

AGENDA

Council Meeting

6.00pm Tuesday 29 June 2021

VENUE:
Golden Plains Civic Centre
Council Chambers
2 Pope Street, Bannockburn

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING
6.00pm Tuesday 27 July 2021

Copies of Golden Plains Shire Council's Agendas & Minutes
Can be obtained online at www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au

Code of Conduct Principles

WORKING TOGETHER

We Councillors will:

- acknowledge and respect that a diversity of opinion exists among us;
- recognise that each of us has different life experience, knowledge and values, and that all of these contribute collectively to our discussions;
- behave with courtesy towards each other, Council officers and our citizens;
- conform to the policy and precedents that guide the conduct of meetings;
- attend punctually and participate in all relevant meetings, workshops and briefings;
- share reasonably in the representation, ceremonial and hosting tasks of the full Council; and
- honour the majority decisions made by the Council, irrespective of our own position, and explain these decisions frankly to the community, once made.

BEHAVING WITH INTEGRITY

We Councillors will:

- identify our financial and personal interest, or potential interest, in any matter that comes before the Council;
- be honest and truthful;
- comply with laws and the regulations deriving there from;
- respect Council property and be frugal in its use, where allowed;
- avoid using our position for personal gain or to achieve advantage over others or to obtain preferential treatment;
- be sympathetic to the legitimate concerns of our citizens;
- act impartially when making decisions and have due regard to the needs of the community as a whole, rather than that of narrow vested interest; and
- acknowledge the role of Council officers in providing advice to us and in implementing Council decisions.

MAKING COMPETENT DECISIONS

We Councillors will:

- without diminishing the short term focus, approach decisions with due regard to the long term needs of the municipality;
- form policies with regard to the needs of the entire Shire;
- direct our attentions to the strategic and statutory needs of the municipality rather than short term, transient, operational issues;
- seek to fully inform ourselves on the issues before Council before making a decision;
- take all reasonable steps to improve our knowledge of matters relevant to our municipal duties; and
- use and respect the professional knowledge of Council officers and other advisers to Council.

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1 OPENING DECLARATION

We the Councillors of Golden Plains Shire declare that we will undertake, on every occasion, to carry out our duties in the best interest 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 Golden Plains Shire

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Golden Plains Shire spans the Traditional lands of the Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar people. We acknowledge them as the Traditional Owners and Custodians. Council pays its respects to Wadawurrung Elders past, present and emerging. Council also respects Eastern Maar Elders past, present and emerging.

Council extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Golden Plains Shire.

3 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES****Recommendation**

That the minutes of the Council Meetings held on Tuesday 25 May 2021 and Tuesday 8 June 2021 as circulated, be confirmed.

5 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**6 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

7 BUSINESS REPORTS FOR DECISION

7.1 MEETING RECORD

File Number:

Author: Sharon Naylor, Executive Assistant - Chief Executive Officer

Authoriser: Eric Braslis, CEO

Attachments: 1. Meeting Notice

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Meeting Records from 25 May 2021 to 28 June 2021 as attached.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To receive any Meeting Records that disclose any conflict of interests declared since the previous Council meeting.

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) outlines obligations and requirements for Councillors to declare and manage conflicts of interests. Council's Governance Rules provide further procedures in relation to Conflict of Interest.

In accordance with chapter 23 of the Governance Rules, procedures at meetings other than Council Meetings, for example Councillor Briefings, requires meetings records to be presented to Council for noting and inclusion on the public record where a conflict of interest was declared.

By disclosing conflicts of interests and following the prescribed procedures, Councillors engage in practices that promote the integrity and transparency of decision-making.

DISCUSSION

The attached meeting record is prepared in accordance with the Act and Council's Governance Rules.

In accordance with the Act and the Governance Rules, a record of any meeting held under the auspices of Council where a conflict of interest was declared must be presented to the next possible Council meeting.

Meetings held under the auspices of Council may include (but are not limited to) Councillor briefings or forums, advisory committee meetings, public consultations and site meetings (including meetings the Council arranges jointly with other organisations).

These records replace the previous requirements for assemblies of councillors under the Local Government Act 1989.

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020)

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications	No

(Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	No
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	No
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	No
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	No
Risk Assessment	No
Communication	No
Human Rights Charter	Yes

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW*Local Government Act 2020*

Governance Rules

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

All conflicts of interests are documented and reported to external auditors upon request.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic).

OPTIONS

Option 1 – That Council receive and note the Meeting Record from 25 May 2021 to 28 June 2021 as attached.

This option is recommended by officers as it complies with the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rules.

Option 2 – That Council do not receive and note the Meeting Record from 25 May 2021 to 28 June 2021 as attached.

This option is not recommended by officers as this report is to communicate any conflicts of interest only.

Option 3 – That Council require further information.

This option is not recommended by officers as the conflict of interest records are accessible to Councillors.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest in regards to this matter.

CONCLUSION


That Council notes the meeting record.



Meeting Notice

Date of meeting:	Tuesday 15 June 2021
Time:	8.45am
Purpose of meeting:	Councillor Briefing session
Councillors present:	Cr Helena Kirby, Mayor Cr Ian Getsom, Deputy Mayor Cr Brett Cunningham Cr Gavin Gamble Cr Les Rowe Cr Owen Sharkey Cr Clayton Whitfield
Apologies:	Nil
Council staff present:	Eric Braslis, Chief Executive Officer Phil Josipovic, Director Infrastructure & Development Lisa Letic, Director Community Services Philippa O'Sullivan, Director Corporate Services Annamaree Bowey, Corporate Governance Coordinator Jennie Schoof, Community Partnerships Officer Peter O'Brien, Town Planning Officer Sarah Fisher, Coordinator Statutory Planning Fiona Rae, Manager Finance Alicia te Wierik, Senior Strategic Planner Laura Murphy, Coordinator Strategic Planning Marine Desa, Resource Recovery and Waste Officer Ben Jordan, Manager Community and Council Planning Leanne Wilson, Manager Development and Regulatory Services Derek Scott, Corporate Strategic Planner Richard Brown, Manager Community Places and Environment Vicki Shelton, Manager Asset Services David Collins, Coordinator Environment and Sustainability
Other people present:	Bev McArthur MP, Upper House Member for Western Victoria Ailish Seaton – youth from GPSC Terry Maguire, Manager Regional Rating Valuation, Victorian Valuer General Bill Wright, Valuer of Opteon Solutions
Conflict of Interest Disclosures (Councillors)	Cr Ian Getsom - P20087 Crown Allotment 37E Piggoreet Road, Piggoreet (Dwelling and native vegetation removal)
Conflict of Interest Disclosures (Officers)	Nil
Matters discussed:	<p>Presentation Bev McArthur MP Upper House Member for Western Victoria Golden Plains Youth Survey 2021 Revaluation Briefing Recycling Update</p> <p>Reports Community Satisfaction Survey 2021 - Report Findings Adoption of Golden Plains Shire Council Plan 2021-2025 Adoption of Golden Plains Shire Council Budget 2021-22 Delegates Report - 25 May 2021 to 28 June 2021 P20087 Crown Allotment 37E Piggoreet Road, Piggoreet (Dwelling and native vegetation removal) Community Strengthening Grants - Round 1, 2021 VAGO Report on Local Roads Enforcement Policy - Adoption</p>



	<p>Annual Adoption of Procurement Policy Mayor and Councillor Allowances Awarding of Tender (RFT-03-2021) Bannockburn Soccer Female Friendly Changeroom Awarding of Tender (RFT-01-2021) Meredith Shelford Road Widening Stage 3</p> <p>Updates Smythesdale Structure Plan ESC Local Government Outcomes Report Bannockburn Chamber of Commerce Barwon South West Climate Alliance GPCC Project Update - Progress Update Council Meeting Schedule SMT Only CEO Only Councillor Only</p> <p>Confidential Report Regional Renewable Organics Network- Heads of Agreement</p>
Completed by:	<p>Eric Braslis, Chief Executive Officer</p> 

7.2 DELEGATES REPORT - 25 MAY 2021 TO 28 JUNE 2021**File Number:****Author:** Sharon Naylor, Executive Assistant - Chief Executive Officer**Authoriser:** Eric Braslis, CEO**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the Delegates Report – 25 May 2021 to 28 June 2021.

	Cr Kirby	Cr Cunningham	Cr Gamble	Cr Getsom	Cr Rowe	Cr Sharkey	Cr Whitfield
May Council Meeting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
June Councillor Briefing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
June Strategic Councillor Briefing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
May/June Portfolios	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Cr Helena Kirby

26 May – 28 May	Rural Councils Victoria Summit
1 June	Meeting with Department of Transport
3 June	Meeting with Central Highlands Water
4 June	Central Highlands Councils Victoria meeting
4 June	G21 Board meeting
7 June	G21 Sports & Recreation Pillar meeting
16 June	Colac Regional Advisory Group meeting
17 June	Active Ageing & Inclusion Advisory Group meeting
18 June	Meeting with Gayle Tierney MP
18 June	Golden Plains Youth Hub sod turning event
21 June – 23 June	National General Assembly of Local Government (ALGA)
24 June	G21 Economic Development Pillar meeting
24 June	Shelford Meeting
25 June	G21 Board Meeting
27 June	Pubs & Publicans of Meredith Book Launch event
28 June	Meeting with NBN Engagement Officer

Cr Brett Cunningham

7 June	G21 Sport & Recreation Pillar meeting
7 June	Tourism Greater Geelong and Bellarine Board meeting
24 June	G21 Economic Development Pillar meeting

Cr Gavin Gamble**Cr Ian Getsom**

26 May – 28 May	Rural Councils Victoria Summit
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Cr Les Rowe

26 May – 28 May	Rural Councils Victoria Summit
9 June	G21 Education and Training Pillar meeting
17 June	Geelong Arts, Heritage & Culture Pillar meeting

Cr Owen Sharkey

17 June

Geelong Regional Library Committee meeting

Cr Clayton Whitfield

7.3 COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING GRANTS - ROUND 1, 2021

File Number:**Author:** Jennie Schoof, Community Partnerships Officer**Authoriser:** Lisa Letic, Director Community Services**Attachments:** 1. Attachment 1: Community Strengthening Grants Summary**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council acknowledge the approved Community Strengthening Grants, Round 1 2021 (summarised in Attachment 1) to the following recipients:

- Inverleigh Progress Association - Open Space Mower Replacement - \$10,000
- Inverleigh Primary School Gardening Group – Raised Beds for Edible Garden Project - \$1,600
- Inverleigh Cemetery Trust – Seating for Rest and Reflection - \$2,930
- Linton and District Progress Association – Linton Community Safety Plan Connecting Community and Leaders - \$6,000
- Linton and District Progress Association – Community Seating and Gardening Group Equipment - \$7,024
- Smythesdale Community Coordinators – Music at the Market - \$2,300
- Smythesdale Arts & Music Community Fiesta - \$5,795
- Smythesdale Progress Association – Shower Ventilation Project - \$800
- Bannockburn Inclusive – Bus and Ferry trip to Sorrento for people with disabilities and the elderly - \$1,600
- Golden Plains Trail Riders – Safety Items - \$640
- Meredith History Interest Group – Connecting the Past while looking to the Future - \$3,800
- Lethbridge Public Hall – Replacement of Ovens - \$2,042

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to acknowledge the funding of 12 projects, proposed by a variety of community groups through Council's Community Strengthening Grants Program, Round 1 2021.

Council received 13 applications during April 2021, with 8 coming from the Community Strengthening Grants and a further 5 applications referred from the COVID19 Quick Response Grants. The 12 proposed projects assessed as successful for grant funding will require \$44,531 to complete and are summarised in Attachment 1, these include:

- \$14,236 for Health and Wellbeing, Sports and Recreation projects through the Healthy Active Living Stream
- \$11,895 for Arts and Culture projects through the Creative Communities Stream
- \$11,600 for Environmental projects through the Environment and Sustainability Stream
- \$6,800 for Community Safety initiatives through the Community Safety Stream.

Council's contribution of \$44,531 for the Round 1 Community Strengthening Grants 2021 will deliver \$99,062 in total value (across the 12 projects), a return of \$2.22 for every \$1 invested.

BACKGROUND

Council is committed to ensuring our communities thrive. The Community Strengthening Grants Program provides funding, expertise and support to not-for-profit organisations and community groups that deliver outcomes aligned to the Golden Plains Community Vision 2040 and the Council Plan.

A revised Community Grants Program Framework was developed and adopted by Council in February 2020. The grant program has a focus on:

- Empowering our communities to identify and respond to local areas of need
- Partnering with community organisations to deliver shared outcomes
- Activating community participation amongst residents
- Building capacity within the community sector.

Under the Community Grants Program Framework, there are objectives, criteria, application and assessment forms specific to each of the following 4 grant streams:

- **Healthy Active Living** which seeks projects that help achieve the strategic objectives of the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and of the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2020-2030. The priority areas for which are:
 - Healthy Eating.
 - Active Living – increasing physical activity, sport and active recreation opportunities for residents.
 - Connected Communities – social connectedness and activated spaces.
 - Mental Health.
 - Gender Equity and the prevention of violence against women.
 - Increased access to health and community services.
- **Community Safety** which seeks projects that help achieve the goals, outcomes and strategic objectives of the Council's Community Safety Team. The priority areas for which are:
 - Opportunities for residents to connect, get to know their neighbours and build strong communities better equipped to survive and thrive during and after times of crisis.
 - Support activities which address specific risk factors within the community such as fire or crime.
 - Small infrastructure projects which increase the safety of the community for example fire danger signs, communication boards or air conditioning units in public buildings.
- **Creative Community** which seeks projects that help achieve the goals, outcomes and strategic objectives of Council's Arts and Culture Strategy 2018-2022. The priority areas for which are:
 - Opportunities for residents to connect and engage with their local community through participating in creative experiences.
 - Support the local artistic community.
 - Arts and culture as a tool to revitalise local spaces.
- **Environment and Sustainability** which seeks projects that help achieve the goals, outcomes and strategic objectives of Council's Environment Strategy 2019-2027. The priority areas for which are:
 - Environmental Sustainability.
 - Resilience.
 - Healthy Environment.

All streams of the Community Strengthening Grants are funded on a matched 1:1 ratio for amounts of up to \$10,000.

Council successfully ran two grants funding rounds under the Community Grants Program Framework in April and September 2020. 33 projects were approved for funding in 2020 to the total value of \$146,212.

DISCUSSION

The Community Strengthening Grants, Round 1 2021 opened on 1 April and closed on 30 April 2021, with extensive promotion and advertising through:

- Council's website
- Media release
- Social media
- Community newsletters including Meredith news, Linton news, Skipton News, Rokewood and District Newsletter, Woody Yaloak Herald (Haddon) and Inverleigh News
- Community Planning Program news alert
- Golden Plains Gazette, issue 2, 2021
- Email blasts to Community Groups, Committees, Sport and Recreation Clubs
- Web banner.

Applications Received and Assessed

Initially, eight applications were received for the Community Strengthening Grants Round 1 2021 requesting \$30,865 in funding. Following the COVID-19 Quick Response Grants round which closed on 5 April 2021, a further five grant applications requesting \$17,666 (ruled as ineligible under that program) were referred to the Community Strengthening Grants for assessment.

In total, 13 projects requesting \$48,531 were assessed with the breakdown of grants assessed across all streams and the outcomes as follows:

- Council received 3 applications to the **Environment and Sustainability** stream requesting a total of \$15,600 in funding. This included applications from:
 - Bannockburn Community Planning Group – Access to Bannockburn Bushland - \$4,000 (assessed as unsuccessful)
 - Inverleigh Progress Association – Open Space Mower Replacement - \$10,000
 - Inverleigh Primary School Gardening Group – Raised Beds for Edible Garden Project - \$1,600.
- Council received 5 applications to the **Healthy and Active Living** stream requesting a total of \$14,236 in funding. This included applications from:
 - Inverleigh Cemetery Trust – Seating for Rest and Reflection - \$2,930
 - Golden Plains Trail Riders – Safety Items - \$640
 - Bannockburn Inclusive – Bus and Ferry trip to Sorrento for people with disabilities and the elderly - \$1,600
 - Lethbridge Public Hall – Replacement of Ovens - \$2,042
 - Linton and District Progress Association – Community Seating and Gardening Group Equipment - \$7,024.
- Council received 3 applications to the **Creative Community** stream requesting a total of \$11,895 in funding. This included applications from:
 - Smythesdale Community Coordinators – Music at the Market - \$2,300
 - Smythesdale Arts & Music Community Fiesta - \$5,795

- Meredith History Interest Group – Connecting the Past while looking to the Future - \$3,800.
- Council received 2 applications to the **Community Safety** stream requesting a total of \$6,800 in funding. This included applications from:
 - Linton and District Progress Association – Linton Community Safety Plan Connecting Community and Leaders - \$6,000
 - Smythesdale Progress Association – Shower Ventilation Project - \$800.

Assessment Process

Each application was assessed for eligibility and then evaluated by an internal panel using SmartyGrants software against the following criteria identified in the funding guidelines for applicants:

- Clear objectives (10%)
- Alignment with the specific grant streams objectives (30%)
- Clear outcomes and benefits to target group (20%)
- Lasting community impact (20%)
- Project management ability (10%)
- Budget (10%).

The panel for each stream was made up of the Community Partnerships Officer with either the Manager or officers whose roles are directly related to each particular stream - for example, the Arts and Culture Advisor for the Creative Community Stream or Recreation Officer for Healthy Active Living Grants. The panel assessed each application they were assigned individually, through SmartyGrants. The assessment forms were consistent across streams. Once the applications had been assessed and scored individually, these assessments were collated and the panel met to discuss each one, to compare and justify the scores they had given.

As required under the Community Grants Framework, the full list of projects, details of assessment and recommendations for funding were provided to the Chief Executive Officer for review and approval. The CEO has approved 12 projects for funding to the total value of \$44,531 as detailed in Attachment 1 and listed in the report recommendation.

Council's contribution of \$44,531 for the Round 1 Community Strengthening Grants 2021 will leverage a further \$54,531 from the community in the delivery of the 12 projects. This equates to \$99,062 in total value, a return of \$2.22 for every \$1 of Council investment.

Awarding of Successful Grants

Following acknowledgement of this report, Councillors will be invited to recognise the successful grant recipients at the commencement of the Council Meeting on 29 June. A short description of each group's project, its importance to the community and the amount of funding awarded will be announced.

Representatives from the successful community groups will be invited to attend the Council Meeting or dial into the meeting virtually.

Program Analysis

Following strong interest and oversubscription in the two 2020 rounds of the Community Strengthening Grants Program, Round 1 of the 2021 program was under-subscribed with only eight initial applications received and a further five added from the COVID19 Quick Response Grants. Feedback provided by a number of community members that either submitted applications or expressed interest in the Community Strengthening Grants, was that they were experiencing fatigue and confusion due to the various grant opportunities that have been available recently. These have included but were not limited to:

- Round 2 COVID19 Quick Response Grants – Operating in a COVID Environment stream

- Round 2 COVID19 Quick Response Grants – Community Engage, Connect and Recover stream
- The Stronger Communities Programme (SCP) – Federal Government
- Regional Arts Fund Grants
- Small Halls Grant Program
- MP Volunteer Grants 2021
- MP Powering Communities grant program.

