



# **ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**

## **MINUTES**

**Wednesday 16 June 2021**

**Commencing at 3.00pm**

**Remotely via zoom**

**Anthony Judd  
Chief Executive Officer  
Buloke Shire Council**

**Minutes of the Special Meeting held on Wednesday, 16 June 2021 commencing at 3.00pm held remotely via zoom.**

**PRESENT**

**CHAIRPERSON:**

Cr Daryl Warren                      Mount Jeffcott Ward

**COUNCILLORS:**

Cr Graeme Milne                      Mount Jeffcott Ward

Cr Bronwyn Simpson                      Mount Jeffcott Ward

Cr Alan Getley                      Mallee Ward

Cr David Vis                      Mallee Ward

Cr David Pollard                      Lower Avoca Ward

**OFFICERS:**

Anthony Judd                      Chief Executive Officer

Wayne O'Toole                      Director Works and Technical Services

Hannah Yu                      Director Corporate Services

Rose Harris                      Director Community Development

**AGENDA**

**1. COUNCIL WELCOME**

**WELCOME**

The Mayor Cr Daryl Warren welcomed all in attendance.

**STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to their Elders and to the Elders from other communities who maybe here today.

**2. RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES**

Cr Carolyn Stewart                      Lower Avoca Ward

**3. DECLARATION of PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Cr Milne Item 3.1.1 and Item 3.1.2

Cr Warren Item 3.1.1 and Item 3.1.2

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<b>4.</b>	<b>BUSINESS</b>	
<b>4.1</b>	<b>MATTERS WHICH MAY EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC</b>	<b>22</b>

The Meeting may be closed to members of the public to consider confidential matters.

- 4.1.1 CONTRACT No 93 2020-2021 - PROVISION OF MUNICIPAL BUILDING SURVEYOR AND BUILDING INSPECTOR SERVICES

If the meeting has been closed it will be brought back into open session by resolution

#### **NEXT MEETING**

THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL WILL BE HELD IN WYCHEPROOF SUPPER ROOM, , 367 BROADWAY, WYCHEPROOF ON WEDNESDAY, 14 JULY 2021 AT 7PM.

**Anthony Judd**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

### 3.1 MANAGEMENT REPORTS

#### 3.1.1 COMMUNITY GRANTS & SPONSORSHIP

Cr Warren handed the chair to Cr Vis Deputy Mayor

Cr Milne and Cr Warren declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting at 3.05pm

**Author's Title:** Community Development Officer

**Department:** Community Development

**File No:** GS/09/42

**Relevance to Council Plan 2017 - 2021**

**Strategic Objective:** Build a healthy and active community

#### PURPOSE

This report is presented to Council to consider the allocation of funds from the Community Grants and Sponsorship Program

#### SUMMARY

The following applications are presented for Council to consider.

- The Mayor vacates the Chair, removes self from meeting –
- Cr. Vis (Deputy Mayor) assumes the Chair for Part 1

#### MOTION:

That Council allocates the following funding under the Community Grants and Sponsorship program:

- \$6,600 sustainability Grant to Friends to Mount Wycheproof;
- \$1,000 Organisation Support Grant to Buloke Tourism Board;
- \$1,500 Project Small Equipment Grant to Birchip Historical Society;
- \$1,500 Project Support Grant to Donald Lions Club; and
- \$1,250 Project Support Grant to Tchum Lake Aquatic Club.

**Moved:** CR ALAN GETLEY

**Seconded:** CR BRONWYN SIMPSON

**CARRIED.**

**(R979/21)**

- Part 1 is put to vote

**AMENDMENT****MOTION:**

That council removes the \$1,000 Organisation Support Grant to Buloke Tourism Board from the recommended funding.

**MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD**

**NO SECONDER – MOTION LOST**

Part 1 is put to vote

First recommendation carried

Cr Milne and Cr Warren returned to the meeting 3.08pm

**Attachments:** Nil

**DISCUSSION**

The following applications have submitted under Council's Community Grants and Sponsorship Program.

Each of these applications have been assessed as per the Community Grant Guidelines as accepted by Council. The Senior Leadership Team recommends the following grants for Council's consideration and final decision on the allocations.

