encourage applications from all suitable applicants including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people of different ages, abilities, gender identities, sexual orientations and cultural backgrounds.

As a regional employer, Council recognises the importance of supporting young people's careers. We continue to work with schools and universities in the region to provide opportunities for students to be involved in the work environment, and to provide them with an insight into the important role of local government in the development and support of local communities.



## LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Council offers study assistance for employees undertaking relevant undergraduate or postgraduate studies and provides ongoing work-related training sessions.

Council also provides online learning via the Hepburn Shire Council Learning Hub which provides employees with the opportunity to undertake a selection of online courses to meet Council's compliance training requirements. The Learning Hub is actively used in the orientation of new employees and has supported the education of staff in Bullying and Harassment, Child Safe Standards, Manual Handling and COVID safe requirements.

All new employees participate in our induction program which provides an overview of service areas and key responsibilities. New employees also participate in site-specific induction and orientation which offers an understanding of Council's corporate policies, procedures, business processes and the services offered by departments.

The Employee Performance Development Program is conducted twice annually with all staff. The Program recognises achievements, challenges, opportunities and behaviours. It aims to facilitate a conversation between supervisors and employees to gain meaningful information that can improve performance and workplace behaviours and to identify training and development needs. This focus provides a direct line of sight between the employee's individual performance activities and the Council Plan objectives.

Council has been fortunate that our staff have been accepted into key leadership programs during the year, including LGPro Executive Leadership Program, the LGPro Emerging Leaders Program and the Committee of Ballarat's Future Shapers program.

# 04

## GENDER EQUALITY AND PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Council continued its commitment to the prevention of violence against women and children through the Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE) Strategy 2021-2025 and the Grampians CoRE Alliance.

The Gender Equality Act 2020 commenced in March 2021 to improve workplace gender equality in the Victorian public sector, universities and local councils. Local councils play an important role in progressing gender equality in the workplace and within the community.

During the year, a Gender Equality Audit was conducted to form part of the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021-2025 which was adopted in March 2022. The GEAP outlines practical ways that Council can continue to embed gender equity into day-to-day work.

Council’s vision for gender equity builds on the Community Vision and Council Plan. The gender equality objective is to embed a strong culture of gender equity and diversity and to provide the resources and support to ensure all employees feel safe, included and represented.

### The three priorities in the GEAP are:

- a) Embed an inclusive culture that respects diversity and ensure a safe workplace for all.
- b) Improve transparency to ensure fair recruitment, development, and promotion practices.
- c) Enhance visibility and monitoring of the status of gender equality and diversity in the organisation.

This work is a priority for Council, and aligns with the leadership commitment to prevention of gender-based violence, along with many other plans, including the objectives in our Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Cr Juliet Simpson and Cr Don Henderson (Co-Chairs of the Heather Mutimer International Women’s Day Honour Roll Advisory Committee) with Events Officer Bridgette O’Brien



# 04

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Council is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all employees, contractors, volunteers, visitors and councillors, and recognises that safety is an integral part of our organisation. This commitment is supported by the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Policy which is displayed on noticeboards in workplaces and on the website.

The organisation continues to focus on strengthening its safety management system and practical safety applications at the workplace. Health and safety is a key component of all new employees' induction and orientation program, and Council's OHS Committee meets regularly to identify and discuss work health and safety matters, compliance and training/awareness opportunities.



## EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

Employees continued to support flexible working arrangements to manage their wellbeing through the COVID pandemic, which for some also required them to balance remote learning for children into their daily routines. This challenged work/life balance but strategies to support employees during this time were implemented and adopted. Employees had access to Council's Working from Home procedure to request flexibility to work from home for up to 50% of their ordinary fortnightly hours and the Pandemic Leave Policy allowing additional access to leave entitlements. Council also encouraged staff to receive the COVID vaccinations and seasonal flu vaccinations.

Council continues to offer all employees and volunteers access to 24/7 confidential Employee Assistance Program support services.





our progress  
within the  
five focus  
areas

.....

# 05 PERFORMANCE



# 05

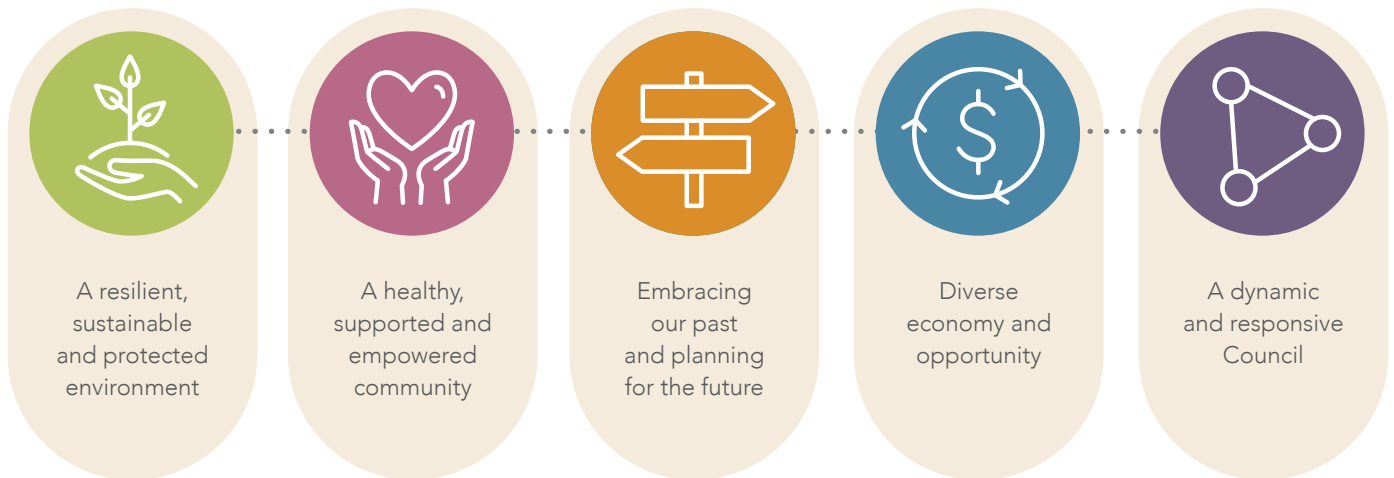
## COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS

The Council Plan 2021-2025 including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) is complemented by the Annual Plan 2021-2022.

Council is committed to monitoring and reporting progress of the plan to the community. This reports on the progress of year one of the plan's deliverables and initiatives under each of the five Focus Areas. Strategic indicators identified for each Focus Area are based on achieving a target or desired trend. It should be understood that not all strategies are expected to be completed in year 1 of the 4-year Council Plan.

In addition, Priority Area deliverables from the MPHWP are monitored and reported against annual action plans.

### Our five focus areas:



05



1

## A resilient, sustainable and protected environment

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

FOCUS AREA 1 - STRATEGIC INDICATOR	TARGET	ACTUAL	OUTCOME	COMMENTS
An annual reduction in Council's Corporate emissions measured via tonnes CO2	>1% Reduction from 1,263t	16% reduction	✓	There was a substantial reduction in emissions, down to 1,075 tonnes CO2-equivalent due to purchasing power through local renewable energy and additional electric vehicle added to the existing EV fleet.
10% reduction in community emissions measured by tonnes CO2	10% reduction from baseline of 70,715t	49.6%	✓	There has been a significant reduction from the 2018 emissions baseline of 70,715 tonnes of Co2 down to 35,640 tonnes, resulting in a saving of 35,075 tonnes of Co2 across the community.
An annual reduction in tonnes of waste to landfill per capita	Reduction from 48.46%	40.22%	✓	The decrease from 48.46% to 40.22% was attributed to changes in the communities' habits with changing COVID restrictions and increase in visitors to the shire.
Maintain existing 11 kilometres of Roadside Weed Control across Shire	11km	15km	✓	Increase in output to maintain 15km this financial year with a further focus on next year in the east of the municipality due to the vast roadside clean up from the June 2021 Storm Event.

# 05

## 1.1 Adapt to and mitigate climate change to reach net-zero community emissions by 2030.

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
1.1.1	Undertake actions to support Council’s declaration of a climate emergency including bi-annual reporting to community on local actions and projects which are delivering upon climate change mitigation, while ensuring that the levels of activity remain consistent with the importance of the climate emergency.	A Sustainable Hepburn strategy incorporating updates to Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy 2014-2021, Biodiversity Strategy 2014-2021 and Towards Zero Emissions Roadmap 2017-2021 was developed this year, and ultimately adopted in August 2022. The strategy development included significant community consultation and included a Community Reference Group. Biodiversity Grants were allocated to local Landcare groups and ongoing Roadside Weed Control program was undertaken across the shire. Regular reporting of events occurred during the year, however, this will be finalised into a bi-annual formal report in 2022/23.
1.1.2	Review procurement policies and procedures to ensure they provide a focus on sustainable practices.	The procurement policy was reviewed during the year and reference has been included to use strategic procurement practices and innovative procurement solutions to promote sustainability. Section 6.12 Sustainability of the policy outlines how the Council is committed to addressing the climate emergency and that it has adopted a Community Transition Plan to respond to this challenge. The definition for sustainability is now included in the policy. The evaluation criteria weightings have been reviewed and sustainability must have a minimum weighting of 7.5% for all evaluations undertaken.
1.1.3	Continue to support the objectives of Hepburn Z-NET and the Hepburn Wind MoU to achieve the target of net zero community emissions by 2030.	<p>Council continued to provide a strong anchoring role to Z-NET in 2021/22 via secretariat and strategic support to the Z-NET Roundtable which assists delivery of the Community Transition Plan – our community-wide net-zero emissions by 2030 strategy.</p> <p>Council worked with the Hepburn Shire community and Hepburn Wind (now Hepburn Energy), in line with our MoU, on a number of projects that will drive down emissions and increase community benefit and resilience. Examples of these projects are the electric vehicle charging station rollout of four new charging stations across the shire, circular economy program, community battery feasibility and a climate adaptation toolkit.</p>
1.1.4	Promote the use of environmentally sustainable practices through planning processes and the Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy.	In June 2022, Hepburn Shire Council entered into a MoU to join the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE), a collective of Victorian municipal governments committed to the creation of a more sustainable built environment both within and beyond their municipalities.

# 05

<b>1.1.5</b>	Pursue the environment and sustainability objectives outlined in Council's Municipal Planning Scheme.	Delivered this strategy through planning permit conditions on development and through Council's strategic planning program building on the 2020 review of the Hepburn Planning Scheme. This will be further enhanced over the coming financial years as Council's Strategic Planning program is implemented.
<b>1.1.6</b>	Support community transition to zero emissions through the Towards Zero Community Grants Program and or any other applicable grant funding program.	Council again provided funding to non-profit organisations in the shire to reduce GHG emissions through the Towards Zero Community Grants Program. This year three recipients shared just over \$40,000 to install 30kW of emissions free solar energy generation.
<b>1.1.7</b>	Contribute to the implementation of the Grampians Region Climate Adaption Strategy.	Hepburn Shire Council and Hepburn Energy were successful in obtaining \$31,500 of ADAPT Grampians funding to deliver a Climate Adaptation Toolkit and series of community engagements. This project is being delivered across the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years and will enable the community to better understand and build climate change resilience locally. The tools created will be of use to the Grampians Region and beyond.
<b>1.1.8</b>	Publish Council's emission profile annually	Council has published its recently adopted Sustainable Hepburn Strategy which outlines what Council has been doing to reduce its own carbon footprint. The actions undertaken by Council has resulted in a 16% reduction of CO2-e in the past year. This has resulted in an overall 43.4% reduction over the last 5 years.

## 1.2 Prioritise environmental management, protection, and regeneration

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
<b>1.2.1</b>	Review Environmental Significance Overlays.	No action taken this year. To be considered in conjunction with future Rural Settlement Strategy required to be undertaken as part of Council's strategic planning program.
<b>1.2.2</b>	Undertake appropriate Municipal Emergency Management Planning to prepare for and respond to natural disasters.	Council has coordinated quarterly meetings of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning committee along with responding to three major incidents over the past 12 months. We have undertaken a review of our Municipal Emergency Management Plan and in addition have also undertaken specific incident debriefs, and a major review of our systems and capabilities with a number of learnings and improvement opportunities identified which are now being implemented.
<b>1.2.3</b>	Adopt and implement a Tree Management Strategy to protect existing trees and increase planting of new trees.	Council has implemented a Municipal Tree Management Plan which includes a detailed annual tree inspection regime, a roadmap to reinforce the significant tree register and protection of such trees and also a 5-Year Street Tree planting strategy.

# 05

## 1.3 Transition to ecologically sustainable and accountable tourism

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
1.3.1	Develop and implement a sustainable and accountable Visitor Economy Strategy that balances sustainability goals whilst supporting the economy.	No action this year – this is forecast to occur in 2024/25.

## 1.4 Develop meaningful policies and strategic partnerships that link sustainability and public health

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
1.4.1	Strengthen and protect existing agriculture to support the availability, sustainability and accessibility of local food sources.	Council continued to work with the Artisan Agriculture sector to support our premium produce enterprises to navigate government, unlock opportunities and build the ongoing capacity and skills of the sector to collectively grow and survive. In June, officers from Central Highlands Councils and farmers from across the region attended a planning forum with Agriculture Victoria Planning and Advisory Service to discuss how agriculture in the region can be better supported.
1.4.2	Promote community adaptation of public health risks of climate change to public health.	Regular health promotion messaging occurred during the year to increase community awareness in line with storm recovery and recent flood events. Messages were focused on improved mental and physical health, resilience and support services available.
1.4.3	Increase community understanding of the risks of climate change to public health through communication and education	Community sessions linked with storm and flood recovery were used to increase community awareness.
1.4.4	Develop a meaningful and strategic partnership with Dja Dja Wurrung to identify and collaborate on our shared environmental priorities	Regular contact between Councillors, Executive and Staff on a range of priorities occur. An overarching guiding principle throughout the development of the Sustainable Hepburn strategy has been to partner with and enable Traditional Owners to lead and manage Country within Hepburn Shire. We thank the staff at DJAARA for their time, expertise and knowledge that they have contributed to the project so far.  Council funds a Reconciliation Officer who has regular contact with DJAARA, and Council has recently appointed members to the new Reconciliation Advisory Committee who will support the development of our new RAP in 2022/23.