Many of the recent grants opportunities have been as a result of the COVID19 pandemic and have included short timeframes for submission of grants applications, delivery of projects and acquittal of the funding. This has come at a time when social gathering restrictions have only just been scaled back and many community groups have had limited capacity (to submit applications or deliver projects) and have been focussed on re-commencing basic activities and connecting with their volunteers/members.

A number of community groups indicated that given the recent circumstances and the time and commitment required when applying for grants, they would prefer to consider making an application for funding in Round 2 of the Community Strengthening Grants which opens on 1 September 2021.

Capacity building support

To build the capacity of community groups in gathering information and presenting quality grant applications, further opportunities for support and mentoring have been identified and will be offered prior to Round 2 of the 2021 Community Strengthening Grants in September. This includes:

- Volunteer project management training will be held during June/July 2021. This will be made available to volunteers based on an expression of interest application process.
- In the lead up to Round 2 2021 Community Strengthening Grants, there will be 6 location drop ins provided to give community groups/members an opportunity to discuss their grant applications, clarify any grant criteria requirements and better understand the requirements of an auspice arrangement.
- A suite of 'Frequently Asked Questions' will be developed to support a better understanding of the grant process and program and address many of the common items raised during grants rounds.
- Changes to the online grant application forms and interface will be implemented based on feedback provided.

This will enable community groups to further develop their skills in grant writing, program design and project management. It is anticipated that greater long-term clarity in relation to the operating environment for community groups and activities (around COVID19) and less variety in terms of available funding streams may lead to an increase in the number of applications for Community Strengthening Grants.

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes

Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	Yes
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	No
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	No
Risk Assessment	Yes
Communication	Yes
Human Rights Charter	No

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

5.1 Community Grants Program Policy.

The Community Grants Program aims to enable community groups to further enhance the wellbeing and quality of life of the wider community in a partnership relationship with Council

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The Environment and Sustainability funding stream of the Community Strengthening Grants Program directly targets environmental sustainability, resilience and a healthy environment for communities in Golden Plains Shire.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The following strategies were undertaken to promote the Community Strengthening Grants Program, Round 1 2021:

- A promotional article published in the Golden Plains Gazette and delivered to all households in March 2020.
- Multiple emails were provided to community groups, sport and recreation clubs, community coordinators, committees of management and kindergarten committees.
- A variety of articles and promotion was undertaken via Council's website and Social Media platforms.
- One-on-one mentoring was offered and provided by the Community Partnerships Officer via meetings, online conferencing or over the phone.

An opportunity for Councillors to acknowledge and congratulate recipients of the funding will be provided at the Council Meeting on 29 June 2021. This will involve a short description of each group's project and the amount of funding awarded which will be announced by Councillors.

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

The Community Grants Program Framework was adopted in February 2020 and provides clear processes and criteria for public transparency in the submission, assessment and awarding of community grants.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Council's Annual Budget provides an allocation of \$157,500 toward the Community Grants Program, of which \$12,500 is allocated to SmartyGrants management software.

RISK ASSESSMENT

There are identified risk implications associated with this report. The Community Strengthening Grants Framework is applied to the assessment of all applications for grants in the interests of a consistent approach to both identifying and mitigating risks to the community and Council.

COMMUNICATION

Communication on the outcome of all applications received for the Community Strengthening Grants will occur following this report being acknowledged by Council. A ceremony to award the grants at the Council meeting on 29 June 2021 will be undertaken and the outcomes will be promoted via Council's digital and print media platforms.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic).

OPTIONS

Option 1 – Council acknowledge the approved community grants recipients as detailed in this report.

This option is recommended by officers as the Community Grants Framework as adopted by Council in February 2020 has been applied to all grants applications and the funded projects have been approved by the CEO.

Option 2 – Council do not acknowledge the approved community grants recipients as detailed in this report.

This option is not recommended by officers as Council's adopted Community Grants Framework has been applied to all grants applications and the funded projects have been approved by the CEO.

Option 3 – Council defer the report.

This option is not recommended by officers as Council's adopted Community Grants Framework has been applied to all grants applications and the funded projects have been approved by the CEO. Furthermore, this would likely lead to a delay in the awarding of grants to community groups who lodged their grant applications during April 2021.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest in regards to this matter.

CONCLUSION

Round 1 applications for the 2021 Community Strengthening Grants Program have been assessed against the criteria set by Council under the Community Grants Program framework that was revised and adopted in February 2020.

Following CEO review, 12 projects as summarised in Attachment One have been approved for funding to the total value of \$44,531 across the four funding streams – Healthy Active Living, Community Safety, Creative Community and Environment and Sustainability. Council's investment of \$44,531 will deliver a return of \$99,062 in total project value to local communities across Golden Plains Shire.

Following acknowledgement of this report, Councillors will be invited to recognise the successful grant recipients at the commencement of the Council Meeting on 29 June. A short description of each group's project, its importance to the community and the amount of funding awarded will be announced.

Representatives from the successful community groups will be invited to attend the Council Meeting or dial into the meeting virtually.

Attachment 1: Community Strengthening Grants Summary

Applicant	Project Details	Recommendation
<p>Applicant: Inverleigh Progress Association</p> <p>Project: Open Space Mower Replacement</p>	<p>This project seeks to replace the existing mower the Inverleigh Progress Association have used for the last seven years, which is now out of warranty. The mower is used solely for maintaining the Leigh River Open Space.</p> <p>Through the diligent and dedicated work of volunteers and the use of community mowing the Leigh River Open Space area has been cleared of noxious weeds and vermin. This work has the additional benefit of providing a buffer zone that ensures town fire protection from the north.</p> <p>Community Benefit:</p> <p>Clearing and maintaining the areas allows the community, walking groups, school excursions, sporting groups and visitors to the community to enjoy the Leigh River Open Space.</p> <p>The committee believe they are constructing a sustainable and natural environment for future generations to enjoy the balance between modern society and nature.</p> <p>The requested 4WD mower has modern safety features to meet OH&S standards.</p> <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Project Cost: \$30,000 • Requested Funding: \$10,000 	<p>\$10,000.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement</p>
Applicant	Project Details	Recommendation
<p>Applicant: Inverleigh Primary School Gardening Group</p> <p>Project: Raised Beds for Edible Garden Project</p>	<p>This project seeks to establish an edible community garden. Funding will be used to purchase 4 slim line raised beds for a vegetable and herb garden, and the purchase of apple, plum and native bush tucker trees.</p> <p>Project Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a hands-on gardening experience for students and community to better understand food production. • Donate produce to community groups and vulnerable community members. • Further enhance a recent school 'green team' volunteer project. Students 	<p>\$1,600.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement</p>

Attachment 1: Community Strengthening Grants Summary

	<p>volunteer their time to maintain plants and the garden whilst also taking part in plant selection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Food Swap Group, and the Inverleigh Community Gardening Group will also assist with maintaining the garden during school holidays. <p>Project Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a hands-on gardening experience for students and community, to better understand food production. Donate produce to community groups and vulnerable community members. <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Project Cost: \$3,500 Requested Funding: \$1,600 	
Applicant	Project Details	Recommendation
Bannockburn Community Planning Group	<p>Easy access to Bannockburn Bushland</p> <p>To improve and facilitate access for people of all degrees of mobility to the Bannockburn Bushland reserve. Funds requested for a Bobcat or backhoe to complete works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To conduct events and showcase the improved access. Provide educational opportunities for schools and the community. To foster an interest in our native; aerial, terrestrial, and aquatic flora and fauna. <p>Project outcome:</p> <p>Improved access to tracks within the Bannockburn Bushland Reserve.</p> <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Project Cost: \$8,000.00 Requested Funding: \$4,000.00 	<p>\$4,000.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has not recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement.</p> <p>Community Strengthening Grant application for the same project from a previous round is outstanding and is required to be acquitted before another grant can be requested. Referred to Round 2 September 2021 Grant round.</p>

Attachment 1: Community Strengthening Grants Summary

Community Safety Category		
Applicant	Project Details	Recommendation
<p>Applicant: Linton and District Progress Association</p> <p>Project: Linton Community Safety Plan Connecting Community and Leaders</p>	<p>This project seeks to establish a community neighbourhood plan based on a co-design approach with both the Linton community and emergency services agencies. The funding requested will be used for the delivery of a neighbourhood plan, community education and resource developments. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Services based on an all agencies and all hazards approach to develop a neighbourhood plan. • Emergency Services bus tour assessment of hazards to inform emergency services of local demographics. This will enable local based emergency assessment, whilst informing the community engagement development for the community workshops. • Community and emergency services filming, interviews, and educational resourcing. • Community and emergency service meetings to ensure the co-design approach is at the centre of the project. <p>Project Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A community that is informed and have personal responsibility and action in all phases of PPRR (Prevention, Preparedness, Response, Recovery). • Neighbourhood plan that allows for community preparedness and resilience. • Relationships with emergency services to sustain the longevity of the project. • Beneficial outcomes for the Council MEMP. <p>Note: If funding is received this project will also be a major project for Linton's new Community Plan which is due for development during the 2021 – 2022 financial year.</p> <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Project Cost: \$12,000 • Requested Funding: \$6,000 	<p>\$6,000.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement</p>

Attachment 1: Community Strengthening Grants Summary

Applicant	Project Details	Recommendation
<p>Applicant: Smythesdale Progress Association</p> <p>Project: Shower Ventilation Project</p>	<p>This project seeks funding to purchase and install exhaust fans in the free camp shower block at the Smythesdale Public Gardens.</p> <p>The installation of the showering block fan ensures that the facility is COVID safe compliant for both volunteers who clean/maintain the facility and the community visitors who use it.</p> <p>Project Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased camping patronage resulting which will aid in economic benefits to the towns businesses, and an increase in donations to the campground. Establishing a renewed positive reputation of the garden's facilities and township. Once the fan is installed, the group can safely re-open the showering block to visitors. <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Project Cost: \$1,600 Requested Funding: \$800 	<p>\$800.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement</p>

Creative Communities Category		
Applicant	Project Details	Recommendation
<p>Applicant: Smythesdale Community Coordinators</p> <p>Project: Music at the Market</p>	<p>This project seeks funding support to cover the performer fees, production (mixing/technician) equipment, setting up and packing up of equipment, and publicity for the event.</p> <p>Music at the Market seeks to develop live music and performances at the Smythesdale Country Market in November and December 2021, February, March, and April 2022. The project aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feature local groups such as the Haddon Community Band, Tim Tam Tuesday (voluntary contributors), Ballarat bands, and additional performers and musical acts. Open mike sessions will also be held to encourage local amateur performers. Provide local residents' opportunities to join community artistic projects. 	<p>\$2,300.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement</p>

Attachment 1: Community Strengthening Grants Summary

	<p>The project was inspired by the success of the live music at the 2021 Smythesdale Arts and Music Fiesta, which generated considerable local support with feedback that the community wanted to have more live music performances.</p> <p>The project aligns with Council's Arts & Culture Strategy through providing opportunities for residents to connect and engage, supporting the local artistic community, and revitalising local spaces.</p> <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Project Cost: \$4,600.00 • Requested Funding: \$2,300.00 	
Applicant	Project Details	Recommendation
<p>Applicant: Smythesdale Arts & Music Community Fiesta</p> <p>Project: Event Support for the Smythesdale Arts and Music Community Fiesta</p>	<p>The funding for this project is for performer and artist fees, advertising and equipment hire.</p> <p>The aim of this project is to increase the viability of the Smythesdale Arts & Music Community Fiesta as a sustainable and established annual event, where the Smythesdale community and the greater surrounding district will be the prime beneficiaries of the Fiesta. The Fiesta Program involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A diverse genre of visual and performance artists. • Exhibition and selling of artwork. • Community workshops and demonstrations. • Public interaction and participation in Poetry Sessions and Mural Painting. <p>Project Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen wellbeing and engagement within the local and surrounding communities of Smythesdale. • Build and strengthen inclusion for disengaged residents and newly arrived young families. • Provide community connection and collaboration following pandemic lockdowns. <p>The project aligns with Council's Arts & Culture Strategy through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing opportunities for members of the community to engage in socialisation and entertainment. • Establishing social connections with community service bodies and clubs. 	<p>\$5,795.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement</p>

Attachment 1: Community Strengthening Grants Summary

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing workshops and activities that will engage members of the local community in artistic and social pursuits. • Raising the profile of local and regional artists, musicians, poets, and art workers. <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Project Cost: \$11,590 • Requested Funding: \$5,795 	
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Applicant	Project Details	Recommendation
<p>Applicant: Meredith History Interest Group</p> <p>Project: Connecting the Past while looking to the Future</p>	<p>This project seeks to establish three historical events held over 2021-22. The events are a starting point to reconnect the community of Meredith, post COVID-19 restrictions, through a creative outlet and building community participation.</p> <p>The events will also support local business, through the provision of local food, drinks, and gifts.</p> <p>Event 1: A Book Launch Afternoon of 'The Pubs & Publicans of Meredith 1840-1960'. The Launch will include locals "acting in roles of past publicans and telling their stories", followed by afternoon tea and a self-guided walk to the historical hotel sites.</p> <p>Event 2: Steiglitz Gold Rush Boom Town. A photo exhibition of Steiglitz in its Gold Rush Boom Time, telling the story of Steiglitz history. To be held in conjunction with the Airing of the Quilts, a biannual event in Steiglitz in October, providing the opportunity to cross promote both events.</p> <p>Event 3: Lost Trades of Meredith & District Weekend. An event where business and associations once operating within Meredith and District can come along and display their lost skills and trades.</p> <p>Project Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting the community to Meredith & District's rich history. • Bringing Community together after a year of COVID pandemic isolation. • An opportunity for community of all ages and backgrounds to come together and explore and learn in a creative way the story of Meredith. 	<p>\$3,800.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement</p>

Attachment 1: Community Strengthening Grants Summary

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for visitors to learn about the community and the history of Meredith's people, events, and building. <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Project Cost: \$7,600 Requested Funding: \$3,800 	
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Healthy and Active Living Category		
Applicant	Project Details	Recommendation
<p>Applicant: Inverleigh Cemetery Trust</p> <p>Project: Seating for Rest and Reflection</p>	<p>Funding to install two seats in the cemetery grounds to give a place of rest and reflection for visitors. The budget covers the purchase of the seating, cement, freight charges and products required for assembly.</p> <p>The provision of seating at the cemetery aims to meet the needs of several types of visitors to the cemetery, providing a resting space for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older residents as they visit loved ones. Family members at graveside funerals. Inverleigh's Historical Society researching gravesites. Upcoming Cemetery Walking Tours. Volunteers resting place at working bees. Visitors may stay longer and enjoy more reflective time with former friends and family. <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Project Cost: \$5,860 Requested Funding: \$2,930 	<p>\$ 2,930.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement</p>
Applicant	Project Details	Recommendation
<p>Applicant: Golden Plains Trail Riders</p> <p>Project: Safety Items</p>	<p>Funding will be used for the purchase of a radio and portable safety signage.</p> <p>This project's focus is on rider and community safety with <u>portable</u> crossing signage to alert riders and community of road crossing points.</p> <p>The radio will allow for volunteer support to be able to communicate with base and other volunteers.</p> <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Project Cost: \$1,280 Requested Funding: \$640 	<p>\$640.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement</p>

Attachment 1: Community Strengthening Grants Summary

Applicant	Project Details	Recommendation
<p>Applicant: Bannockburn Inclusive</p> <p>Project: Bus and Ferry trip to Sorrento for people with disabilities and the elderly</p>	<p>Funding for this project will be used for transport, catering, and promotion.</p> <p>Bannockburn Inclusive is a recently formed social group, providing people with disabilities, the elderly, the socially isolated and their family and/or carers to meet and interact in a social and friendly environment.</p> <p>Project Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a newly developed Bannockburn social group for people with disabilities and seniors to build skills and social connections whilst learning more broadly how to access community. • Coordinate an inclusive return bus and ferry trip to Sorrento inclusive of lunch, resulting in improved mental health and wellbeing outcomes, reducing feelings of social isolation, and increasing social connectedness. • Addressing the current public transport timetable is unsuitable, and buses do not allow for wheelchair-bound, elderly or anyone with reduced mobility. <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Project Cost: \$ 3,200 • Requested Funding: \$1,600 	<p>\$1,600.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement</p>
Application	Project	Recommendation
<p>Applicant: Lethbridge Public Hall</p> <p>Project: Replacement of Ovens</p>	<p>Funding to purchase and install two new ovens in the Lethbridge Public Hall Kitchen.</p> <p>The Hall is used every Friday for a community social group, amongst other community social events. A well-equipped kitchen is essential to running events out of the hall, and the group is currently limited to what they can cater for.</p> <p>Replacing the ovens will improve this facility and allow the group to expand on community functions and social connection within the Lethbridge community.</p> <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Project Cost: \$ 4,084.00 • Requested Funding: \$2,042 	<p>\$2,042.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement</p>

Attachment 1: Community Strengthening Grants Summary

Application	Project	Recommendation
<p>Applicant: Linton & District Progress Association</p> <p>Project: Community Seating and Gardening Group Equipment</p>	<p>This project seeks funding to enhance and develop the public spaces in and around Linton for use by the local community and visitors to the region, with funding initially used to purchase the equipment necessary for the Linton Gardening Group to create a new seating area and to replace an existing seating area. The local community garden will also be further developed.</p> <p>The project will work alongside Council as part of the Northern Streetscapes Project and the existing Edinburgh Reserve project of the Linton & District Progress Association. This work will further develop enhance the main street of Linton and Edinburgh Reserve.</p> <p>Project Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on reconnecting community and encouraging people to be active. • Enhancing a sense of community pride by improving the appearance of public spaces. • Encouraging community members to be active within their community and volunteer their time to enhance public spaces. • Encourage people to use the public spaces available within the community. • Provide opportunities for community members to share knowledge and learn new skills. <p>Project Cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Project Cost: \$ 14,048.00 • Requested Funding: \$7,024 	<p>\$7,024.00</p> <p>The assessment panel has recommended the funding application be approved subject to CEO review/endorsement</p>

One application not recommended for funding

- Bannockburn Community Planning Group was deemed not eligible: funding acquittal outstanding on previous grant for the same project. Referred to Round 2 September 2021. Requested funding \$4,000.00

7.4 P20087 CROWN ALLOTMENT 37E PIGGOREET ROAD, PIGGOREET (DWELLING AND NATIVE VEGETATION REMOVAL)**File Number:****Author:** Peter O'Brien, Town Planner**Authoriser:** Phil Josipovic, Director Infrastructure and Development**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council resolves to issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit for the use and development of a dwelling and associated native vegetation removal at Crown Allotment 37E Piggoreet Road, Piggoreet for the following reasons:

1. The proposal is contrary to the Municipal Planning Strategy in particular Clauses 02.02, 02.03-1, 02.03-4 & 02.03-6 and Council's Rural Land Use Strategy which all seek to protect agricultural land, by discouraging use and development that is inconsistent with agricultural activities and by containing residential development within existing town boundaries.
2. The proposal is inconsistent with the policies contained in the Planning Policy Framework (Clauses 11.03-3S, 12.05-2R, 14.01-1S & 16.01-3S) which aim to protect productive agricultural land and minimise or avoid property servicing costs carried by local and State governments by directing housing to existing settlements and discouraging the development of small lots in rural areas for dwellings.
3. The proposal does not satisfy the provisions of the Farming Zone, because the dwelling is not reasonably required for the proposed use of the land and the proposal has the potential to lead to a proliferation of dwellings in the area, affect the operation of nearby agricultural uses and result in the loss of productive agricultural land.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report relates to a planning permit application for a dwelling and associated native vegetation removal at Crown Allotment 37E Piggoreet Road, Piggoreet. The application has been referred to a Council meeting for determination because Council officers consider that the application does not satisfy the provisions of the planning scheme and should be refused.