<b>Project:</b>	<b>Mt Wycheproof Restoration Project</b>
Organisation:	Friends of Mt Wycheproof
Amount Applied:	\$6600
Funding Amount Recommended:	\$6600
Total project cost:	\$11000
Project Description:	Remove and inhibit Noxious and other weeds from Mt Wycheproof. Work carried out by local contractors TMC Enviro who have all the insurance and experience for undertaking this type of work on Crown/Shire managed land. Council's Environmental Compliance Officer will liaise with the contractors.
Project Benefit:	Successful cessation of weed growth will allow native species to thrive and provide carbon sequestration. Enhance the natural environment and attraction of the Mount site. Potential growth of visitor and tourism numbers will bring benefits to the Wycheproof community.

<b>Project:</b>	<b>Insuring Buloke Tourism</b>
Organisation:	Buloke Tourism Board
Amount Applied:	\$1000
Funding Amount Recommended:	\$1000
Total project cost:	\$1049
Project	This funding will provide organisational support to cover insurance costs for 12

Description:	months. The impact of COVID and a significant drop in overseas visitors has impacted on local business over the past 14 months. The re-emergence of local tourism and a move of metropolitan families to rural communities should provide opportunities for this group to generate it's own revenue going forward.
Project Benefit:	Buloke communities working together to promote tourism and local attractions will contribute significantly to the diversification of the Buloke community. The Buloke Visitor's Guide was a good example of what can be accomplished when communities collaborate. The Buloke Tourism Board are currently working on a Business Plan and a Memorandum of Understanding for Buloke Shire and the various town forums to formalize the role this board plays in the community. This should result in them developing an independent revenue stream.

#### **IT help for Research**

Organisation:	Birchip Historical Society
Amount Applied:	\$1500
Funding Amount Recommended:	\$1500
Total project cost:	\$2634.95
Project Description:	Project to upgrade current IT capacity with a computer and software
Project Benefit:	The project will result in enhanced capacity to undertake research and support local residents and visitors in exploring their family links to the Birchip community. Local researcher and visiting families will benefit from this improved capacity. As COVID restrictions ease the museum will be reopened to the public. The BHS is collaborating with Sea Lake based tour operators to host bus trips to Birchip. This will contribute to the local economy.

#### **Project: Out and About With The Davidson Brothers**

Organisation:	Donald Lions Club
Amount Applied:	\$1500
Funding Amount Recommended:	\$1500
Total project cost:	\$2900
Project Description:	A country music event featuring the Davidson Brothers. An afternoon – evening event to be held on a Sunday. The project will provide an opportunity for Donald people to further re-connect. Re-grouping post COVID-19 lockdowns to develop the town's older people and younger country music towns people to get the community moving and a reason to get out and about.
Project Benefit:	Local Lions Clubs have been significant contributors to emergency response efforts in Buloke. COVID has impacted on the capacity of the clubs to support local connectedness and community building projects. Lions in Donald are keen to build on this initial event as a local community fundraiser going forward. This project is prompting the community to get out again, especially older people, to enjoy a pleasant Sunday afternoon with music and gathering to reconnect with old friends who have become withdrawn. Special transport and invitation will be issued to Goodwin Village residents.

#### **Project: Tchum Lake Fun Day**

Organisation:	Tchum Lake Aquatic Club
Amount Applied:	\$1250
Funding Amount Recommended:	\$1250
Total project cost:	\$2500

Project Description:	Project will provide a evening event featuring an outdoor movie. This is a family friendly event held on the Tchum Lake foreshore. The night is designed for a cross section of ages so that families can relax and enjoy the evening together.
Project Benefit:	Tchum Lake location and facilities provide a setting that contributes to people being able to relax and have the benefit of both indoor and outdoor setting. This opportunity to bring Birchip residents as well as neighbouring communities together will be a valuable circuit breaker following the COVID impact.

**RELEVANT LAW**

Not applicable

**RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS**

Not applicable

**OPTIONS**

Not applicable.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The Friends of Mount Wycheproof application targeting a reductions in their carbon footprint and positive impact on the environment.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Not applicable.

**INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

Not Applicable

**COLLABORATION**

Not applicable.

**FINANCIAL VIABILITY**

With the approval of the above applications the allocation for Community Grant Funding will be \$15,868 of a total of \$20,000 annual budget and the Sustainability Grant Funding will be \$41,284 out of a total \$50,000 annual budget.

**REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES**

Not applicable.

**COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES**

These projects all fit broadly within the Council Plan strategies, particularly in supporting community enterprise and enhancing the sustainability of our community facilities

**TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS**

Not applicable.

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No officer involved in the development of this report has a conflict of interest.