# 05

## 1.5 Protect and regenerate the natural resources of the Shire including soils, water and ecological systems, from both current and future threats

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
1.5.1	Annual Plan 2021/22 Develop and implement the 'Sustainable Hepburn Strategy' to align waste, sustainability, and biodiversity strategies.	During the development of the Sustainable Hepburn Strategy, Community Reference Group members were appointed, Reference Group meetings held, and a recommended action plan developed by the Reference Group was provided to independent facilitators to prepare draft strategy. The draft strategy was presented to Council before being released for community consultation. The strategy was adopted in August 2022.
1.5.2	Continue environmental services with an increased focus on weed management and roadside vegetation management including development and implementation of a Roadside Conservation Strategy.	Council continues to monitor and maintain roadside vegetation and weeds on annual basis. Following the 2021 June Storm Event, a dedicated Environmental Officer has been externally funded to strategically respond to the Roadside Weed risk following the event.
1.5.3	Support the implementation of priorities of the Integrated Water Management Plans.	The Central Highlands Water (CHW) lead project for the development of individual Integrated Water Management plans for Daylesford/Hepburn, Creswick and Clunes has concluded. Council will now partner with CHW and other stakeholders to look for opportunities to implement actions from the plans.

05



2

## A healthy, supported and empowered community

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

FOCUS AREA 2 - STRATEGIC INDICATOR

TARGET

ACTUAL

OUTCOME

COMMENTS

Over the life of the plan a 5% increase in proportion of adults eating sufficient fruit and vegetables.

5%

Data not available



Health Survey data for Hepburn is not available this year.

Network of mental health service providers servicing the Shire established. 75% of networks active in Shire to support access to mental health services.

75%

0%



Mental Health Service network implementation will occur in 2022-23.

Over the life of the Plan, a 5% (1.25% pa) increase in percentage of population that are active library borrowers.

1.25%

-3.2%



The impacts of lockdowns are still being felt across Library network.

Network of providers servicing the Shire focusing on prevention of all violence. 75% of networks active in Shire to support prevention of all violence.

75%

100%



Target achieved.

Over the life of the Plan, a 5% increase of children enrolled in Maternal Child Health (MCH) who participated in MCH services.

5%

18%



Target achieved and exceeded.

## 05

## 2.1 Support appropriate land use and accommodate more affordable long-term housing within townships that conforms with the character of the area

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
2.1.1	Annual Plan 2021/22 Develop an Integrated Affordable Housing Policy and Strategy.	Hornsby and Co. consultants were appointed in August 2022 to prepare the 'Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan'. Project inception meeting has been held. Quarterly meetings are held with Safe Place Homes Inc. to discuss affordable housing matters.
2.1.2	Deliver the strategic planning program from the adopted Municipal Planning Scheme.	Work has commenced on the Creswick Structure Plan, the first of five town structure plans. The work includes technical assessments of land supply and demand, Aboriginal and post contact heritage, contaminated land buffers, bushfire hazard and biodiversity. First phase engagement and draft plan development for Trentham, Glenlyon, Clunes and Daylesford/Hepburn Springs to commence in late 2023.
2.1.3	Advocate for involvement in the Victorian State Government's Big Housing Build program.	Council Officers engaged with Homes Victoria to provide input into the development of Housing Compact between Homes Victoria, MAV and councils. They also worked with Homes Victoria to advocate for affordable housing in Hepburn Shire to be given priority under future funding programs such as Affordable Rental Housing Scheme to be launched in late 2022. Actions from the Integrated Affordable Housing Policy and Strategy (2022/23) will further enhance advocacy opportunities for Council.

## 2.2 Increase the availability and accessibility of services in the Hepburn Shire area to support liveability, health, and wellbeing

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
2.2.1	Conduct a gap and needs analysis of local health and community services to support advocacy for funding parity	No action this year – will be undertaken in later years of the Council Plan.
2.2.2	Promote partnerships with health service providers to improve shared community health outcomes	A MoU with Central Highlands Rural Health (CHRH) was implemented with joint actions from Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and CHRH-Health Promotion Plan.
2.2.3	Support advocacy for a new facility for Central Highlands Rural Health.	Council has advocated for the new improved facilities for Central Highlands Rural Health at its Daylesford facility, working with the Board and the Community Fundraising Committee where possible.
2.2.4	Develop services networks to increase community awareness and access to local services	This year the Prevention of Violence network, Hepburn Engaging Youth (HEY) Network and Early years Network were implemented.
2.2.5	Develop, adopt and implement an Early Years Strategy	Starting Blocks Hepburn Shires Early and Middle Years Strategy 2022 - 2030 was adopted by Council on the 17 May 2022.



# 05

<b>2.2.6</b>	Annual Plan 2021/22 Develop, adopt and implement a Positive Ageing Strategy.	Council continued to play a significant role in development of the strategy. Significant community input occurred following an extensive public exhibition and feedback period. The draft No Barriers Positive Ageing Strategy 2022-2030 will be presented at the August Council meeting for adoption
<b>2.2.7</b>	Work with our partners to support the provision of Early Years Services, e.g., Maternal Child Health, Kindergartens, Childcare and Playgroup.	A variation to the Maternal Child Health contract was implemented which will provide an increase accountability and reporting to improve services. Early Years providers were supported through building upgrades and regular Early Years Reform updates.
<b>2.2.8</b>	Annual Plan 2021/22 Continue services to build strong, safe and resilient communities (emergency management, local laws, animal control, environmental health.	Community consultation and work continues on the development of a 4-year Domestic Animal Management Plan that will inform Council's approach to animal management in the Shire, which is expected to be adopted by Council in September 2022.
<b>2.2.9</b>	Deliver actions identified in the Disability Action and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2018-2022.	The implementation of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2018 – 2022 has been supported by the Disability Advisory Committee (DAC), Council's Inclusion Officer and other staff across Council. This includes the development of staff awareness training materials; information to assist businesses to improve access; and the planning and delivery of building projects in line with Universal Design principles and input from the DAC.
<b>2.2.10</b>	Develop, adopt and implement a new Disability Access and Inclusion Plan post-2022.	A range of needs have been explored this year as potential focus areas for the next Disability Access and Inclusion Plan by Officers and the Disability Advisory Committee. This includes preliminary research into relevant state and national policies and frameworks, and best practice at local government level with the plan to be further developed and adopted in 2022/23.
<b>2.3 Optimise the use of public spaces to increase participation and community connection</b>		
Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
<b>2.3.1</b>	Increase female health and wellbeing by implementing the Hepburn Shire Active Women and Girls Strategy.	In support of the delivery of strategic pillar number two, Investment in Spaces and Places within the Active Women and Girls Strategy, the following projects were undertaken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of Hepburn Pavilion Project.</li> <li>• Construction of Newlyn Cricket Nets.</li> <li>• Reconstruction of Hepburn Netball Main Court.</li> <li>• Commencement of Trentham Sportsground redevelopment.</li> <li>• Commencement of Calembreen Park change facilities.</li> </ul>
<b>2.3.2</b>	Implement appropriate actions from the 'Play is for everyone' Hepburn Shire Playspace Strategy.	Construction began on the Hammon Park Trailhead this year and is expected to be completed in late 2022. The trailhead is located one minute from town centre and boasts accessible toilets including a Changing Place, BBQ area, electric bike charging station, nature playground, learn to ride track as well as ample parking.

# 05

2.3.3	Support access and participation through strong asset management practices aligned with developing a long-term Asset Plan.	Council's Asset Plan was developed in consultation with the community and adopted by Council in June 2022. The 10-year plan provides details of how Council approaches its management to provide effective and efficient management of public asset in the most cost-effective manner.
2.3.4	Facilitate walking and cycling infrastructure by implementing works outlined in the Walking and Cycling Strategy.	No action this year – Council has funded in the 2022/23 budget (adopted June 2022) a project to undertake community consultation and develop the strategy.
2.3.5	Promote the use of libraries and hubs throughout Hepburn Shire.	Regular promotion of library events and programming were delivered by Council. These included Storytime, Baby Rhyme Time, school holiday activities, participation in Book Week, National Simultaneous Story time. A substantial upgrade of Daylesford Library to promote use and increase amenity of the site occurred.
2.3.6	Maintain our open spaces for the enjoyment of our community and visitors.	Council's Parks and Open Space team maintain our various open space areas throughout the municipality. Community Sporting Ovals, Mineral Springs Areas, Lake Precincts, CBD Garden Beds and Lawn Areas, Avenue of Honours are just a sample of the open space areas the team maintain.
2.3.7	Design, develop and advocate for funding to enhance or build sport and active recreation facilities identified through Master Planning. Ensure design and construct projects comply with Universal Design principles, including compliance with the Design for Everyone Guide.	<p>Various projects have continued and began during the year, both in planning and design and also construction.</p> <p>Trentham Sportsground Reserve Pavilion - Following extensive community consultation the design phase of the Pavilion has been completed and construction commenced in November 2021, following successful funding of \$2.062M from the Victorian Government, the project is expected to be completed by late 2022.</p> <p>Works to construct a circuit path and carpark at Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve as well as lighting and CCTV upgrades occurred. Master planning works at Clunes and Glenlyon continued during the year and will be finalised in 2022/23.</p>
2.3.8	<p>Annual plan 2021/22</p> <p>Deliver key projects including Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens enhanced visitation experience, Bullarto Station Precinct development and Creswick Town Hall restoration</p>	<p><b>Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens enhanced visitation experience</b> The upgrade has progressed with designs for the four parts of the project, procurement and a roll-out of construction. The steps element is complete, glasshouse refurbishment almost complete and designs on the amenity block and landscaping underway with a view to commence construction before the end of 2022.</p> <p><b>Bullarto Station Tourist Precinct</b> Design completed as well as building permit issued. Construction tender has been awarded and site works are expected to commence in August and be completed by end of 2022.</p> <p><b>Creswick Town Hall</b> This year saw the final design, Heritage Impact Statement completed and a Heritage Victoria permit approved. The contract was released for tender however no submissions were received. Another release of the tender occurred and appointment of a contractor is expected in August.</p>
2.3.9	Finalise and implement the Hepburn Shire Aquatic Strategy.	<p>Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy was adopted in April 2022 with the implementation in progress through Strategic Direction 1 - Facility Upgrades- Compliance and OH&amp;S Works and Strategic Direction 2 – Indoor Aquatics Facility planning.</p> <p>Council funded in its 2022/23 budget a project to undertake a business case for the Indoor Aquatics Facility to be completed in 2022/23.</p>

# 05

## 2.4 Assist our community to increase access to healthy food to improve nutrition, reduce chronic disease, improve mental wellbeing and strengthen the local food production system

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
2.4.1	Lead by example, by supplying and promoting local healthier food and drink options across Council-run meetings, events, activities, facilities and programs.	Healthy Choices was implemented in pool services throughout the Shire. The Choose Tap Campaign run across the region increasing free access to public drinking water, with the installation of a drinking fountain at Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve in Creswick.
2.4.2	Support initiatives that encourage healthier lifestyles and habits across the lifespan, particularly in children's early years.	Council ran programming for Early Years with 'Christmas Rhyme Time in the park' events. Neighbourhood houses were also supported to run Health and Wellbeing days.
2.4.3	Partner with local organisation/s to increase access to healthy and affordable food (including for vulnerable groups) and to support positive food system change.	Council continues to partner with Health Futures Australia (HFA) and their young growers program for the production of healthy local food. HFA are now providing health lunches to the majority of schools across the shire.
2.4.4	Partner with key health agencies to support initiatives and services to improve health and wellbeing.	Internal and external Health and Wellbeing Working Groups have been established.

## 2.5 Improved mental wellbeing within the community

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
2.5.1	Raise awareness and understanding of mental health services and resources, and work with other levels of government to localise and improve mental health services available to residents with a specific focus on youth mental health.	Ongoing health promotion throughout Councils current networks continues regarding mental health support and referral pathways to ensure providers are visible in our community and accountable for funded services. The Youth Development team have been focused on raising mental health awareness through social media, events, training, targeted programming and working with key stakeholders around the challenges young people are facing in our community. We are also working with the schools to increase access to appropriate place based mental health support for young people.
2.5.2	Strengthen partnerships and support education, programs, events and prevention activities that focus on community participation, diversity and inclusion.	Council established the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee in 2022 which will assist with advice to Council on a strategic approach to developing greater awareness and activities focussing diversity and inclusion. Council also hosted a range of events including celebration of the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) in May 2022 with a flag-raising ceremony and a civic reception led by the Mayor and CEO. Youth Queer book clubs successfully run across the Shire and the annual 16 days of Activism was held in November 2021 to promote the prevention of violence and equality.
2.5.3	Adopt a co-benefit approach to improving mental wellbeing, supporting active living and healthy eating initiatives.	Mental Wellbeing is a primary focus in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and has been embedded in the ACE Youth Development Strategy and Positive Aging Strategy. We are continually working with partners on opportunities to promote improved health.
2.5.4	Ensure Council services, activities and facilities are accessible and inclusive to remove barriers to participation.	Principles of accessibility and inclusion are upheld in a wide range of Council policies, plans and projects. New facility projects such as Hepburn Kindergarten and Creswick Trailhead have been planned using Universal Design principles and respond to advice from the Disability Advisory Committee. The design of Council's new website has also been informed by new web accessibility standards.

05



3

## Embracing our past and planning for the future

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

FOCUS AREA 3 - STRATEGIC INDICATOR

TARGET

ACTUAL

OUTCOME

COMMENTS

90% of current staff have completed cultural awareness training within the last 4 years (30% pa commencing year 2).

0%

0%



The development of culture awareness training will commence in 2022/23.

Deliver Council’s documented and agreed annual strategic planning program.

100%

60%



Key work completed includes Land Demand & Supply Study, and Creswick Structure Plan first community consultation. The Creswick Structure Plan technical assessments under way. Affordable housing strategy to commence July 2022.

A 3% per annum (1.5km) footpath expansion i.e., new footpath (generally concrete or asphalt, not granitic sand) to increase connectivity of walking paths across the Shire.

3%

2.5%



Council has been delivering its Footpath Renewal Program, and some expansions. The impacts of Storm events in the Shire has impacted the ability to reach the target fully. Further footpath works will continue in 2022/23.

Across the life of the Plan, a 10% increase in the percentage of Planning applications decided within required time frames.

2.5%

-44.77%



Statutory Planning applications have significantly increased, there was a reduction in available resources and as a result time frames extended to unacceptable levels. Additional resources, DELWP assistance, and a priority planning team to process delayed planning applications has seen timelines improve recently.