The report provides a background to the application and a summary of the relevant planning considerations. Councillors have also been provided with a full copy of the application for consideration prior to making a decision.

The application is not considered to satisfy the provisions of the planning scheme including the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework, the Rural Land Use Strategy and the decision guidelines of the Farming Zone. The use of the land for a dwelling has the potential to lead to a proliferation of dwellings in the area, affect the operation of nearby agricultural uses and result in the loss of productive agricultural land. The issue of a Notice of a Refusal to grant a planning permit is recommended, as per the proposed grounds of refusal.

BACKGROUND**Site description**

The subject land is formally described as Crown Allotment 37E Section G Parish of Clarksdale and is located in the rural locality of Piggoreet. The site is a vacant bush block with a total area of approximately 5.6 hectares. The land is undulating and contains remnant bushland. Access to the site is from Piggoreet Road which is an all-weather gravel road managed by Council. An unmade road reserve runs along the rear (western) boundary of the land and separates the land from an adjoining lot (Crown Allotment 37F) in the same ownership.

Surrounding land is predominately in a Farming Zone (FZ) except for Crown Land reserves along the Woody Yaloak River and the 'Devils Kitchen' geological formation which are in a Public Conservation & Resource Zone (PCRZ). There is a dwelling on the adjoining land to the south but otherwise the surrounding area consists of farmland and bushland.

A planning permit for a dwelling on the land was previously issued in 2013 but was not acted on. There are no covenants applying to the land.

Proposal

The application proposes the use and development of the land for a dwelling and associated native vegetation removal. The dwelling is proposed to be located towards the front of the property with a setback distance of 42.6m from the Piggoreet Road (eastern) boundary and 39m from the nearest side (northern) boundary. The proposed dwelling is a single storey residence containing three bedrooms, living and meals area, amenities and garage. Detailed plans have not been submitted but the external materials of the dwelling appear to consist of brick walls and metal roofing.

The proposed dwelling is not associated with any agricultural use. The application suggests that a dwelling is required to facilitate the environmental management of the land and provide the owner with a base to undertake conservation works such as weed and pest control.

The application involves the removal of a small area of native vegetation (0.044ha) for the effluent disposal system associated with the dwelling. The removal of native vegetation for the dwelling and to create defendable space is exempt from requiring a permit under Clause 52.12-5 of the planning scheme.

Site Map



CONSULTATION

Notice of the application was not given under Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act* 1987 because the proposal is not considered to cause material detriment to any person. The site has adequate separation to adjoining properties including nearby agricultural uses and is screened by surrounding bushland.

ASSESSMENT

The subject land is in a Farming Zone (FZ) and is affected by a Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO).

A planning permit is required under the following provisions:

- FZ (Clause 35.07-1) A dwelling is a 'Section 2 - permit required' use where the land is less than the area specified in the schedule to the zone (100 hectares).
- FZ (Clause 35.07-4) A permit is required for buildings and works associated with a Section 2 use (dwelling).
- BMO (44.06-2) A permit is required for buildings and works associated with accommodation (dwelling).
- Particular provisions – Native vegetation (Clause 52.17-1) A permit is required to remove, lop or destroy native vegetation.

The application was lodged on 27 March 2020 and has been delayed due to multiple requests for further information (amended plans) by the CFA. The CFA is a recommending referral authority for an application for a dwelling in the BMO. The CFA consented to the issue of a permit subject to conditions being placed on the permit.

PLANNING SCHEME

Municipal Planning Strategy

02.01 Context

The Shire is characterised by agricultural land used predominantly for grazing and cropping as well as other activities including intensive animal industries and wind farms. There are a large number of small townships as well as extensive natural forested areas, bushland areas and riverine gorges in the municipality.

02.02 Vision

Council's vision is to sustainably manage land use and development within the Shire, including:

- Residential development will predominantly be contained within townships.
- The natural environment will be protected and enhanced.
- The local economy will grow, particularly in township development and rural based and farming industries.

02.03 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

02.03-1 Settlement

There is pressure for subdivision and development outside existing townships, particularly for subdivision and hobby farm development close to Geelong and Ballarat. Residential development is not supported outside existing township boundaries. With sufficient land being set aside for the moderate growth forecast across the Shire, no significant new areas of land need to be provided for residential development. Council seeks to (among other things):

- Encourage the consolidation of townships, including directing residential development to within township boundaries.
- Maintain a clear distinction between urban and rural areas.
- Avoid urban development in unserviced areas.

North West Area

The north-west area of the Shire contains a mix of settlements, rural residential, rural living and rural areas. Council intends to support growth in existing townships and Rural Living Zones and contain growth elsewhere.

02.03-2 Environmental and landscape values**Biodiversity**

The municipality is home to a wealth of flora and fauna, including rare and threatened species and communities, major waterways and freshwater wetlands. Remnant native vegetation across the municipality is estimated to be approximately 25 per cent of that which existed prior to European settlement. The quality and quantity of native vegetation, flora and fauna across the municipality is threatened by development, land use change and poor land management practices. Biodiversity will be supported by (among other things) protecting significant habitats and remnant vegetation from the encroachment of development.

02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity**Bushfire**

Bushfire is a significant issue across the municipality affecting built communities and natural systems. Development of land for residential purposes can have an adverse effect on the natural environment. Although the protection of human life is the primary consideration, vegetation conservation is a lower, but still important, priority in bushfire prone areas. Bushfire risk will be mitigated by (among other things) avoiding development in bushfire prone areas.

02.03-4 Natural resource management**Agriculture**

Agricultural industries continue to be the major economic sector comprising more than 25 percent of the employment in the Shire. Council aims to support sustainable agriculture in the Shire by (among other things):

- Protecting the role of agricultural land as an economically valuable resource.
- Minimising the potential for conflict between sensitive uses and agricultural practices.
- Discouraging dwellings and house lot excisions on rural properties.

02.03-6 Housing**Rural residential development**

Over the past two decades the Shire has continued to experience demand for rural residential development. The north-west area of the Shire contains Rural Activity and Farming zoning that is interspersed with large areas of Rural Living zoning. There is a substantial oversupply of land zoned Rural Living in the north of the Shire. To sustainably manage rural residential development, Council will direct infill rural residential development to the Rural Living Zone in the north-west area of the Shire.

Planning Policy Framework (PPF)

11.03-3S Peri-urban areas

The policy for Peri-urban areas seeks to manage growth in peri-urban areas to protect and enhance their identified valued attributes such as environment, landscape and agriculture. This policy includes strategies to establish growth boundaries for peri-urban towns to avoid urban sprawl and protect agricultural land and environmental assets, and to prevent dispersed settlement and provide for non-urban breaks between urban areas.

12.05-2R Landscapes - Central Highlands

The regional landscapes policy seeks to provide clear urban boundaries and maintain distinctive breaks and open rural landscapes between settlements.

14.01-1S Protection of agricultural land

The objective of this policy is to protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland. This will be achieved by preventing inappropriately dispersed urban activities in rural areas and protecting strategically important agricultural and primary production land from incompatible uses. The policy seeks to limit new housing development in rural areas by:

- Directing housing growth into existing settlements.
- Discouraging development of isolated small lots in the rural zones from use for dwellings or other incompatible uses.
- Encouraging consolidation of existing isolated small lots in rural zones.

16.01-3S Rural residential development

This policy aims to identify land suitable for rural residential development to avoid or significantly reduce adverse economic, social and environmental impacts. This is to be achieved in part by discouraging development of isolated small lots in rural zones from use for rural living or other incompatible uses, protecting existing landscape values and environmental qualities such as native vegetation, minimising or avoiding property servicing costs carried by local and State governments and by encouraging consolidation of existing isolated small lots in rural zones.

Zone and overlay provisions

Farming Zone (FZ)

The site and surrounding area is in a Farming Zone. The purpose of the Farming Zone is, among other things, to provide for the use of land for agriculture, to encourage the retention of productive agricultural land and to ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture. The schedule to the Farming Zone specifies that a permit is required for a dwelling where the lot area is less than 100 hectares.

Before deciding on an application Council must consider, among other things, the following decision guidelines:

General issues

- Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.

Agricultural issues and the impacts from non-agricultural uses

- Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production.

Dwelling issues

- Whether the dwelling will be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land due to dust, noise, odour, use of chemicals and farm machinery, traffic and hours of operation.
- Whether the dwelling will adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.
- The potential for the proposal to lead to a concentration or proliferation of dwellings in the area and the impact of this on the use of the land for agriculture.

Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)

The land is affected by the Bushfire Management Overlay. The BMO seeks to ensure that the development of land prioritises the protection of human life and to ensure that development is only permitted where the risk to life and property from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level. A permit is required for a dwelling and an application must be referred to the CFA under the provisions of the BMO.

Particular provisions**Clause 52.17 Native vegetation**

The purpose of this clause is to ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation. This is achieved by applying the following three step approach in accordance with the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017) (the Guidelines):

1. Avoid the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.
2. Minimise impacts from the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation that cannot be avoided.
3. Provide an offset to compensate for the biodiversity impact if a permit is granted to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation.

A permit is required under Clause 52.17-1 to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation. The proposed native vegetation removal is in the basic assessment pathway meaning referral to DELWP is not required.

Clause 52.12-5 of the planning scheme provides a permit exemption to the removal of native vegetation to create defensible space for a dwelling where the land is in a Bushfire Management Overlay.

General provisions

The decision guidelines contained in Clause 65.01 of the planning scheme require Council to consider the following matters, as appropriate:

- The matters set out in section 60 of the Act.
- The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- The purpose of the zone, overlay or other provision.
- Any matter required to be considered in the zone, overlay or other provision.
- The orderly planning of the area.
- The effect on the amenity of the area.
- The proximity of the land to any public land.
- Factors likely to cause or contribute to land degradation, salinity or reduce water quality.
- Whether the proposed development is designed to maintain or improve the quality of stormwater within and exiting the site.
- The extent and character of native vegetation and the likelihood of its destruction.
- Whether native vegetation is to be or can be protected, planted or allowed to regenerate.
- The degree of flood, erosion or fire hazard associated with the location of the land and the use, development or management of the land so as to minimise any such hazard.

- The adequacy of loading and unloading facilities and any associated amenity, traffic flow and road safety impacts.

Rural land use strategy

The Golden Plains Rural Land Use Strategy was adopted by Council in 2008 and is a reference document to the planning scheme. The strategy is designed to guide future land use and development across the Shire's rural areas. The strategy recognises the existence of inappropriate subdivisions containing small lots located in broad acre farming areas. These areas have limited access to social and physical infrastructure that would be required for residential development. The strategy states that although these lots can be sold individually no provision should be made for their development. The loss of agricultural land through conversion of land to rural living is a significant issue and these changes have created conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses and caused the inflation of rural land values thereby preventing farmers from purchasing land for agriculture.

CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPLICATIONS

This proposal does not require the preparation of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan under the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007*.

DISCUSSION

The proposed dwelling is not considered to satisfy the relevant policies and decision guidelines contained within the Golden Plains Planning Scheme. An assessment against the relevant provisions of the planning scheme is provided as follows:

State and local planning policies

The State and Local Planning Policy Frameworks and Rural Land Use Strategy recognise the importance of agricultural industries to State and local economies and aim to avoid the loss of productive agricultural land. The policies referred to in this report seek to direct residential development to existing townships and discourage the development of isolated small lots in rural areas for single dwellings. Residential development should be contained within existing townships to avoid conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural uses and maximise use of existing infrastructure.

The subject land is located in an isolated rural area and additional development in these areas will further increase servicing costs to Council including physical services such as road maintenance and garbage collection. Council has refused several applications for dwellings on small lots in the FZ in this area. The approval of this application would set an undesirable precedent which may lead to the development of other small lots in the area and result in the loss of valuable farmland.

Farming Zone

The planning scheme seeks to maintain viable farm sizes and sets a minimum lot size of 100 hectares in the Farming Zone. The subject land has an area of only 5.6 hectares and the proposed dwelling is not related to any agricultural use.

While a permit was issued for a dwelling on the land in 2013, more recently Council has obtained legal advice and been involved in VCAT hearings which have made clear that a dwelling in the FZ must be associated with an agricultural use and that it is not appropriate to allow bush blocks in the FZ to be used for residential purposes.

The decision guidelines of the Farming Zone relevant to this application are addressed as follows:

Whether the dwelling will adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses. The use of the land for a dwelling is considered to be inappropriate because it is inconsistent with agricultural uses in the surrounding area and may result in land use conflicts that

constrain 'as of right' agricultural uses on nearby land. The surrounding area contains a number of large farming properties which have existing use rights. The use of the land for a dwelling has the potential to result in conflicts with nearby agricultural uses.

The potential for the proposal to lead to a concentration or proliferation of dwellings in the area and the impact of this on the use of the land for agriculture. The site is one of many similar small rural lots located in the area. Many of the small vacant lots are contained in larger farming parcels however the lots could be individually sold and developed. The approval of a dwelling on such a small lot would set an undesirable precedent which would lead to pressure for residential development of similar small lots in the area, the inflation of land values preventing farmers purchasing land for agriculture and resulting in the loss of productive agricultural land.

VCAT reviews

VCAT has consistently refused applications for dwellings on small lots in the Farming Zone where the dwelling is not complementary and subservient to an agricultural use. Two recent examples within our Shire were *Campbell v Golden Plains SC* [2018] VCAT 823 and *Webster v Golden Plains SC* [2020] VCAT 71 where the applications were refused because the dwellings were not considered to be necessary for management of an agricultural use.

In this case the proposed dwelling is not related to an agricultural use. The application claims that the dwelling will enable the owner to reside on site to manage environmental issues including weeds and pest animals. It is considered that weed and pest control measures on such a small lot (5.6ha) do not adequately justify the need for the owner to permanently reside on site.

Impact of approval

Council has maintained a clear and consistent approach to its assessment of applications for dwellings within the Farming Zone by refusing those that are not reasonably required for an agricultural use. Officers are of the opinion that a dwelling is not reasonably required for the proposed use of the land and the approval of this application would set an undesirable precedent which would lead to a proliferation of dwellings in the area. This would result in the following impacts:

- The loss of productive agricultural land through the inflation of land values thereby preventing farmers from purchasing land for agricultural use.
- Introducing impediments to the establishment of agricultural industries which require substantial buffers and creating land use conflicts between existing farm operations and dwellings that are not related to agriculture.
- Increasing the demand for services and infrastructure away from existing townships which will increase costs to Council.

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020)

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	Yes
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Strategies and Plans	Yes

(Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	No
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	No
Risk Assessment	Yes
Communication	Yes
Human Rights Charter	Yes

GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

In assessing and formulating a recommendation for this planning application, the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and Golden Plains Shire Planning Scheme have been considered in the officers' assessment.

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

In assessing and formulating a recommendation for this planning application, the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and Golden Plains Shire Planning Scheme have been considered in the officers' assessment.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental considerations have been taken into account in formulating a recommendation in this matter.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Notice of the planning application was not given under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 because it is considered that the grant of a permit will not cause material detriment to any person.

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

The application is being forwarded to Council for a decision, thereby making the determination transparent.

STRATEGIES/PLANS

In assessing and formulating a recommendation for this planning application, the Golden Plains Shire Planning Scheme (which consists of strategic plans) has been considered in the officers' assessment.

RISK ASSESSMENT

There are identified risk implications associated with this report, detailed below:

- Applicant lodging an Application for Review at the Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal.
- Applicant lodging an Application for Review at the Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal, and due to the unnecessary delay, apply for costs against Council. This outcome may impact Council's professional indemnity insurance and reputational risk to Council.

COMMUNICATION

For all options proposed for this application, the outcome will be communicated to all parties in writing.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC).

OPTIONSOption 1 – Issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit

This option is recommended by officers because the application is not considered to satisfy the provisions of the Golden Plains Shire Planning Scheme.

Option 2 – Issue a Permit

This option is not recommended by officers as the matters which are required to be considered have been, and the application is not considered to satisfy the provisions of the Golden Plains Shire Planning Scheme.

Option 3 – Defer the matter to another Council Meeting for Consideration

This option is not recommended by officers as there is no outstanding information which would alter the officer recommendation on this matter.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest in regard to this matter.

CONCLUSION

The application is not considered to satisfy the provisions of the planning scheme including the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework, the Rural Land Use Strategy and the decision guidelines of the Farming Zone. The use of the land for a dwelling has the potential to lead to a proliferation of dwellings in the area, affect the operation of nearby agricultural uses and result in the loss of productive agricultural land. It is therefore recommended that the application be refused.

7.5 ADOPTION OF GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025

File Number:

Author: Ben Jordan, Manager Community and Council Planning

Authoriser: Lisa Letic, Director Community Services

Attachments: 1. Council Plan 2021-2025 (under separate cover)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the verbal and written submissions received and considered at 8 June 2021 Council Meeting.
2. That Council adopt the Golden Plains Shire Council Plan 2021-2025 in accordance with Section 90 of the *Local Government Act 2020* as attached.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks to formally adopt the Council Plan 2021-2025 incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan that has been developed in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

A number of stages were undertaken in developing the Council Plan 2021-2025 commencing in November 2020 including the adoption of the Golden Plains Shire Community Vision 2040, gathering of internal priorities from across Council, extensive community engagement and a series of Councillor workshops.

Presentation of the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 was provided to the Council Meeting on 27 April 2021 with Council endorsing provision of the Draft Council Plan for a public exhibition and submission process for a period from 28 April to 26 May 2021.

A Special Meeting of Council was held on Tuesday 8 June 2021 to consider all written submissions from the public. Council received a total of ten public submissions relating to the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 with three submitters addressing Council in support of their submission at the meeting.