### 3.1.2 ADOPTION OF ANNUAL BUDGET 2021 - 2022 FINANCIAL YEAR

Cr Milne and Cr Warren declared a Conflict of Interest

**Author's Title:** Director Corporate Services

**Department:** Corporate Services

**File No:** FM/05/02

**Relevance to Council Plan 2017 - 2021**

**Strategic Objective:** Deliver our service in a financially viable way

#### PURPOSE

To present the Annual Budget 2021/22 for adoption by the Council.

#### SUMMARY

Council has complied with all the relevant requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* relating to the preparation, presentation, and adoption of the Annual Budget 2021/22.

#### AMENDMENT

##### MOTION:

That the Council consider the recommendation in 2 separate parts, i.e. part 1 of the motion be put, and parts 2-6 of the motion be put

**MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD**

**CARRIED.  
(R980/21)**

The procedural does not need to be seconded  
 The Mayor cannot move a procedural motion  
 The Mayor vacates the Chair, removes self from meeting  
 Cr Milne and Cr Warren left the meeting at 3.11pm  
 Cr. Vis (Deputy Mayor) assumes the Chair for Part 1  
 Part 1 is put to vote  
 Mayor returns and resumes the Chair 3.12pm  
 Cr Milne returns to the meeting at 3.12pm  
 Mayor asks Director Corporate Services to introduce the report  
 Mayor puts to vote Part 2-6

##### MOTION:

That the Council, having complied with its obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020*:

1. Adopts the proposed Annual Budget 2021/22 document including to the following amendments from draft:
  - Confirmation of the Financial Assistance Grant (FAG) 2021-22 and estimate of advanced payment 2022-23;



- Additional expenditure relating to increase FAG;
- Corrections and updates to capital works projects since draft; and
- Additional allocations to community groups following Council's consideration of budget submissions

**MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD**

**SECONDED: CR BRONWYN SIMPSON**

**CARRIED.**

**(R981/21)**

#### **AMENDMENT**

##### **MOTION:**

That parts 2-6 are considered in this recommendation

2. Provides the following details in relation to the Annual Budget 2021/22:

- i. There are no new borrowings proposed for the 2021/22 financial year;
- ii. The rate in the dollar for each type of rate to be levied for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 is as follows:

<b>Type of Rate</b>	<b>Cents in \$ on CIV</b>
Rateable residential properties	0.73991
Rateable commercial properties	0.73991
Rateable industrial properties	0.73991
Rateable farming properties	0.51794

- iii. Rate a Municipal Charge \$170 for each rateable assessment in respect of which a Municipal Charge may be levied;
  - iv. Levy an Annual Service Charge of \$422 for kerbside garbage and recycling collection for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022;
3. Levies the general rates and service charges referred to in this resolution by the service notice on each person liable to pay such rate or charge in accordance with section 158 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.
4. In accordance with section 167 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the rates and charges declared by the Council for the 2021/22 financial year must be paid as follows:
- i. By four instalments made on or before the following dates:
    - Instalment 1 – 30 September 2021;
    - Instalment 2 – 30 November 2021;
    - Instalment 3 – 28 February 2022; and
    - Instalment 4 – 31 May 2022;

Or;
  - ii. By a lump sum payment made on or before 15 February 2022.
5. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to levy and recover the general rates and annual service charges in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989*; and
6. Determines that the proposed fees and charges for the 2021/22 financial year be adopted.

**MOVED: CR DAVID VIS**

**SECONDED: CR ALAN GETLEY**

**CARRIED.**

**(R982/21)**

**Attachments:** 1 Buloke Shire Council Annual Budget 2021 - 2022 Financial Year

## **DISCUSSION**

Council is required to prepare and adopt a Budget for each financial year, and the subsequent 3 financial years by 30 June. At the Council Meeting held on 12 May 2021, the draft Annual Budget 2021/22 was endorsed for the purposes of commencing community engagement. This community engagement process has now been completed, and submissions were presented to the Council at its Meeting held on 9 June 2021.

Each year between the time the draft Annual Budget is advertised and when the document is adopted by the Council, events occur which can cause some variation in the Annual Budget. The types of events which occur including:

- timing differences in payment of grants funds;
- additional grant funded capital works projects; and
- completion of the capital works program for the current financial year.

While some of the changes listed above have occurred since the draft budget was released in May 2021 no material change has occurred to Council's overall bottom line and it is recommended that Council adopt the draft budget document as advertised.