# 05

## 3.1 Partner with and empower our Traditional Owners and broader community to acknowledge, understand, celebrate, and preserve our area’s cultures, traditions, and environs

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
3.1.1	Annual Plan 2021/22 Continue to implement and review the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and build strong partnerships through the RAP Advisory Committee.	A key reconciliation project, the proposed renaming of Jim Crow Creek, involved extensive community engagement with many submissions from both supporters and objectors before Council's decision in April 2022 to recommend to the Office of Geographic Names that the Creek be renamed to Larni Barramul Yaluk. Other Reconciliation activities included recognition of Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week with flag lowering and raising according to appropriate protocols. A call out for Expressions of Interest for committee members for the Reconciliation Advisory Committee has been advertised and it is anticipated that a new Committee will be formed in August. The Committee will provide advice on the development of Council's next Reconciliation Action Plan which has been funded in the 2022/23 budget.
3.1.2	Hold annual strategic meetings with Dja Dja Wurrung to share and align projects and priorities.	Council Officers continued to engage with Dja Dja Wurrung on matters relating to the Traditional Lands such as involving Land Use Activity Agreements for significant projects being delivered. An annual meeting of Councillors and DJAARA Board will occur in 2022/23 as part of the development of the RAP.
3.1.3	Annual Plan 2021/22 Develop and implement an Arts and Culture Strategy to support local artists to provide creative cultural experiences to enrich community wellbeing.	There has been a strong response to community consultation and key themes are being identified to lay the foundations for detailed development of the strategy, which is expected to be considered for adoption in late 2022.
3.1.4	Develop and implement an Indigenous Heritage Strategy to support the recognition and preservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage.	Consultation has commenced with Dja Dja Wurrung Aboriginal Corporation on the scoping of the indigenous heritage strategy.
3.1.5	Manage and support our heritage buildings in accordance with the adopted Hepburn Heritage Strategy 2020-2030.	Work has commenced on a review of heritage places in the Creswick area. A report on roof repairs on the Daylesford Town Hall has been prepared. A tender has been released for conservation works on the Creswick Town Hall.
3.1.6	Annual Plan 2021/22 Partner with other Council’s to advocate for UNESCO World Heritage Listing of the Central Victorian Goldfields	The UNESCO bid will serve as a catalyst to transform the region, delivering a crucial post-pandemic economic lifeline to the Central Victorian Goldfields region. Officers are participating in ongoing meetings with the region as arranged by project leads at City of Ballarat and City of Greater Bendigo to identify 12 key sites from throughout the entire region that will be put forward for listing.

## 05

### 3.2 Protect and enhance the existing character of our towns and rural settings through community-inclusive strategic planning to strengthen planning controls on growth and development

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
3.2.1	Annual Plan 2021/22 Develop and complete Town Structure Plans as per Council's strategic planning program.	Work has commenced on the Creswick Structure Plan, the first of the town structure plans to be delivered under this program. The first stage of engagement, involving identifying the vision for Creswick in 20 years' time, was undertaken in late April /early May. Technical studies including flora and fauna assessment, bushfire management, heritage and identification of buffer separation distances are in progress.  A Project Control Group has been implemented to review progress of the Strategic Planning Program, with structure plans across the major towns on track to be fully completed in 2024.
3.2.2	Support community planning to enable local communities to determine their priorities for the future.	Council supported Lyonville in the development of a Community Plan that identifies aspirations for the future that will further develop Lyonville's strong sense of community.
3.2.3	Conduct a study of land development supply.	Council prepared a shire-wide Land Capacity and Demand Study of residential and commercial/industrial land, this is being reviewed by officers and Councillors during 2022/23.
3.2.4	Develop an Agricultural Land Use and Settlement Strategy.	A Rural Activity Zone – Supply Demand Assessment has been prepared as an early input to a future agricultural land use and settlement strategy. The Rural Activity Zone assessment is part of a shire-wide Land Capacity and Demand Study.
3.2.5	Undertake strategic land use planning to identify access to commercial and industrial land.	A shire-wide Land Capacity and Demand Study of residential and commercial/industrial land has been prepared. Investigations commenced for commercial and industrial land availability in Creswick as part of the draft Creswick Structure Plan.
3.2.6	Develop and implement a local Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Planning Policy.	Amendment VC216 changed all planning schemes in Victoria by making changes to the Planning Policy Framework in the Victoria Planning Provisions and all planning schemes to support Environmentally Sustainable Development. This was Stage One of the Environmentally sustainable development of buildings and subdivisions - A roadmap for Victoria's planning system (DELWP, 2020). Stage Two will introduce new and expanded particular provisions into all planning schemes and include specific planning objectives and standards which seek to achieve ESD policy goals.

## 05

### 3.3 Build and maintain quality infrastructure that supports and promotes liveability and active living in the community

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
3.3.1	Annual Plan 2021/22 Continue to provide strong management and maintenance of our infrastructure.	Various maintenance and constructions across all infrastructure types have been undertaken. Council has funded in the 2022/23 budget a full review of the condition of buildings, and an Internal Audit of Councils maintenance of buildings.
3.3.2	Support the amenity of our towns through the maintenance, replacement and development of streetscapes.	Council's maintenance department continue to maintain the streetscapes in line with seasonal schedules. Renewal and development opportunities for CBD streetscapes are considered annually through annual budget processes.
3.3.3	Annual Plan 2021/22 Advocate, plan and deliver pedestrian, cycling and recreation paths and trails that reduce reliance on vehicles.	Project scoping has commenced to develop a 4-year transport strategy, including Walking and Cycling. Funding is being sought from the Victorian Government to further support the Council contribution budgeted.
3.3.4	Advocate to the State and Federal Government to improve cycling connections, public transport infrastructure and roll out of a public electric vehicle (EV) charging network across city boundaries and the broader region.	A funding submission to co-fund the development of the Hepburn Shire Council Walking and Cycling Strategy through the Victoria Government's, Local Sports Infrastructure Fund is pending. Funding announcements are anticipated in October 2022.  Three more electric vehicles (EV) charging stations will be installed in Hepburn Springs, Trentham and Creswick due to State Government funding and a new collaboration between Hepburn Energy (formally Hepburn Wind), Council, and Chargefox.
3.3.5	Annual Plan 2021/22 Ensure sustainable and accessible infrastructure that promotes healthy recreation, physical activity and social connection.	Construction for the Hammon Park Trailhead is underway following the finalisation of detailed designs and the tender process. The trailhead will also include public amenities and a Changing Places facility ensuring accessibility for all.
3.2.6	Maintain and improve the amenity and cleanliness of townships, roadsides and public spaces.	Council continued to monitor and maintain our townships and connecting roads throughout the municipality in line with various Management Plans, whilst always looking for opportunities for amenity improvements.
3.3.7	Annual Plan 2021/22 Advocate for and partner in the delivery of Council's priority projects.	The Hepburn Shire Advocacy Statement was adopted by Council at the February 2022 Meeting. The Statement has been forwarded to all levels of Government to showcase our priority projects and initiatives to attract funding.  Council has been very successful with grant funding over the last 12 months with 11 funding applications worth \$5,047,279 awarded. The Western Victoria Transmission Line (renamed Western Renewables Link) continues to be a key advocacy project. A Strategic Advisor was appointed to lead ongoing advocacy and liaison between Council, AusNet, AEMO, VicGrid, State Government, adjoining councils and the community. Council has participated in EES processes and community consultations and regularly meets with interested community members.

05



4

## Diverse economy and opportunity

### MEASURES OF SUCCESS

FOCUS AREA 4 - STRATEGIC INDICATOR	TARGET	ACTUAL	OUTCOME	COMMENTS
2% increase in total spend per visitor	2%	40%	✓	Target achieved and exceeded due to the increase in domestic day trips post Victorian lock-downs.
4% annual increase in per capita Gross Regional Product	4%	9.6%	✓	Target achieved and exceeded with GRP per capita at \$47,634. This is higher than pre-pandemic levels.
5% annual increase of subscribers to the Hepburn Shire business e-newsletter.	5%	0.3%	✗	Whilst the subscription rate grew this was at lower levels than expected, the newsletter will be advertised through other communication channels (such as Hepburn Life to encourage more subscribers).
4% annual increase percentage of gross revenue generated by businesses and organisations, outside the Tourism sector	4%	6.2%	✓	Target achieved



## 05

#### 4.1 Work in partnership to attract and retain young people in our area through the provision of improved digital connectivity, education opportunities, employment pathways, affordable housing, improved public and active transport options, and leadership opportunities

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
4.1.1	Develop and implement a Youth Strategy 2021-25 to support the delivery of services and opportunities to young people in Hepburn Shire	The ACE Youth Development Strategy 2022 – 2030 was adopted by Council on 28 June 2022, following significant community consultation and detailed input by Youth of the shire. Consultation in the development of the strategy involved 660 young people and 53 stakeholders.
4.1.2	Explore offering a graduate or traineeship program in alignment with Council's Workforce Plan development.	A traineeship program was developed and budgeted to commence in late 2022. Four new traineeships will be introduced for Council in People and Culture, ICT, Governance, Customer Experience, and Finance.
4.1.3	Annual Plan 2021/22 Advocate to government to assist with funding of the business case for the establishment of Institute of Gastronomy within the shire.	Partnering with the City of Greater Bendigo, Council has represented the Shire in seeking opportunities for Gastronomy in our region. The City of Greater Bendigo have completed testing of an online map featuring producers within the region, this is being rolled out in a staged approach, and currently features Bendigo producers, with the expectation that it will be further rolled out throughout the region in 2022. Business planning development for the Institute of Gastronomy continues.
4.1.4	Investigate the formation of a Youth Council or Youth Advisory Committee.	This year saw the implementation of the Youth Co-Design Group that led the creation of ACE Youth Development Strategy. An action to investigate the formation was included in the adopted strategy.

#### 4.2 Advocate for improved internet infrastructure to support business, residents who work from home, students, and other citizens of the Hepburn Shire area

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
4.2.1	Support implementation of Central Highlands Digital Plan.	No action this year – Council continues to work with partners such as the Central Highlands Regional Partnership to ensure funding opportunities when available are sought.
4.2.2	Review the impact of the co-working space at the Hepburn Hub at the Rex and explore the feasibility of a local co-working spaces in other parts of the Shire.	Council's decision not to proceed with the Hepburn Hub at the Rex project means the co-working space not proceeded with.
4.2.3	Install public wi-fi in appropriate areas.	No action this year
4.2.4	Advocate to ensure that our community has access to, and benefits from reliable digital services.	Senior officers continue to advocate for appropriate access to digital services with key agencies.

## 05

### 4.3 Support and facilitate a diverse and innovative local economy that encourages an increase of local businesses with diverse offerings to achieve positive social, economic and environmental impacts

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
4.3.1	Implement a Business Concierge model (Customer Service, Planning and Economic Development) to enhance the permit approvals process.	No specific action this year. The implementation of e-planning system has ensured an online presence to now submit, view and review planning permits.
4.3.2	Invest in streetscapes and infrastructure in commercial and retail areas across the Shire.	The Outdoor Activation Project is supporting all businesses with the waiving of street furniture permit waivers which includes outdoor furniture and A-frame signs. Eligible businesses will also have an opportunity to secure new outdoor furniture as part of the program.
4.3.3	Annual Plan 2021/22 Finalise the pilot project of the Artisan Agriculture Project to support producers more broadly.	Council continued to work with the Artisan Agriculture sector to support our premium produce enterprises to navigate government, unlock opportunities and build the ongoing capacity and skills of the sector to collectively grow and survive as part of the heavily government grant funded project, the Hub for Premium Produce. During the year a range of actions were achieved from a highly successful planning forum, connecting our producers to all levels of government, upskilling through business mentoring, marketing workshops and a grant writing webinar. Council has also supported the broader agriculture sector in response to the January storm event in Creswick and surrounds.
4.3.4	Develop and implement an Economic Development Strategy that ensures diverse offerings.	Budget funding request to develop a new Economic and Visitor Economy Strategy is likely for the 2023/24 financial years.
4.3.5	Develop and implement a Commercial Land Use Policy.	No action this year – this project will form part of the Strategic Planning Program.
4.3.6	Develop and implement a HSC Shire Wide Agricultural and Rural Settlement Strategy.	A Rural Activity Zone – Supply Demand Assessment was prepared as an early input to a future agricultural land use and settlement strategy. The Rural Activity Zone assessment is part of a shire-wide Land Capacity and Demand Study.
4.3.7	Support local and regional tourism campaigns and initiatives to support the local offer.	Council continues to partner with Daylesford Macedon Tourism (DMT) to promote and support tourism marketing campaigns, professional development initiatives like the DMT Conference. This year saw the continued development of new collateral, most recently Tasty Little Touring Map which showcases local producers across the DMT region and a brand-new regional Eat & Drink guide to be released late in 2022.
4.3.8	Implement the Events Strategy 2020-2025 building on existing brand pillars including Indulge (Food & Drink), Refresh (Escape & Rejuvenate), Learn (History & Culture) and Make (Art & Artisans).	Officers continued to implement actions outlined in the Event Strategy. Highlights include attracting new events to the shire that align with values and activate the off-peak season to encourage visitation and Economic impact. New events included Winter Sounds, CresFest and Borealis.

# 05

## 4.4 Develop and promote the circular economy to diversify our local economy and support our sustainability goals

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
4.4.1	Review waste services to ensure alignment with the new State Government’s Circular Economy program	Council has adopted the Sustainable Hepburn Strategy which includes an action to review our kerbside waste and recycling services in compliance with Recycling Victoria’s requirements. The Waste Team is about to begin community consultation on changes to the kerbside services. The kerbside collection trial of food and garden organics in Clunes has progressed well and has been extended to gather more information and refine the composting process.
4.4.2	Develop and promote the circular economy to diversify our local economy and support our sustainability goals	This year significant planning and program design occurred around our circular economy strategy. Preparations were made for a Circular Economy Officer to be recruited to Council (funded in 2022/23), as well as several grant applications and the program design for the 'Stage 1 - Activating a Circular Economy in the Hepburn Shire' project.

05



5

## A dynamic and responsive Council

### MEASURES OF SUCCESS

FOCUS AREA 5 - STRATEGIC INDICATOR	TARGET	ACTUAL	OUTCOME	COMMENTS
5% annual increase subscribers to Council's e-newsletter, Hepburn Life	5%	14.9%	✓	Target achieved and exceeded. There are now over 3,500 subscribers to Council's e-newsletter.
Achieve a low or medium risk rating for VAGO financial sustainability indicators	All indicators low or medium	4 Low, 1 Medium, 1 High	✗	The Underlying Surplus / Deficit is in the high category. This is predominately impacted by costs associated with storm recovery that have not been reimbursed and the writing off of costs incurred that will not be recognised as assets, however needs to be closely monitored.
2% annual increase percentage of service requests responded to in accordance with customer service charter	2%	NA	⊘	The Customer Service Charter is in development and this indicator will be reported in year two of the Council Plan.
Increase result of community satisfaction with community consultation and engagement from 44 to 50 points, over the life of the plan, a 14% improvement	14% increase	0%	✗	Council had a score of 44 in this years Community Satisfaction Survey in relation to consultation and engagement.
100% of annual actions from the adopted Workforce Plan are implemented. The Workforce Plan will be adopted by 31 December 2021 to ensure gender equity, diversity and inclusiveness in the workforce.	100%	36%	✗	The Workforce Plan 2021-2025 was adopted in December 2021 and in six months, 8 of the 22 annual actions were implemented. Along with the Gender Equality Action Plan, this work will ensure a diverse and engaged workforce.