Amendments made to the Council Plan following the public exhibition and submission process and further internal review of the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 are outlined in this report and are included in the updated version of the Council Plan 2021-2025 (attached).

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires that Council develop and adopt a new Council Plan by 31 October in the year following an election. The current Council Plan (2017-2021) comes to a close on 30 June 2021.

The project plan and timelines endorsed by Council in November 2021 for developing the Council Plan 2021-2025 have progressed including the following key stages:

- Council adoption of the Golden Plains Shire Community Vision 2040 in December 2020
- Internal priorities developed by teams across Council – December 2020 to February 2021
- Councillor priorities provided, identified and discussed through survey and workshops
- Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan community engagement process conducted from 18 January 2021 to 21 February 2021
- Analysis and workshopping of community engagement responses, internal and Councillor priorities for consideration in Draft Council Plan 2021-2025
- Presentation of the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 and endorsement for the Draft to be provided for public exhibition and submission.

- Public exhibition and submissions on Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 open from 28 April to 26 May 2021
- Ten public submissions received and considered at Special Council Meeting on 8 June 2021. Three submitters elected to speak to their submissions at the meeting.

Incorporation of health and wellbeing matters and the legislative requirements of a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (*Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*) into the Council Plan 2021-2025 has been undertaken. This ensures an integrated approach to the planning and implementing of actions is undertaken to ensure health and wellbeing is embedded as a responsibility across all areas of Council.

Under Section 27 of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* Council's sought an exemption (through the Department of Health Victoria) from producing a stand alone Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan through the inclusion of public health and wellbeing matters into the Council Plan. An exemption from producing a stand-alone Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan was granted with notification provided to Council from the Department of Health on 20 May 2021.

Prior to implementation, the final Council Plan 2021-2025 will be provided to the 29 June 2021 Ordinary Council Meeting for adoption.

DISCUSSION

The public exhibition and submission process for the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 was extensively promoted during April and May 2021 alongside the Draft Budget 2021-22. A media release, and promotion via publications (including the Gazette), online and through social media platforms was undertaken. Copies of the Draft Council Plan were made available for viewing online and at Council Customer Service Centres.

Two specific Councillor public engagement events around the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 and Draft Budget were undertaken with the Councillors attending the Golden Plains Farmers Market on 1 May and Coffee with Councillors sessions conducted at nine community locations on Saturday 8 May.

Ten public submissions were received on the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025, of which three submitters were heard at the Special Council Meeting on 8 June 2021. All written submissions were presented to Councillors in their entirety on 1 June and considered following the Special Council Meeting. A summary of the written submissions is provided in the table below.

Date Submitted	Heard on 8 June	Township	Summary of Submission
5 May	Yes	Teesdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add the Teesdale to Bannockburn off road trail to the Council Plan. This has been a community priority for around 15 years
24 May	No	Teesdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declare a Climate Emergency • Promote a number of sustainability items - sustainable farming and agriculture, • support sustainable housing, reduce gas and promote electricity, support recycling and sustainable waste treatment • Protect old growth gums, habitat and local wildlife. • Improve public transport, provide alternative transport options.
25 May	Yes	Smythes Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smythesdale Snake Valley Rd and Whites Bridge in Council Plan. • Better pedestrian links around Smythesdale joining the township and key • public/recreation areas – to link in with the Rail

			<p>Tail project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A park run in Smythesdale. • A local project to clean the river and promote community participation.
25 May	No	Teesdale	<p>A number of items relating to the review of the Domestic Animal Management Plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling of wandering and nuisance cats – need for a curfews, pens, enclosures • Impact of cats on native wildlife, including birds • More resources for animal management and enforcement.
24 May	No	Teesdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controls on housing developments and their impact on natural environment • Activities to mitigate/address Climate Change • Walking and cycling trails. • Increased public transport. • Animal control including consideration of a cat curfew and action on rabbit plague • Involvement of indigenous people on environmental matters.
26 May	No	Inverleigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declare a Climate Emergency. • Assisting farms with practices and resilience to extreme weather. • Reducing household energy and carbon footprint, including waste management, energy solution, green space. • Improving and protecting rivers, streams and native wildlife habitat • Community gardens, workshops e.g. composting and tree planting. • Improved public transport. • Support for a LGBTQIA+ Youth space/service.
26 May	No	Inverleigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaring a Climate Emergency. • Climate change actions to both mitigate and adapt. • Renewable energy and zero carbon targets and supporting businesses/farmers to switch away from fossil fuels.
26 May	No	Teesdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off-road cycling and pedestrian trails. • Better public transport. • Protecting indigenous landscape and natural habitat. • Housing developments, wildlife corridors and speed limits. • Weed and feral animal control.
26 May	Yes	Newtown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and wellbeing underpins everything. • Addressing climate change is critical, including a Climate Change Action Plan, emission reduction targets and clean/green technology. • Sustainable development. • Mental health initiatives. • Partnering with community on environmental issues.
27 May	No	Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further emphasis on preventing and responding to family violence, including

		Consultant	<p>measures and language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger images/references to reflect diversity. • Highlighting sexual and reproductive health. • Indicator options for community safety. • Gender equity programs and applying an intersectional gender lens. • Support and recognition of LGBTQIA+ communities.
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Following consideration at the Special Council Meeting on 8 June 2021, written responses for all ten public submissions were provided. A large number of items raised within the submissions are already represented, are considered to be sub-actions of those within the Council Plan or are covered off by other business activities.

As a result of the submissions and further internal review of the Draft Council Plan during the public exhibition period, some amendments have been made to final Council Plan 2021-2025 as provided in the table below.

Change/Edit	Update made to Council Plan	Rationale
Word added	Data and Context Bullet Point, Theme 1: Community <i>Lower reported family violence rates than the Victorian average.</i>	Recognises that family violence is usually under reported.
Wording added	Action under 1.1.1 <i>Develop and implement the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2021-2025 to collaborate and advocate with community and partners for initiatives that raise awareness of health and wellbeing, including:...</i>	Represents the planning, delivery and role of MPHWP Action Plan which is required to be developed by October 2021.
Wording added	<i>1.1.1 Education, programs, services and infrastructure to enable people to feel safe in their local communities including preventing and responding to family violence and improving mental wellbeing.</i>	Differentiates between prevention and response mechanisms to target family violence.
Word added	Bullet point in Action under 1.1.1 <i>The prevention of family violence, including partnerships with prevention, response and support services, raising awareness and advocating for services</i>	As with above differentiates between prevention and response mechanisms to target family violence.
Word added	<i>1.4.1 Value and provide inclusive opportunities for residents of all ages, genders and abilities to meaningfully participate in community life</i>	To better represent gender diversity in Council Plan.
Wording added	New bullet point in Action under 1.4.1 <i>Realise and promote the potential of young GPS residents through:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening and activation of the Golden Plains Youth Hub including advocacy for new service provision (e.g. Allied Health and outreach youth services) • Youth Development Action Plan • Municipal Early Years Plan • A program of youth activities and events 	Adds the Municipal Early Years Plan as an important factor in the development of young people and families in Golden Plains.
New action added	Action under 1.4.1 <i>Promote and encourage activities that build awareness of gender diversity and support inclusion for LGBTQIA+ communities</i>	Supports the inclusion of gender diverse and LGBTQIA+ communities in Council Plan.
Wording	Bullet point in Action under 2.1.2 <i>Rural paths</i>	Specifically recognises this

added	<i>connecting townships including further investigation of a Teesdale to Bannockburn path.</i>	path as a priority for further investigation/action.
Wording added	<i>3.1.1 Ensuring our native vegetation, ecosystems, flora and fauna and old growth trees are healthy and protected</i>	Recognises the significance and need to protect of old growth trees.
Wording added	<i>2022/23 and beyond, Action under 3.4.1 Tackle climate change and its impact on health including implementing the Emissions Reduction Action Plan and Climate Change Action Plan.</i>	Represents that a broader action plan for the Shire to address Climate Change will be developed and implemented in years following 2021/22.
Refer the action to future year/s	<i>Move action under 3.2.2 to 2022/23 and beyond Review alternatives and costing models for the collection and/or disposal of hard waste, including the EPA Landfill Levy.</i>	The Waste Strategy, adopted in August 2020 determined that hard waste collection service/ tip vouchers etc. would not be introduced in the short term (due to increased costs to rate payer). Will be revisited in 2023.
Wording added	<p>Bullet points and wording added in action under 4.1.1 <i>Provide services, infrastructure and support to enable health, wellbeing and development in early years, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Maternal Child Health</i> • <i>Community Playgroups</i> • <i>Early Years Networks</i> • <i>Funded Kindergarten Services</i> • <i>Family Day Care Service</i> • <i>Parenting support groups.</i> 	To better represent additional and comprehensive services across the early years.
Wording change	<i>4.1.1 Connect Collaborate with learning centres, local groups and activities to promote skill development opportunities including with emergency services, Mens Sheds and interest groups.</i>	To better represent the role Council can play following clarification from Councillors.
Wording added	<i>4.4.1 Work with partners to deliver short-term courses, internships and job training opportunities for ratepayers and residents, including promoting the use of Council facilities.</i>	To better represent the support Council can play in supporting courses etc. following clarification from Councillors.

Highlights represent the text changes made to Council Plan

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications	Yes

(Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	Yes
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	No
Risk Assessment	Yes
Communication	Yes
Human Rights Charter	No

GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

The governance principles in Section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, have been applied to the development of the Council Plan 2021-2025 including:

- Engaging the community in strategic planning and strategic decision making.
- Priority is given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations
- Taking into account regional, state and national plans and policies in strategic planning and decision making.
- Ensuring transparency of Council decisions, actions and information.

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

The development, public exhibition and adoption of the Council Plan 2021-2025 (scheduled for June 2021) ensures Council can deliver on a number of the legislative requirements in the *Local Government Act 2020* including Section 89 (Strategic Planning Principles) and Section 90 (Council Plan).

The Council Plan 2021-2025 also addresses Section 27 of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* through the inclusion of public health and wellbeing matters in the Council Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Good governance to ensure the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district are all areas addressed in the Council Plan 2021-2025.

The Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023 provides the focus area of 'tackling climate change and its impact on health' that needs to be addressed in Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan - this has been incorporated under theme 3.Sustainability in the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement in the development of the Council Plan 2021-2025 was undertaken in accordance with the community engagement principles in the *Local Government Act 2020*. The processes for the development of the Council Plan have included deliberative engagement practices as defined in Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Following extensive community engagement supported by advertising and promotion in January and February 2020, the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025. was developed and presented to Council in April. The Draft was placed on public exhibition with submissions received from 28 April to 26 May 2020. This period included face to face engagement with Councillors at the Golden Plains Farmers' Market and through Coffee with Councillors sessions in May 2021.

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

The deliberative community engagement in the development of the Council Plan 2021-2025 and public exhibition/submission process for the Draft provide public transparency in decision making through actions and information that are accessible and guided by members of the community.

STRATEGIES/PLANS

In undertaking development of the Council Plan 2021-2025, Council has given effect to the Strategic Planning principles under Section 89 of the *Local Government Act 2020* which include:

- (a) an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting is to be adopted;
- (b) strategic planning must address the Community Vision;
- (c) strategic planning must take into account the resources needed for effective implementation;
- (d) strategic planning must identify and address the risks to effective implementation;
- (e) strategic planning must provide for ongoing monitoring of progress and regular reviews to identify and address changing circumstances.

In addition, the Council Plan incorporates the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (as required under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*) which includes addressing priorities in alignment with the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019–2023.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Council Plan must take into account the resources needed for effective implementation and both the Budget and Financial Plan are required to give effect to the Council Plan and other strategic plans of the Council.

Development of the Council Plan 2021-2025 has been undertaken in alignment with processes for the Budget to ensure that both the current and future resources required for the delivery of actions and initiatives in the Council Plan are considered and provided for.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Identified risk implications associated with this report have been addressed as detailed below:

- The extensive engagement process undertaken including providing the Council Plan for public viewing and submission enables involvement in Council decision making and minimises the risk that the community does not substantively support the final document.
- Community engagement processes and the preparation and adoption of a Council Plan address the risk of not meeting the legislative requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.
- A comprehensive approach to incorporating the requirements of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* into the Council Plan was undertaken to minimise the risk of not being granted an exemption from producing a stand-alone Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. The Department of Health granted Council an exemption from producing a stand-alone Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and on 20 May 2021.

COMMUNICATION

The key stages and timelines determined for developing the Council Plan 2021-2025 have been broadly communicated via publications, media releases, online and through social media posts.

This included the public exhibition and submission process promoted to encourage participation and feedback on the Draft Council Plan during April and May 2021.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*.

OPTIONS

Option 1 – That Council adopt the Council Plan 2021-2025

This option is recommended by officers as the Council Plan has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and replaces the previous Council Plan 2017-2021 that comes to a close on 30 June 2021.

Option 2 – That Council do not adopt the Council Plan 2021-2025

This option is not recommended by officers as the Council Plan has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The Council Plan outlines the strategic direction and deliverables for Council over the period 2021-2025 and has been informed by significant community engagement to action and address the Golden Plains Community Vision 2040.

Option 3 – That Council defer the adoption of the Council Plan 2021-2025

This option is not recommended by officers as the timelines for the Council Plan were designed to enable public submissions to be received and considered prior to adoption of the Council Plan on 29 June 2021. The period the Council Plan is scheduled to commence on is 1 July 2021 and 29 June is the last meeting prior to this date.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest in regards to this matter.

CONCLUSION

Following community engagement and development, the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 was presented to Council in April 2021 and endorsed for public exhibition and submission from 28 April to 26 May 2021. Ten public submissions on the Draft Council Plan 2021-2025 were received and considered at the 8 June 2021 Special Council Meeting.

After consideration of public submissions, Councillor feedback and further internal review, the final Council Plan 2021-2025 with amendments (attached) is presented for adoption.

A copy of the adopted Council Plan will be provided to the Office of the Minister for Local Government and copies of the Council Plan 2021-2025 will be made available to the public on Council's website and at Customer Service Centres.

7.6 ADOPTION OF GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL BUDGET 2021-22

File Number:**Author:** Fiona Rae, Manager Finance**Authoriser:** Philippa O'Sullivan, Director Corporate Services**Attachments:**

1. 2021-22 Draft Budget (under separate cover)
2. 2021-22 Draft Fees and Charges (under separate cover)
3. 2021-22 to 2024-25 Draft Revenue and Rating Plan (under separate cover)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the verbal and written submissions received and considered at 8 June 2021 Special Council Meeting.
2. Note the declaration of rates included in the 2021-22 Budget.
3. Approve \$50,000 to continue the COVID-19 financial hardship policy into 2021-22 and an additional \$50,000 to deliver a COVID-19 recovery program.
4. Resolve to adopt the 2021-22 Budget for the purpose of Section 96 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
5. Adopt the 2021-22 to 2024-25 Revenue and Rating Plan for the purpose of Section 93 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks to formally adopt the 2021-22 Budget, incorporating the 2021-22 rating fees and charges pursuant to Section 96 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The 2021-22 Draft Budget has been prepared based on the adopted principles within the 2021-2025 Council Plan and Financial Plan within the framework of a 1.5% rate increase cap mandated by the State Government.

After making the document available for public inspection and inviting submissions under Section 96 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council received a total of 14 submissions. A Special Meeting of Council was held on Tuesday 8 June 2021 to hear from 5 submitters who requested to address Council in support of their submission.

Amendments to the budget include the following:

- Confirmed grant funding of \$2.6m included for local roads and infrastructure capital projects and \$2.6m additional capital projects
- Additional \$269k Financial Assistance Grant allocated for the general purpose grants
- Increase \$10k for additional flagpoles
- Increase in memberships of \$19k
- Increase in subscriptions of \$28k for software licenses reclassified as operating costs
- Road Blackspot grant funding confirmed at \$873k
- Confirmed grant funding of \$2.0m and development contribution of \$1.1m for Bannockburn Industrial Estate with equivalent expenditure to complete the works
- Increase of \$30k for Leighdale Equestrian Upgrade capital project
- Removal of \$30k for replacement of foyer flooring in Bannockburn Family Services Centre
- Rate calculations updated with Stage 4 valuation data

BACKGROUND

Section 96 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to adopt the Annual Budget by 30 June each year.

As part of Council's ongoing Community Engagement activities, Council and officers have undertaken many forms of engagement with the community. The feedback from this engagement has been utilised throughout the process of developing both the Council Plan and Annual Budget.

Prior to the Draft Budget being finalised, Council reviewed the document and participated in a workshop to ensure it delivered the services and initiatives contained in the Council Plan and again reflective of the feedback from the community. The final draft of the budget was discussed at the 20 April 2021 Council meeting where Council confirmed its support for the document and resolved to place it on public exhibition and invite submissions from the community.

After making the document available for public inspection and inviting submissions under Section 6 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council received a total of 14 submissions. A Special Meeting of Council was held on Tuesday 8 June 2021 to hear from 4 submitters who requested to address Council in support of their submission. After having listened to the submitters and reviewing the written submissions, Council undertook detailed discussion of the issues raised during a workshop following the Special Meeting.

DISCUSSION

The 2021-22 Draft Budget is appended to this report and includes a detailed list of the capital works program. The 2021-22 Draft Fees and Charges are provided in attachment two.

Budget Summary

- Total operating revenue of \$54.9 million;
- Operating Expenditure of \$47.3 million to continue to deliver services to the Golden Plains community with an increased focus on infrastructure maintenance;
- Operating surplus \$7.5 million;
- Underlying deficit of \$0.4 million;
- Cash inflow from operations of \$14.9 million; and
- Total Capital Works investment of \$18.2 million of which asset renewal makes up 55%, capital upgrade 31% and new assets of 14%.

The Financial Performance Indicators disclosed in the budget reflect Council's ongoing commitment to sound financial management. The indicators Council considers critical are outlined in table below and shows that the 2021-22 results are generally positive when compared to best practice and Council's preferred targets.

Indicator	Budget 2021-22	Best Practice	GPS Target	Traffic Light Position
Surplus ¹	\$7,548k	>\$0	>\$5,000k	
Adjusted Underlying Result ²	(\$427k)	>\$0	>\$0	
Working Capital (%) ³	123%	>100%	>180%	
Discretionary Retained Earnings ⁴	(\$824k)	>\$1,000k	>\$2,000k	
Borrowings (% of Rates and Charges) ⁵	46%	<60%	<30%	
Cash Balance ⁶	\$11,595k	>\$0	>\$5,000k	
Rate Determination ⁷	(\$1,015k)	>\$0	>\$0	

¹ Surplus – The net result of total revenue and expenditure, including non-cash items such as depreciation.

² Adjusted Underlying Result – Surplus less non-recurrent capital grants, non-monetary asset contributions and other contributions to fund capital expenditure. These items have the potential to incorrectly inflate the operating surplus.

³ Working Capital – This is a measure of Council's ability to meet its short term commitments.