When Council considers its September financial report in October 2021, the end of the 2021 financial year will have been completed. At this time Council will incorporate the following 2021/22 variations:

- Carryover of any uncompleted projects from the 2020/21 financial year;
- Additional capital and operational grant funded projects; and
- Variations caused because of timing changes in the delivery of grant funds.

Once these amendments have been adopted by Council in October each year, the updated budget becomes the Council's Current Budget and is the document used for financial report comparison for the remainder of the year.

## **RELEVANT LAW**

Council has a statutory responsibility to prepare and adopt a Budget in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. The provisions of the *Local Government Act 1989* continue to apply with respect to rates and charges on rateable land.

## **RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS**

Council released its draft Annual Budget 2021/22 in May 2021 for feedback in accordance with its Community Engagement policy. Submissions were received at the Council Meeting held on 9 June 2021. Community engagement was also undertaken in relation to the Financial Plan, Council Plan and Revenue and Rating Plan during this period.

## **OPTIONS**

The Council's Annual Budget has been developed in consultation with the Councillors. Briefings included discussion on the need to continue investing own source revenue into Council assets, particularly its road infrastructure. Council's Annual Budget continues to reflect the commitment to maintain current service levels.

Submissions to the budget were considered and, where appropriate, amendments made to the budget to address matters raised. Submissions made to the Council Plan and Revenue and Rating Plan were also assessed against the draft document.

### SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The Annual Budget 2021-22 identifies how Council proposes to resource strategic objectives related to its:

- built and natural environment, including ongoing review of waste and recycling management; implementation of streetscape improvements, riverfront projects and the Playspace master plan; and management of environmental compliance and sustainability programs and services;
- community, including implementation of Council's Community Vision and Council Plan; establishing a new early learning facility in Sea Lake; and supporting initiatives under the Bounce Back funding; and
- economy, including working with stakeholders to review and promote housing opportunities within the Shire; developing a new Economic Development and Tourism Strategy; and implementing key projects from the Silo Art Activation fund.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Draft Annual Budget 2021/22 was presented at the Council Meeting held on 12 May 2021 and Council subsequently commenced community engagement in accordance with its Community Engagement policy.

Submissions on the budget closed 12 noon 9 June 2021 and Council received 10 budget submissions.

A brief description of the subject matter of each submission is listed below:

Ref.	Person/Group	Submission
1*	Martin Duke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget development methodology</li> <li>• Continued critical review of built assets in consultation with community to identify and remove from BSC AM register built infrastructure surplus to needs – therefore reduction in long term financial impost</li> <li>• Specific comments re major initiatives (procurement kerbside waste bins, recognition and allocation aged care service model, analyse and enhance improved customer service / community engagement focus)</li> </ul>
2*	Youth Health Expo Working Party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$2,000 Funding for current and future Youth Health Expo</li> </ul>
3*	Charlton Gentle Exercise Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability ramp and railing at shallow end of Charlton Pool</li> </ul>
4*	Buloke Neighbourhood House Cluster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual allocation \$5K/house 'community event and activities funding'</li> </ul>
5	Buloke Tourism Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual stipend \$1-2K to cover operating costs and small projects</li> </ul>
6	Rex Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual funding \$10K across Shire arts management/cultural incentives</li> </ul>
7	L2P Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$7,500 toward purchase replacement vehicle</li> </ul>
8	CHARTSEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for building upgrade \$322K</li> </ul>
9	Charlton Lawn Tennis Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal 3 trees within Charlton Park (approx. \$13,500)</li> </ul>
10	Birchip Early Learning Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding of infrastructure in Strategic Plan</li> </ul>

Council considered these submissions at the Council Meeting held on 9 June 2021. 6 presentations were made in support of the submissions.

Following consideration of the submissions, the Annual Budget 2021/22 will be amended to include an allocation of \$2,000 for each Neighbourhood House within the 2021/22 financial year and an allocation of \$1,000 for the Buloke Tourism Board. The current 2020/21 Annual Budget already includes \$5,000 to fund the L2P proposal and funds to remove 3 trees at Charlton Park.

Council has committed to undertaking a strategic review of contributions and grants within the 2021/22 financial year with the intention to develop a community contributions and grants framework to guide future decision making. Council Officers will work with other groups who have made a submission to discuss alternative funding sources and, if applicable, project planning and costs, to support the achievement of objectives set out in their submissions.

### **INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

The Annual Budget 2021-22 identifies how Council proposes to resource strategic objectives related to continued service improvement for efficient and flexible services.

