



AGENDA
of the
SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY 6 MAY 2020
at
6.00 pm
Conducted via videoconference

This Special Meeting will be conducted virtually (as per *COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020*, passed by Victorian Parliament on 23 April 2020)

The meeting is closed to the public under section 66(2)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The proceedings will be live streamed for public viewing in accordance with section 66(3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*

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1. PLEDGE AND RECONCILIATION STATEMENT**2. APOLOGIES AND REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE****3. COMMUNITY RECOGNITION****4. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST****5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

5.1 Minutes of the Special Meeting of Council held on 11 March 2020.

Officer Recommendation

That the minutes of the Special Meeting of Council held on 11 March 2020 be confirmed.

5.2 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25 March 2020.

Officer Recommendation

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25 March 2020 be confirmed.

5.3 Minutes of the Confidential Meeting of Council held on 25 March 2020.

Officer Recommendation

That the minutes of the Confidential Meeting of Council held on 25 March 2020 be confirmed.

6. PETITIONS**7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME**

7.1 QUESTIONS OF COUNCIL

8. OUR PLACE**9. OUR PEOPLE****10. OUR PROSPERITY****11. OUR PROMISE**

11.1 COVID-19 PANDEMIC UPDATE

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present to Council and the community regarding Council's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and State of Emergency.

Officer Recommendation

That Council note this report.

Background

In the Middle of March, it became clear that the Coronavirus (COVID-19) virus was beginning to spread in Australia, and it became clear that Governments of all levels needed to implement their plans.

On 15 March 2020, the Victorian State Government declared a State of Emergency as a result of the spread of the COVID-19. In enacting this Emergency, Council was requested to implement its Pandemic Plan and we commenced our early arrangements.

Discussion

As the declared Stages of the Pandemic began to roll out, the Chief Health Officer began to provide written directives, and Council made changes to its service delivery, implemented its Business Continuity Plan and stepped up community information. At a very early stage senior officers of Council were isolated from each other to ensure business continuity, we enhanced separation and started additional cleaning programs.

Council officers also formed a Critical Incident Team, chaired by the Chief Executive Officer and comprising key members of the organisation's leadership and key specialists. Council also enacted its Pandemic Plan and commenced meetings with other key agencies, community groups and community representatives.

Council Office

In accordance with the direction of the Victorian Chief Health Officer, Council restricted access to its buildings, followed by a full closure of offices, libraries, community buildings and later parks, playgrounds, some public amenities and boat ramps.

In line with our Business Continuity Plan, all office based staff commenced working from home, with Council phone lines diverted to avoid interruption to service. Outdoor staff also adapted working practices to maintain separation, using single occupant vehicles and ensured frequent hand washing.

Changes to Council Services

In order to comply with the directions of the Chief Health Officer and to prevent the transmission of the virus, Council has, to date, implemented a range of measures to continue its services and at the same time support our community and staff. Some of the changes implemented by Council include;

Communications

Council is providing regular updates to our community on the situation, and specifically how it relates to our Shire. We have done this in various ways including regular video updates on Facebook, newspapers advertisements, a letter to all properties from the Mayor, daily updates on UGFM radio, roadside signage and posters. We have also sought answers for individual community members unsure how to manage through the restrictions.

Community Support

Council introduced its DindiLink Program to support vulnerable and high risk members of our community. This program supports the over 65's, those with existing medical conditions or other factors making them at a higher risk from the virus, who otherwise do not have support available from family and friends. The program supports facilitating access to food and essential supplies, and can refer to other appropriate agencies and groups where required. As part of this program Council provided a grant of \$1000 each to Neighbourhood and Community Houses across the Shire to support their foodbank and food supply programs.

Book Butler

With the closure of our libraries Council introduced a home delivery service for books with over 250 deliveries undertaken so far. Return dates for existing loans have been pushed out until 30th June and a range of other online, interactive sessions are being rolled out such as Story Time and featuring local music artists. These services assist support the mental health of our community, particularly those who are most isolated.

Public Facility Cleaning

Council's outdoor staff have been hard at work undertaking twice daily cleaning in our busiest shopping streets including seating, bin areas and other shared infrastructure. Many public toilets have been closed, but the public toilets in each of the main towns have remained open (except over Easter Weekend), and are being cleaned every two hours during opening hours. Our staff have also erected signage throughout our towns as a reminder of the need to 'social distance' and maintain hygiene.

Dindi Business and Tourism Advisory Committee

Council has fast-tracked the formation of an industry based Committee to oversee business and tourism in the Shire. This new Committee, which is Chaired by the Mayor Cr. Leigh Dunscombe and includes membership of Cr Jackie Ashe, CEO Craig Lloyd, Director Community Engagement Shivaun Brown and two representative from each of Kinglake Ranges Business Network, Alexandra and District Tourism & Traders Association, Marysville Triangle Business & Tourism as well as a number of independent members (to be appointed). Longer term, the Committee's main function is assisting Council with the delivery of the Murrindindi Tourism and Events Strategy, but initially will focus on identifying opportunities to support business through the current restrictions and developing a Business Recovery Plan. Council will be able to use this plan to advocate to other levels of Government for support in our local recovery.

Advocacy

Council has been strongly working with, and advocating to both the Federal and State Governments throughout the pandemic. Advocacy has included highlighting anomalies in support packages, ensuring that rural communities are considered in planning arrangements, pushing for our community to be able to support itself rather than receiving services delivered from Melbourne and the creation of a scheme to allow Councils to recruit additional community members in the short term to boost the local economy.

Financial Hardship

In recognition of the potentially serious financial impacts on our businesses and community as a result of the economic effects of the pandemic, Council's Financial Hardship Policy was expanded to include businesses, as well as residents, and to include all types of payments owing to Council, not just rate payments. This provides for more flexible payment arrangements for those in our community who are experiencing genuine difficulty meeting their payment obligations with Council.