⁴ Discretionary Retained Earnings – The component of total equity that is not committed (includes proceeds from sale of land at Bakers Lane and VGC received in advance). Additional reserves included in 2021-22 budget generate a negative indicator.

⁵ Borrowings – Balance of total interest bearing loans and liabilities as a percentage of rates and charges (including garbage charges). The prudent limit is considered to be 60%.

⁶ Cash Balance – The total cash and cash equivalents.

⁷ Rate Determination – This calculation demonstrates Council's ability to fund its capital program from operations. A deficit means retained earnings will be depleted further.

Budget Principles

The draft budget has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The budget seeks to achieve the actions and activities set out in the Council Plan by balancing the demand for services and infrastructure with the community's capacity to pay.

This year, the creation of the draft budget was based on the following principles;

- Rate revenue modelled on pre-valuations with a 1.5% average rate cap increase;
- Waste management fee increase to \$385 per property comprised of:
 - \$20 increase for State Government landfill levy increase of \$40/tonne (includes 20-21 increase deferred due to COVID-19)
 - \$10 increase for Cleanaway recycling cost increases
 - \$14 increase for landfill rehabilitation to commence collecting funds to rehabilitate the Rokewood and Teesdale landfill sites to be compliant with EPA standards
 - \$6 increase for roadside stockpile removal to commence removing the legacy of 60 stockpiles scattered across the Shire
- Waste Management Reserve
 - The Rokewood landfill rehabilitation works are estimated at \$450k and are planned to commence in 2021-22 and a review of works required will be completed on the Teesdale landfill site during 2021-22. Due to the amount and timing of landfill rehabilitation works being uncertain this is captured as a note below the table in the budget and not within the budgeted financial statements.
 - The reserve has a budgeted opening balance at 1 July 2021 of \$868k which will be drawn down on during 2021-22 once the funds are confirmed to fund the Rokewood landfill rehabilitation works and to commence design works for the Teesdale landfill site, based on current estimates the closing balance at 30 June 2022 is estimated at \$494k.
- Council User Fees – majority of fees at 1.5% increase
- Lomandra Drive/Bakers Lane land sales - \$2m profit included in 2021-22
- No increases in operational expenditure beyond a 1.5% increase in line with the rate cap;
- Additional \$344k for potential increase in workers compensation and public liability insurance premiums following MAV losing workcover premium license;
- Salary and wages increased based on estimates of new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement;
- Additional FTEs – standard 2 plus 5 extra to maintain additional standard of works possible due to the additional Working for Victoria staff; and
- Waste management cost increases for the State Government mandated landfill levy increase and contracted expenses.

Response to COVID-19

Golden Plains Shire Council included a package of financial relief options in the 2020-21 budget for local residents and businesses to support the Golden Plains community in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Ratepayer customer relief - Waiving interest on rates, developing a COVID-19 financial hardship policy, and promoting customer payment plans.
- Business relief – extending permits for food registration for the time ceased trading, allow restaurants and cafes to sell takeaway food and waive permit fees, discount waste charge on additional bins, and pay businesses within 14 days.

This relief package was designed to assist those in the community most in need of assistance and set aside \$100k of which \$80k was utilized at the time of writing this report.

It is proposed to continue to offer financial support to customers and set aside a total of \$100k in the 2021-22 budget, with \$50k to continue the COVID-19 financial hardship policy and relax the criteria to be eligible for assistance, and \$50k towards a COVID-19 recovery program.

Fees and Charges

Septic tank fees are a statutory charge. Advice was received of a change in these fees as outlined below, which have been updated in the 2021-22 Draft Fees and Charges attached.

Description	2021-22 Fee (prior to change)	2021-22 Updated Fee
Septic Tank Installation Permit	723.90	734.67
Septic Tank Installation Permit Additional Hourly Fee (for assessments that exceed 8.2 hours)	90.60	91.98
Septic Tank Alteration Permit	551.70	559.87
Septic Tank Transfer a Permit	147.10	149.25
Septic Tank Amend a Permit	153.10	156.01
Septic Tank Renew a Permit	123.10	124.90
Septic Tank Exemption Assessment	217.30	220.49
Septic Tank Exemption Assessment Additional Hourly Fee (for assessments that exceed 2.6 hours)	88.00	89.28

Capital Works

Of the \$18.2 million capital works programme Council is investing more than \$10.0 million into the maintenance and renewal of assets including our extensive rural roads and bridge network. In our large rural Shire, Council maintains more than 1,744km of local roads across Golden Plains. Council has maintained its commitment to improving, resealing and resheeting local roads, and new infrastructure including bridge replacements, kerb and channelling, and widening existing roads. Key projects included in the 2021-22 budget are:

- Meredith - Shelford Road improvements;
- Tannery Road, Smythesdale intersection treatment and floodway improvements;
- Local road resealing program;
- Bridge replacement;
- Local Roads and Community Infrastructure projects;
- Blackspot funding road projects;
- Ross Creek Play and Active Rec upgrade;
- Leighdale Equestrian Upgrade Female Friendly; and
- Linton Oval Drainage upgrade.

Rating Strategy

As part of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council are required to adopt a 4 year Revenue and Rating Plan, however it is important to note that the plan can be reviewed and updated at any time during the 4 year period.

As part of the implementation of the 2020 Act, the Victorian Government committed to a review of the local government rating system to ensure local government rates are fair and equitable for all community. This included establishing an independent panel to lead the review in consultation with the community, ratepayers and Councils. The final report included 56 recommendations to Government, with the response from Government released early this year (2021). As result of the timing of the Government's response to the recommendations and how this may impact on

councils rating strategies and also taking into account an extensive review undertaken by the previous council on GPSC rating strategy, a review of the rating strategy will be considered in August 2021 for future years.

The outcomes from GPSC's rating Strategy undertaken last year (2019-20) included the following key changes effective from 1 July 2020:

- Removal of growth differentials from all rating categories
- Establishing separate farm differentials for broadacre, intensive and small farms
- Increase business property differential rate to 120% for Bannockburn

This year, rates are based on the 2021 valuations with rate increases varying across the differential rating categories and individual properties. There can be a misunderstanding that as properties are revalued, council receives additional revenue. However, this is not the case, but instead the total revenue is re-distributed across all properties in the shire. As such, as property values increase, the rate in the dollar will decrease. Total income from rates can only be increased by the 1.5% rate cap, a reduction from the 2.0% 2020-21 rate cap.

Council's current rating strategy ensures that the financial burden is shared equitably amongst ratepayers, whilst generating sufficient revenue to meet the increasing demands of future infrastructure and service needs of the Shire although noting that this council will have an opportunity to re-visit and consider updating during their term.

Declaration of Rates

The amount of \$25,723,671 (or such other amount as is lawfully raised) is declared in respect of the 2021-22 financial year as the amount which Council intends to raise by general rates, municipal charge and annual services charges, which is calculated as follows:

<i>General Rates</i>	<i>\$18,513,266</i>
<i>Municipal Charge</i>	<i>\$3,404,175</i>
<i>Annual Service (Garbage) Charge</i>	<i>\$3,541,230</i>
<i>Supplementary Rates Income</i>	<i>\$150,000</i>
<i>Municipal Charge on Supplementary Rates</i>	<i>\$15,000</i>
<i>Interest on Rates</i>	<i>\$100,000</i>

1. General Rates

- 1.1. *A general rate be declared in respect of the 2021-22 Financial Year.*
- 1.2. *It be further declared that the general rate be raised by the application of differential rates.*
- 1.4. *Each differential rate will be determined by multiplying the Capital Improved Value of each rateable land (categorised by the characteristics described in the Attachment to this resolution) by the relevant cents in the dollar indicated in the following table, or such lesser amount as required to achieve compliance with Part 4, Section 94 – Rate caps of the Local Government Act 2020:*

Category	Cents in the dollar on CIV*
<i>Residential Improved</i>	<i>0.2674 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value</i>
<i>Business, Industrial and Commercial</i>	<i>0.2674 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value</i>
<i>Business, Industrial and Commercial (Bannockburn)</i>	<i>0.3209 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value</i>
<i>Farm Land Broadacre</i>	<i>0.2273 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value</i>
<i>Farm Land Intensive</i>	<i>0.2407 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value</i>
<i>Farm Land < 40 Hectares</i>	<i>0.2674 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value</i>

Category	Cents in the dollar on CIV*
<i>Non Farm Vacant Land</i>	<i>0.5348 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value</i>
<i>Vacant Land Non Developable</i>	<i>0.2674 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value</i>

**The above rates in the dollar are indicative only as they are based on draft 2021 Revaluations. These rates in the dollar will be recalculated in July 2021 using the actual rate book as at 1 July 2021, in order to ensure compliance with the rate capping provisions of the Local Government Act.*

2. Municipal Charge

- 2.1. *A municipal charge be declared in respect of the 2021-22 Financial Year.*
- 2.2. *The municipal charge be declared for the purpose of covering some of the costs of Council.*
- 2.3. *The municipal charge to be increased from \$306 to \$310.60 for each rateable land (or part) in respect of which a municipal charge may be levied.*
- 2.4. *It be confirmed that the municipal charge is declared in respect of all rateable land within the municipal district in respect of which a municipal charge may be levied.*

3. Annual Service (Garbage) Charge

- 3.1. *An annual service charge be declared in respect of the 2021-22 Financial Year.*
- 3.2. *The annual service charge be declared for the collection and disposal of refuse (including recyclables).*
- 3.3. *The annual service charge be:*
 - 3.3.1. *in the sum of \$385 for each rateable land (or part) in respect of which the annual service charge may be levied; and*
 - 3.3.2. *based on ownership of any land used primarily for residential purposes within the area designated for waste collection in the plan, which are the criteria for the annual service charge so declared.*

4. Consequential

- 4.1. *It be recorded that Council requires any person to pay interest on any amount of rates and charges to which:*
 - 4.1.1. *that person is liable to pay; and*
 - 4.1.2. *have not been paid by the date specified for their payment*
- 4.2. *The Chief Executive officer be authorised to levy and recover the general rates, municipal charge and annual service charge in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.*
- 4.3. *The Chief Executive officer be authorised to make so much of Council's rating database available as is reasonably necessary to enable any person to ascertain the designation of any land located within any of the areas bounded by the continuous and unbroken lines in the plans included in the 2021-22 Budget.*

Budget Submissions

After placing the 2021-22 Draft Budget on public exhibition, 15 submissions were received, which are summarised in the table below (Please note that some submissions raised multiple issues).

Request to be heard / Order	Township	Summary of Submission
No	Shelford	What is the \$44m in services?
Yes - 1	Bannockburn	Pedestrian crossings on High Street and Milton Street need to be made safer.
No	Bannockburn	\$50 increase in rubbish removal, will the money complete the jobs specified and if so will the charge be reduced next year. Will there be an increase of mowing of roadsides and reserves to include

		smaller townships such as Maude Recreation Reserve.
No	Bannockburn	\$50 garbage charge increase and only fortnightly collection. And we have to also pay for the 10% pay rise for councillors.
No	Inverleigh	\$50 garbage charge increase is not 1.5% as per the rate cap, fortnightly collection is asking for disease. If increase fees should revisit what can be recycled and go back to weekly garbage collection.
No	Cambrian Hill	Bore in Heinz Road is important in the event of a dry summer my stock could not be supported from my dam. I depend on the bore for my horses and a few cows and hope it can be reopened.
Yes - 2		\$50 garbage charge increase should be \$39.50 as he doesn't believe the landfill rehabilitation costs will be as high as estimated, waste charge surplus since 17-18 totals \$1.178m and only \$868k in reserve. Should remove 85% broadacre farm differential as unreasonable load placed on residential sector. Confused how residential valuations have increased by 12.83% but only generated a 1% increase in rates. Private works budgeted to generate \$6k loss but should be a profit, Rokewood transfer station still running at large loss so should be shut down, no records management budget.
No	Dereel	Don't agree with extra garbage charge
Yes - 3	Inverleigh	Council should consider formal engagement, concerned with lack of COVID19 signage, soap and sanitiser at Council public facilities, note reduction in community facilities and community transport budgets and question the increase in the insurance budget. Strongly support Farm Broadacre differential to be the same as Residential. Believe waste management reserve should be used to reduce waste charges.
Yes - 4	Bannockburn	Deliberative consultation should be considered next year. Lomandra Drive income is propping up operating budget rather than reducing debt, continued underlying deficits not sustainable, expectation windfarm revenue would be directed toward easing the rate burden on residents. Increase in garbage charge not justified as should not include street sweeper or roadside stockpile removal costs and disappointed action not taken to significantly progress the range of waste services. Do not believe the municipal charge is providing a fair and equitable system of rating as lower valued properties are forced to pay more. Staff turnover still significantly higher than other councils.
Yes - 5	Barunah Park	Support continuation of rating differentials for farming properties.
No		Farm differential should stay the same or be reduced.
No	Lethbridge	Do not agree with raising the rates for Broadacre Farming from 85% to 100%
No	Bannockburn	Strongly object to raising the farming rates to 100%

Proposed Amendments

Having conducted an extensive process in preparing the budget and receiving and hearing submissions, the Budget as exhibited has been amended as attached, to reflect a number of issues raised and grants confirmed including:

Change	Impact
Confirmed grant funding of \$2.6m for local roads and infrastructure projects	Increase in grant income and increase in capital projects
Include additional \$269k Financial Assistance Grant funding allocated for general purpose grants	Increase in grant income
Additional \$10k for flagpoles	Increase in operating expenses
Increasing in memberships of \$19k	Increase in operating expenses
Increase of \$28k in subscriptions for software licences reclassified as operating not capital	Increase in operating expenses
Confirmed Road Blackspot grant funding of \$873k	Increase in grant income and increase in capital projects
Confirmed grant funding of \$2.0m and development contribution of \$1.1m for Bannockburn Industrial Estate and equivalent expenditure to complete the works	Increase in operating grant income of \$2.0m, increase in development contribution income of \$1.1m and corresponding increase of \$3.1m in operating expenses
Increase of \$30k to Leighdale Equestrian Upgrade project	Increase in capital project cost
Removal of \$30k for replacement of foyer flooring in Bannockburn Family Services Centre	Reduction in capital projects
Rate calculations and disclosures updated based on Stage 4 customer property valuation data	No impact to financial statements as no change to total rate revenue

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020)

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	Yes
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	Yes

Risk Assessment	Yes
Communication	Yes
Human Rights Charter	Yes

GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

The 2021-22 Draft Budget has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government Amendment (Fair Go Rates) Act 2015

Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020

Financial Plan

Annual Budget

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmentally sustainable design and construction is included for all projects.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The principles contained in the 2021-2025 Council Plan were adopted after an extensive community engagement and consultation process. As mentioned earlier in the report the Draft Budget has been prepared based on these adopted principles.

As part of Council's Community Engagement Strategy, Council has implemented an ongoing process which has seen Councillors and officers participate in engagement activities prior to, and throughout, the process of developing the draft Budget.

A range of mediums were used in order to communicate to the community about the public exhibition period, including:

- Four page article in Golden Plains Shire Gazette
- Notices in the Geelong Advertiser and Ballarat Courier;
- Notices on Council's website, including a link directly to the submission page;
- Coffee with the Councillors at various locations within the Shire during May;
- Posts on Council's social media accounts; and
- Electronic copy made available on Council's website or in hard copy on request.

The 2021-22 Draft Budget has been placed on public exhibition as part of the legislated four week consultation period and was made available for inspection and comment up to the 31 May 2021 with feedback heard at a council meeting on 8 June 2021.

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

The public consultation process facilitates transparency of the budget submitted for adoption and all Council reports are available for the public to access.

STRATEGIES/PLANS

financial plan, and also ensuring alignment with the 2021-2025 Council Plan.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The 2021-22 Draft Budget has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*, Australian Accounting Standards

and other mandatory professional reporting requirements. Financial sustainability is monitored by considering the financial result for the period and key financial indicators within Council's long term financial plan.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE

Service performance levels are considered when developing the annual budget to ensure sufficient funds are available to meet required levels of performance.

RISK ASSESSMENT

There are identified risk implications associated with this report, detailed below:

The 2021-22 Draft Budget has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* incorporating long term financial plan requirements to ensure financial sustainability over the short and long term.

COMMUNICATION

The 2021-22 Draft Budget has been reported to Council as it has been formulated with a series of workshops held with Council to facilitate the development of the draft budget. The 2021-22 Draft Budget was placed on public exhibition for a four week period up to 31 May 2021, with public submissions considered at the 8 June 2021 Council meeting, and adoption of the budget at the 29 June 2021 Council meeting.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC).

OPTIONS

Option 1 – Council adopt the 2021-22 Budget

This option is recommended by officers as it is a requirement of the *Local Government Act 2020* to prepare and annual budget and formally adopt the budget by 30 June. Council have provided an extensive amount of information on all aspects of the budget and have also been involved in key decisions during the formulation. Adoption of the 2021-22 Budget will enable operations to continue, such as purchases relating to operations and capital works, and the issuing of the annual rates notices.

Option 2 – Council postpone the adoption of the 2021-22 Budget

This option is not recommended by officers as postponing the adoption of the 2021-22 Budget will cause delays in delivering programs and projects as any new budgets are required to be approved by Council. If there are any delays in the adoption of the 2021-22 Budget this would impact the timing of the issuing of annual rates notices as the annual declaration of rates is included as part of the budget process. If not adopted this would prevent issuing the annual rates notices to customers.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest in regards to this matter.

CONCLUSION

Council has prepared the 2021-22 budget in accordance with Section 96 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and undertaken all requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020*; including undertaking the statutory advertising process, the call for submissions, and providing the opportunity for submissions to be considered prior to adoption.

7.7 COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY 2021 - REPORT FINDINGS

File Number:

Author: Ben Jordan, Manager Community and Council Planning

Authoriser: Lisa Letic, Director Community Services

Attachments:

1. Community Satisfaction Survey 2021 Report (under separate cover)
2. Community Satisfaction Survey 2021 Tailored Questions Report (under separate cover)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the 2021 Community Satisfaction Survey reports for Golden Plains Shire Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year, Local Government Victoria (LGV) coordinates a State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey (Survey) throughout Victorian local government areas. JWS Research conducted the survey on behalf of the participating Councils, including Golden Plains Shire Council in 2021.

The Survey was conducted in early 2021 via telephone interviews with 400 Golden Plains Shire residents with the results and survey reports provided to Council. The survey provides insights into the community's views on both importance and performance in relation to Council services and infrastructure and is comparable to previous years results, the average at like Councils (Large Rural group) and the Victorian State-wide average.

The community perceptions of Council's performance have improved marginally from 2020 with positive movement in index score results recorded for Overall performance, Lobbying on behalf of community, Decisions made in the interests of community (all +2 index points) and Sealed local roads improving by 3 index points. Minor negative movement was recorded in the index score results for Consultation and engagement (-2 point) and Customer service (-1 point).

