

Golden Plains Shire Council  
Council Plan 2017-2021

Golden Plains Shire Council	
File No(s)	BluePoint 01-01-014
23 MAY 2017	
Owner	_____
Manager	_____
Reader(s)	_____
Doc Ref	_____

## Submission on Draft Council Plan Community Reference Group

May 2017

Submitted by:

Des Joyce

Name



Signature

23 May 2017

Date

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The Community Reference Group also requests the opportunity to be represented by Des Joyce to present this submission at the Special Council 'Hearing of Submissions' meeting to be held on Tuesday 13 June 2017, 6pm at the Bannockburn Shire Hall. Des can be contacted on 0419 295966.

## Feedback on the Draft Council Plan overall....

1. Develop and provide a plain English version of the plan suitable for young people and broader distribution.
2. Educate Councillors and officers on engagement with the community.
3. Where possible establish a direction connection with what the community said and objectives/strategies across the four key pillars (pages 14-21) e.g:
  - Aligning objectives, strategies and measures of success (e.g. table format).
  - Present the community voice first followed by strategic direction, objectives and strategies.
4. Use a consistent style for bullet points illustrating strategies, objectives and measures of success (pages 14-21).
5. Demonstrate how the Council Plan translates into action (pages 4, 22, 23).
6. Health and Wellbeing priorities (page 11 and throughout).
  - The priority for 'Family violence and gender equity' could be separated into distinct priorities.
  - Replace the 'shield' icon for the 'Family violence and gender equity' priority.
7. The leadership team photo (page 12) could become outdated with staff changes.
7. 'How the plan will be implemented' (page 22) does not, and could, reference 'listening' amongst the roles for Council – 'listening' is extensively referenced throughout the document.
8. Document requires comprehensive proof read for consistency, punctuation and presentation as a seamless document.
9. The organisation chart (p12) shows 'Environment and Sustainability' under Development in the Assets and Amenity portfolio – the weight of community feedback on the importance of the environment should be reflected in more prominent positioning in the organisation structure.
10. The development of a new Civic Centre is a significant item in the Strategic Resource Plan and should be identified in the body of the Council Plan document.
11. There is a view that the directions, objectives and strategies across the four pillars 'miss' many points reflected in the community feedback e.g. specific reference to bushfire risk and management.
12. Not enough plain language – put it through a plain language review. Document needs to be more accessible for ordinary readers and those less literate.
13. Make the 'pillars' more present in operations, communications, web structure, gazette reporting etc. to assist community understanding.

14. Include an action plan. Include more detail on 'how we are going to deliver'. More operational information or an indication of the operational implementation plan.

## Feedback on Strategic Directions....

### 1. Promoting Healthy & Connected Communities (pages 14-15)

#### Relevance of objectives and strategies and reflection of community feedback

- 1.1 Objectives and strategies may be relevant to those living in built up areas, families with children, and those with sporting interests, but less so to others (page 14).
- 1.2 The strategic direction statement reference to '....their local community' is too narrow and would be more relevant as '....their local and broader community' (page 14).
- 1.3 The document does not reflect the importance of community feedback on the need for 'after school programs and activities for local secondary students' (page 17). This calls for greater emphasis and a specific strategy in the Plan in either this section (page 16) or 'Enhancing Local Economies' section.
- 1.4 Strategy 1. of 'How we will go about it' refers to 'people of all ages...' (page 14). A separate and additional strategy emphasising approaches for ensuring the health and wellbeing of young people/youth is required.
- 1.5 Aligning objectives and strategies with and in the same order as the community feedback and statistical information would assist clarity and readability (e.g. present as a table/map). (As for point 3. above)
- 1.6 Overall, objectives and strategies reflect the community feedback.

#### Proposed additions or changes

- 1.7 Objectives and strategies are too general – where is the specific reference to 'actions' identifying next steps? A clearer picture of what happens next is required (page 14)
  - Include information about an Action Plan in 'About the Council Plan' (page 4) and/or 'How the Plan will be implemented' (page 22) – see also point 13. in this submission.
- 1.8 Consider hyperlinking objectives and strategies to a more specific action plan.
- 1.9 Gambling to be recognised as an issue and an advocacy opportunity – specifically in terms of what we are going to do about it e.g. restricting signage at community facilities. (pages 14 and 15)
- 1.10 Strategy 1 in 'What we are going to do' stating 'Provide and support programs, activities, and spaces ..... ' to be amended to 'Develop a strategy to provide and support programs, activities and spaces relevant to demographic profiles... (page 14).

- 1.11 Strategy 2 in 'What we are going to do' stating 'Facilitate increased access to local health and community services..... ' to incorporate the concepts of 'equitable and increased access to local and other health and community services' based on the lack of public transport across the Shire to support access to services (page 14.)
- 1.12 Council to take a more formal role in providing a local context (input and information) to the State Government on relevant state managed issues – rather than specific 'cause' related advocacy.
  - Advocate and support improved and relevant research on public transport needs across the Shire.
- 1.13 Consider how we are going to respond to 'individual' crisis situations in local and remote areas outside of normal service hours.
- 1.14 Plan needs to recognise the impact of the natural environment in terms of health, wellbeing and social benefits to the community.
- 1.15 The concept of 'connected communities' to be extended to and acknowledge improved internet connectivity – potential strategy (page 14).