This report provides a high level summary of the significant range of actions Council have been taking.

All areas of Council, Council staff and Councillors are continuing to work hard for our community focussing on continuing to deliver normal services, additional services and planning for supporting our community as restrictions are lifted.

Council Plan/Strategies/Policies

Council's approach to the continuation of service under the COVID-19 Pandemic State of Emergency is consistent with the *Council Plan 2017-2021* 'Our Promise' objective "We will all work in collaboration with our communities to deliver the best possible outcomes in all that we do."

Relevant Legislation

The Federal and Victorian State Governments have been enacting legislation and restrictions which Council has been adhering to.

Financial Implications and Risk

The COVID-19 Pandemic has had significant risks and resource implications. Council's approach to addressing these is outlined in discussion.

Conflict of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest by Council officers in relation to this report.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

Council has been consulting with Government Departments and representatives, the community and staff impacted by changes.

11.2 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2020

Attachment(s): *3rd Quarter Financial Report – (refer Attachment 11.2)*

Purpose

The report provides the quarterly financial report for the period ending 31 March 2020.

Officer Recommendation

That Council receives the Quarterly Financial Report to 31 March 2020.

Background

The Quarterly Financial Report for the period ended 31 March 2020, is presented for consideration by Council, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989*.

The report includes the following statements:

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Cash Flow
- Reconciliation of Non-Discretionary Cash & Reserves.

Discussion

The statements for the third quarter to 31 March 2020 are included in Attachment 11.2.

Income Statement (Statement A)

The Income Statement for the period 1 July 2019 to 31 March 2020 (also within the attached report) is presented below:

Statement A

Murrindindi Shire Council
Income Statement
For the period ended 31st March 2020

NOTE	Original Budget 2019/20 \$	December Revised Budget 2019/20 \$	Annual Revised Budget 2019/20 \$	(1)		(2)		%	
				Forecast Adjustment 2019/20 \$	YTD Budgets 31/03/2020 \$	YTD Actual 31/03/2020 \$	YTD Budget V Actual Variance 31/03/2020 \$		
Revenue									
Rates & Charges	1	21,381,684	21,401,886	21,401,886	-	21,351,706	21,382,835	31,129	0%
Special Charge	2	-	87,000	27,000	(60,000)	-	-	-	-
Statutory fees and fines	3	1,082,669	1,104,294	1,020,559	(83,735)	749,628	759,967	10,339	1%
User fees		2,393,305	1,902,200	1,891,748	(10,452)	1,536,137	1,508,364	(27,773)	-2%
Grants - Operating	4	7,992,170	7,895,974	8,247,315	351,341	4,087,139	4,031,321	(55,818)	-1%
Grants - Capital	5	2,034,235	2,525,454	2,555,454	30,000	1,220,409	1,222,475	2,066	0%
Contributions - Cash	6	49,105	124,105	169,560	45,455	81,685	79,080	(2,605)	-3%
Contributions - Non Cash		400,000	600,000	600,000	-	-	-	-	-
Reimbursements		385,062	349,338	349,338	-	135,658	148,456	12,798	9%
Other revenue	7	1,134,182	1,083,240	963,352	(119,888)	713,970	735,939	21,969	3%
Total Revenue		36,852,412	37,073,491	37,226,212	152,721	29,876,332	29,868,436	(7,896)	0%
Expenses									
Employee Benefits	8	15,474,271	15,075,567	15,091,079	15,512	11,744,007	11,417,210	(326,797)	-3%
Materials and Services	9	10,550,050	12,436,433	12,676,632	240,199	7,947,589	7,965,259	17,670	0%
Depreciation and amortisation		9,281,520	8,869,011	8,869,011	-	46,950	51,626	4,676	10%
Bad and Doubtful Debts		-	255	255	-	255	2,174	1,919	753%
Other Expense		313,805	319,805	319,805	-	208,318	226,886	18,568	9%
Finance Costs (Interest)		36,809	36,809	36,809	-	13,594	13,747	153	1%
Total Expenses		35,656,455	36,737,880	36,993,591	255,711	19,960,713	19,676,903	(283,810)	-1%
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		(33,007)	(327,047)	(327,047)	-	9,200	9,200	-	0%
Increase/(Decrease) Landfill Provison		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-100%
Surplus (deficit) for the period		1,162,950	8,564	(94,426)	(102,990)	9,924,819	10,200,733	275,914	3%

This statement provides information on two budgetary components:

1. The budget adjustments made to the December budget review figures. Refer to the column titled "(1) Forecast Adjustment". The forecast position for the financial year has decreased by \$102,990 moving from a predicted surplus of \$8,564 to a deficit of \$94,426. This is predominately due to additional costs expected to be incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. An amount of \$150,000 has been added to fund additional items which includes IT infrastructure enhancements to enable staff to work from home. Income has been reduced to reflect the decisions taken to refund fees and to provide rental relief. Some of these costs are offset by savings from delayed or cancelled programs that were identified as difficult to deliver in the current circumstances.
2. The variance between the March Revised Budget and the year to date result. Refer to column titled "(2) Budget Actual Variance" This indicates a \$275,914 or 3% favourable variance.

The table below provides further details of the variances as outlined in Statement A.

Note	Line item	(1) Explanation: Forecast Adjustment	(2) Explanation: YTD Budget V Actual Variance
1	Rates and Charges		\$31,129 favourable. Supplementary rate income
2	Special Charges	\$60,000 unfavourable. Proposed Snodgrass Street project not proceeding.	