# 05

## 5.1 Harness community expertise

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
5.1.1	Conduct a Community Skills Session to capture community skills and interest for future engagements.	No action this year – Council this year has concentrated on embedding the Community Engagement Policy, upskilling staff and undertaken a number of major engagement activities.
5.1.2	Strengthen processes to create strong alignment with community-led engagement.	An Engagement Specialist was recruited with the purpose of creating a proactive, systematic and sustained approach to community engagement. This role has proactively managed community engagement programs and actively participated in policy and strategy development. Engagement Plans are developed with regard to community preferences.
5.1.3	Continue to value, support and implement Community Reference Groups, where appropriate.	Community Reference Groups, with deliberative elements, have been used in the development of the Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025 and the Sustainable Hepburn Strategy. Council's Advisory Committees have also been engaged in the development and implementation of strategies.
5.1.4	Actively participate in community and government networks and regional alliances.	Council and officers have actively participated in a range of network and alliances throughout the year, and these continue to grow. Council fully participates in session coordinated by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Local Government Professional (LGPro), Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA), Rural Councils Victoria (RCV); Hepburn is a member of both the Central Highlands and the Loddon-Campaspe Group of Councils as well as the Central Highlands Regional Partnership; and Councils CEO is the President of FinPro (Financial Professional Victoria LG). Council also have roles in groups such as, but not exclusive, to the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance, Z-Net, Women's Health Grampians, Committee for Ballarat; and many officers represent Council in working groups across the shire, region and state.

## 5.2 Actively communicate, inform and engage with our community about events and decision-making

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
5.2.1	Implement the Community Engagement Policy and procedures to improve community engagement practices and relationship building	Building upon the Community Engagement Framework an Engagement Toolbox has been developed with the purpose of supporting officers in the delivery of quality engagements that align with the Community Engagement Policy. The Toolbox has been developed with consideration for existing policy and procedures, best practice research, industry standards, and community preferences.

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<b>5.2.2</b>	<p>Annual Plan 2021/22</p> <p>Communicate in a timely, clear, responsive and accessible way about decisions and circumstances that impact our community.</p>	<p>The Community Vision 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 was adopted by Council at the October 2021 Ordinary meeting of Council.</p> <p>Council has improved its communications tools during the year, and this will continue to be enhanced on an ongoing basis. During the year Council implemented a new, user-friendly website, and also introduced a regular e-newsletter 'Hepburn Life' which has over 3,500 subscribers and higher open rates than government averages.</p>
<b>5.2.3</b>	<p>Implement the recommendations of Hepburn Shire Council Service Review-Customer Experience.</p>	<p>A Project Working Group has been established along with internal consultations. The scope of project expanded to include the Customer Service Strategy and Customer Service Charter and expected to be finalised in late 2022.</p>
<b>5.2.4</b>	<p>Create an online database of Community Groups and contacts from across the Shire accessible to relevant Council Departments.</p>	<p>There is greater awareness by staff of the challenges and need for contacts to be easily available – a project for specific software will be considered in later years of the Council Plan.</p>
<b>5.2.5</b>	<p>Increase public participation in Council meetings by continuing to live stream meetings.</p>	<p>Council meetings were live streamed throughout the year and recording are available on Council's website and Facebook page. The livestreaming will be enhanced and continue.</p>

## 5.3 A sustainable and agile organisation with strong corporate governance that supports excellent operations

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
<b>5.3.1</b>	<p>Strengthen the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework, including a programmed service review of all Council services.</p>	<p>Council undertook a detailed service review of the Aged Care service delivery and ultimately took the decision to transition out of service delivery effective 30 June 2022.</p> <p>A review of Customer Service was also finalised resulting in the development of an Action Plan of improvements, including the development of a Customer Service Strategy and Charter to be developed in 2022/23.</p> <p>Following the adoption of the Council Plan 2021-25 in October 2021 and to inform the Workplace Plan and Strategy that was required to be adopted by 31 December 2021 each business unit of Council prepared a Business and Workforce Plan which detailed: current service profile; SWOT analysis; benchmarking; workforce review; and action plan, these will be reviewed and enhanced during the four year implementation of the Council Plan.</p>

## 05

<b>5.3.2</b>	Develop and implement an Annual Plan to set the operational direction of Council year on year.	A progress report on the performance of actions included in the 2021/22 plan occurred on a quarterly basis during 2021/22. A new Council Annual Plan 2022-23 was adopted at the Ordinary meeting on 28 June 2022.
<b>5.3.3</b>	Enhance long-term financial planning and forecasting through the development and implementation of a Long-Term Financial Plan.	The 10-year Financial Plan (Long Term Financial Plan) was adopted by Council at a Special Meeting held on 21 October 2021. Ongoing review of Council's finances occurs on a regular basis, and quarterly finance reports are presented at a Council Meeting.
<b>5.3.4</b>	Effectively advocate, scope projects, prepare applications and ensure delivery of major initiatives and projects.	Significant grant funding was secured, increasing the delivery of the 2021/22 Capital Works program. This was made more challenging due to confluence of construction sector challenges. Officers continue to improve planning and delivery of projects, with a number of enhancements and the creation of the Major Projects team within Council having positive impacts.
<b>5.3.5</b>	Development and implementation of an Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) Strategy to ensure staff have quality equipment and soft-ware to deliver high quality services to our community.	The ICT Strategy has been developed with final organisational workplans for Transformation Activities to be finalised in the first half of 2022/23.
<b>5.3.6</b>	Ensure Council practices, processes and decision making is compliant with the Local Government Act 2020 provisions and other related legislation and regulations.	The final element of the Local Government Act 2020 Implementation - Council's Municipal Asset Plan 2022-2032 - was adopted on 28 June 2022. Council has fully implemented the Local Government Act 2020.
<b>5.3.7</b>	Strengthen internal governance through ongoing Councillor and staff capacity building and skill development.	Councillor development opportunities offered over the past year and have included meeting procedures and debate best practice and managing conflicts of interest, and a workshop to further enhance understand of the Planning and Environment Act. Staff development opportunities offered have included Freedom of Information, complaints handling, and good record keeping.
<b>5.3.8</b>	Embed Council's risk management framework and risk appetite into project management and decision making.	Following detailed development and review by Councils, Audit and Risk Committee the Risk Management Framework was finalised and adopted by Council at the Ordinary Meeting of Council in December 2021.
<b>5.3.9</b>	Ensure the procurement practices of staff are in line with set policies, procedures and guidelines that have a focus on transparency, accountability and probity.	Council's Procurement Policy was reviewed this year as per the requirements of implementing the Local Government Act 2020. This was approved by Council on 21 December 2021. It included a review of the evaluation criteria and minimum ratings for these criteria. Section 6 of the policy provides clear guidelines on the procurement principals to guide officers.
<b>5.3.10</b>	Respond and adapt to requirements set out by the Victoria Electoral Commission in relation to representation reviews and general elections.	The Victorian Electoral Commission has notified Council that the Electoral Representation Review has been delayed and will now commence in 2022/23.

# 05

## 5.4 Improve staff resourcing, support, and capacity building

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
<b>5.4.1</b>	Annual Plan 2021/22 Develop Workforce Plan to promote gender equity, diversity, inclusion, with an appropriate organisational structure to deliver the Council Plan.	The 2021 – 2025 Workforce Strategy and Plan developed in consultation with staff was presented to Executive and Councillors for consideration in late 2021. The finalised plan was adopted in December 2021, and actions will be implemented throughout the four years of the Council Plan.
<b>5.4.2</b>	Ensure appropriate training and development of staff to ensure continuous improvement and access to the required skills.	A Skill Gap Analysis was conducted as part of annual review process, and this will be utilised to improve Councils corporate training calendar.
<b>5.4.3</b>	Strengthen the organisational approach to project management and delivery.	A Project Management Framework was completed and is being rolled out to the organisation. An internal intranet page with resources was developed as ‘one-stop-shop’ for project managers; multiple processes and templates created or improved. This also included improvement to the planning processes of the capital works program.
<b>5.4.4</b>	Ensure that 100% of staff are offered the opportunity to undertake Cultural Awareness training.	No action this year, with funding included in the 2022/23 budget for training to be undertaken.



## 05

**5.5 Strong asset management and renewal**

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
<b>5.5.1</b>	Annual Plan 2021/22 Continue to invest in asset maintenance, renewal and upgrade programs.	Various maintenance, renewal and upgrade programs occur across the organisation and across all asset classes. A total of \$8.8 million of capital renewal and upgrade was incurred during the year. Some major programs include Council's 2021/22 Road Rehabilitation program covering Daylesford Clunes Road; Lone Hand Road; Orford St Daylesford; and the annual gravel resheeting program which was completed in December 2021.
<b>5.5.2</b>	Review and modernise Council's Asset Management practices in alignment with the development of Council's Asset Plan.	Council's Asset Plan, a requirement of the Victorian Local Government Act 2020, was developed in consultation with the community and adopted by Council in June 2022.
<b>5.5.3</b>	Deliver the annual Capital Works program.	There was improved delivery of capital works program compared to previous years. Major and complex projects have seen significant progress, including Trentham Sportsground Pavilion and Trentham Community Hub construction underway, and Creswick Trails progressed to tendering stage.

**5.6 Be a leader in gender equality and equity and promote respect and safety in our community**

Item	Strategy	2021/22 Actions and Outcomes
<b>5.6.1</b>	Annual Plan 2021/22 Implement provisions of the Gender Equality Act 2020, including a Gender Equity Action Plan.	The Gender Equity Action Plan (GEAP) has been approved by the CEO and made available to the organisation, our Gender Equity Advisory Committee and placed on Council's website. A number of key strategies had Gender Impact Assessments (GIA) undertaken and Council continues to invest in training and development opportunities for staff to improve undertaken of the GEAP.
<b>5.6.2</b>	Provide strong Council leadership, both internally and in the community, to build understanding of safe, respectful and equitable relationships through education and awareness raising.	An information portal on Gender Equality has been established for staff using internal communications, including our involvement with the promotion of the prevention of violence. Messaging regarding Council's commitment to these activities has been widely communicated, including the support and promotion of the 16 Days of Activism to end the violence against Women and Children.
<b>5.6.3</b>	Review and update the Act@Work Plan and continue to strengthen Gender Equity on Council.	Under the guidance of an internal Project Group, the Gender Equality Action Plan was developed and has been submitted to the Commissioner for Gender Equality in the public sector for approval.

## 05

## MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN (MPHWP) PROGRESS

In Victoria, the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 gives local government specific responsibilities to plan for and contribute to protecting and improving health and wellbeing. The Act requires municipal public health and wellbeing plans to be prepared sequentially every four years. These plans inform each other and provide the basis for an integrated planning approach in our state.

Hepburn Shire Council is committed to the health and wellbeing of its communities and for the first time the Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan has been integrated into the Hepburn Shire Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025.

The plan has identified four Priority Areas that reflect the needs of our community, they are:

### 1. Tackling climate change and its impact on health

This priority area focuses on resilient and safe communities that are adapting to the public health impacts of climate change. Some activities from the past year include adopting a cross-department approach to youth-focused sustainability programs that develop the connection between climate change and health, investigating and collating local data that reflects the strong links between our environment (built and natural) and our community's health, and involvement in the Healthy and Active in Nature Alliance, which is a strategic partnership that links sustainability and public health.

### 2. Increasing healthy eating

This priority area focuses on increasing access to nutritious food and water, especially for those most vulnerable, and supporting people to make healthy lifestyle choices through collaborative people and place-based approaches. Some activities from the past year include continuing to review and improve the Healthy Choices Australia Traffic Light System at outdoor swimming pools and working with the Central Highland Primary Care Partnership to deliver healthy eating actions and shared regional priorities for healthy eating.

### 3. Improving Mental Wellbeing

This priority area focuses on our diverse communities feeling celebrated, respected, and included. Social connections are strengthened through participation in community groups, clubs, arts, culture, physical activity, and nature. Access to mental health services, housing, learning, and employment are a focus. Some activities from the past year include providing mental health sessions for young people, parents and carers, continued partnership with Central Highlands Rural Health to deliver the Walk to School project, scheduled mental health training for our community sports clubs to take place in 2022.

### 4. Preventing all forms of violence

The priority area focuses on the fact that everyone deserves to live a life free from all forms of violence. Prevention efforts focus on gender equity, while responding to the needs of our diverse population. Some activities from the past year include delivering a strong campaign for 16 Days of Activism in 2021, delivering training on Gender Impact Assessments to meet our obligation as outlined by the Gender Equality Act 2020, completing Gender Equity reporting, commencing Gender Impact Assessments, providing free 3R's Family Violence training for both community members and staff, establishing an internal Gender Equity Committee and an external Gender Equity Advisory Committee to better inform Council policies, plans and strategies.

# 05

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE REPORTING FRAMEWORK INDICATORS

### Service Performance Indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of results in the comments.

### Aquatic Facilities : Service Performance Indicator Results

Service / indicator / measure	Results				Comments
	2019	2020	2021	2022	
<b>AQUATIC FACILITIES</b>					
<b>Service standard</b>					
Health inspections of aquatic facilities <i>[Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / Number of Council aquatic facilities]</i>	2.60	1.20	0.00	0.00	Council operates three outdoor pools which open for the summer season only as well as a splash park and a toddler pool. Proactive inspections were not undertaken because of the extraordinary demands upon Health Officers in addressing COVID pandemic compliance issues and storm event relief and recovery. This will be corrected in the 2022/23 season.
<b>Utilisation</b>					
Utilisation of aquatic facilities <i>[Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]</i>	0.73	1.59	1.20	1.64	Utilisation was able to increase as 2021 results were heavily impacted by COVID closures.
<b>Service cost</b>					
Cost of aquatic facilities <i>[Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received / Number of visits to aquatic facilities]</i>	New in 2020	\$15.95	\$19.84	\$12.95	Reduced costs are as a result of the reduction of pool operational hours throughout the 2021/22 season due to sector staff shortages. These cost reductions, coupled with an increase in the number of visits, which returned to more pre COVID levels, contributed to the reduced cost per swim.

## 05

## Animal Management : Service Performance Indicator Results

Service / indicator / measure	Results				Comments
	2019	2020	2021	2022	
<b>ANIMAL MANAGEMENT</b>					
<b>Timeliness</b>					
<p><i>Time taken to action animal management requests</i></p> <p><i>[Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests / Number of animal management requests]</i></p>	2.26	1.58	4.14	4.48	The number of days taken to respond to animal requests is similar to the previous year. This does not include urgent requests that are responded to immediately.
<b>Service standard</b>					
<p><i>Animals reclaimed</i></p> <p><i>[Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected] x100</i></p>	20.00%	83.33%	11.63%	13.75%	The percentage of domestic animals which have been reclaimed is slightly higher than the previous year. This figure does not include animals that can be identified and reunited with their owner the same day.
<p><i>Animals rehomed</i></p> <p><i>[Number of animals rehomed / Number of animals collected] x100</i></p>	New in 2020	55.56%	95.35%	27.50%	The percentage of domestic animals which have been rehomed is lower compared to last year. This could be due to a number of factors including an increased desire of the community for pet ownership during COVID and a change in internal processes that has led to more accurate reporting.
<b>Service cost</b>					
<p><i>Cost of animal management service per population</i></p> <p><i>[Direct cost of the animal management service / Population]</i></p>	New in 2020	\$8.29	\$10.91	\$9.72	The cost of animal management services has remained relatively similar across the four years.
<b>Health and safety</b>					
<p><i>Animal management prosecutions</i></p> <p><i>[Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100</i></p>	New in 2020	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Council has not prosecuted any person under the Domestic Animals Act as other enforcement actions have been successful.