## **2. Enhancing Local Economies (pages 16-17)**

### Relevance of objectives and strategies and reflection of community feedback

- 2.1 For the most part the objectives and strategies are relevant and reflect community feedback (pages 16, 17)
- 2.2 Do the measures actually reflect whether the work done is having an impact on the people who need our support the most and deliver improvements in lifestyles? (page 16)
- 2.3 Raise the importance of the community feedback around 'Advocating for a vocational focus for the new secondary school, after school programs and activities for local secondary students' – consider including this as a strategy (pages 16, 17).
- 2.4 Objectives and strategies are not as specific as the community feedback – there needs to be a balance i.e. reference to public transport and internet access (pages 16, 17).
- 2.5 Ensure that infrastructure meets community growth – provide more specific information in the research section (page 17).

### Proposed additions or changes

- 2.6 A strong balance between the environment (sustainable industries) and economic growth based on good planning supported by strong consultation (page 16).
- 2.7 Longer term planning (10-25years) – specific to this pillar and more broadly - future proofing (page 16)
- 2.8 Specific reference to controlled business and tourism growth to maintain the rural feel of the Shire where appropriate (page 16).
- 2.9 For strategy point 1. – add an element of connection between businesses as a way of strengthening the sector (page 16).
- 2.10 Include community and business access to technology (internet) as a strategy (page 16).
- 2.11 Avoid broad motherhood statements – be clear about strategies i.e. internet access (page 16).
- 2.12 Public transport is not given enough weight in the current plan in connection with economic growth and sustainability (page 16).
- 2.13 Controlling where business and tourism growth occurs and the types of businesses that are encouraged – the need for good planning (page 16).
- 2.14 Strong consultation around rezoning within the Shire (page 16).

### **3. Managing the Natural and Built Environment (pages 18-19)**

#### Relevance of objectives and strategies and reflection of community feedback

- 3.1 Include specific reference to paths (walking/cycle/horse) and accessible communities under objectives - 'What we are going to do' (page 18).
- 3.2 Reference Council to work **in partnership** with small allotment owners to control pests and invasive species under strategies - 'How we will go about it' point 3. (page 18).
- 3.3 Identify a more proactive and systematic approach to the management of pests and invasive species - 'How we will go about it' point 3. (page 18).
- 3.4 Use smarter technology, materials and processes in relation to road works – do it better – (page 18).

#### Proposed additions or changes

- 3.5 Separation of this pillar into two separate pillars for 'Natural Environment' and 'Built Environment' (page 18-19).
- 3.6 Amend the strategic direction to add the words 'preserve and enhance' to create 'We work to promote, preserve, enhance and protect the natural environment.....' (page 18).
- 3.7 Include a strategy to ... educate the community about aboriginal heritage (page 18).
- 3.8 Include a strategy to ... encourage land owners to connect natural habitat areas (including Council owned areas) to allow natural propagation and diversification (page 18).
- 3.9 Include a strategy to ... include young people in environmental initiatives e.g. after school engagement, cubs and scouts (page 18).
- 3.10 Define a pathway to achieving carbon neutrality for Council operations - 'How we will go about it' point 2. (page 18).
- 3.11 Enhance the 'strategy' response (How we will go about it) on biodiversity e.g. MSS review, appropriate zoning, remnant vegetation, training of planners (page 18).
- 3.12 Tourism initiative – install an RV Dump Point at Smythesdale – grow tourism visitation and increase local investment
- 3.13 Include reference to an Annual Action Plan and how progress reporting back to the community on the Council Plan will work.
- 3.14 Emergency management (particularly bushfire safety/re-zoning) to be included as a strategy – 'How we will go about it' (page 18).

#### **4. Delivering Good Governance and Leadership (pages 20-21)**

##### Relevance of objectives and strategies and reflection of community feedback

- 4.1 Council to take a stronger advocacy role within the plan to ensure objectives and strategies are not lost in translation (pages 20-21).
- 4.2 Councillor education - ensure new Councillors are well trained to be able to do their job in governance.
- 4.3 Riding (ward) Councillors perform better for community, relate better to resident concerns, and better represent local areas.
- 4.5 Important to support the 25 year plan for stability across Council terms so that each new Council is guided by the overall long term plan – strategy 1. 'How we will go about it' (page 20).

#### Proposed additions or changes

- 4.6 Be more explicit about the use of technology, digitisation and innovation linked to advancement of good governance (page 20).
- 4.7 Good governance requires good prioritisation of funding for strategic actions. The Strategic Resource Plan should include the capacity to cope with the cost of unanticipated events such as fire or flood.
- 4.8 We must report on what we are doing - how we are delivering the plan. The reporting must be multi-platform and accessible. People will not go looking; we must make it easily accessible. The community has the right to know.
- 4.9 Please report on key activities e.g. Golden Plains Food Production Precinct.
- 4.10 Make sure facility and infrastructure provision is ahead of community growth. Look at the future demand on facilities in the north of the Shire by the growing population in south Ballarat.
- 4.11 Waste coupons should be available as in other Shires – they may prevent dumping in road and other public reserves.
- 4.12 Make sure letters etc. from the community are answered.
- 4.13 Make sure promises are kept e.g. township maintenance.
- 4.14 Staff to be more approachable. More face to face staff interaction in community.
- 4.15 Provide access to questions for Council through the website.
- 4.16 Provide easy access to Councillor contact information on the website and in the Gazette.
- 4.17 Improve access for councillors to community - more face to face contact.
- 4.18 Objective 2 'What we are going to do' reference to 'Doing what we say' can be read as a directive of Council to the community. Needs revision to 'Doing what we say we will do' to convey the intention.
- 4.19 Staff turnover is a factor of good governance e.g. Golden Plains 13%, Surf Coast 7%? It should be a measure of improved governance or improved management performance.
- 4.20 Include 'open' as a key statement as it is different to transparent. Open implies a willingness to allow the community into the process. (page 20 and broader document).