Note	Line item	(1) Explanation: Forecast Adjustment	(2) Explanation: YTD Budget V Actual Variance
3	Statutory fees and fines	\$83,735 unfavourable. Refund of Health Registration Fees to assist businesses impacted by COVID-19 pandemic.	
4	Grants - Operating	\$351,341 favourable comprising: \$321,341 for summer storm damage. \$30,000 road trauma grant.	\$55,818 unfavourable. Due to two grants not yet received, however funds are expected by 30 June.
5	Grants -Capital	\$30,000 favourable comprising: \$10,000 E-waste grant. \$20,000 new grant for Wilhelmina road culvert.	
6	Contributions - Non Cash	\$45,455 favourable. Contribution to Murchison street Marysville carpark	
7	Other revenue	\$119,888 unfavourable comprising: \$75,155 reduced interest income due to falling interest rates. \$44,733 due to rental waivers for businesses impacted by COVID-19 pandemic.	
8	Employee Benefits	\$15,512 unfavourable. Several minor adjustments both favourable and unfavourable. Savings in the areas of swimming pools, environmental services and community development are more than offset by additional wages in the areas of summer storm damage, and an adjustment to cover the final aged and disability costs.	\$326,797 favourable. Due to vacant positions. Some of this work has been completed by the temporary use of labour hire arrangements, these costs are reported as materials and services, so do not feature in the employee benefits line. Several vacant positions have now been filled.
9	Materials and Services	\$240,199 unfavourable comprising: \$150,000 Additional COVID-19 expenditure, \$245,679 summer storms. Offset by savings in the areas of human resource management, environmental programs, and purchase of minor equipment (\$155,480).	

Balance Sheet (Statement B)

The Balance Sheet is included Attachment 11.2.

Assets

As at 31 March 2020 the statements shows a \$102,990 revised budget reduction in assets – refer column (1). While cash has decreased \$629,805, debtors are expected to increase \$366,385 due to the impact of COVID-19 upon the economy and ratepayers. In terms of year to date budget tracking - column (2) - the variance is mostly due to the timing impact of the capital budget expenditure. Currently the figures show more cash retained and less property plant and equipment assets added than had been expected to this point in time. This will rectify as the year's capital works program is completed.

Liabilities

As at 31 March 2020, there has been no liability adjustment to the revised budget column (1). In terms of year to date budget tracking column (2) current liabilities are \$246,138 lower than expected. This is mostly due to a reduction in creditors, which reflects the efforts made to pay creditors as promptly as possible. Non-current liabilities shows a favourable variance of

\$855,647, this relates mostly to an accounting assessment of the landfill rehabilitation cost. It was anticipated that this work could have been completed in March. The review and adjustment of the landfill rehabilitation provision will now happen in June as part of the year end accounting process.

Equity

As at 31 March 2020 the statements shows an unfavourable \$102,990 decrease in equity. The year to date variance is favourable \$275,914. These variances are explained in more detail by the commentary outlined in Statement A – Income Statement.

Cash Flow Statement (Statement C) – Refer Attachment 11.2.

This statement combines the cash related movements from the Income Statement and the Balance Sheet into one statement. This Statement shows how funds are being generated and consumed. The revised budget column (1) projects cash reserves will decrease by \$629,805.

Cash from Operating Activities

The statement column (1) shows a reduction of \$469,375 from cash being generated by operations. Collections from ratepayers has been adjusted down \$426,385 recognising that in the short to medium term rate collection will become more difficult. Other adjustments such as cash from extra grants \$351,341 and the offsetting payment of works \$264,219 account for the other variations.

Cash Flow from Investing Activities

Column (1) shows an extra \$160,430 being paid to fund the capital works program including adjustments to the value of assets to be sold.

Cash flow from financing activities

No budget changes were been made, and year to date the budget is tracking within expectations .

Non-Discretionary Cash and Council Reserves (Statement D) - Refer Attachment 11.2

Included, as part of this report is a statement of Council's Non-Discretionary Cash Flow requirements. This reconciliation lists all Council reserves together with funds held as Deposits or Trust, these are required to be refunded, and an allowance for the provision of employee entitlements. This latter provision being a nominal amount of 25% of Council's Annual Leave Liability and 25% of the current Long Service Leave Liability.

The original budget figure for total unallocated cash was \$13,906,345 the revised budget figure is now \$12,372,605

Councillor Expenses (GST Exclusive):

The Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014 Part 4 - Annual Report, Division 1 requires Council to report annually regarding Councillor expenses under prescribed categories.

As agreed in the Councillor Reimbursement Policy that was adopted by Council at its February 2017 Ordinary Meeting, Council reports quarterly on the Councillor related expenses. The following table details Councillor expenses for the third quarter period ending 31 March 2020.

Councillor Expenses for 3 months ended 31 March 2020:

	Allowances	Travel Expenses	Childcare Expenses	Information & Communications Expenses	Conference & Training Expenses	Other Expenses
Cr Ashe	\$5,762.16	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	
Cr Bisset	\$5,780.16	\$52.65	\$-	\$-	\$-	
Cr Bowles	\$5,762.16	\$571.60	\$-	\$-	\$-	
Cr Dunscombe	\$17,214.51	\$1,642.00	\$-	\$-	\$1,866.00	\$195.41
Cr Lording	\$5,762.16	\$499.54	\$-	\$-	\$183.64	
Cr McAulay	\$5,762.16	\$1,070.36	\$-	\$-	\$-	
Cr Rae	\$5,762.16	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$100.00

It should be noted that accommodation and travel costs include the reimbursement of the claims, which a Councillor may choose to submit for travelling to Council meetings, briefings and other functions, which they attend in their capacity as a Councillor. Where a Councillor's residence is greater than 50 kilometres from the location of a Council meeting they may also claim the statutory remote area allowance.

It should also be noted that Councillors can elect for part of their allowance to be deducted for superannuation purposes.