### **COLLABORATION**

Council's commitment to work collaboratively with its partners is set out in its values statement. The Annual Budget includes provision for a Youth Officer to deliver VicHealth Local Government Partnership priorities.

### **FINANCIAL VIABILITY**

The annual budget adoption process is a formal process required under the *Local Government Act 2020* and includes the current and future financial implications of Council's operations and capital expenditure requirements.

The adopted Annual Budget 2021/22 will provide an overarching financial framework for the Council to implement for the forthcoming year and over the subsequent 3 financial years.

### **REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES**

Council's commitment to undertaking a strategic review of its community contributions and grants will include advocacy to increase funding by other levels of government for eligible community groups.

### **COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES**

Council's budget development process has been undertaken in accordance with its Community Engagement policy.

### **TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS**

Council's budget development process has included receipt of submissions at a Council Meeting, with the opportunity for persons to speak to their submission. Council Officers will respond to each person or group in relation to the matters raised in their submission.

### **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020* provide that for the purposes of section 129(g) of the *Local Government Act 2020* a matter related to preparing or adopting a budget or a revised budget under Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is prescribed to be exempt.

### 3.1.3 COUNCIL PLAN 2021 - 2025 AND LONG TERM COMMUNITY VISION

**Author's Title:** Director Community Development

**Department:** Community Development

**File No:** CM/13/06

**Relevance to Council Plan 2017 - 2021**

**Strategic Objective:** Support our councillors, staff, volunteers and the community to make informed and transparent decisions.

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the Council Plan 2021-2025 and Long Term Community Vision document for adoption.

#### SUMMARY

Council must adopt and prepare a Council Plan for the period of at least the next four financial years after a general election. Council must also prepare a Community Vision with an outlook of at least the next 10 years. This document presents both of these together under the four Strategic Objective areas of Our Built and Natural Environment, Our Community Wellbeing, Our Economy and Our Council and Community Leadership. This document also incorporates the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan for the second time. The Council Plan 2021-2025 and Long-Term Community Vision comes to Council after a period of feedback from the community and stakeholders on the draft document.

#### MOTION:

That Council adopt the Long-Term Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025

**MOVED:** CR BRONWYN SIMPSON

**SECONDED:** CR DAVID POLLARD

**CARRIED.**  
**(R983/21)**

**Attachments:** 1 Buloke Shire Long-Term Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025.

#### DISCUSSION

The Buloke Long-Term Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025 comes to Council for formal adoption. Under the vision of "Building a Better Buloke", this document presents a range of strategies to guide Council for the next four years, under the ten-year vision of the community. This document has been prepared following a range of community consultation processes, analysis of strategies and plans which interact with this document and consultation with stakeholders. The Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan is integrated into this Council Plan for the second time.

We have some strong data through the Primary Health Network, the Primary Care Partnership, the Buloke, Loddon, Gannawarra Health Needs Analysis and the State of Buloke's Children and Young People's Report which have been reflected in this document. Critical partnerships with service providers and key stakeholders sit behind these reports which have given a great foundation for Council to continue to work towards prevention, early intervention and population health outcomes.

Alongside this planning, the Buloke Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategy is being developed also which will present some key actions to focus on as we move towards our future vision.

Outcomes of our last Council Plan, including the Customer Service Charter, Inclusiveness Plan, updated financial systems, Volunteer Strategy, Rural Land Use review, Economic Development and Tourism Strategy will also play into this plan with the actions from those carrying through to what we are hearing from community in their aspirations.

Our newly adopted Community Engagement Policy has shaped the way we have put this document together.

In 2018, Council undertook an extensive planning exercise which resulted in ten individual community plans, feeding into the integrated community plan under the heading of "Building Buloke 2030". Under the new Local Government Act 2020, we have reviewed this vision to "Beyond 2030" to form Buloke's long term community vision. Much remains the same as that original 2018 aspiration as we take in the lessons of 2020 and build towards a better Buloke, led by our community.

The draft document sets out the ten-year aspiration under each theme and then leads into the four-year strategies and actions which will guide Council in assisting these long-term aspirations.

These will then form Annual Plans. The progress of these will be reported on each quarter. A full review of this document will be undertaken annually.

Several high-quality submissions were received to the Council Plan 2021-2025 and Long Term Community Vision throughout the public exhibition period. These have been carefully considered by officers and taken into consideration in the latest update of this document. This feedback, as well as the extensive amount of feedback collected throughout the development of the draft, will also be used as Council develops its annual plans which will action these strategies over the next four years.