# 05

## Food Safety : Service Performance Indicator Results

Service / indicator / measure	Results				Comments
	2019	2020	2021	2022	
<b>FOOD SAFETY</b>					
<b>Timeliness</b>					
Time taken to action food complaints [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints / Number of food complaints]	3.00	1.50	5.00	1.00	The number of days taken to respond to a public complaint about food safety has significantly decreased as the number of COVID related requests has reduced.
<b>Service standard</b>					
Food safety assessments [Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984 / Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984] x100	92.11%	74.30%	25.67%	48.44%	The percentage of registered food premises which were inspected has increased compared to the previous year but still remains below target as the Environmental Health Team were significantly impacted by severe storm events. Additional resources are being sought to correct this below target testing in 2021/2022.
<b>Service cost</b>					
Cost of food safety service [Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the Food Act 1984]	\$439.11	\$449.60	\$585.21	\$841.56	The cost of food safety services per registered food premises has increased due to additional resources being allocated to the team structure to respond to the increasing demands.
<b>Health and safety</b>					
Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications [Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x100	75.00%	100.00%	50.00%	100.00%	There has been a strong focus this year to ensure all Critical and Major Non Conformances have been followed up and appropriate enforcement action taken.

# 05

## Governance : Service Performance Indicator Results

Service / indicator / measure	Results				Comments
	2019	2020	2021	2022	
<b>GOVERNANCE</b>					
<b>Transparency</b>					
<p><i>Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public</i></p> <p><i>[Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council, or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors, closed to the public / Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors ] x100</i></p>	9.35%	3.03%	4.68%	9.29%	<p>Council continues to make as many decisions in public as possible for greater transparency. With an increase in development in the area, Council has seen an increase in the number of statutory planning applications referred to VCAT, leading to an increase in decisions made in closed meetings to comply with the VCAT Act 1998.</p>
<b>Consultation and engagement</b>					
<p><i>Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement</i></p> <p><i>[Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]</i></p>	51.00	41.00	44.00	44.00	<p>Result has remained consistent with the previous year.</p>
<b>Attendance</b>					
<p><i>Councillor attendance at council meetings</i></p> <p><i>[The sum of the number of Councillors who attended each Council meeting / (Number of Council meetings) x (Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election)] x100</i></p>	84.76%	96.94%	99.25%	97.32%	<p>Councillor attendance at Council meetings continues to be very high. The ability to hold hybrid and virtual meetings has made it easier for Councillors to attend.</p>
<b>Service cost</b>					
<p><i>Cost of elected representation</i></p> <p><i>[Direct cost of the governance service / Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election]</i></p>	\$37,149.43	\$37,815.57	\$37,259.57	\$37,944.57	<p>Result has remained consistent with the previous year.</p>
<b>Satisfaction</b>					
<p><i>Satisfaction with council decisions</i></p> <p><i>[Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]</i></p>	52.00	38.00	44.00	41.00	<p>Slight decrease from the previous year with a number of key decisions undertaken during the year including sale of The Rex and the transitioning out of aged care service delivery.</p>

# 05

## Libraries : Service Performance Indicator Results

Service / indicator / measure	Results				Comments
	2019	2020	2021	2022	
<b>LIBRARIES</b>					
<b>Utilisation</b>					
Physical library collection usage <i>[Number of physical library collection item loans / Number of physical library collection items]</i>	4.45	3.61	2.50	3.16	The collection usage rate is slowly returning to pre-COVID levels.
<b>Resource standard</b>					
Recently purchased library collection <i>[Number of library collection items purchased in the last 5 years / Number of library collection items] x100</i>	66.92%	73.18%	69.34%	66.17%	Result has remained consistent over the last four years.
<b>Participation</b>					
Active library borrowers in municipality <i>[Number of active library borrowers in the last three years / The sum of the population for the last three years] x100</i>	19.49%	18.08%	15.66%	13.67%	The effects of lockdowns linger with a reduced number of active borrowers. The library network is working on programming to encourage members to return to the library as well as signing up new members.
<b>Service cost</b>					
Cost of library service per population <i>[Direct cost of the library service / Population]</i>	New in 2020	\$44.80	\$39.36	\$37.21	The cost of delivering the library service to the community has decreased slightly because opening hours were reduced due to COVID 19 pandemic restrictions.

## 05

## Maternal & Child Health (MCH) : Service Performance Indicator Results

Service / indicator / measure	Results				Comments
	2019	2020	2021	2022	
<b>MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH (MCH)</b>					
<b>Service standard</b>					
Infant enrolments in the MCH service [Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service (from birth notifications received) / Number of birth notifications received] x100	100.77%	100.89%	101.50%	104.63%	We are seeing a slightly higher than normal birth rate from previous years.
<b>Service cost</b>					
Cost of the MCH service [Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses]	\$69.33	\$86.46	\$86.79	\$98.54	Increased cost due to increased funding in line with new variation of contract with Central Highlands Rural Health. The additional funding is for Sleep and Settling sessions and Family Violence Support.
<b>Participation</b>					
Participation in the MCH service [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	77.16%	78.99%	76.96%	86.01%	Increased rate of children attending appointments due to catch up appointments missed during Covid.
<b>Participation</b>					
Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children [Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	88.24%	76.74%	75.76%	80.95%	Many families choose to access support services from Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative.
<b>Satisfaction</b>					
Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit [Number of 4-week key age and stage visits / Number of birth notifications received] x100	New in 2020	96.43%	94.74%	99.07%	Increased rate of children attending appointments due to catch up appointments missed during Covid.



## 05

## Roads : Service Performance Indicator Results

Service / indicator / measure	Results				Comments
	2019	2020	2021	2022	
<b>ROADS</b>					
<b>Satisfaction of use</b>					
Sealed local road requests <i>[Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100</i>	34.96	41.94	46.96	50.26	The number of customer requests about sealed road conditions has increased due to the high rainfall and a spike of requests related to the storm events.
<b>Condition</b>					
Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards <i>[Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100</i>	99.64%	99.47%	96.91%	97.73%	Result is consistent with prior years.
<b>Service cost</b>					
Cost of sealed local road reconstruction <i>[Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]</i>	\$57.62	\$51.92	\$56.20	\$49.88	Cost decrease reflective of the nature of reconstruction projects complete in 2021/22, being mostly large rural roads with little additional drainage or other costs incurred.
<b>Service cost</b>					
Cost of sealed local road resealing <i>[Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]</i>	\$6.62	\$6.80	\$7.59	\$8.67	Cost increase due to larger amount of reseat preparation (patching) in program.
<b>Satisfaction</b>					
Satisfaction with sealed local roads <i>[Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]</i>	50.00	44.00	47.00	39.00	Overall decrease reflective of general satisfaction trends across Council and poor condition of arterial roads across the Shire.

# 05

## Statutory Planning : Service Performance Indicator Results

Service / indicator / measure	Results				Comments
	2019	2020	2021	2022	
<b>STATUTORY PLANNING</b>					
<b>Timeliness</b>					
Time taken to decide planning applications <i>[The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application]</i>	84.00	53.00	69.00	107.00	Increase in time taken to decide planning applications has occurred due to a significant spike in planning applications.
<b>Service standard</b>					
Planning applications decided within required time frames <i>[(Number of regular planning application decisions made within 60 days) + (Number of VicSmart planning application decisions made within 10 days) / Number of planning application decisions made] x100</i>	57.35%	60.99%	64.47%	19.70%	Increase in time taken to decide planning applications has occurred due to a significant spike in planning applications (up 25% from pre-COVID levels) and a number of vacancies within the team. Significant additional resources have been implemented and this is improving timelines. From July 1 2022 to early September there has been a 19% reduction in the number of outstanding planning applications.
<b>Service cost</b>					
Cost of statutory planning service <i>[Direct cost of the statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received]</i>	\$1,643.38	\$1,662.25	\$2,012.01	\$2,458.49	The cost of the Statutory Planning Service for each application received has risen slightly over the last financial year due to additional resources being employed to reduce overall assessment timeframes as a result of a large backlog of applications.
<b>Decision making</b>					
Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT <i>[Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100</i>	50.00%	0.00%	80.00%	50.00%	The percentage of set aside decisions after review of VCAT has increased over the last financial year due to an increase of applications being reviewed at VCAT. Current year saw five applications from 10 set aside and previous year was four set aside from five applications.

# 05

## Waste Collection : Service Performance Indicator Results

Service / indicator / measure	Results				Comments
	2019	2020	2021	2022	
<b>WASTE COLLECTION</b>					
<b>Satisfaction</b>					
Kerbside bin collection requests [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling bin collection requests / Number of kerbside bin collection households] x1000	117.20	94.46	96.44	104.19	A small increase largely due to confusion and additional requests due to a bin collection schedule change.
<b>Service standard</b>					
Kerbside collection bins missed [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x10,000	4.06	4.58	3.59	5.89	A small increase largely due to confusion and additional requests due to a bin collection schedule change, as well as a new supplier as part of the changeover. Rates improved towards the end of the financial year.
<b>Service cost</b>					
Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service [Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]	\$98.85	\$111.64	\$119.33	\$149.49	Change in kerbside contract and increase in landfill levy led to increased kerbside cost to residents for waste.
<b>Service cost</b>					
Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service [Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]	\$61.67	\$71.43	\$85.15	\$77.88	Change in kerbside contract led to a slight decrease in cost for recycling costs.
<b>Waste diversion</b>					
Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100	37.08%	37.81%	48.46%	40.22%	It is believed that the decrease from 48% to 40% can be attributed to changes in the community's habits with changing COVID restriction levels, including an increase in visitors to the shire and residents spending less time at home following the lifting of restrictions.

## 05

## SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY INDICATORS

Indicator / measure [formula]	Results				Comments
	2019	2020	2021	2022	
<b>Population</b>					
C1 <i>Expenses per head of municipal population</i> [Total expenses / Municipal population]	\$1,923.10	\$2,084.26	\$2,225.60	\$3,237.76	Total expenses have increased this year for costs associated with recovery works for storm events \$7.52m and writing off of costs incurred that will not be recognised as assets. It is expected that this ratio will return to normal in future years.
C2 <i>Infrastructure per head of municipal population</i> [Value of infrastructure / Municipal population]	\$13,520.24	\$16,003.13	\$19,903.57	\$21,088.82	The construction and renewal of assets combined with revaluation of assets has increased the value of assets controlled by Council. The growing proportion of infrastructure relative to the population shows Council's commitment to improving and accurately recording infrastructure.
C3 <i>Population density per length of road</i> [Municipal population / Kilometres of local roads]	10.52	11.16	11.28	11.37	Result has remained consistent over the last four years, as length of the road network remains very similar.
<b>Own-source revenue</b>					
C4 <i>Own-source revenue per head of municipal population</i> [Own-source revenue / Municipal population]	\$1,553.82	\$1,517.62	\$1,323.20	\$1,647.32	This indicator has increased due to the reallocation of loss on disposal of assets being recognised as an expense. In the prior year it was recognised as negative revenue.
<b>Recurrent grants</b>					
C5 <i>Recurrent grants per head of municipal population</i> [Recurrent grants / Municipal population]	\$444.47	\$471.92	\$439.19	\$594.99	The value of grants per person has increased due to the early receipt of 75% of the 2022/23 Financial Assistance Grants allocation, within the 2021/2022 financial year.
<b>Disadvantage</b>					
C6 <i>Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage</i> [Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage by decile]	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	The socio-economic index summarises a range of information about the economic and social conditions of people and households within the shire. The decile has remained constant throughout the past four years.
<b>Workforce turnover</b>					
C7 <i>Percentage of staff turnover</i> [Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations / Average number of permanent staff for the financial year] x100	21.8%	22.3%	22.5%	35.3%	Workforce turnover has increased over the last year and includes the redundancies resulting from Council deciding to cease service delivery in the aged care sector. The workforce turnover rate would have been 28.67% if these redundancies were excluded from the calculation.

## SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

For the year ended 30 June 2022

Service/indicator/measure [formula]	Results				Comments
	2019	2020	2021	2022	
<b>AQUATIC FACILITIES</b>					
<b>Utilisation</b>					
AF6 <i>Utilisation of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	0.73	1.59	1.20	1.64	Utilisation was able to increase as 2021 results were heavily impacted by COVID closures.
<b>ANIMAL MANAGEMENT</b>					
<b>Health and safety</b>					
AM7 <i>Animal management prosecutions</i> [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	New in 2020	0%	0%	0%	Council has not prosecuted any person under the Domestic Animals Act as other enforcement actions have been successful.
<b>FOOD SAFETY</b>					
<b>Health and safety</b>					
FS4 <i>Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications</i> [Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x100	75.00%	100.00%	50.00%	100.00%	There has been a strong focus this year to ensure all Critical and Major Non Conformances have been followed up and appropriate enforcement action taken.
<b>GOVERNANCE</b>					
<b>Satisfaction</b>					
G5 <i>Satisfaction with council decisions</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	52	38	44	41	Slight decrease from the previous year with a number of key decisions undertaken during the year including sale of The Rex and the transitioning out of aged care service delivery.
<b>LIBRARIES</b>					
<b>Participation</b>					
LB4 <i>Active library borrowers in municipality</i> [Number of active library borrowers in the last three years / The sum of the population for the last three years] x100	19.49%	18.08%	15.66%	13.67%	The effects of lockdowns linger with a reduced number of active borrowers. The library network is working on programming to encourage members to return to the library as well as signing up new members.

## 05

## SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (cont.)

For the year ended 30 June 2022

Service/indicator/measure [formula]	Results				Comments
	2019	2020	2021	2022	
<b>MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH (MCH)</b>					
<b>Participation</b>					
MC4 <i>Participation in the MCH service</i> [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	77.16%	78.99%	76.96%	86.01%	Increased rate of children attending appointments due to catch up appointments missed during Covid.
<b>Participation</b>					
MC5 <i>Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children</i> [Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	88.24%	76.74%	75.76%	80.95%	Many families choose to access support services from Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative.
<b>ROADS</b>					
<b>Satisfaction</b>					
R5 <i>Satisfaction with sealed local roads</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	50	44	47	39	Overall decrease reflective of general satisfaction trends across Council and poor condition of arterial roads across the Shire.
<b>STATUTORY PLANNING</b>					
<b>Decision making</b>					
SP4 <i>Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT</i> [Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100	50.00%	0.00%	80.00%	50.00%	The percentage of set aside decisions after review of VCAT has increased over the last financial year due to an increased number of applications under review.
<b>WASTE COLLECTION</b>					
<b>Waste diversion</b>					
WC5 <i>Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill</i> [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100	37.08%	37.81%	48.46%	40.22%	It is believed that the decrease from 48% to 40% can be attributed to changes in the communities habits with changing COVID restriction levels, including an increase in visitors to the shire and residents spending less time at home following the lifting of restrictions.

