



Murrindindi
Shire Council

MINUTES
of the
SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL
held on
WEDNESDAY 7 JUNE 2017
in the
ALEXANDRA COUNCIL CHAMBER
commencing at
6.00 pm

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1. PLEDGE AND RECONCILIATION STATEMENT

The meeting was opened with all Councillors declaring the following Pledge:

“We as Councillors democratically elected to represent our community as the Murrindindi Shire Council, are committed to working together in the best interests of the people who live in our municipality, who conduct business here and those who visit.”

2. APOLOGIES AND REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

REF: SF/306

That Council accept the apologies of Cr E Lording.

RESOLUTION:

Cr M Rae / Cr J Ashe

That Council accept the apologies of Cr E Lording.

CARRIED

Present:

Crs C Bisset (Chair), S McAulay, R Bowles, J Ashe, L Dunscombe, M Rae

In attendance:

Chief Executive Officer: Margaret Abbey

General Manager Corporate and Community Services: Michael Chesworth

General Manager Infrastructure and Development Services: Stuart McConnell

Manager Business Services: Andrew Bond

Manager Community Services: Naomi McNamara

Governance Officer: Audrey Kyval

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

REF: SF/783

Nil

The Chairperson declared Public Participation Time and invited submitters to speak at the Hearing of Submissions.

RESOLUTION:

Cr L Dunscombe/ Cr M Rae

That the 30 minutes allocated for Public Participation be extended to allow each participant five (5) minutes to be heard.

CARRIED

4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME

4.1 HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS

Mike Dalmau (President) and Don Knight (Vice President) on behalf of Murrindindi Inc. spoke to its submission to the Draft Council Plan 2017-2021

John Griffiths spoke to his submission to the Draft Council Plan 2017-2021.

Joan Semmens and Brian Hender spoke to their submission to the Draft Council Plan 2017-2021.

Steve Bahlen spoke to his submission to the Draft Budget 2017-2018.

Chris Healy spoke to his submission to the Draft Budget 2017-2018.

5. OFFICER REPORTS

5.1 CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSIONS FOR THE COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

REF: 17/40708

Attachments: *Submissions were provided to Councillors separately.*

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of the submissions received in relation to the Draft Council Plan 2017-2021.

Officer Recommendation:

That Council considers the six submissions received in relation to the Draft Council Plan 2017-2021.

Background:

At the 26 April 2017 Ordinary Meeting, Council endorsed the Draft Council Plan 2017-2021 incorporating the Strategic Resource Plan for the purposes of public exhibition in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Submissions were sought from the public and the Draft Council Plan 2017-2021 incorporating the Strategic Resource Plan was made available at various locations and on Council's website. The public exhibition period and submission process was advertised in the relevant newspapers. Submissions were due by 12:00 pm on 1 June 2017.

At the time of preparing the agenda, six submissions were received by Council. All submissions have been provided to all Councillors for review prior to the Special Meeting.

Acknowledgement letters were sent to the submitters, confirming receipt of their submissions and informing them of the opportunity to attend the Special Meeting on the 7 June 2017 to speak to their submissions if they wished.

Council Plan/Strategies:

This process is part of the required process for adoption of the Council Plan 2017-2021 including Strategic Resource Plan.

Legal/Policy Issues:

The process complies with the relevant provisions of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Financial/Resources/Risk:

There are no financial or risk considerations regarding the hearing of submissions.

Discussion:

Six submissions were received in relation to the Draft Council Plan 2017-2021 incorporating the Strategic Resource Plan.

Full copies of each submission were provided to all Councillors in advance of the Special Meeting to consider them as appropriately received submissions in accordance with the *Act*.

A summary of each of the submissions is provided below.

Summary of Submissions:Submitter 1

This submission suggested that the budget and Council Plan documents do not adequately address issues raised at the Alexandra "Have Your Say" workshop, namely concerning the following topics: the unexpectedly strong financial state of the Council, need for TV advertising to better promote the Shire, need for a Chamber of Commerce in Alexandra and the need for major tourism attraction.

Submitter 2

This submission sought greater clarity of meaning in the wording used in the document, particularly concerning the wording of strategies and indicators proposed in the Plan. The submission sought improved correlation between the strategies and indicators and requested greater clarity around what the indicators will measure.

Submitter 3

This submission focused on the "Our Prosperity" strategic objective of the Council Plan. The submission outlined some key challenges and opportunities in relation to the future prosperity of the Shire and requested that these be considered in the final drafting of the Council Plan, including the inclusion of an additional strategy. The submission also proposed areas to focus on when implementing each of the strategies under the Our Prosperity section and offered advice on the further development of each of the strategic indicators.

Submitter 4

This submission suggested that Council continue to be open and transparent. For Council to include the community in the decision making process, accept criticism, admit when mistakes are made, be diligent in their responsibilities and accountable for their actions.

Submitter 5

This submission has an environment focus, in particular the protection of the natural environment in future planning. The submission outlined some concerns regarding Council's focus on events support, specifically regarding the impact that events have on the natural environment. It outlines concerns that open spaces are seen as opportunities for recreation and events rather than respected for the environmental significance and opportunity for quiet reflection and appreciation.

Further environmental considerations raised were roadside slashing, awareness of indigenous planting, protection of the natural landscapes and the streetscapes, including heritage aspects.

Submitter 6

This submission raised some suggestions for enhancement of the Council Plan. Firstly, recognition of the Taungurung people's rights over Crown Land and acknowledgement of their intrinsic connection to the land and water resources is important to be included.

Inclusion of the theme of engagement with partners, acknowledging that it is imperative that they work together to develop and deliver joint initiatives and leverage funding to achieve mutual goals.