Council Plan/Strategies/Policies

This report, in relation to the Annual Budget and quarterly financial reporting, is consistent with the *Council Plan 2017-2021* Our Promise strategy 'to maintain Council's financial sustainability through sound financial and asset management practices'.

Relevant Legislation

The *Local Government Act 1989* (the *Act*) requires, under Section 126, that a Council must prepare a Strategic Resource Plan for a period of four years.

The *Act* also sets out in Section 127 that the Council must prepare a budget for each financial year. Then, in Section 138, the *Act* requires that quarterly financial reports must be presented to Council.

Financial Implications and Risk

The financial governance of Council is an important role for Councillors. The risk of poor financial management can have a significant impact upon the governance of the Council. The financial implications flowing from this quarterly financial review are outlined in this report.

Conflict of Interest

There are no declared conflicts of interest by Council officers in the preparation of this report.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

There was no community consultation required for the preparation of this quarterly budget report.

11.3 QUARTERLY COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021 PROGRESS SUMMARY – 31 MARCH 2020

Attachment(s): Quarterly Council Plan Report January to March 2020 (refer Attachment 11.3)

Purpose

This report provides the second quarter summary of progress to date in delivering the actions in the Council's *Priority Action Plan 2019/20* (*Action Plan*).

Officer Recommendation

That the Council receive the quarterly report ending 31 March 2020 on the status of actions from the Priority Action Plan 2019/20.

Background

Council adopted its *Council Plan 2017-2021 (Council Plan)* at the Special Meeting of 21 June 2017. The *Council Plan* sets out the overall strategic direction of Council over its four-year term based on an extensive community consultation program conducted across the Shire.

At the July 2019 Ordinary Meeting Council adopted the *Priority Action Plan 2019/20* which outlines the actions that Council will pursue during the 2019/20 year to continue to implement the four year strategies in the *Council Plan*.

Both the *Council Plan* and the *Priority Action Plan* are published on Council's website.

A report on progress in implementing the annual priority actions is provided to Council at the end of each quarter.

Discussion

Attachment 11.3 provides a summary of activity undertaken in the second quarter of the *Priority Action Plan* for each of the four strategic objectives relating to Our People, Our Place, Our Prosperity and Our Promise.

Highlights from the quarter (January to March 2020) include the following:

Our People

- We partnered with Creative Arts Victoria to deliver a range of creative arts programs for young people to promote self-expression and increase awareness of support services that aide positive mental health
- We continued our Community Planning Project with three community plan prioritisation dinner workshops delivered in Yea, Toolangi/Castella and Marysville and follow up Action Team meetings took place across all three towns
- With the Better Health Murrindindi Network and the Goulburn Mental Health Partnership, we progressed advocacy activities and projects to support flexible, equitable services for Murrindindi Shire
- We delivered Everyday Leadership workshops to 36 year 9 students at Alexandra Secondary College.

Our Place

- We began the construction stages of the Yea Recreation Reserve female friendly change rooms project and the Kinglake Memorial Reserve Netball court re-development
- We commenced the 2019/20 Pathway program with 60% of the program completed during the quarter
- We completed the Activating Growth in Murrindindi review focusing on delivering Council's land use planning, development, tourism and economic growth strategic plans
- We received funding approval for an E Waste facility at Yea with quotations currently being sought
- The revised Community Local Law was adopted by Council at its March 2020 Ordinary meeting, following extensive community consultation.

Our Prosperity

- We delivered 2 Information sessions about Council's Business Grants, conducted 19 business visits and supported 7 businesses to make a grant application
- We worked with Murrindindi Inc to establish the purpose of a Council Advisory Committee for Tourism and Events

- We assisted event organisers around Murrindindi Shire to communicate event cancellations and postponement due to COVID-19.

Our Promise

- We advocated across the State and Federal Government for appropriate support for our community and businesses at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A range of innovative practices were implemented to support Council's response to the COVID-19 restrictions. These have included:
 - IT infrastructure enhancement to enable staff to work from home
 - videoconferencing to enable team meetings and employee engagement
 - online community engagement
 - 'Book Butler Program' to deliver borrowing services to the community
 - online Library programs and events
 - offsite customer service
 - livestreaming our Council Meeting via Facebook
 - paperless process improvements.
- We successfully transitioned 113 Council staff members to work from home in response to COVID-19, ensuring that we could continue to deliver services to the community.

Council Plan/Strategies/Policies

This report is consistent with the *Council Plan 2017-2021 Our Promise* strategic objective to work in collaboration with our communities to deliver the best possible outcomes in all that we do.

Relevant Legislation

Council has a statutory obligation to prepare and approve a Council Plan in accordance with Section 125 of the *Local Government Act 1989* now *Local Government Act 2020*.

Financial Implications and Risk

The delivery of the *Council Plan* is supported by the four-year *Strategic Resource Plan* and the Annual Budget.

Conflict of Interest

There are no declared conflicts of interest by Council officers in relation to this report.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

The actions in the *Action Plan* have been developed with reference to the priorities identified from the community following the 'Have Your Say' community consultation undertaken in February – April 2017.

11.4 QUARTERLY CAPITAL WORKS REPORTS – 31 MARCH 2020

Attachment(s): Capital Works Quarterly Report – March (refer Attachment 11.4)

Purpose

This report provides an update on the 2019/20 Capital Works Program (CWP) for the third quarter of the year ending 31 March 2020.

Officer Recommendation:

That the CEO on behalf of Council receive the quarterly report ending 31 March 2020 on the status of delivering the Capital Works Program.

Background

This report is the third quarter report for the 2019/20 CWP. The period of reporting is from 1 January 2020 to 31 March 2020. The CWP is comprised of those projects endorsed by Council

as part of the 2019/20 Capital Works budget, projects identified for carry forward from the 2018/19 program and approved projects that have received grant funding during the financial year.