# 05

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

For the year ended 30 June 2022

Dimension/indicator/measure	Results				Forecasts			
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
<b>EFFICIENCY</b>								
<b>Expenditure level</b>								
E2	Expenses per property assessment [Total expenses / Number of property assessments]	\$2,718.89	\$2,931.50	\$3,129.05	\$4,497.40	\$3,780.17	\$3,083.95	\$3,142.28
<b>Revenue level</b>								
E4	Average rate per property assessment [Total rate revenue (general rates and municipal charges) / Number of property assessments]	New in 2020	\$1,566.03	\$1,598.16	\$1,612.58	\$1,679.31	\$1,715.40	\$1,750.72
<b>LIQUIDITY</b>								
<b>Working capital</b>								
L1	Current assets compared to current liabilities [Current assets / Current liabilities] x100	380.90%	331.94%	223.75%	194.62%	304.60%	259.17%	227.00%
<b>Unrestricted cash</b>								
L2	Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities [Current assets / Current liabilities] x100	60.36%	33.59%	22.96%	16.16%	27.44%	86.16%	51.97%
<b>OBLIGATIONS</b>								
<b>Loans and borrowings</b>								
O2	Loans and borrowings compared to rates [Interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100	21.43%	18.88%	30.00%	19.17%	21.38%	18.36%	14.84%
O3	Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates [Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100	3.17%	2.90%	2.63%	9.54%	3.82%	3.72%	3.62%
<b>Indebtedness</b>								
O4	Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue [Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue] x100	18.36%	16.60%	23.42%	16.67%	17.68%	14.84%	11.75%
<b>Asset renewal and upgrade</b>								
O5	Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation [Asset renewal and asset upgrade expense / Asset depreciation] x100	New in 2020	125.16%	123.21%	103.42%	163.36%	126.13%	122.25%

# 05

## COUNCIL PLAN AND COMMUNITY VISION

For the year ended 30 June 2022

Dimension/indicator/measure	Results				Forecasts		
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>OPERATING POSITION</b>							
<b>Adjusted underlying result</b>							
OP1 <i>Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)</i> [Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit)/ Adjusted underlying revenue] x100	8.37%	-1.88%	-17.07%	-22.18%	11.57%	16.53%	10.05%
<b>STABILITY</b>							
<b>Rates concentration</b>							
S1 <i>Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue</i> [Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100	62.06%	64.66%	71.53%	54.71%	49.82%	58.70%	63.25%
<b>Rates effort</b>							
S2 <i>Rates compared to property values</i> [Rate revenue / Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality] x100	0.43%	0.38%	0.36%	0.35%	0.27%	0.27%	0.26%





structures  
& processes  
by which  
we operate

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# 06 GOVERNANCE

## COMMUNITY VISION AND COUNCIL PLAN

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Hepburn Shire Council is constituted under the Local Government Act 2020 to provide leadership for the good governance of the municipal district and the local community.

The 2021/22 financial year saw the remaining provisions of the Local Government Act 2020 come into effect.

The new Act is the most ambitious reform to the local government sector in more than 30 years. The Act is a principle-based piece of legislation and aims to improve local government democracy, accountability and service delivery for all Victorians.

Council has a number of roles including:

- Taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision-making.
- Providing leadership by establishing strategic objectives and monitoring achievements.
- Ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner.
- Advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and governments.
- Fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

Council is committed to effective and sustainable forms of democratic and corporate governance as the key to ensuring that we meet the community's needs. The community has many opportunities to provide input into Council's decision-making processes, including community consultation sessions and public forums (such as ward meetings and public participation provisions within each Ordinary Meeting of Council).

Council's formal decision-making processes are conducted through Council meetings and Community Asset Committees. Council delegates the majority of its decision-making to Council staff. These delegations are exercised in accordance with adopted Council policies.

## 06

**Council meetings**

Council conducts scheduled meetings on the third Tuesday of each month, and unscheduled Meetings as required. These meetings are open to the public.

Council meetings are livestreamed to Council's Facebook account, to maintain transparency and accessibility of these meetings to the public. The recordings and minutes are available on Council's website after the meeting.

In addition to Council meetings, Councillors are briefed on relevant issues during Confidential Councillor Briefing sessions throughout the month.

All Meetings are governed by Council's Governance Rules to allow for accountable and transparent conduct of Council meetings. The Governance Rules were prepared pursuant to section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020, which was a new requirement bestowed upon Council, and came into effect on 2 September 2020. The Governance Rules also provide the opportunity for community members to submit questions to the Council during scheduled Council meetings, or ask to address Council, and have the option to submit petitions to Council for consideration.

**Conflict of interest declarations**

Councillors and members of Council staff are required under the Local Government Act 2020 to comply with the conflict of interest provisions as set out in the legislation.

During 2021/22 the following conflicts of interest were declared under the Local Government Act 2020.

- A total of 32 conflicts of interest were declared by Councillors in 2021/22. These declarations were made at both Councillor briefings and Council meetings.

Council held 16 meetings, including four unscheduled Council Meetings and one Statutory Meeting:

- 20 July 2021 – Ordinary Meeting of Council
- 27 July 2021 – Special Meeting of Council
- 17 August 2021 – Ordinary Meeting of Council
- 21 September 2021 – Ordinary Meeting of Council
- 19 October 2021 – Ordinary Meeting of Council
- 26 October 2021 – Special Meeting of Council
- 16 November 2021 – Statutory Meeting to elect the mayor and deputy mayor
- 23 November 2021 – Ordinary Meeting of Council
- 21 December 2021 – Ordinary Meeting of Council
- 15 February 2022 – Ordinary Meeting of Council
- 15 March 2022 – Ordinary Meeting of Council
- 22 March 2022 – Special Meeting of Council
- 20 April 2022 – Ordinary Meeting of Council
- 10 May 2022 – Special Meeting of Council
- 17 May 2022 – Ordinary Meeting of Council
- 28 June 2022 – Ordinary Meeting of Council

## 06

The following table provides a summary of Councillor attendance at Council Meetings and unscheduled Council Meetings for 2021/22.

Councillors	Council Meeting (11)	Special Council Meeting (5)	Total
Cr Bray	11	5	16
Cr Drylie	11	5	16
Cr Halliday	9	4	13 (leave of absence granted for Parental Leave)
Cr Henderson	11	5	16
Cr Hewitt	11	5	16
Cr Hood	11	5	16
Cr Simpson	11	5	16

### Community Asset Committees

A Community Asset Committee (CAC) is a committee with powers of the Council, established and with members appointed by Council, with the powers delegated by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), subject to the terms and conditions specified by the CEO, for the purposes of managing a community asset in a municipal district (s 65(2)).

On 25 August 2020 Council resolved to establish the following Community Asset Committees under section 65 of the Local Government Act 2020. All previous Special Committees of Council were transitioned to Community Asset Committees.

Special Committee	Purpose
Creswick Museum Community Asset Committee	To administer, manage and control the historic Creswick Museum building and collection of artworks and artefacts.
Dean Recreation Reserve and Tennis Courts Community Asset Committee	To manage, control, operate and maintain the Dean Recreation Reserve and Tennis Courts.
Drummond Hall Community Asset Committee	To manage, control, operate and maintain the Drummond Hall premises.
Glenlyon Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee	To administer, maintain and control the Glenlyon Recreation Reserve.
Lee Medlyn Home of Bottles Community Asset Committee	To administer, manage and control the property of the Clunes Historic Medlyn Complex, the Lee Medlyn Bottle collection, the Eberhard Factory and other collectables and displays contained in the facility.
Lyonville Hall Community Asset Committee	To manage, control, operate and maintain the Lyonville Hall.

*Under the Local Government Act 2020, the CEO is required to submit a report to Council each year on the activities and performance of Community Asset Committees.*

## 06

### Advisory Committees

Council has several Advisory Committees of Council. The purpose of these committees is to provide advice to Council, with the final decision for action or expenditure is taken by Council in a Council Meeting. Membership is ordinarily open to the community, defined by an Expression of Interest process, and approved by a Council motion. Each advisory committee operates to Terms of Reference.

Council has the following advisory committees:

Advisory Committee	Purpose
Heather Mutimer International Women's Day Advisory Committee	Provide advice to Council on the Heather Mutimer International Women's Day Honour Roll.
Mineral Springs Reserves Advisory Committee	Provide advice to assist Council plan for, prioritise and implement maintenance works and major projects across all Mineral Springs Reserves within the given parameters and funding opportunities.
Public Art Advisory Committee	Provide advice to assist Council to make decisions about public art projects and acquisitions.
Reconciliation Advisory Committee	Provide input and support on the interests, needs and experiences identified by our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Advises on projects and makes recommendations on ways to build and promote reconciliation in the Shire.
Disability Advisory Committee (DAC)	<p>Collaborate with Council to ensure that there is a proactive, two-way conversation and advice about how to effectively implement the actions in the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and address other access issues as they arise.</p> <p>The DAC also acts as Council's disability representatives in the community to seek broader views on access issues and develop proactive solutions to effectively address access issues as they arise.</p>
Gender Equity Advisory Committee (GEAC)	Provide Council with advice on improving gender equity within Hepburn Shire Council and community.
LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee	Provide Council with advice and information on inclusion, access and equity issues for the LGBTIQ+ community so that Council can strive to improve programs and services for the community and inclusion throughout the Shire.

## 06

## Councillor Code of Conduct

Council adopted a Councillor Code of Conduct at a Special Council Meeting on 23 February 2021. This was a set requirement for all local government agencies pursuant to section 139 Local Government Act 2020. This repealed and replaced the Councillor Code of Conduct last reviewed in 2017.

Division 5 Section 139 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) requires Council to develop a Councillor Code of Conduct and details that Council must review and adopt the Councillor Code of Conduct within four (4) months after a general election.

The Code of Conduct was developed by Council to comply with the requirements of the Act and supporting Regulations (the Local Government Governance and Integrity Regulations 2020).

Pursuant to legislation, a Councillor Code of Conduct must include:

- the standards of conduct prescribed by the regulations expected to be observed by Councillors, and
- any provisions prescribed by the regulations for the purpose of section 139 of the Act, and
- provisions addressing any matters prescribed by the regulations for the purpose of this section, and
- any other matters which the Council considers appropriate, other than any other standards of conduct.

The code adopts and incorporates the current and relevant Councillor protocols, policies and procedures and other documents (as amended from time to time), listed in the Policy that were in effect at the time of adoption.

### The Hepburn Shire Council Councillor Code of Conduct:

- Sets standards of conduct expected of Councillors in order to ensure that good governance and increase public confidence in the administration of Council and integrity of local government is achieved and prohibits discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment) and vilification.
- Endeavours to foster good working relationships between Councillors to enable Councillors to work constructively together in the best interests of the local community.

- Details governing principles to guide the Councillors in their duties and functions and details the roles and responsibilities of Councillors. The Code additionally provides a dispute resolution process.
- Details breaches of the Councillor Code of Conduct and includes obligations regarding child safety and gender equality, diversity and inclusiveness.

## Councillor allowances

The duties of a councillor demand time, energy and commitment with many reducing their time in paid employment to meet the demands of the role. The Victorian Government currently sets the upper and lower limits for all allowances paid to Councillors and Mayors. Councils are divided into three categories based on the income and population of the municipality. Hepburn Shire Council is currently recognised as a category 1 council.

Councils are required to review allowance levels by 30 June in the year following a general election and the allowance level determined remains in effect for the full term of the Council.

Whilst the Local Government Act 2020 was in force, Section 74 of the Local Government Act 1989 remained until the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal decided on the values of allowances, including allowance categories payable to mayors, deputy mayors and councillors in Victorian councils.

On 18 May 2021 Council resolved to endorse setting of the Mayoral and Councillor allowances at the top level 1 category which was:

- Mayoral Allowance - \$62,884
- Councillor Allowance - \$21,049
- Plus, an additional 9.5% of the above allowances is payable as an equivalent of the Commonwealth Superannuation Guarantee.

The superannuation guarantee increased to 10.00% as of 1 July 2021.

On 7 March 2022 the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal made the allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022. The Determination applies to all Councillors (Council members) in all Victorian Councils and took effect from 18 December 2021.

## 06

Hepburn Shire Council is a category 1 Council for the purposes of Determination No. 01/2022. From 18 December 2021 to 20 June 2022, the allowances paid to Councillors were:

- Mayors - \$74,706
- Deputy Mayors - \$37,353
- Councillors - \$24,080.

The following table contains a summary of the allowances paid to each Councillor during the year.

Councillors	Councillor Allowance
Cr Don Henderson	\$23,596
Cr Lesley Hewitt	\$41,584
Cr Brian Hood	\$23,596
Cr Tessa Halliday	\$23,596
Cr Jen Bray	\$30,486
Cr Tim Drylie	\$53,938
Cr Juliet Simpson	\$23,596
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$220,395</b>

## Councillor expenses

In accordance with sections 39-43 of the Local Government Act 2020, Council adopted the Council Expenses and Resources Policy on 25 August 2021. The policy provides guidance for the payment of reimbursements of expenses and the provision of resources, facilities and other support to the Mayor and Councillors to enable them to discharge their duties.

It is a requirement of Council to adopt and maintain this policy in relation to the reimbursement of expenses for Councillors.

The details of the expenses for Councillors for 2021/22 are set out in the following table.

Councillor	Training and development	Travel	Communication	Carer expenses	Total expenditure by Councillor
Councillor Expenses & Resources Guidelines Reference	2.1	2.2 & 2.3	2.4, 2.5 & 2.6	2.7	
Cr Don Henderson	\$2,633		\$1,417		\$4,050
Cr Lesley Hewitt	\$3,225	\$5,406	\$971		\$9,602
Cr Brian Hood	\$2,318		\$971		\$3,289
Cr Tessa Halliday	\$2,993		\$971		\$3,964
Cr Jen Bray	\$2,542		\$971		\$3,513
Cr Tim Drylie	\$5,342	\$8,894	\$971		\$15,207
Cr Juliet Simpson	\$3,042		\$971		\$4,013
<b>Total expenditure by cost category</b>	<b>\$22,595</b>	<b>\$14,300</b>	<b>\$7243</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$44,138</b>

Note: Travel – cost is inclusive of Mayoral vehicle allocation

## 06

## PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT REPORTING

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2020, the Council adopted its new Procurement Policy on 21 December 2021.