On overall performance, Golden Plains Shire Council's community satisfaction scores rate significantly lower than both the average of the Large Rural Councils (grouping) and Victorian State-wide average. The full reports (Attachment 1 and 2) detail key findings and recommendations on areas for improvement for Council. Mark Zuker, Managing Director from JWS Research presented a summary of the survey results to the Councillor Briefing on 15 June.

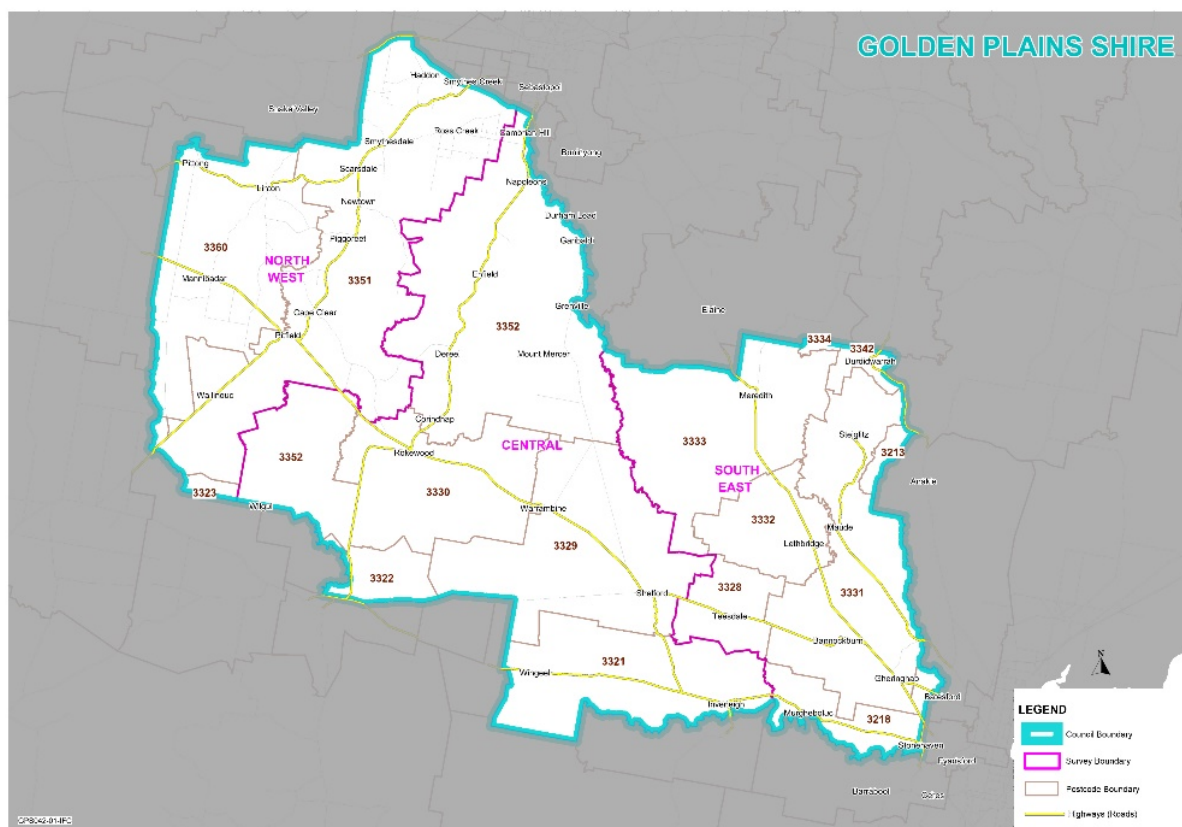
BACKGROUND

Since 1998, Local Government Victoria has coordinated a State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) throughout Victorian local government areas. The main objectives of the survey are to assess the performance of Golden Plains Shire Council across a range of measures and to seek insight into the ways to provide improved or more efficient service and infrastructure delivery. The CSS also enables Council to fulfil statutory reporting requirements by collecting indicator data that is reported to the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework and Annual Report.

The data was collected through 400 resident telephone surveys over the period 15 February to 23 March 2021 with respondents being a representative random sample of Golden Plains Shire community members aged 18+ including minimum quotas of gender within various age groups. Data/scores within the each of the areas measured in the survey is reported by age group and gender.

To enable a further local geographical split and a deeper understanding of the view of residents across the Shire, Council requested the ability to capture community responses by 3 different

areas from 2020 onwards. These three areas, as presented below, are the North-West, Central and South-East.



In 2021, 66 of the 79 Victorian Councils participated in the Community Satisfaction Survey – the remaining 13 Councils conduct (or contract out) their own equivalent survey.

Since 2015, Golden Plains Shire Council has been included in the 'Large Rural' Council category. This groups Golden Plains Shire with the following 17 other Councils that participated in the 2021 survey: Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Campaspe, Colac Otway, Corangamite, Glenelg, Macedon Ranges, Mitchell, Moira, Moorabool, Mount Alexander, Moyne, South Gippsland, Southern Grampians, Surf Coast, Swan Hill and Wellington.

In addition to the standard CSS survey questions, some optional and tailored questions were added to the 2021 survey of Golden Plains residents to further explore areas for improvement or elicit more detailed responses. These questions were:

- If Golden Plains Shire Council was going to get in touch with you to inform you about Council news and information and upcoming events, which one of the following is the best way to communicate and engage with you? (multiple choice – with a list of 9 items)
- You earlier rated the performance of sealed local roads as [average / poor / very poor], what is your major complaint that influenced your rating of sealed local roads? (open response)
- Can you specify which particular sealed local road or roads are of concern? (open response)
- You earlier rated the performance of unsealed local roads as [average / poor / very poor], what is your major complaint that influenced your rating of unsealed roads? (open response)
- If you had to choose, would you prefer to see Council rates rise to improve rural roads, Council services or facilities or would you prefer to see future rate rises kept to a minimum? (multiple choice from a list of four responses)

- *For those who answered they would prefer to see Council rates rise to improve rural roads, Council services or facilities* - Where would you like to see this greater investment? (open response)
- *For those who answered keep rate rises kept to a minimum* - What services or facilities would you be prepared to see reduced? (open response)
- What do you think is the best achievement or project that Golden Plains Shire Council has delivered in recent years? (open response)

All analysis of responses is provided in two attached reports – the Community Satisfaction Survey Report (Attachment One) and the Golden Plains Shire Council Tailored Questions Report (Attachment Two).

DISCUSSION

The Community Satisfaction Survey Report (Attachment One) is divided into two areas:









- Key Performance Areas – Overall performance, Value for money, Overall Council direction, Customer service
- Individual Service Areas – Waste management, Lobbying, Community decisions, Consultation and engagement, Sealed local roads, Unsealed local roads which provides resident data on both importance and performance of these services.

The results of the two areas above are benchmarked against the 2020 Golden Plains results, the Large Rural Councils Average and Victorian State-wide Average.

Survey Results

Figure 1 below provides a high level summary on the Key Performance Areas and Individual Service Areas of the CSS.

Figure 1 - Summary of Performance

Services		Golden Plains 2021	Golden Plains 2020	Large Rural 2021	State-wide 2021
	Overall performance	51	49	58	61
	Value for money	40	-	50	54
	Overall council direction	45	45	51	53
	Customer service	62	63	68	70
	Waste management	57	-	66	69
	Lobbying	50	48	54	55
	Community decisions	49	47	54	56
	Consultation & engagement	47	49	54	56
	Sealed local roads	42	39	50	57
	Unsealed roads	36	36	44	45

The summary of performance indicates only minor (non-material) change in the 2021 CSS scores when compared to those recorded in 2020. These include:

- Improvement in the Overall performance index score for Golden Plains (+2) from the 2020 result of 49. Small improvements were also recorded for Lobbying on behalf of community (+2), Decisions made in the interests of community (+2) and Sealed local roads (+3).
- Minor negative movement in the index scores for Consultation and engagement (-2) and Customer service (-1) were recorded.
- No movement in Overall Council direction and Condition of unsealed roads index scores from the 2020 result.
- Results across all CSS areas remain significantly lower than the Large Rural Councils Average and Victorian State-wide Average.
- Customer service remains the highest index score (62) for Golden Plains – consistent with the Large Rural and State-wide averages where Customer service is the highest score.
- Unsealed local roads is the lowest index score (36) for Golden Plains – consistent with the Large Rural and State-wide averages where Unsealed local roads is also the lowest score.

Contact with Council and Customer Service

Just under two thirds (63%) of Golden Plains Shire Council residents surveyed had contact with Council in the last twelve months. Residents aged 18 to 34 years are significantly less likely to have contacted Council in 2021 (52%) than the other age cohorts. Among residents who have had

contact with Council, more than half (55%) provided a positive customer service rating of 'very good' or 'good'.

Council direction

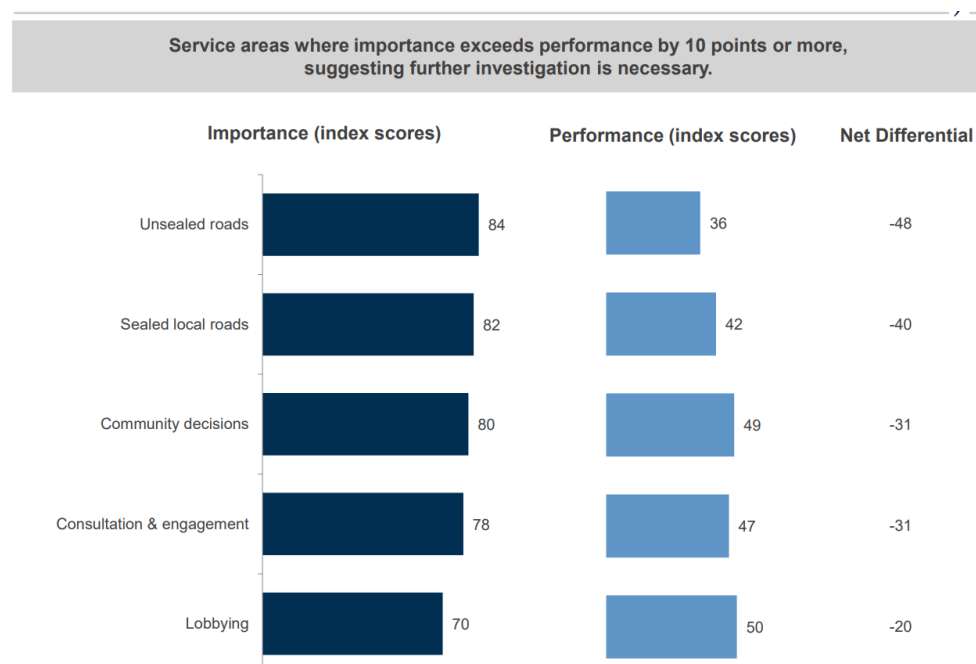
Perceptions of Council's overall direction in the 2021 CSS are very similar to those seen in 2020. Over the last 12 months, 65% of respondents believe the direction of Council's overall performance has stayed the same, down one percentage point on 2020.

The cohort most satisfied with Council's direction are those aged 65+ years (index score of 48) which represents a shift as this group was the least satisfied with Council's overall direction in 2020 (when the index score for this group was 42).

Importance vs Performance

The individual service areas showing Importance vs Performance scores and the net differential are shown below.

Figure 2 - Individual Service areas Importance vs Performance and differential

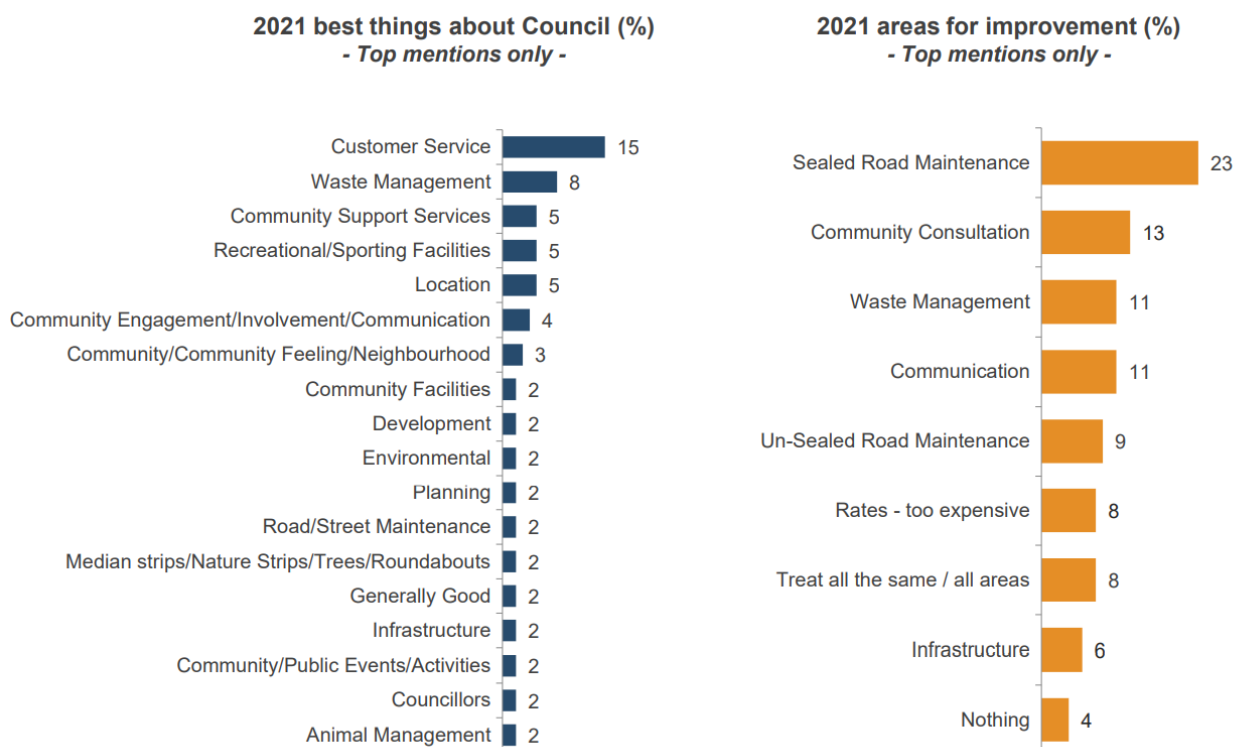


Not surprisingly, the biggest differentials (-48 and -40) in index scores for Importance vs Performance were in the lowest performing service areas of Unsealed local roads and Sealed local roads. The lowest differential from this list (-20 - still more than double what is regarded as statistically significant [± 10]) was in Lobbying on behalf of community where Council's performance score was somewhat higher (index score of 50).

Best Things about Council and Areas for Improvement

Survey participants were asked "What is the best thing about Golden Plains Shire Council?" and also "What does Council need to do to most improve its performance?" The results in Figure 3 below clearly indicate Customer Service as the most popular response for the best thing about Council and the area for most improvement was Sealed Road Maintenance.

Figure 3 – Best things about Council and areas for improvement



Tailored Questions

The responses and results to the Tailored Questions specifically requested by Golden Plains Shire are available in Attachment Two. Key highlights from this section of the CSS report and the upward/downward trends when compared to 2020 survey results are as follows:

- Best way to Communicate and Engage (%):
 - The Gazette – 26% (↓6%)
 - Social Media – 22% (↑1%)
 - E-newsletters – 22% (↑11%)
- Major complaints influencing the rating of Local Sealed Roads (%):
 - Potholes – 71% (↓2%)
 - Poor surface condition - 36% (↑5%)
 - Road shoulder issues – 16% (↑3%)
 - Road safety – 14% (↑2%)
- The two individual sealed local roads identified (all responses are provided verbatim in a file) that are of most concern are McPhillips Road, Bannockburn and Dog Rocks Road, Batesford. 22% of respondents answered unsure / no specific road / all roads in general.
- Major complaints that influence the rating of Unsealed Local Roads (%):
 - Potholes – 52% (↑7%)
 - Road Corrugation - 36% (↑10%)
 - Loose surface – 21% (↑5%)
- Services or facilities where people would like to see greater investment (%):
 - Roads – 56% (↓1%)
 - Community facilities, service infrastructure – 24% (↑7%)
- Services or facilities where people are prepared to see reduced (%):
 - Don't know / can't say – 65% (↑3%)
 - Council buildings / staff personal expenses / functions / wages – 13% (↑1%)

- Waste collection – 5% (unchanged from 2020)
- The best achievement or projects identified that Council had delivered in recent years were:
 - Bannockburn Heart (water/adventure park) – 16%
 - Roads upgrades / maintenance – 9%
 - Sporting grounds and facilities – 7%
 - Playgrounds, parks – 6%

Geographical Split

The geographical split of Golden Plains Shire into the three areas - North West, South-East and Central is provided in response to all the questions on performance and importance within the standard CSS Report (Attachment One).

It is worth noting that although the scores vary across the different measures for the three locations, the Central area is the lowest on eight of the ten results where performance comparisons are made. In particular, Unsealed local roads (index score of only 29 for Central area) has the greatest performance differential (-9) across all the measures.

Areas for Council to focus on / improve

The CSS Report (Attachment One) outlines that with sealed local roads and unsealed roads persisting as the lowest rated areas, they warrant renewed focus from Council over the next 12 months. Perceived importance in both these areas continues to exceed performance by the widest margins. It is suggested that Council needs to address this gap and build upon moderate improvement in performance perceptions of sealed local roads in the 2021 CSS.

The report also advises that Council:

- Focus attention on consultation and engagement, where performance has slipped from gains made in 2020
- Continue cultivating improved performance on lobbying and decisions made in the interests of the community. Performance in both areas is strengthening after significant declines in 2019, but effort is required to maintain and build further on these small gains. Decisions made in the interests of community, in particular, is a key influencer on perceptions of overall performance.
- Raising performance on waste management will also be important over the next 12 months.

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	Yes
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes

2020)	
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	No
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Risk Assessment	Yes
Communication	Yes
Human Rights Charter	No

GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

Consideration of the governance principles in Section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, has been applied to Council's participation and reporting of the CSS, including:

- Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.
- The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.
- Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.
- Ensuring transparency of Council decisions, actions and information.

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

Section 98 (Annual report) of the *Local Government Act 2020* includes that the prescribed indicators of service performance for the services provided by Council and the prescribed measures relating to those indicators are required to be reported.

The CSS is the mechanism/source for collecting and reporting a number of these service indicators annually for Council's across Victoria including Golden Plains Shire Council.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community Satisfaction Survey is an engagement exercise to collect, analyse and report information directly from the public on the community's perceptions of importance and performance on a number of the services provided by Council.

This CSS is consistent with the community engagement principles in the *Local Government Act 2020* including that a community engagement process must have a clearly defined objective and scope and that participants in community engagement must be representative of the persons and groups affected by the matter that is the subject of the community engagement.

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

The independent process for the collection, analysis and reporting of the CSS data provides for a consistent approach and public transparency to inform decision making through actions and information that are accessible and guided by members of the community.