Discussion

The third quarter of any given year is generally a busier period for capital works, as contractors are generally awarded the bulk of the year's works, construction activities are in progress and projects from the previous financial year are largely complete. This is only partially reflected in project progress and expenditure for the quarter ending 31 March 2020 as a number of larger projects were delayed due to funding shortfalls and delays from other authorities (eg. EPA). A number of significant grant funded projects have been progressed as follows:

- Eildon Floating Cities: Issues have been encountered in the investigation by JCA Consulting as detailed in previous reports. We are progressing the full project at this stage and pursuing quotes to relocate power poles. The design process continues with minor changes to address other service location issues. The amendment to key milestone dates is still with the Minister waiting approval.

The current program now indicates that this project will not be completed this financial year, however we will continue moving forward. Works planned in the short term are the removal of the vegetation, the demolition of the decommissioned toilet blocks, relocation of services as required and the bulk earthworks on the Sugarloaf Road including batter and filling of the required area for future road construction.
- Kinglake Streetscape – Stage 1 - Construction funding has been distributed across the two financial years for the two stages. Stage 1 Aitkin Crescent works have been awarded and construction will commence soon. Stage 2 works – Design of Streetscape has commenced with concepts being initially discussed with RRV.
- Rubicon Village effluent system – A consultant has been engaged to complete updated land capabilities assessment for the site, the LCA has been completed and the report submitted. We are about to proceed with the purchasing of the systems and arrange for their installation. A public meeting was planned for the 24 March to explain the solution and to distribute access agreements for each lot, but given the COVID-19 restrictions we will now send a letter which will explain the plan and request that agreements be signed and returned. Once the agreements have been returned, work to install the units can commence.
- Local Government Energy Saver program (LGESP) was completed. Works included lighting fit out and fixtures as well as solar system installations.
- Fixing Country Roads –
 - High Street Yea Safety Works: The tender was awarded at Council's March 2020 meeting. It is currently intended that works will commence early May, however an updated program is still pending from the contractor.
 - Back Eildon Road, Eildon was awarded in February and works are planned to commence in late April/early May.
 - Rubicon Road, Rubicon – Works are currently well underway. All required culvert extensions have been completed and first stage of road widening is near complete. The current program aims for completion in early May.
 - King Parrot Creek Road, Kerrisdale - tenders have closed and the evaluation is complete. The tender report will go to Council at its April meeting.
- The final portion of the National Disaster Financial Assistance (NDFA) funded asset restoration is underway from the December 2017 flood event. These were originally part of the 2018/19 program, only some major culverts and minor bridge works remain. Works have been awarded and are currently underway.

This report also includes an attachment (Attachment 11.4) which indicates the current position of the remaining capital projects for the current financial year using a traffic light system. The colours shown highlight the following:

- green – Council officers are confident that the project will be delivered within the current financial year
- yellow – there is a medium risk that there may be a delay in delivery due to issues outside of Council officer's control
- red – there is a high risk that delivery will not occur within the current financial year for reasons as outlined
- blue - the project has been assessed and has been placed on hold
- black – the project has been completed.

Additional information on projects are presented below:

1. Major areas of expenditure for the quarter include:

- Sealed Rd Renewals (Reseals) (\$435,000) – Reseals have all been completed.
- Murchison Street, Marysville Carpark (\$224,000) – Major works are all complete.
- Roads - Major Maintenance (\$270,000) – Nearing completion
- Kerami Crescent, Marysville drainage upgrade (\$22,000) - Complete
- Sealed Road Shoulder re-sheeting (allocated to Rubicon Rd) (\$101,364)
- Pathway renewals (\$85,433) – Well underway
- Cycling Road Signage (\$29,639) – Complete
- Marshbank Street, Yea Drainage (\$45,430) – Complete
- Alexandra Emergency services Helipad (\$38,555) – Complete
- Yea Office Carpark (\$22,000) – Complete
- Kinglake Community Centre – Roof and Lighting (\$45,000) – Complete
- Timber Tramway Museum (\$35,740) - Complete
- Terip Terip Hall – Bifold Doors (\$25,892) - Complete
- Yea Saleyards – Sprinkler system upgrades (\$44,205)
- Alexandra Landfill - GPS for compactor (\$52,894) – Complete
- Alexandra Landfill – Alternative Daily Cover – Spray applicator (\$50,000) - Complete
- Passenger Vehicles – Fleet (\$254,000)
- Plant (\$227,000)
- Kinglake Streetscape– Stage 2 (\$31,000)
- Eildon Floating cities (\$21,000)
- High Street, Yea – Safety Improvements (\$26,000)
- King Parrot Creek Road, Kerrisdale – Route Improvements (\$23,000)
- Rubicon Road, Rubicon – Route Improvements (\$65,000)
- Back Eildon Road, Eildon – Route Improvements (\$37,000)
- Wilhelmina Fall Rd, Murrindindi – Major Culvert (\$44,620) - Complete