For the financial year commencing on 1 July 2021 the Council entered into contracts in compliance with 2 different Procurement Policies requirements:

- a. between 1 July 2021 and 21 December 2021 in accordance with section 186(1) of the Local Government Act 1989 where the value of contracts was at \$150,000 or more for goods or services, or at \$200,000 or more for works or in the circumstances referred to in section 186(5) (a) or (c) of the Local Government Act 1989; and

- b. between 21 December 2021 and 30 June 2022 in accordance with section 108 of the Local Government Act 2020 where the value of contracts was at \$300,000 or more for the purchase of goods or services or works.

The following table provides a list of contracts entered into by the Council in compliance with its Procurement Policy for the financial year commencing on 1 July 2021:

Contract Title	Contract Value (Exclusive of GST)
Reconstruction of Daylesford Clunes Road	\$389,871.74
Bridge Strengthening Works - Telegraph Road, Mount Prospect and Blampied Mollonghip Road, Rocklyn	\$343,164.87
Footpath Expansion and Renewal	\$268,105.38
Trentham Sports Ground Reserve Pavilion Redevelopment	\$1,871,847
Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve Circuit Path and Carpark Construction	\$353,943.60
Public Amenity Upgrade - construction phase 1 - Calembeen Park	\$326,481
Trentham Community Hub	\$4,885,121
Bullarto Railway Station Building	\$557,730
Hammon Park Trailhead Construction	\$1,931,709
Kerb and Channel Upgrade of Pearman Street Creswick	\$287,015.54
Intersection Realignment of Kingston Road	\$319,438.66
Old Ballarat Road Clunes - Bridge Construction	\$507,039.10
Hammon Park Trailhead Public Amenities Block - Toilets and Changing Place	\$283,761



## Audit and Risk Committee

Council established Council's Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) pursuant to section 53 of the Local Government Act 2020 on 25 August 2020. The Audit and Risk Committee, whilst not a delegate committee of Council, acts as an advisory committee to Council (in that it doesn't have any decision-making powers of Council) and assists Council with oversight in the areas of risk, governance, financial management and compliance.

### Independent members for 2021/22:

- Ms Carol Pagnon
- Mr Robert Taylor
- Ms Linda McNeill (Chair)
- Mr Jason Young.

### Councillor Members:

Cr Brian Hood (November 2020 – June 2022)

Cr Tim Drylie (November 2021 – June 2022)

Cr Lesley Hewitt (November 2020 – November 2021)

At these meetings the committee considers the following agenda items:

- Review of key risks and controls
- Summary of quarterly finance reports
- Summary of quarterly management reports
- Mid-year budget review
- Annual budget review
- Review of councillor expenses
- Internal audit reports issued
- External audit reports and management letters
- Review of compliance obligations
- Progress on internal and external audit recommendations
- Policy and procedure review.

## Internal Audit Reviews

Council's internal audit function provides independent and objective assurance that the appropriate processes and controls are in place. Internal audits are resourced by an external provider. A risk based three-year Internal Audit Plan is revised annually to ensure the audit resources remain focused on the appropriate areas.

The review process considers Council's risk framework, the Council Plan, the impact of any change on operations, systems or the business environment, prior audit coverage and outcomes and management input. The Internal Audit Plan is reviewed and approved by the Audit and Risk Committee annually.

The Internal Auditor attends each Audit and Risk Committee meeting to report on the status of the Internal Audit Plan, to provide an update on the implementation of audit recommendations and to present findings of completed reviews. All audit issues identified are risk rated. Recommendations are assigned to the responsible manager and tracked in Council's performance management system.

Council's previous Internal Auditor's contract with HLB Mann Judd expired in December 2021. Council undertook an open tender process to appoint a new Internal Auditor for the next three years. The successful tenderer was AFS and Associates. Internal Audit reviews conducted in 2021/22:

- HLB Mann Judd – Follow-up on status of actions addressing internal audit recommendations.
- AFS – Operations Review – Statutory Planning.

## Risk management

In July 2013, Council adopted its Risk Management Policy in line with current best practice in the management of business enterprise risks and current AS/NZS 31000 guidelines.

Council adopted its Risk Management Framework in December 2021.

As part of this work Council will review its risk registers both strategic and operational as well as Council's Risk Management Policy. A range of internal training programs and department engagement activities complemented this project. Council regularly reports to the Audit and Risk Committee on the progress of the program.

## 06

## GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

The following are the results in the prescribed form of Council's assessment against the prescribed governance and management checklist.

Governance and Management Items	Assessment
1 Community Engagement Policy	Policy was adopted on 23 February 2021
2 Community engagement guidelines (guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community)	Current guidelines commenced on 23 February 2021
3 Financial Plan (plan under section 91 of the Act outlining the financial and non-financial resources required for at least the next 10 financial years)	Plan Adopted on 26 October 2021
4 Asset Plans (plans that set out the asset maintenance and renewal needs for key infrastructure asset classes for at least the next 10 years)	29/06/2021
5 Revenue and Rating Plan (plan setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges)	Plan adopted on 29 June 2021
6 Annual budget (sets out the services to be provided and initiatives to be undertaken over the next 12 months and the funding and the other resources required)	Budget was adopted on 28 June 2021
7 Risk policy (policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council's operations)	Current policy commenced on 16 July 2013, and following the recent adoption of the Risk Management Framework will be reviewed.
8 Fraud policy (policy outlining council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud)	Policy was adopted on 21 September 2021
9 Municipal Emergency Management Plan (plan under section 20 of the Emergency Management Act 1986 for emergency prevention, response and recovery)	Prepared and maintained in accordance with the Act and commenced on 16 September 2018
10 Procurement policy (policy under section 186A of the Local Government Act 1989 outlining matters, practices and procedures that will apply to all purchases of goods, services and works)	Policy was adopted on 21 December 2021

## 06

Governance and Management Items	Assessment
11 Business continuity plan (plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to ensure that key services continue to operate in the event of a disaster)	Plan was adopted on 16 November 2017
12 Disaster recovery plan (plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to recover and restore business capability in the event of a disaster)	Plan was adopted on 25 May 2017
13 Risk Management Framework (framework outlining council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations)	Risk Framework was adopted 21 December 2021
14 The Audit and Risk Committee (committee of Council established under section 53 of the Local Government Act 2020 whose role is to oversee the integrity of a council's financial reporting, processes to manage risks to the council's operations and for compliance with applicable legal, ethical, and regulatory requirements)	The Audit and Risk Committee was appointed under section 53 of the Local Government Act 2020 on 25 August 2021
15 Internal audit (independent accounting professionals engaged by the council to provide analyses and recommendations aimed at improving council's governance, risk and management controls)	Internal Auditors contract was awarded on 21 December 2021
16 Performance reporting framework (a set of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act)	Current Reporting framework commenced on 16 September 2021
17 Council Plan reporting (report reviewing the performance of the council against the Council Plan, including the results in relation to the strategic indicators, for the first six months of the financial year)	Council Plan performance reporting occurred on 15 February 2022
18 Quarterly budget reports (quarterly reports to Council under section 97 of the Act comparing actual and budgeted results and an explanation of any material variations)	Quarterly Budget reports and including Annual Report were reported on Annual Report – 21 September 2021 Quarter 1 – 23 January 2022 Quarter 2 - 15 March 2022 Quarter 3 - 17 May 2022

06

Governance and Management Items		Assessment
19	Risk reporting (six-monthly reports of strategic risks to council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies)	Council is reviewing its Risk Management Framework and reports about the review have been presented to the Audit and Risk Committee.
20	Performance reporting (six-monthly reports of indicators measuring the results against financial and non-financial performance, including performance indicators referred to in section 131 of the Act)	Reports prepared 21 September 2021 and 15 March 2022
21	Annual report (annual report under sections 131, 132 and 133 of the Act to the community containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements)	Annual Report was adopted on 21 September 2021
22	Councillor Code of Conduct (Code under section 76C of the Act setting out the conduct principles and the dispute resolution processes to be followed by Councillors)	Adopted and signed by All Councillors on 23 February 2021
23	Instruments of Delegations (a document setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff)	The Instruments of Delegation are regularly reviewed and adopted or executed as legislative changes are made, or where changes to positions are enacted. Council most recently adopted the following: - Instrument of Delegation from Council to the Chief Executive Officer (S5) (last executed on 20 April 2022); Instrument of Sub Delegation from the Chief Executive Officer to members of Council Staff (s7) last adopted on 7 April 2022
24	Governance Rules Meeting procedures (a local law governing the conduct of meetings of council and special committees)	Adopted on 24 August 2021. A review of Governance Rules will be undertaken in August 2022.

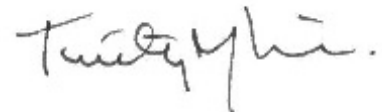
I certify that this information presents fairly the status of Council's governance and management arrangements.

**Bradley Thomas**  
Chief Executive Officer



Dated: 20 September 2022

**Cr Tim Drylie**  
Mayor



Dated: 20 September 2022

## FINANCIAL REPORT

Council, like most local governments, is experiencing a challenging fiscal environment with the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, two major storm events during the year and the current rising costs in the economy.

Although rate capping has been implemented for several years, the impact on rate revenue for small rural councils is still significant. Council is in a delicate financial position which must continue to be managed over the coming years.

### Overview

- A deficit of \$5.6 million (2020/2021; \$2.3 million deficit) against an original budget of \$5.1 million surplus.
- A net asset revaluation increment (non-cash) of \$20.1 million (2020/2021; \$32.8 million).
- Revenue of \$47.1 million (2020/2021; \$37.6 million) with 50% coming from rates and waste charges (2020/2021; 59%).
- Operating expenditure of \$52.7 million (2020/2021; \$39.9 million), with 39% attributable to employee costs (2020/2021; 39%) and 33% attributable to materials and services (2020/2021; 31%).
- \$343.3 million in capital assets (at written down value), providing community facilities, roads, bridges and other infrastructure (2020/2021; \$326.3 million).
- Cash and other financial assets of \$23.8 million (2020/2021; \$27.0 million), which after excluding external restrictions and internal allocations, provides revised cash and cash equivalents of \$961k (2019/2020; \$842k) and needs to be closely monitored.
- The total balance of loan borrowings at the end of the 2021/2022 financial year was \$4.5 million (2020/21; \$6.6 million).

### Cash

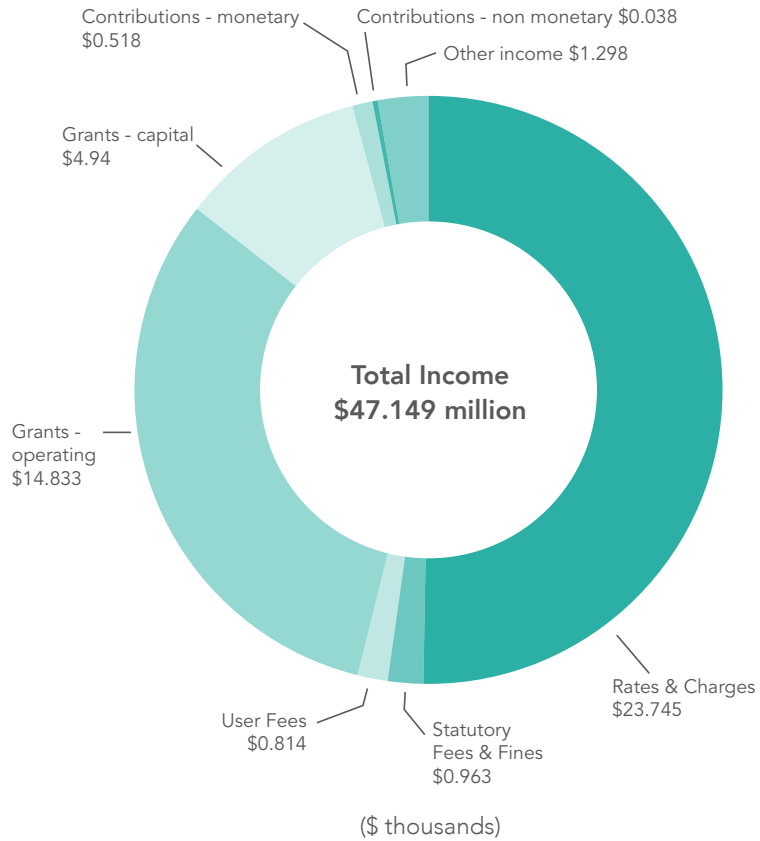
Council's cash, cash equivalents and other financial assets decreased \$3.3 million to \$23.8 million at 30 June 2022 (2020/2021; \$27.0 million). Council's cash and cash equivalents are subject to external restrictions and internal allocations that limit the amounts available for discretionary use.

At 30 June 2022 Council's working capital ratio, which represents Council's current assets as a percentage of current liabilities, was 195% down from 224% at 30 June 2021.

# 06

## Income

Total income for the financial year was \$47.1 million (2020/2021; \$37.6 million). This included \$4.9 million of capital grants (2020/2021; \$3.2 million).

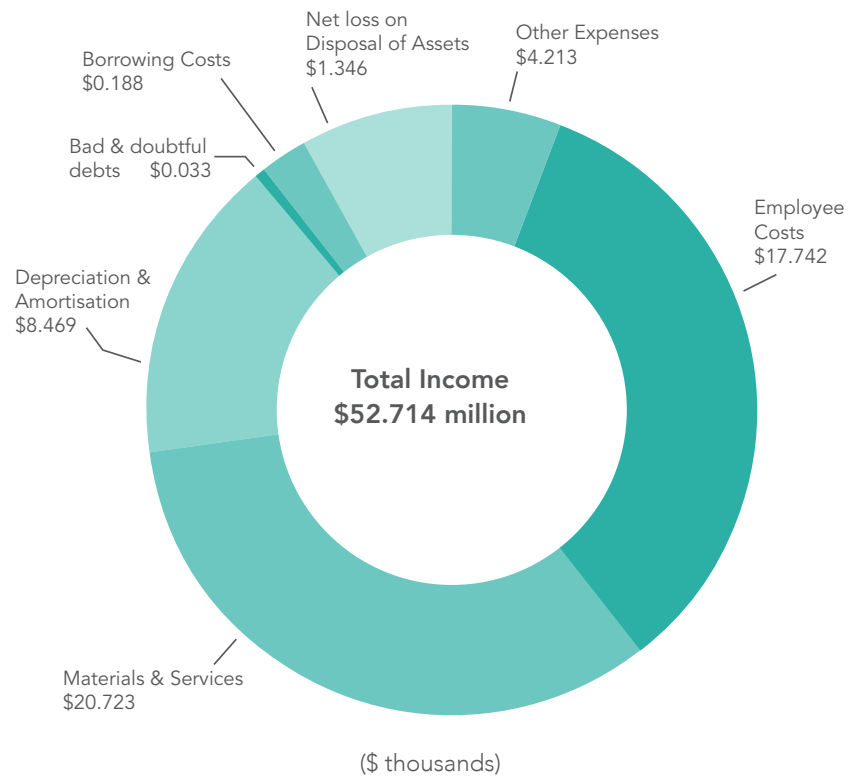


Detailed and audited Financial & Performance Statements are available on Council's website.