STRATEGIES/PLANS

Council has given effect to the Strategic Planning principles under Section 89 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, including that the Community Satisfaction Survey processes and data contribute to:

- an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting is to be adopted.
- strategic planning must provide for ongoing monitoring of progress and regular reviews to identify and address changing circumstances.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE

The Strategic Performance principles under Section 106 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, are informed through the data/results from the Community Satisfaction Survey, including that:

- services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community.
- services should be accessible to the members of the municipal community for whom the services are intended.
- quality and costs standards for services set by the Council should provide good value to the municipal community.
- Council should seek to continuously improve service delivery to the municipal community in response to performance monitoring.

RISK ASSESSMENT

- The annual surveying, data collection and reporting of the CSS mitigates the risk of Council not complying with the reporting requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- The provision of this report, presentation and further communication of Council's CSS results (including via the Annual Report and Know Your Council website) demonstrates how community involvement can inform Council decision making and minimises the risk of not providing public transparency on reporting on feedback from community engagement.

COMMUNICATION

Communication on conducting of the Community Satisfaction Survey was provided internally and externally in early 2021 to inform Council staff and the community of the process being undertaken by JWS Research.

Further communication regarding the CSS results will be provided following the receiving of this report by Council including information that will be provided to the Know Your Council website and Council's Annual Report.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic).

OPTIONS

Option 1 – That Council receive the 2021 Community Satisfaction Survey reports for Golden Plains Shire Council.

This option is recommended by officers as the annual Community Satisfaction Survey has been completed across Victoria for 2021 with results and information now available for reporting to Council and providing back to the community.

Option 2 - That Council does not receive the 2021 Community Satisfaction Survey reports for Golden Plains Shire Council.

This option is not recommended by officers as the CSS provides the opportunity to review, consider and benchmark community feedback on Council's services and infrastructure and there is a legislative requirement for Council to report against a number of the measures collected through the CSS.

Option 3 – That Council defer receiving the 2021 Community Satisfaction Survey reports for Golden Plains Shire Council.

This option is / is not recommended by officers as CSS results are collected and reported annually at this time for review and to consider community feedback on Council's performance. This also enables end of financial year 2020/21 reporting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest in regards to this matter.

CONCLUSION

The 2021 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey has been completed with 400 Golden Plains Shire community members being surveyed and providing input. The two survey reports have been provided by JWS Research for Council to review and receive. Mark Zuker from JWS Research presented a summary of the survey results to the Councillor Briefing on 15 June 2021.

Attachment One provides Council's 2021 CSS results across a number of measures that enable benchmarking and comparison with previous Golden Plains Shire Council results, the Large Rural Councils averages and the Victorian State-wide averages. Attachment Two reports on tailored CSS questions specific to Golden Plains Shire for further information and depth on local issues.

7.8 VAGO REPORT ON LOCAL ROADS

File Number:**Author:** Wendy McAlpine, Coordinator Strategic Asset Management and Systems**Authoriser:** Phil Josipovic, Director Infrastructure and Development**Attachments:**

1. VAGO report Maintaining Local Roads (under separate cover)
2. VAGO report Roads data summary for Golden Plains Shire (under separate cover)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the Roads Data Summary for Golden Plains Shire Report and the Maintaining Local Roads Report prepared by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2021, the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) released the report 'Maintaining Local Roads'. In addition to this report, VAGO also compared each Councils' own road maintenance costs to other Victorian Councils.

The purpose of this report is to present:

- Key findings from the Roads Data Summary for Golden Plains Shire Report;
- Comments on the Recommendations to Councils by VAGO in the Maintaining Local Roads report.

VAGO suggests Councils should read the responses of the Roads Data Summary Report in the context of the findings in the performance audit report, Maintaining Local Roads. Further, VAGO encourages each Council to examine the results in consideration of the factors that impact road maintenance works.

BACKGROUND

Road maintenance activities ensure roads are safe and functional. In Victoria, Councils manage 87% of the State's road network. Local roads typically represent approximately 10 per cent of Council expenditure, therefore Councils need to maintain them in a financially sustainable way.

VAGO audited five Councils and conducted a sector-wide questionnaire and using this information they concluded that Councils cannot determine whether they are achieving value for money when maintaining their road network.

DISCUSSION

VAGO's Roads data summary for Golden Plains Shire Report was prepared based on data from the following sources:

- the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF), 2014–15 to 2019–20
- the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission (VLGGC), 2014–15 to 2018–19
- VAGO questionnaire, 2014–15 to 2018–19.

Some key findings from the Roads data summary report, include:

- Golden Plains Shire (GPS) has recorded a low confidence in the data accuracy provided in response to the Questionnaire
- VAGO suggests that GPS underspends by 41.1% on its Total Network Cost (TNC). The gap in underspending ranges from ~18% to 100% for Councils in our cohort. Comparatively, GPS is ranked 8th (therefore there are 11 Councils in our cohort which have a bigger funding gap). VLGGC uses the TNC to determine grant distribution.

- GPS spends 62% of total roads maintenance expenditure reactively, where the average for similar Councils is 33% and the sector average is 25%.
- GPS spends significantly less than similar Councils on sealed and unsealed roads maintenance
- Community satisfaction of sealed roads on average is lower at GPS than our cohort average and significantly lower than the average across all Councils (rating of 43 at GPS vs 56 for overall sector)
- 94% of all sealed roads at GPS use a single spray – this is a significantly higher percentage for this surface type than other Councils in our cohort,
- 96% of our roads are classed as low traffic volume roads – which is one of the highest percentages reported for low traffic volume roads for Councils in our cohort. (Most of our high traffic roads would be the responsibility of Regional Roads Victoria).
- GPS spends less on resealing per sqm on average than other Councils in our cohort
- GPS's resealing rate is on average 3.53% pa. Whilst this is lower than Councils in our cohort, it's a similar rate to all Councils
- 98.93% of GPS's sealed road network is in better condition than intervention. This is significantly better than most Councils. However, each Council can set its own intervention level/s – therefore a road in the same condition at one Council might be better than intervention, whereas at another Council it is in worse condition.
- GPS spends less on sealed road reconstruction costs than other Councils, both within our cohort, and on average

The provision of this information from VAGO allows GPS to benchmark its performance relative to similar Councils and all Victorian Councils.

The Maintaining Local Roads report was prepared in order to address the key question – Are Councils achieving value for money in maintaining their local roads? Five councils were examined in detail, in addition to information from the sector-wide questionnaire. Overall, VAGO provided ten recommendations to all Victorian Councils grouped into three broad areas of improvement:

- Maintenance planning,
- Achieving value for money,
- Road Management Plan compliance

A summary of VAGO's recommendations including how GPS is responding to these recommendations is shown in Appendix 1.

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020)

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Environmental/Sustainability Implications (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	No

Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	No
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	No
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Risk Assessment	No
Communication	No
Human Rights Charter	No

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

VAGO have made a number of recommendations to Councils in the Maintaining Local Roads report. There will be financial implications should GPS wish to adopt these recommendations. For example, increasing the condition inspection frequency. Capturing detailed roads maintenance expenditure data as suggested by VAGO will require additional resources to manage this information as we don't currently maintain information to this level of detail.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE

VAGO suggests that Councils may not be able to demonstrate that we are getting value for money when maintaining their local road network.

OPTIONS

Option 1 to note the two VAGO Local Roads reports.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest in regard to this matter.

CONCLUSION

This report has presented the following items:

- Key findings from the Roads Data Summary for Golden Plains Shire Report;
- Comments on the Recommendations to Councils by VAGO in the Maintaining Local Roads report.

By completing this review, we have been able to summarise how Golden Plains Shire is performing in the context of local roads maintenance relative to similar Councils and the state.

We have also reviewed the recommendations made by VAGO for maintaining local roads which cover:

- Maintenance Planning;
- Achieving value for money
- Road management plan compliance.

Appendix 1

Recommendation Type	Recommendation	Response
Maintenance Planning	Set and document timeframes to survey the condition of sealed and unsealed road networks with consideration of Australian Road Research Board's Best practice guide for sealed roads 2020 and Best practice guide for unsealed roads 2020	According to GPS SOP 3081 – Asset recognition, valuation and revaluation; Sealed and Unsealed Roads are currently condition assessed once every 5 years. The Australian Roads Research Board (ARRB) is recommending different survey timeframes depending on factors such as the type of road, its traffic volume and deterioration – ranging from 2-5 years.
	Review road surveying methods and consider options to incorporate technologically advanced surveying equipment	In 2018-19 GPS used ARRB to complete the road condition assessments, their survey methodology included manual assessments supplemented by ride quality measurements using two-laser profilometer, and a hawkkey camera and recording system.
	Review specifications of current predictive modelling software for roads and evaluate the need to procure, or jointly procure with other Councils, an alternative software that integrates with other key Council systems and is fit-for-purpose.	GPS has previously outsourced roads predictive modelling as part of roads condition assessments/Asset Management Plans (AMP/s). GPS has recently purchased an in-house predictive modelling software as part of the Assetic Asset Management Software suite. Suitability of this software for the roads asset class will be reviewed at time of next condition assessment. (An upgrade to the current version will enable direct integration to Assetic's Asset Register. However, this is an additional cost).
	Provide communities with detailed information on service levels for road maintenance and collect their feedback at least once every two years (see Section 2.2)	GPS has not historically released such information to the community. Feedback on roads is gathered via the annual Community Satisfaction Survey. Road Management Plan (RMP) is required to be updated for each Council term and requires community engagement. The RMP includes maintenance intervention levels.
	Set unit rates for reactive maintenance to: 1. determine the adequacy of planned maintenance in reducing reactive maintenance costs 2. compare costs of different road maintenance activities	We have not established unit rates for reactive maintenance activities.
Achieving value for money	Ensure data reported to Victorian Local Government Grants Commission and as part of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework is accurate by: 3. complying with relevant	Roads asset data migration into Assetic is proposed to be complete by EOFY 2020-2021. Assetic offers improved data management and data security over existing system/s used by GPS – this should improve future data reporting. Further, a review of asset data update procedures will be completed to ensure the systems data

Recommendation Type	Recommendation	Response
	<p>instructions</p> <p>4. establishing quality assurance processes over data collection and submission</p> <p>5. periodically reviewing data to identify errors</p>	<p>remains current and up to date.</p>
	<p>Identify, collect and internally report on data necessary to understand whether the Council is achieving long-term value for money in road maintenance, including:</p> <p>6. expenditure on planned and reactive maintenance</p> <p>7. use of different seal types</p> <p>8. amount of resealing completed</p>	<p>GPS has information on each of the road maintenance items however there are a number of systems used to record this information. These systems are not linked therefore data collection and analysis are time consuming and difficult tasks.</p> <p>Road maintenance activities and expenditure can be recorded in the Maintenance module of Assetic, however this activity is not currently resourced.</p>
	<p>Undertake self-assessments of the cost of road maintenance against similar Councils by:</p> <p>9. using publicly available data from Victorian Local Government Grants Commission and the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework</p> <p>10. Incorporating detailed analysis of factors such as traffic volume and road surface to understand whether costs are commensurate with community needs</p>	<p>The first half of this report demonstrates that GPS has commenced a self-assessment on the cost of road maintenance when comparing to similar Councils.</p> <p>Further work could be done to understand if these costs are in line with community needs.</p>
Road Management Plan compliance	<p>Collect and retain data on compliance with timeliness standards in road management plans</p>	<p>Currently a challenging task as Maintenance Crews are given jobs on paper, and there is a delay in close out of the paper based defects completed list compared to the defect logged on the computer based Road Inspection System.</p> <p>(Note, an action is underway to migrate this inspection process to Assetic. Assetic has a mobile app which allows maintenance crews to receive jobs on a tablet/phone and close them out as each job is completed).</p>
	<p>Establish performance measures for road management plans and use them to annually review performance and the practicality of standards set out in the plans</p>	<p>Not currently undertaken</p>

7.9 ENFORCEMENT POLICY - ADOPTION

File Number:**Author:** Matthew Sims, Coordinator Community Safety**Authoriser:** Phil Josipovic, Director Infrastructure and Development**Attachments:** 1. Enforcement Policy (under separate cover)**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopts the 2021 Enforcement Policy as attached.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy defines Council's assurance to a shared responsibility with the community in achieving compliance with applicable laws and acts enforced by Council. This policy provides a framework upon which Council officers will base their enforcement decisions and actions and will provide a consistent approach in the use of community awareness, education and enforcement actions by officers to achieve compliance outcomes.

BACKGROUND

Council officers are Authorised Officers or Delegated Officers in a number state acts and regulations as well as our own Local Law. These acts are listed in the policy. Council officers currently triage all enquiries and respond to them as required. Due to limited resources to undertake enforcement, Council must prioritise and focus resources where required to achieve the most impact.

DISCUSSION

Council receives over 1000 enforcement related enquiries each year. Some of these enquires result in a phone call only while others proceed to investigations where the result is determined at VCAT or the Magistrates Court.

The Enforcement Policy details to the community what to expect when an incident has been reported and will also explain what the alleged offender is to expect when communicating with Council.

The Policy gives examples of when a certain action is appropriate and a matrix that Council officers can follow to prioritise the response. This policy and subsequent internal procedure not only informs the community but assists officers in guiding them through the enforcement process.

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020)

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No

Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	No
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	No
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	No
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	No
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Risk Assessment	No
Communication	No
Human Rights Charter	Yes

GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

Ensuring that residents comply with relevant laws and that Council officers investigate verified complaints from the community.

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

- Domestic Animals Act 1994
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Building Act 1993
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
- Subdivision Act 1988
- Impounding of Livestock Act 1994
- Country Fire Authority Act 1958
- Environment Protection Act 1970
- Road Safety Act 1986
- Road Safety Regulations 2019
- Local Law – General Public Amenity

SERVICE PERFORMANCE

This policy provides information to the community as to the fair and effective process Council officers will undertake when considering and responding to complaints.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC).

OPTIONSOption 1 – Adopt the Enforcement Policy

This option is recommended by officers as the policy considers the needs of the community, together with the legislative requirements of Council.

Option 2 – Amend the Enforcement Policy

This option is not recommended however can be completed if required. Council officers have reviewed a number of enforcement policies and officers from the Development and Regulatory Services Department have reviewed this policy and believe it will be of assistance to them in their duties.

Option 3 – Not to adopt the Enforcement Policy

This option is not recommended by officers as this policy gives the community and officers guidance in relation to investigations.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest in regard to this matter.

CONCLUSION

The adoption of this policy will balance the expectations of our residents, the limited resources of Council and giving the community guidance as to what action Council may take when reporting an event.

7.10 ANNUAL ADOPTION OF PROCUREMENT POLICY

File Number:**Author:** Fiona Rae, Manager Finance**Authoriser:** Philippa O'Sullivan, Director Corporate Services**Attachments:**

1. Procurement Policy June 2021 (under separate cover)
2. Exemption Procedure June 2021 (under separate cover)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note its obligations under section 108(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* to review the current Procurement Policy at least once in every four financial years and where necessary amend it.
 2. Adopt the Procurement Policy noting amendments were made in accordance with new requirements in the *Local Government Act 2020* and to align with other regional council policies and practices.
 3. Make copies of the policy available to the public in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.
-

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is committed to ensuring continuous improvement and strong compliance processes are in place for its procurement activities in order to achieve value for money and generate benefits for Council and its community.

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires that Council prepare and approve a Procurement Policy and review the Procurement Policy at least once during its four year term and amend it as necessary.

BACKGROUND

The annual review of the Procurement Policy incorporated the new requirements from the *Local Government Act 2020* and also amendments resulting from aligning with other regional council policies and practices.

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires Procurement Policies to be updated to incorporate all requirements in the new *Local Government Act 2020* and to be adopted by Council by 31 October 2021, with the ability to adopt prior to 31 October 2021. Updated Procurement Policies can be effective from 1 July 2021 if approved prior to the effective date.

DISCUSSION

Council conducts a review of the Procurement Policy on an annual basis as this policy is central to day-to-day operations and important to ensure it reflects current processes and meets legislative requirements.

Enhancements to the Procurement Policy include aligning with other regional council policies, incorporating new requirements outlined in the *Local Government Act 2020*, and providing more clarity by expanding guidance and requirements throughout the policy.

Amendments to align with other regional councils included:

- Emphasising the importance of compliance with the Procurement Policy and consequences resulting from non-compliance
- Expansion of 'Value for Money' principle and examples of how it is achieved

- Additional probity requirements
- Strengthening of Councillor and Council Officer conduct requirements
- Addition of how Council will minimise risk exposure section

Additional clarity and guidance now included:

- Procurement threshold methodology examples expanded
- Requirements for purchases under \$150k
- Inclusion of details of when a probity plan should be developed
- More detail in tender evaluation section
- Expansion of definitions included

The *Local Government Act 2020* introduced a number of new requirements. Council already had a number of these included in the current Procurement Policy, such as including a procurement thresholds indicating when a tender is required. The following amendments have been included in the revised Procurement Policy to incorporate new requirements in the *Local Government Act 2020*:

LGA 2020 Section	Requirement	GPSC Procurement Policy Section
S108(2)	Promote open and fair competition and provide value for money	Section 11
S108(3)(a)	Contract value above which Council must invite a tender or seek an expression of interest	Section 6
S108(3)(b)	Description of criteria to be used to evaluate whether a contract provides value for money	Section 11.2
S108(3)(c)	Description of how Council will seek collaboration with other Councils	Section 20
S108(3)(d)	Conditions under which Council may purchase goods or services without inviting a public tender or expression of interest	Section 6
S108(3)(e)	Description of the process to be undertaken in inviting a public tender or expression of interest	Sections 23-26
S108(4)	Contract value to be included in a Procurement Policy in S108(3)(a) must not exceed the value prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this section. <i>Prescribed amount is \$250,000 (excl GST)</i>	Section 6
S108(5)	Must review procurement policy once every 4 years	Section 35

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020)

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes

Environmental/Sustainability Implications (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	No
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	No
Risk Assessment	Yes
Communication	Yes
Human Rights Charter	Yes

GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

The Procurement Policy has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental sustainability considerations are included within the Procurement principles section of the policy.

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

Probity requirements include applying a consistent and transparent process. The policy outlines procurement principles, probity requirements and the tender evaluation process. Details of tenders received are confidential however feedback can be provided to tenderers on their tender to enable any issues to be addressed in future submissions.

STRATEGIES/PLANS

The Procurement Policy is consistent with Council's financial plans.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Procurement Policy is consistent with Council's financial management processes, with confirmation of budget allocation prior to a tender being prepared.

RISK ASSESSMENT

There are identified risk implications associated with this report, detailed below:

The Procurement Policy has been updated in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 and also aligned with other regional council policies. This review was completed by Council officers.

COMMUNICATION

When approved, the Procurement Policy will be published on Council's web site.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC).