2. Projects that are delayed or where other significant issues have arisen which affect the budget for the project:

- Alexandra Landfill – Construction of Capping for cells 1E and 1BC - due to delays in receiving approval from the EPA for the capping design, we have been forced to place the project on hold. Due to tendering timelines this would have scheduled construction to commence in winter which is not an ideal time to be undertaking these works due to the sensitive nature of the Geosynthetic Clay Liner (GCL) required for the project. This will now require the carry forward of the \$1.7M project budget
 - Eildon Floating Cities - this project was delayed as we were unable to appoint a suitable design consultant who complied with Council's requirement to have the necessary level of professional indemnity insurance. This project is now under way and some unforeseen issues regarding scoping have emerged. It has been found that there are some issues with an additional overhead power line impacting the clearances required and if these are left in place, will need to be placed underground. In addition, there is an existing sewer main within the proposed washdown area which may need to be relocated or upgraded to allow the works to proceed
 - High Street, Yea – The cost to deliver this project was greater than the original budget. This created some delay in awarding the contract as a result to source additional funding to deliver the full scope of works. This has delayed the construction start date by a month.
 - Aitkin Crescent, Kinglake – This project was delayed due to problems with the original selected tenderer. This project has since been re-awarded to another tenderer however as a consequence the start date was delayed by one month.
 - Bayley Street, Alexandra - Kerb and Channel – works currently on hold as the existing budget is not sufficient.
 - Rubicon Village Provision of services – This project was delayed due to the COVID 19 emergency and lockdown.
3. Projects completed in the March quarter:
- Sealed Road - reseals
 - Cycling Road signage
 - Kerami Crescent, Marysville - Drainage
 - Sealed road shoulder renewals
 - Marshbank Street, Yea - drainage
 - Alexandra emergency service helipad
 - Yea office carpark
 - Kinglake Community Centre – Roof and Lighting
 - Timber Tramway Museum - refurbishment
 - Terip Terip Hall – bifold doors
 - Alexandra Landfill GPS for compactor
 - Alexandra Landfill – alternative daily cover – spray applicator.
 - Wilhelmina Fall Road, Murrindindi – major culvert
 - Yea Saleyards – auctioneers walkway
4. Project savings and reallocations:
- There are no further reallocation of funds required at this stage that require Council endorsement.
 - Current projected non reserves savings are \$191,003.90 (potential funds available when all projects have been completed).
 - Current confirmed non reserve savings are \$59,800 (confirmed funds available for reallocation).

Council Plan/Strategies/Policies

The CWP is consistent with the *Council Plan 2017-2021 Our Promise* strategic objectives 'to work in collaboration with our communities to deliver the best possible outcomes in all that we do' and the strategy 'to maintain Council's financial sustainability through sound financial and asset management.'

Relevant Legislation

Nil.

Financial Implications and Risk

Timely reporting of financial issues assists in early identification of the need for corrective action or reallocation of budget where required. Reporting of project progress also provides Council and the community with an understanding of when projects will commence and communicates delays if they occur.

Conflict of Interest

There are no declared conflicts of interest by Council officers in relation to this report.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

No external consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of this report.

11.5 2020/21 DRAFT ANNUAL BUDGET AND STRATEGIC RESOURCE PLAN

Attachment(s): 2020/21 Draft Annual Budget (refer Attachment 11.5a)
Strategic Resource Plan (2020/21 Review) (refer Attachment 11.5b)
Proposed projects subject to savings and external grant funding
(refer Attachment 11.5c)

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's endorsement of the draft 2020/21 Annual Budget (draft Budget) and draft Strategic Resource Plan (2020/21 Review) (SRP) for the purpose of a public exhibition and submission process in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* now the *Local Government Act 2020* (the *Act*).

Officer Recommendation**That Council:**

1. **Note that the draft 2020/21 Annual Budget (draft Budget) attached to this resolution is the draft Budget prepared by Council for the purposes of Section 127 (1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* now the *Local Government Act 2020* (the *Act*)**
2. **For the 2020/21 financial year only, adjust the Commercial / Industrial differential rate from 125% to 100%, matching the rate in the dollar to the general differential rate**
3. **Note that the draft Budget includes \$500,000 for a COVID-19 relief and recovery package funded from the remaining 2009 bushfire government assistance funds provided by the State Government, which is currently held in reserve**
4. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to:**
 - a. **give public notice of the draft Budget and draft Strategic Resource Plan (SRP) in accordance with Section 129 of the *Act***
 - b. **pursuant to Section 129(3) (b) of the *Act*, advise that copies of the draft Budget and SRP are available for inspection at the following location:**
 - **Murrindindi Shire Council's website - www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au**
5. **call a Special Meeting for the purpose of hearing submissions on a proposal (or proposals) contained in the draft Budget made in accordance with Section 223 of the *Act* on Wednesday 10 June 2020 commencing at 6 pm and held at the Council Chambers in Alexandra or subject to COVID-19 restrictions conducted online as a virtual meeting**
6. **note that following the consideration of all written and verbal submissions, the draft Budget be presented at the Council Meeting to be held on Wednesday 24 June 2020**

commencing at 6 pm and held at the Council Chambers in Alexandra or subject to COVID-19 restrictions conducted online as a virtual meeting

- 7. approve the list of capital works projects included in Attachment 11.5c to proceed if savings or alternative funding sources are found during the financial year or grant submissions are successful.**

Background

The preparation of the financial budget is part of a cyclical process that begins with the development of the Council Plan, the four-year blueprint for Council activities. Council developed the *Council Plan 2017-2021* following consultation with the community. Council has also developed the Strategic Resource Plan (SRP), which ensures resource allocation is able to service Council's long term activities and initiatives. The SRP and its underpinning strategies inform the budget development process. The annual budget is a one-year financial plan that considers Council Plan activities, current influences and any new initiatives.

The draft Budget 2020/21 attached to this report outlines the financial implications of the strategic objectives and initiatives planned by Council, focusing on the coming financial year.

The draft Budget balances the need to deliver infrastructure and services while also providing the best possible value for residents, recognising the adverse impacts on the community associated with the current COVID-10 pandemic, and ensuring careful ongoing financial management.

Discussion

The draft Budget details the resource requirements and project priorities that are in accordance with the key strategic objectives that have been set in the *Council Plan 2017-2021*.

The draft Budget has been prepared on the principles of responsible financial management to achieve an operating result that ensures and maintains long term financial sustainability.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the direction set by Council in framing the draft budget for 2020/21 was to balance the need to reduce as much as possible the financial impacts on the community at this critical time, whilst at the same time meeting the need to continue and in some cases enhance critical services in response to government directives and to support the community's longer term recovery from this crisis.