The theme of resilience could be strengthened by expanding to include strategies to build community resilience in identifying and responding to environmental challenges such as climate change, natural events and land use changes.

Concerns were raised regarding the lack of a strategic indicator which is specific to protection and enhancement of the natural environment. A suggestion was made that by separating the 'reduce resource consumption' from the Council Plan's strategic indicators to a waste management strategy would substantiate the importance of the both objectives in their own right.

A further suggestion to include sustainable land use planning as a strategy and relevant strategic indicator was supplied in this submission.

Response to submissions

Further information will be provided by Officers at the meeting. Following consideration of the submissions by Council, the submitters will receive a reply with respect to the matters identified.

Consultation:

The Draft Council Plan 2017-2021 incorporating the Strategic Resource Plan was advertised for public exhibition and submissions in the following publications:

Newspaper / Other	Publishing Date(s)
<i>Newspaper:</i>	
The Alexandra Standard	3 May 2017
Marysville and Triangle	5 May 2017
The Local Paper	2 May 2017
The Yea Chronicle	3 May 2017
<i>Hard copies available at:</i>	
Council Office - Alexandra	
Council Office - Kinglake	
Council Office - Yea	
Marysville RAC (VIC)	
Eildon Community Resource Centre	

Conclusion:

It is appropriate that Council considers any submissions received for relevance and its influence on the Draft Council Plan 2017-2021 prior to adoption at the Special Meeting of Council on 21 June 2017.

RESOLUTION:

Cr M Rae / Cr S McAulay

That Council considers the six submissions received in relation to the Draft Council Plan 2017-2021.

CARRIED

5.2 CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSIONS FOR THE ANNUAL BUDGET 2017-2018

REF: 17/40697

Attachments: *Submissions were provided to Councillors separately.*

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of the submissions received in relation to the Annual Budget 2017-2018.

Officer Recommendation:

That Council considers the submissions received in relation to the Annual Budget 2017-2018.

Background:

At the 26 April 2017 Ordinary Meeting, Council endorsed the Draft Annual Budget 2017-2018 for the purposes of public exhibition in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989 (Act)*.

Submissions were sought from the public and the budget documents were made available at Council Offices and on Council's website. The public exhibition period and submission process was advertised in the relevant newspapers. Submissions were due by 12:00 pm on 1 June 2017.

At the time of preparing the agenda, two submissions were received by Council. Both submissions have been provided to all Councillors for review prior to the Special Meeting.

Acknowledgement letters were sent to the submitters, confirming receipt of their submissions and informing them of the opportunity to attend the Special Meeting on the 7 June 2017 to speak to their submissions if they wished.

Council Plan/Strategies:

This process is part of the required process for adoption of the Annual Budget 2017-2018.

Legal/Policy Issues:

The process complies with the relevant provisions of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Financial/Resources/Risk:

There are no financial or risk considerations regarding the hearing of submissions.

Discussion:

Two submissions were received in relation to the Draft Annual Budget 2017-2018.

Full copies of each submission were provided to all Councillors in advance of the Special Meeting to consider them as appropriately received submissions in accordance with the *Act*.

A summary of each of the submissions is provided below.

Summary of Submissions:**Submitter 1**

This submission raises many questions, those specifically related to the Budget are predominantly based around employee costs, legal expenses and the intent to borrow.

The submission outlines that the Budget is much the same as the previous year's document and that the majority of the community would find the format difficult to understand.

The comprehensive income statement shows budgeted employees cost of \$14,147,000, the submitter questions does this cost include the cost of the purchase and maintenance of vehicles that some employees use for their private use and how much is the cost for this to the Council.

The submission raises concerns with the fact that the legal expenses are budgeted for \$265,000 for 2017-2018 and for year 2016-2017 are also shown as \$265,000, however the Draft Budget for 2016-2017 showed \$248,000. The submitter has requested clarity regarding the legal expenses incurred by Council and the increased budget.

The submission also raises concerns regarding the intention to borrow \$500,000, in particular why borrow and pay interest when Council has about \$22 million in reserve and it earns about 2.5%. The in relation to Council's intentions to borrow \$500,000 every year for next five years and the statement 'the table below shows information on borrowings specifically required by the Regulations', the submitter requests clarity regarding where those regulations are written in *Local Government Act*?

Submitter 2

This submission encourages Council to carefully consider all information available and to undertake their own research prior to adopting the budget.

The submitter raises particular concerns with the levels of cash held by Council and the corresponding level of rates comparing both the 2008/09 Budget.

The submission raises questions as to how Council can propose a deficit Budget which results in cash levels increasing.

Response to Submissions

Further information will be provided by Council officers at the meeting. Following consideration of the submissions by Council, the submitters will receive a reply with respect to the matters identified.

Consultation:

The Draft Annual Budget 2017/2018 was advertised for public exhibition and submissions in the following publications:

Newspaper / Other	Publishing Date(s)
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The Alexandra Standard	3 May 2017
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Council Office - Kinglake	
Council Office - Yea	
Marysville RAC (VIC)	
Eildon Community Resource Centre	

Conclusion:

It is appropriate that Council considers any submissions received for relevance and its influence on the Draft Annual Budget 2017-2018 prior to adoption at the Special Meeting of Council on 21 June 2017.

RESOLUTION:

Cr R Bowles / Cr L Dunscombe

That Council considers the submissions received in relation to the Annual Budget 2017-2018.

CARRIED

There being no further items of Business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 6.44 pm.

CONFIRMED THIS

28 June 2017

CHAIRPERSON

Cr R Bowles