OPTIONS

Option 1 – Council approve the updated Procurement Policy

This option is recommended by officers as an extensive review of the Procurement Policy has been completed which incorporates new requirements from the *Local Government Act 2020* and also aligns with other regional council policies.

Option 2 – Council note the updated Procurement Policy

This option is not recommended by officers as the *Local Government Act 2020* requires the updated Procurement Policy to be adopted by 31 October 2021.

Option 3 – Council request changes to the Procurement Policy

This option is not recommended by officers as an extensive review has been completed including a comparison to other council policies.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest in regards to this matter.

CONCLUSION

The updated Procurement Policy will come into force from 1 July 2021 as outlined in the *Local Government Act 2020*, if approved prior to the effective date. If not approved prior to 1 July 2021 it will come into force when approved.

7.11 MAYOR AND COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES

File Number:**Author:** Philippa O'Sullivan, Director Corporate Services**Authoriser:** Philippa O'Sullivan, Director Corporate Services**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Receive and note the submissions provided during the public consultation period.
 2. Adopt the Mayoral allowance of \$65,998.54 and Councillor allowances of \$23,048.02 which are also subject to an additional amount to cover the superannuation guarantee.
-

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its 27 April Council Meeting, Council endorsed an increase to the Mayoral and Councillor allowances to reflect the increasing population that the Mayor and Councillors now represent and serve. The proposed allowances, which are also subject to an additional amount to cover the superannuation guarantee:

- Mayoral allowance: \$65,998.54
- Councillor allowances: \$23,048.02

At the same meeting, Council also resolved to invite public submissions on the remuneration levels for Mayoral and Councillor allowances between 27 April 2021 and 25 May 2021, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989.

As a result of the public consultation period a total of 5 submissions were lodged using the online submission form and an opportunity to hear submissions was provided on 8 June 2021, however no submitters requested to be heard.

BACKGROUND

Mayors and Councillors are entitled to receive an allowance while performing their duties as an elected official.

The Mayor and Councillors at Golden Plains Shire currently receive the following allowances which are also subject to an additional amount to cover the superannuation guarantee:

- Mayoral allowance: \$62,855.71
- Councillor allowances: \$20,952.51

On 23 December 2019, the Minister for Local Government advised Golden Plains Shire that Golden Plains Shire Council's had been approved to progress from the allowance Category 1 (lowest level) to Category 2 (mid-level) as per the letter presented in Attachment 1. This change was justified due to the increase in number of residents in the shire district and the increase in the Council's recurrent revenue numbers.

As a result, the upper limit of allowances that may now be paid to the Mayor and Councillors in a Category 2 Council which are also subject to an additional amount to cover the superannuation guarantee:

- Mayoral allowance: up to \$81,203.37
- Councillor allowances: up to \$26,244.75

However, Councillors proposed not to accept the upper limit but agreed to the amounts below, which are also subject to an additional amount to cover the superannuation guarantee:

- Mayoral allowance: \$65,998.54
- Councillor allowances: \$23,048.02

A key reform of the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA2020) is the transfer of responsibilities in determining mayoral, deputy mayoral and councillor allowances from the Minister for Local Government to the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal (The Tribunal). However, as the Minister has not yet requested a determination by the Tribunal, Local Government Victoria has advised that the framework under the Local Government Act 1989 (LGA1989) continues to apply until the first determination is made by the Tribunal under the LGA2020.

As such, in accordance with section 74(1) of the LGA89, Council's must review and determine the level of Mayoral and Councillor allowances within 6 months of general election or by 30 June 2021, whichever is later. This also includes a period of public exhibition to allow submissions from the public before a final decision is made by 30 June 2021.

DISCUSSION

The public consultation on Mayoral and Councillor allowances was held between 27 April 2021 and 25 May 2021 with a total of 5 submissions received via Council's Have Your Say Page.

4 submissions received were not supportive of the proposed increase. One submission suggested an increase of 6% over 4 years (1.5% per annum) based on the rate cap would be fair.

Results of the consultation are summarised below.

Number of Submissions	In Favour of Proposed Increase	Not in Favour of Proposed Increase
5	0	5

When making the determination on allowances Council should also consider any feedback received directly at Councillor Conversation Posts, or via direct communication.

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020)

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	Yes
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	No
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	Yes

Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	No
Risk Assessment	No
Communication	Yes
Human Rights Charter	No

GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

In conducting this statutory review, Council will be ensuring it is giving priority to the Governance Principles contained in the Local Government Act 2020, including the need to achieve best outcomes for the municipal community.

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

This process ensures Council's compliance with the Local Government Act 1989 which remains in force until such time as the Minister requests a determination by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal under the new Local Government Act.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Information on the review of Mayoral and Councillor allowances and how to lodge a submission was posted to Council's website as a news story with a link to Council's Have Your Say Page. Residents were encouraged to make a submission via the online form, by email or post.

Promotion of the engagement was also included on Council's social media pages, appearing twice on Facebook, twice on Twitter, and on Linked In via a post about Council's newly launched Engage monthly newsletter.

An article on the proposed increase also appeared in the Golden Plains Times on 6 May 2021.

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

Mayoral and Councillor allowances are determined in open Council with payments being published on the website and through the Council Chamber on a quarterly basis. A summary is also included in Council's Annual Report.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

A budget for Mayoral and Councillor allowances is in place to cover the costs outlined in this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

There are no identified risk implications associated with this report.

COMMUNICATION

Once Council makes the final determination on Mayoral and Councillor allowances, the decision will be made public via the livestreaming of the Council meeting and publishing of the minutes via Council's webpage within 7 days of the meeting.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC).

OPTIONS

Option 1 – that Council support the recommendation as detailed

This option is recommended by officers as the recommendation complies with Council's obligations under the legislation.

Option 2 – that Council do not support the recommendation as detailed

This option is not recommended by officers as failure to carry out the review in accordance with the legislation would be a compliance breach.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest in regards to this matter.

CONCLUSION

Following the results of the public consultation held between 27 April 2021 and 25 May 2021 it is recommended that Council receive and note the submissions and resolve to adopt the Mayoral allowance of \$65,998.54 and Councillor allowances of \$23,048.02 which are also subject to an additional amount to cover the superannuation guarantee.

7.12 AWARDING OF TENDER (RFT-07-2021) BANNOCKBURN YOUTH HUB**File Number:** GPSC-RFT-07-2021**Author:** Thomas Lindberg, Contract and Procurement Specialist**Authoriser:** Philippa O'Sullivan, Director Corporate Services**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Resolves to award the Contract GPSC-RFT-07-2021 Bannockburn Youth Hub to Bowden Corporation for the sum of \$393,189.60 (including Provisional sum) exclusive of GST.
2. Delegates to the Chief Executive Officer or his delegate authority to execute the contract on behalf of Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Golden Plains Shire Council is seeking a commercially registered builder to complete the construction of the Bannockburn Youth Hub.

Councillors have been provided with a copy of the confidential Tender Evaluation Panel Report for consideration prior to making a decision.

BACKGROUND

Golden Plains Shire Council is seeking a suitably qualified contractor for the construction of the Bannockburn Youth Hub. The portable previously used to accommodate Council staff has recently been relocated and will be transformed into a vibrant Youth Hub facility that will provide inclusive, innovative and accessible programs and services for young people in a growing community. This project will support improved health, social, education and employability outcomes, and provide stronger connections between the local community and services young people need.

DISCUSSION

The tender was advertised on 8 May 2021, closing 9 June 2021, with 4 submissions received on closing. The submissions were reviewed, and compliance checked, with no submissions identified as non-compliant. After the evaluation panel members had reviewed and scored each tender and all clarifications independently, a consensus evaluation meeting was held on 18 June 2021.

Bowden Corporation was chosen as the preferred contractor based on consensus measured by capacity, capability, price and local content.

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS*Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020)*

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications	No

(Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	No
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	No
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	No
Risk Assessment	Yes
Communication	Yes
Human Rights Charter	No

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

Tender complies with *GPSC May 2020 Procurement Policy* and the *Local Government Act 1989*.

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

Public notice was provided in line with *Local Government Act 1989, (Sect.186)* and included advertisements in the Geelong Advertiser, Ballarat Courier, The Age and Council's eProcure. Decision outcomes will be advised on eProcure tender website and Council minutes.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The tender is within the project budget of \$561,752 made up of funding from the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions 'Growing Suburbs Fund' \$271,032, Federal Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund \$100,000 and Bannockburn and District Grants Inc. \$100,000 and the in-kind contribution of the repurposed portable building at \$90,720.

The overall project budget is likely to require an estimated additional investment of \$30,000 to ensure the delivery of a high quality, contemporary youth space including landscaping, IT and furniture and equipment. There are a number of projects that are on track to be delivered with savings that could be reallocated to this project and further conversations with Council will occur in the coming months.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risks were considered by the evaluation panel requirements associated with this specific type of risk activity are actively monitored throughout the life of the contract.

COMMUNICATION

Council decisions on tender/s awarded are advised through Council Minutes and electronic tender system and supplier notifications via procurement email.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic).

OPTIONS

Option 1 – Approve Tender Award – GPSC-RFT-07-2021 Bannockburn Youth Hub. This option is recommended by Council officers through the Tender evaluation and selection process which recommends *Bannockburn Youth Hub* to be awarded to *Bowden Corporation*.

Option 2 – do not award contract to any tenderer. This option is not recommended as the works have been identified as high need and if a contract is not awarded, may result in reputational damage for Council.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest regarding this matter.

CONCLUSION

The Evaluation Panel has conducted a comprehensive and detailed assessment of the submissions which were received in response to Council's request for tender *GPSC-RFT-07-2021 – Bannockburn Youth Hub* as outlined in this report to ensure compliance with:

1. *relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 1989 (Vic); and*
2. *Council's Procurement Policy requirements*

In conclusion, Bowden Corporation met the Council's tender requirements and is considered best placed to provide these services for Council.

7.13 AWARDING OF TENDER (RFT-03-2021) BANNOCKBURN SOCCER FEMALE FRIENDLY CHANGEROOM

File Number:**Author:** Thomas Lindberg, Contract and Procurement Specialist**Authoriser:** Philippa O'Sullivan, Director Corporate Services**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Resolves to award the Contract GPSC-RFT-03-2021 Bannockburn Soccer Female Friendly Changeroom to Bowden Corporation Pty Ltd for the sum of \$878,398.62 *exclusive of GST*, comprising of \$804,449.62 for the mandatory building component and \$73,949.00 for two of the three tender options.
2. Delegates to the Chief Executive Officer or his delegate authority to execute the contract on behalf of Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Golden Plains Shire Council is seeking a commercially registered builder to complete the construction of Bannockburn Soccer Female Friendly Changeroom.

Councillors have been provided with a copy of the confidential Tender Evaluation Panel Report for consideration prior to making a decision.

BACKGROUND

The Golden Plains Soccer Club (GPSC) currently has scheduling issues in terms of change room usage between male and female teams. There currently exists two soccer pitches, but there is only one set of change rooms located at the Golden Plains Soccer Pavilion in Bannockburn to cater for all participating teams. Football Federation Victoria (FFV) facility guidelines require two change rooms per pitch (plus referee room and amenities) to facilitate scheduling of games.

A commercially registered builder is required to complete the construction of an architecturally designed extension to the existing soccer pavilion to incorporate female friendly/unisex change rooms to service the recently constructed second soccer pitch. The extension will include items to meet the FFV guidelines including, DDA compliant public toilet, referee room, change rooms (home and away), first aid room, storage space, baby change facilities and other associated supporting items such as paths and landscaping.

The tender included 3 options tenderers were requested to provide a cost for. These were:

- New concrete pavement to extend to future soccer pitch 02 fence line
- New landscape and concrete planter bed
- Provision of external soffit lining to underside of new canopy

DISCUSSION

The tender was advertised on 17 April 2021, closing 12 May 2021, with 4 submissions received on closing. The submissions were reviewed, and compliance checked, with no submissions identified as non-compliant. OHS team reviewed the submissions and provided a final report. After the evaluation panel had reviewed and scored each tender and all clarifications, a consensus evaluation meeting was held on 2 June 2021.

Bowden Corporation Pty Ltd was chosen as the preferred supplier based on consensus scores measured by capacity, capability, price and local content. Two (2) of the three (3) tender options are also recommended to be included in the contracted works, being a new concrete pavement to extend to future soccer pitch 02 fence line and provision of soffit lining to underside of new canopy. A revised construction schedule was received after the initial tender report was complete. Bowden Corporation Pty Ltd have provided an updated schedule that they are able to start on the 1 July 2021 with completion forecast for the 28 of October 2021.

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020)

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	No
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	No
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	No
Risk Assessment	Yes
Communication	Yes
Human Rights Charter	No

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

Tender complies with *GPSC May 2020 Procurement Policy* and the *Local Government Act 1989*.

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

Public notice was provided in line with *Local Government Act 189, (Sect.186)* and included advertisements in the Geelong Advertiser, Ballarat Courier, The Age, Golden Plains and Council's eProcure. Decision outcomes will be advised on eProcure tender website and Council minutes.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Total budget allocated to the Bannockburn Soccer complex is \$1,296,535.

This consists of:

- \$832,000 from the Community Development Grants Program; and
- \$464,535 from Community Infrastructure and Place: Sport and Recreation Victoria funding.
 - It should be noted that \$244,719 of this funding has been committed towards the installation of perimeter fencing and sports lighting. \$82,919 of that has already been spent. The rest is due to be spent prior to the end of the 2021/22 Financial year.

Therefore, the remaining budget is \$1,051,816.

RISK ASSESSMENT

There are no identified risk implications associated with this report.

COMMUNICATION

Council decisions on tender/s awarded are advised through Council Minutes and electronic tender system and supplier notifications via procurement email.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC).

OPTIONS

Option 1 – Approve Contract Award for GPSC-RFT-03-2021 Bannockburn Soccer Female Friendly Changeroom Bowden Corporation Pty Ltd for the sum of \$873,398.62 *exclusive of GST*.

This option is recommended by Council officers through the Tender evaluation and selection process which recommends Bannockburn Soccer Female Friendly Changeroom to be awarded to Bowden Corporation Pty Ltd. This option includes the award of the essential project items (\$804,464.62) and two of requested optional items within the tender (\$73,949.00). This will leave a project contingency amount of \$173,417.38 which equates to 16.5% of the remaining budget.

Option 2 – Do not award contract to any tenderer.

This option is not recommended as the works have been identified as high need and if a contract is not awarded, may result in reputational damage for Council.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest regarding this matter.

CONCLUSION

The Evaluation Panel has conducted a comprehensive and detailed assessment of the submissions which were received in response to Council's request for tender *GPSC-RFT-03-2021 Bannockburn Soccer Female Friendly Changeroom* as outlined in this report to ensure compliance with:

1. *relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 1989 (Vic); and*
2. *Council's Procurement Policy requirements*

In conclusion, Bowden Corporation Pty Ltd met the Council's tender requirements and is best placed to provide these services for Council.

7.14 AWARDING OF TENDER (RFT-01-2021) MEREDITH SHELFORD ROAD WIDENING STAGE 3**File Number:****Author:** Thomas Lindberg, Contract and Procurement Specialist**Authoriser:** Philippa O'Sullivan, Director Corporate Services**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Resolves to award the Contract GPSC-RFT-01-2021 Meredith-Shelford Road Widening Stage 3 to Berne Fleming Civil Pty Ltd for the sum of \$785,357.12 (including Provisional sum) exclusive of GST.
2. Delegates to the Chief Executive Officer or his delegate authority to execute the contract on behalf of Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Golden Plains Shire Council wish to upgrade Meredith-Shelford Road, Meredith from Chainage 14750 to Chainage 16750. This is a continuation of the road upgrade that has seen approximately 4km of road upgrade works previously awarded. A public tender was advertised, and responses assessed. This report seek approval to award the contract to the preferred tenderer, Berne Fleming Civil Pty Ltd.

Councillors have been provided with a copy of the confidential Tender Evaluation Panel Report for consideration prior to making a decision.

BACKGROUND

Council is seeking to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced contractor to construct approximately 2km of sealed road with 300mm compacted depth crushed rock and a 7mm size primer seal to support a safer and more efficient transportation network. The extent of works to be constructed is as indicated on the engineering construction drawings noted as the limit of works between chainages 14,750 to 16,750 which were attached to the public tender documents.

This contract includes all civil works required to complete the scope of works as defined in the construction drawings and the schedule of quantities. The works generally include removal of the existing seal, construction of a two-lane sealed road, installation of VicRoads approved guard fence at specified locations, improved signage, improved line marking, improved delineation throughout and drainage improvements with upgrades to driveway culverts and crossroad culverts.

DISCUSSION

The tender was originally advertised on 3 April 2021, closing 28 April 2021, with 5 submissions received on closing. The submissions were reviewed, and compliance checked, with no submissions identified as non-compliant. After the evaluation panel members had reviewed and scored each tender and all clarifications independently, a consensus evaluation meeting was held on 11 and 20 May 2021.

Berne Fleming Civil Pty Ltd was chosen as the preferred supplier based on consensus measured by capacity, capability, price and local content and reference checks.

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020)

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	No
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	No
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	No
Risk Assessment	Yes
Communication	Yes
Human Rights Charter	No

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

Tender complies with *GPSC May 2020 Procurement Policy* and the *Local Government Act 1989*.

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

Public notice was provided in line with *Local Government Act 1989*, (Sect.186) and included advertisements in the Geelong Advertiser, Ballarat Courier, Golden Plains and Council's eProcure. Decision outcomes will be advised on eProcure tender website and Council minutes.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The tender is 100% funded from Federal Government Blackspot Roads Program and is within the allocated project budget.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risks were considered by the evaluation panel requirements associated with this specific type of risk activity are actively monitored throughout the life of the contract.

COMMUNICATION

Council decisions on tender/s awarded are advised through Council Minutes and electronic tender system and supplier notifications via procurement email.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC).

OPTIONS

Option 1 – Approve Tender Award – GPSC-RFT-01-2021 Meredith Shelford Road Widening Stage 3.

This option is recommended by Council officers through the Tender evaluation and selection process which recommends Meredith Shelford Road Widening Stage 3 to be awarded to Berne Fleming Civil Pty Ltd.

Option 2 – Do not award contract to any tenderer.

This option is not recommended as the works have been identified as high need and if a contract is not awarded, may result in reputational damage for Council.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest regarding this matter.

CONCLUSION

The Evaluation Panel has conducted a comprehensive and detailed assessment of the submissions which were received in response to Council's request for tender *GPSC-RFT-01-2021 – Meredith Shelford Road Widening Stage 3* as outlined in this report to ensure compliance with:

1. *relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 1989 (Vic); and*
2. *Council's Procurement Policy requirements*

In conclusion, Berne Fleming Civil Pty Ltd met the Council's tender requirements and is considered best placed to provide these services for Council.

8 NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

9 PETITIONS

Nil

10 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020:

10.1 Regional Renewable Organics Network- Heads Of Agreement

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 3(1) - g(ii) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with or (ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.