Given these are unprecedented times and following briefings with Council, it is proposed to take the unprecedented step of a 0% property rate rise for the 2020/21 year, with the only variations ratepayers will see on their rate notice being attributable to changes in property valuations (as set by the Victorian State Government) as at 1 January 2020, waste and recycling charges (based on cost recovery) including the landfill levy, and the Fire Services Property Levy, with both levies set by the State Government, not Council.

Further, for the 2020/21 year it is also proposed to remove the 25% premium paid by commercial and industrial property owners under the commercial/industrial differential rate in recognition of the need to support business recovery in our Shire over the coming 12 months.

Whilst recognising this will reduce Council's income over the longer term, with an approximately \$5million reduction in predicted rate revenue over 10 years, this is still considered a prudent step due to the severity of the current crisis, Council's current relatively healthy financial position and the ability to manage the effects of this reduction in revenue through future savings, deferral of non-essential spending, the re-prioritisation of expenditure and the availability of discretionary reserves.

The draft budget also proposes a substantial COVID-19 pandemic relief and recovery package, by drawing down on \$500,000 remaining from the 2009 bushfire government assistance funds, provided by the State Government to Council to support its ongoing operations and which is

currently held in reserve. These funds will be made available for initiatives to support community and business recovery in our Shire during the 2020/21 financial year.

The draft Budget also proposes that Council will spend \$46.40 million to deliver services and improve infrastructure. This includes an expanded \$11.68 million Capital Works Program to help stimulate economic and community recovery.

Highlights of the Capital Works Program include:

- \$3.86 million on roads and paths including reseals, re-sheeting, footpath renewals and improvements to unsealed roads
- \$175,000 to improve safety at the Kinglake West Primary School crossing and surrounds
- \$479,000 on Marysville Swimming Pool renewal works
- \$160,000 on Kinglake Public Toilet Renovation (Aitken Crescent)
- \$350,000 on a new public toilet in Kinglake Memorial Reserve
- \$45,000 on solar hot water showers for male and female amenity blocks at Eildon and Marysville swimming pools
- \$40,000 to replace bi fold doors at Yea Recreation Reserve Clubrooms
- \$189,000 to improve connectivity to Kellock Lodge (William Street to Johnston Street, with connection to Leckie Park)
- \$45,000 for additional shade sails at the Yea Swimming Pool
- \$100,000 for the extension of the footpath in Falls Road, Marysville (Stage 1 – Gallipoli Park to Goulds Terrace)
- \$50,000 for bridge renewal at the entrance to the Yea Caravan Park

In addition to capital projects proposed in the draft budget, attached to this report (Attachment 11.5c) is a list of projects that will only proceed if savings or alternative funding sources become available, or grant applications are successful.

Other new initiatives proposed to be funded in the draft Budget for 2020/21 include:

- provision for free public entry to our Swimming Pools in Alexandra, Eildon, Marysville and Yea and a one year trial of late-night pool openings on Fridays and Saturdays at our busiest Swimming Pools in Alexandra and Yea to promote greater utilisation of these important facilities
- the much-needed addition of an arborist to Council's staff and a \$100,000 increase to funding for tree works across the Shire, reflecting increased need given recent storm events and changing climate patterns
- funding to implement the new Murrindindi Shire Tourism and Events Strategy, which will help us support and re-energise this crucial sector when pandemic-related restrictions are eventually eased
- funding to strengthen our ability to effectively manage waste and improve recycling in the community in light of new State Government policy directions for Victoria's waste and recycling sector
- funding set aside to support the conduct of Council elections scheduled for October 2020 and the training and support of newly elected councillors.

At this stage it is anticipated that Council will consider the final adoption of the budget at the Ordinary Council Meeting on June 24, 2020 following the public exhibition and submission process outlined below.

Council Plan/Strategies/Policies

The draft Budget and SRP are consistent with the *Council Plan 2017-2021* Our Promise strategy to 'maintain Council's financial sustainability through sound financial and asset management'.

Relevant Legislation

Council is required under the *Act*, to prepare and adopt an annual budget. The structure and contents of the draft Budget and Strategic Resource Plan are legislated under Section 126 & 127 of the *Act*. A formal public exhibition and submission process is required to be undertaken in accordance with Section 223 of the *Act*.

Financial Implications and Risk

The proposed 2020/21 Budget is fiscally responsible in its scope of discretionary spending. The draft Budget details how Council can manage its proposed 0% rate rise, whilst providing a responsible and viable financial plan for the ensuing year. Whilst it is recognised that there is a longer term impact in loss of approximately \$5million in rate revenue over 10 years associated with this decision, Council's current sound financial position, its holding of discretionary cash reserves and prudent expenditure management over time will minimise any serious longer term financial impacts.

Conflict of Interest

There are no declared interests by Council officers in the preparation of this report.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

In accordance with the requirement of the *Act*, Council is required to give public notice that it intends to adopt the Budget. The draft Budget must be made available for inspection at its offices and on its website for a period of at least 28 days and submissions invited from members of the public. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent closure of Council's offices, the draft Budget will not be available for inspection, however hard copies will be mailed out upon request. The draft Budget will be formally advertised in a range of publications from 7 May 2020, with written submissions called for by 12 pm on 3 June 2020.