## Expenses

Council incurred total expenditure of \$52.7 million in the financial year (2020/2021; \$39.9 million).

As a service-based entity, Council's main costs are employee costs. Employee costs for the financial year were \$15.6 million or 39% of total expenses (2019/2020; \$13.9 million or 43%). Materials and services for the financial year were \$12.4 million or 31% of total expenses (2019/2020; \$10.8 million or 33%).



## 06

### Capital Works

Of the \$10.2 million capital expenditure (\$9.4 million 2020/2021), 64% was spent on renewal of assets (2020/2021, 52%). Renewal of assets as opposed to building new assets or upgrading assets is an important focus of Council as it works towards reducing the infrastructure renewal gap.

Council's capital assets provide community facilities, roads, bridges and other infrastructure that are important to the everyday functioning of our community. The written down value of these assets continues to increase over time.

### Unrestricted Cash Position

Council has a very delicate unrestricted cash position, the majority of these funds have been allocated to fund carry-forward projects, reserves and refund deposits. Council had only \$961,000 unrestricted cash at 30 June 2022 (\$842,000 in 2021) and this will need to be carefully managed over coming years.

### Liabilities

Council's liabilities comprise of loans, amounts owed to suppliers and amounts owed to employees for leave entitlements. The total balance of loan borrowings at the end of the 2021/2022 financial year was \$4.5 million (2020/21; \$6.6 million).

## STATUTORY INFORMATION

Hepburn Shire Council is required by law to collect and make public information about some of the councillors and council administration activities, roles and responsibilities. We also publish information that is not required by law as we're committed to transparent and open governance.

A register of authorised officers kept under section 224(1A) of the Local Government Act 1989.

A register of delegations kept under sections 11 and 47 of the Local Government Act 2020.

The Local Government Act 2020 requires our CEO, Councillors and any officers nominated by the CEO to complete personal interest returns.

Section 135 of the Act requires Council to publish a summary of the most recent personal interest return which have been lodged with Council.

Election campaign donation returns for a period of 4 years from the date that it is given under section 306 (s308).

# Hepburn

SHIRE COUNCIL

## Hepburn Shire Council

PO Box 21 Daylesford Victoria 3460

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## Council offices

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### Daylesford

Crn Duke & Albert Streets,  
Daylesford

### Creswick

68 Albert Street,  
Creswick

### Clunes

The Warehouse - Clunes  
36 Fraser Street, Clunes

### Trentham

13 Albert Street,  
Trentham



## **11.2 COUNCIL BRIEFING AND MEETING DATES FOR 2023**

Go to 00:57:35 in the meeting recording to view this item.

### **DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES**

*In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Governance and Risk, I Rebecca Smith have no interests to disclose in this report.*

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- Nil

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the dates for Council meetings in the 2023 calendar year.

Council adopted their Governance Rules in August 2022 outlining the Meeting requirements and ability for hybrid Council Meeting to allow for flexibility for the community and Councillors.

It is proposed that the schedule from 2022 continues.

### **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council:*

1. *Adopts the following dates as the schedule for Ordinary Meetings of Council in 2023, with a commencing time of 5:30pm;*
  - *Tuesday 21 February 2023*
  - *Tuesday 21 March 2023*
  - *Tuesday 18 April 2023*
  - *Tuesday 16 May 2023*
  - *Tuesday 20 June 2023*
  - *Tuesday 18 July 2023*
  - *Tuesday 15 August 2023*
  - *Tuesday 19 September 2023*
  - *Tuesday 17 October 2023*
  - *Tuesday 21 November 2023*
  - *Tuesday 19 December 2023*

2. *Notes that all Ordinary Meetings will be held in the Daylesford Town Hall, with proceedings live streamed to the public, except for the December Ordinary Meeting which will be held at Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve Pavillion, Creswick;*
3. *Adopts the following date for the Statutory Meeting of Council in 2023, with a commencing time of 5:30pm at the Daylesford Town Hall, 76 Vincent Street Daylesford:*
  - *Meeting to elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor - Tuesday 14 November 2023;*
4. *Places a public notice in local newspapers to advertise the dates and locations for meetings of Council for 2023; and*
5. *Makes the Council meeting dates and locations for the 2023 calendar year available on Council's website.*

## **MOTION**

*That Council:*

1. *Adopts the following dates as the schedule for Ordinary Meetings of Council in 2023, with a commencing time of 5:30pm;*
  - *Tuesday 21 February 2023*
  - *Tuesday 21 March 2023*
  - *Tuesday 18 April 2023*
  - *Tuesday 16 May 2023*
  - *Tuesday 20 June 2023*
  - *Tuesday 18 July 2023*
  - *Tuesday 15 August 2023*
  - *Tuesday 19 September 2023*
  - *Tuesday 17 October 2023*
  - *Tuesday 21 November 2023*
  - *Tuesday 19 December 2023*

2. *Notes that all Ordinary Meetings will be held in the Daylesford Town Hall, with proceedings live streamed to the public, except for the December Ordinary Meeting which will be held at Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve Pavillion, Creswick;*
3. *Adopts the following date for the Statutory Meeting of Council in 2023, with a commencing time of 5:30pm at the Daylesford Town Hall, 76 Vincent Street Daylesford:*
  - *Meeting to elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor - Tuesday 14 November 2023;*
4. *Places a public notice in local newspapers to advertise the dates and locations for meetings of Council for 2023; and*
5. *Makes the Council meeting dates and locations for the 2023 calendar year available on Council's website.*

**Moved:** Cr Don Henderson

**Seconded:** Cr Tessa Halliday

**Carried**

**Voted for:** Cr Brian Hood, Cr Don Henderson, Cr Jen Bray, Cr Juliet Simpson, Cr Tessa Halliday and Cr Tim Drylie

**Voted against:** Nil

**Abstained:** Nil

## **BACKGROUND**

Under section 18 of Council's Governance Rules and Election Period Policy 2022:

*18.3 Reasonable notice of each Council meeting must be provided to the public. Council may do this:*

- a) *for meetings which it has fixed by preparing a schedule of meetings annually, twice yearly or from time to time, and arranging publication of such schedule in a newspaper generally circulating in the municipal district either at various times throughout the year, or prior to each such Council meeting; and;*
- b) *or any meeting by giving notice on its website and:*
- c) *in each of its Customer Service Centres; and/or*
- d) *in at least one newspaper generally circulating in the municipal district.*

## KEY ISSUES

In 2023, it is proposed that all meetings be held in the Town Hall, except for the December meeting which will be held in Creswick as the Daylesford Town Hall is unavailable.

It is proposed that Council adopts the following dates as the schedule for Ordinary Meetings of Council in 2023, with a commencing time of 5:30pm:

- *Tuesday 21 February 2023*
- *Tuesday 21 March 2023*
- *Tuesday 18 April 2023*
- *Tuesday 16 May 2023*
- *Tuesday 20 June 2023*
- *Tuesday 18 July 2023*
- *Tuesday 15 August 2023*
- *Tuesday 19 September 2023*
- *Tuesday 17 October 2023*
- *Tuesday 21 November 2023*
- *Tuesday 19 December 2023*

The proposed schedule omits an Ordinary Meeting in January 2023, as business operations are traditionally slower following the Christmas and New Year period. There are no supporting briefings scheduled prior to the January meeting date. This position is consistent with other neighbouring rural Councils of similar size.

It is proposed that Council adopts the following date for the Statutory Meeting of Council in 2023, with a commencing time of 5:30pm:

- Meeting to elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor - Tuesday 14 November 2023.

It is important to note that in line with Council's Governance Rules and Election Period Policy, namely Part C, Division 1, s17 Council have the ability to call a Special Council Meeting where required that is not in the scheduled that is set for the calendar year.

The purpose of a Special Council Meeting would ordinarily be to deal with Council business that is urgent in nature or cannot wait until the next scheduled Council Meeting.

Unless all Councillors are present and unanimously agree to deal with any other matter, only the business specified in the written notice of the meeting can be transacted at the Special Council meeting.

## POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Annually setting Council meeting dates for the next calendar year provides consistency for the community and facilitates engagement. It also ensures

transparency and notice of meeting requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's Governance Rules and Election Period Policy are met.

#### **GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The cost of facilitating Council meetings is accounted for in Council's annual budget.

#### **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

The Governance Rules and Election Period Policy was adopted by Council in August 2022. These rules allow for meetings to be conducted virtually as needed.

#### **COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

The timetable will be published on Council's website. Individual meetings will be promoted through Council's Facebook page as they occur.

The live streaming of meetings via Council's Facebook page will continue and remain in place when in-person meetings resume to promote transparency and public engagement.

### **11.3 INSTRUMENTS OF APPOINTMENT TO AUTHORISED OFFICERS UNDER THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987**

Go to 00:59:10 in the meeting recording to view this item.

#### **DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES**

*In providing this advice to Council as the Governance Advisor, I Dannielle Kraak have no interests to disclose in this report.*

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. S11A Instrument of appointment authorisation Planning and Environment [11.3.1 - 1 page]

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The appointment of authorised officers enables appropriate staff within the organisation to administer and enforce various Acts, Regulations or Council local laws in accordance with the powers granted to them under legislation or a local law.

Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation are prepared based on advice from the Maddocks Authorisations and Delegations Service, which Council subscribes to.

Whilst the appointment and authorisation of authorised officers under other relevant legislation is executed by the Chief Executive Officer under delegation, Maddocks recommend that officers enforcing the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* be authorised by Council resolution.

This instrument is being updated to reflect staffing changes.

#### **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council, in the exercise of the powers conferred by s 147(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, resolves that:*

- a. The members of Council staff referred to in the instrument attached be appointed and authorised as set out in the instrument.*
- b. The instrument comes into force immediately it is signed by Council's Chief Executive Officer, and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.*

#### **MOTION**

*That Council, in the exercise of the powers conferred by s 147(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, resolves that:*

- a. The members of Council staff referred to in the instrument attached be appointed and authorised as set out in the instrument.*
- b. The instrument comes into force immediately it is signed by Council's Chief Executive Officer, and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.*

**Moved:** Cr Juliet Simpson

**Seconded:** Cr Tessa Halliday  
**Carried**

**Voted for:** Cr Brian Hood, Cr Don Henderson, Cr Jen Bray, Cr Juliet Simpson, Cr Tessa Halliday and Cr Tim Drylie

**Voted against:** Nil

**Abstained:** Nil

## **BACKGROUND**

Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation empower relevant staff to exercise the powers granted to authorised officers by legislation or a local law.

The Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation prepared for Council's consideration are based on advice from the Maddocks Authorisations and Delegations Service.

Maddocks recommend that officers enforcing the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* be authorised by Council resolution and that Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation be refreshed on a regular basis.

The instruments have been prepared by the Governance Team after consultation with the internal departments of Council and have been recently updated to ensure new employees have been added to the S11a Instrument of Appointment.

The Instruments of Appointment to Authorised Officers that do not relate to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* will be executed by the Chief Executive Officer as per legislation.

## **KEY ISSUES**

### ***Planning and Environment Act 1987***

There are no legislative changes to the authorisation under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. The instrument has been updated in line with staff appointments.

Powers are delegated to individuals, not positions.

## **POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

Council Plan 2021-2025

A dynamic and responsive Council

5.3 A sustainable and agile organisation with strong corporate governance that supports excellent operations

## **GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk implications associated with this report.

## **COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Council subscribes to the Maddocks Authorisations and Delegations Service, and relevant advice has been considered in the preparation of this report.

This Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation has been prepared following feedback from Development and Community Services Department. There are no other community or stakeholder engagement implications or requirements associated with this report.

For transparency purposes, Council is required to prepare a register of Instruments of Appointment to Authorised Officers and Delegations on Council's website.



## ***S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and Environment Act 1987)***

### **Hepburn Shire Council**

#### **Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987* only)**

In this Instrument 'officer' means –

**Natalie Walker – Director Community and Development**  
**Rick Traficante – Manager Statutory Planning and Building**  
**Wallie Cron – Coordinator Statutory Planning**  
**Chris Hu – Statutory Planner**  
**Lipi Patel – Statutory Planner**  
**Bronwyn Southee – Manager Strategic Planning**  
**Damien Kennedy – Acting Manager Strategic Planning**  
**Caroline Reisacher – Strategic Planner**  
**Alicia Cooper-Wallis - Administration Support Statutory Planning**  
**Jack Morales – Administration Support Strategic Planning**  
**Peter Ford – Development Services Enforcement Officer**

**By this instrument of appointment and authorisation Hepburn Shire Council -**

1. under s 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* - appoints the officers to be authorised officers for the purposes of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the regulations made under that Act; and
2. under s 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* authorises the officers either generally or in a particular case to institute proceedings for offences against the Acts and regulations described in this instrument.

**It is declared that** this instrument -

- (a) comes into force immediately upon its execution;
- (b) remains in force until varied or revoked.

This instrument is authorised by a resolution of the Hepburn Shire Council on 19 September 2022

This Instrument is made by the Chief Executive Officer of Hepburn Shire Council in the exercise of his authority to act on Council's behalf, which includes the authority conferred by resolution of Council made on <date>

**Bruce Lucas**  
**Acting Chief Executive Officer**  
**Hepburn Shire Council**

Date: <date> 2022

## 12 GENERAL BUSINESS

### 12.1 GENERAL BUSINESS

Go to 01:02:36 in the meeting recording to view this item.

Cr Tim Drylie left the meeting at 6:34pm.

#### RECOMMENDATION

*That Council:*

1. *Grants Cr Tim Drylie a leave of absence from:*
  - *Wednesday 23 November 2022 to Monday 28 November inclusive;*
  - and,*
  - *Wednesday 4 January 2023 to Wednesday 18 January 2023 inclusive.*
2. *Notes that Cr Drylie will be an apology for any Briefings and Council Meetings that many be scheduled during his leave.*

#### MOTION

*That Council:*

1. *Grants Cr Tim Drylie a leave of absence from:*
  - *Wednesday 23 November 2022 to Monday 28 November inclusive;*
  - and,*
  - *Wednesday 4 January 2023 to Wednesday 18 January 2023 inclusive.*
2. *Notes that Cr Drylie will be an apology for any Briefings and Council Meetings that many be scheduled during his leave.*

**Moved:** Cr Juliet Simpson

**Seconded:** Cr Tessa Halliday

**Carried**

**Voted for:** Cr Brian Hood, Cr Don Henderson, Cr Jen Bray, Cr Juliet Simpson and Cr Tessa Halliday

**Voted against:** Nil

**Abstained:** Nil

Cr Tim Drylie returned to the meeting at 6:35pm.

**13 CLOSE OF MEETING**

The Meeting closed at 6:36pm.