The advertising program for the draft Budget is outlined below:

Medium	Publishing date
Newspapers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandra Standard • Yea Chronicle • Marysville Triangle • Local Paper (Online) 	13 May 2020 13 May 2020 15 May 2020 13 May 2020
Digital: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council website – www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au • Council Facebook page 	7 May 2020 7 May 2020

12. NOTICES OF MOTIONS

13. MATTERS DEFERRED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

14. URGENT BUSINESS

15. COUNCILLOR REPORTS

15.1 CR SANDICE MCAULAY

15.2 CR JACKIE ASHE

15.3 CR ERIC LORDING

15.4 CR CHARLOTTE BISSET

15.5 CR REBECCA BOWLES

15.6 CR MARGARET RAE

15.7 CR LEIGH DUNSCOMBE – MAYORAL REPORT

16. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT**17. ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS****Purpose**

This report presents the records of assemblies of Councillors for 1 April 2020 to 15 April 2020, for Council to note in accordance with Section 80A of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act).

Officer Recommendation

That the CEO on behalf of Council receives and notes the record of assemblies of Councillors for 19 March 2020 to 1 May 2020.

Background

In accordance with Section 80A of the Act, written assemblies of Councillors are to be reported at an Ordinary Meeting of Council.

An assembly of Councillors includes advisory committees, where one or more Councillors were present, along with planned or scheduled meetings involving at least half of the Councillors and a Council officer.

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest at an assembly of Councillors, must disclose the conflict of interest, and leave the meeting while the matter is being discussed.

Discussion

A written record is required to be kept of every assembly of Councillors, including the names of all Councillors and staff at the meeting, a list of the matters considered, any conflict of interest disclosed by a Councillor, and whether a Councillor who disclosed a conflict left the meeting.

The following summary details are for 19 March 2020 to 1 May 2020:

Meeting Name/Type	Briefing Session
Meeting Date:	1 April 2020 - via Videoconference
Matters Discussed:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. COVID-19 Pandemic Update 2. Project Delivery Impacts – COVID-19 3. Annual Budget 2020/21 and COVID-19 4. Lake Eildon Masterplan – Presentation of Draft 5. Aged and Disability Transition Update

	6. Murrindindi Youth Leadership Development Program Update 7. Ellimatta Youth Incorporated Updated 8. Moving Murrindindi Community Transport Program Update 9. Community Planning – Prioritisation Update 10. Lower Hume Primary Care Partnership Update
Councillor Attendees:	Cr C Bisset, Cr L Dunscombe, Cr J Ashe, Cr M Rae, Cr E Lording
Council Officer Attendees	C Lloyd, M Chesworth, S Brown, V Albicini
Conflict of Interest Disclosures:	Nil

Meeting Name/Type	Briefing Session
Meeting Date:	8 April 2020 – via Videoconference
Matters Discussed:	1. COVID-19 Pandemic Update 2. Project Delivery Impacts – COVID-19 3. Capital Works Expenditure Policy (Organisational Policy) 4. Capital Works Monthly Update 5. Draft Annual Budget 20/21 Discussion 6. Tourism Economic Group
Councillor Attendees:	Cr C Bisset, Cr L Dunscombe, Cr R Bowles, Cr J Ashe, Cr M Rae, Cr E Lording
Council Officer Attendees	C Lloyd, M Chesworth, S Brown, V Albicini, C Lintott, G Haylock
Conflict of Interest Disclosures:	Nil

Meeting Name/Type	Workshop Session
Meeting Date:	15 April 2020 via Videoconference
Matters Discussed:	1. COVID-19 Pandemic Update 2. Project Delivery Impacts – COVID-19 3. Councillor Induction 4. Tender CONT20/05 – King Parrot Creek Road – Route Improvement 5. April Council meeting format
Councillor Attendees:	Cr C Bisset, Cr S McAulay, Cr L Dunscombe, Cr R Bowles, Cr J Ashe, Cr M Rae, Cr E Lording
Council Officer Attendees	C Lloyd, M Chesworth, S Brown, V Albicini, T Carter
Conflict of Interest Disclosures:	Nil

Council Plan/Strategies/Policies

This matter is consistent with the *Council Plan 2017-2021 Our Promise* strategy to ‘expand our communication’.

Relevant Legislation

For full details of Council’s requirement for assemblies of Councillors, refer to Section 80A of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Financial Implications and Risk

There are no financial or risk implications.

Conflict of Interest

Any conflicts of interest are noted

18. SEALING REGISTER

File Reference	Date Seal Affixed	Description of Documents	Signatures of Persons Sealing
SF/1292	31 March 2020	Murrindindi Shire Council Community Local Law 2020	Craig Lloyd Cr Leigh Dunscombe Cr Sandice McAulay
CONT19/25	3 April 2020	Formal Instrument of Agreement between Murrindindi Shire Council and Ferrum Group Pty Ltd for Yea Recreation Reserve – Female Friendly Change Room Renewal & Upgrade	Craig Lloyd Cr Leigh Dunscombe
SF/123	8 April 2020	S5 Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer – COVID-19 State of Emergency Period	Cr Leigh Dunscombe Cr Sandice McAulay
CONT19/30	17 April 2020	Victorian Public Sector General Conditions of Contract for Minor Works (VPS MWC August 2018) between Murrindindi Shire Council and Prestige Paving Pty Ltd for Aitkin Crescent Kinglake – Sealing and Associated Works	Craig Lloyd Cr Leigh Dunscombe
CONT20/2	17 April 2020	Formal Instrument of Agreement between Murrindindi Shire Council and Alpine Civil Pty Ltd for Gravel Roads Resheeting Program – 2019 2020	Craig Lloyd Cr Leigh Dunscombe
CONT20/1	27 April 2020	Minor Works Contract between Murrindindi Shire Council	Craig Lloyd Cr Leigh Dunscombe
CONT19/31	27 April 2020	Formal Instrument of Agreement between Murrindindi Shire Council and Fineblade Pty Ltd for High Street, Yea Road Safety Improvements	Craig Lloyd Cr Leigh Dunscombe

Officer Recommendation

That the list of items to which the Council seal has been affixed be noted.