The Draft plan was also submitted to the State Government for exemption to include the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan in this document. Some detailed feedback was received through this process and is reflected in the inclusion of the page titled "Health and Wellbeing Priorities".

The high level of engagement from community throughout this process will continue to guide the implementation of this plan and the subsequent annual plans, reviews and contributing strategies.

#### **RELEVANT LAW**

Not applicable.

#### **RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS**

Council decisions around other key strategic documents will interact with this Council Plan.

#### **OPTIONS**

Council has the option to not adopt this document.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The Long-Term Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025 presents several strategies around sustainability initiatives and responds to the requirement that Local government is identified in the *Climate Change Act 2017* as a decision-maker that must consider climate change when preparing a municipal public health and wellbeing plan, which is incorporated into this document.

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

A range of community consultation activities were undertaken to form the draft document which resulted in high quality feedback from community members.

Letters were issued to Community Forums in December 2020 explaining the upcoming community planning process and a suite of tools were provided to the groups to aid in the revision and renewal of their own community plans to feed into the process of this planning cycle.

Listening Posts and Street Walks were held in all ten communities, where possible, in conjunction with the Buloke Library Service. Both Councillors and Officers attended these.

Flyers were sent to all residents explaining the planning process and ways to get involved. Three key questions were included in the flyer as well as ways to get involved in the feedback process. These flyers were also distributed as an insert in all three local newspapers that cover the Buloke Shire area.

An online survey was made available, and hard copies also on offer for those unable to connect online.

A total of 68 people filled in the online survey, with each respondent spending at least 30 minutes answering the 16 open-ended questions. The depth of this engagement delivered more than 1,000 individual pieces of feedback which have been analysed in the production of this document.

Councillor and officer attendance at Community Forum meetings and key gatherings during the consultation period included explanation of the planning process, ways to get involved as well as feedback taken on the spot.

Further consultation during the draft period also included written submissions as well as listening posts throughout Buloke.

It should be noted some valuable feedback was received and noted on the community consultation process and ways to continue to strengthen this going forward.

#### **INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

This document being presented outlines several innovative strategies building on the community feedback as well as indicators to promote continuous improvement. This document will have an annual review and an annual plan which will be reported on quarterly.

#### **COLLABORATION**

In developing this document, Council has collaborated with a range of stakeholders and regional and state bodies to build into the strategies presented.

#### **FINANCIAL VIABILITY**

The Annual Budget underpins how the strategies in this document will be resourced, grouped under the same four strategic objectives.

#### **REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES**

There are a range of Regional, State and National Plans referenced throughout this document. They are specifically named under the heading of "Current Strategies and Plans" following each key focus area.

#### **COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES**

This document sets out the next four year Council Plan. The previous Council Plan (2017-2021) has been taken into account to link through to this new document. The Integrated Buloke 2030 Plan has heavily influenced this document also.

#### **TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS**

This report comes following the draft document going on public exhibition for 28 days to enable the public to make submission and provide feedback on the proposed strategies and direction.

#### **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No officer involved in this report has a conflict of interest.

### 3.1.4 ADOPTION OF REVENUE AND RATING PLAN

**Author's Title:** Director Corporate Services

**Department:** Corporate Services

**File No:** RV/11/01

**Relevance to Council Plan 2017 - 2021**

**Strategic Objective:** Deliver our service in a financially viable way

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present to the Revenue and Rating Plan to the Council for adoption.

#### SUMMARY

The *Local Government Act 2020* (Act) requires the Council to prepare and adopt a 4-year Revenue and Rating Plan (Plan) by 30 June after a general election. The Plan is used to inform a medium-term approach to generating income required to support the implementation of the Council Plan and Budget. A period of community engagement has been undertaken in as part of the development of the Plan.

#### MOTION:

That the Council adopt the Revenue and Rating Plan.

**MOVED:** CR ALAN GETLEY

**SECONDED:** CR DAVID POLLARD

**CARRIED.**  
**(R984/21)**

**Attachments:** 1 Buloke Shire Council Revenue and Rating Plan

#### DISCUSSION

The development of a Plan is a new requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020* (Act). The Act states Council must prepare a Plan for a period of 4 years, to commence on 30 June the year following a general election.

The Plan explains how Council calculates the revenue needed to fund its activities, and how the funding burden will be apportioned between ratepayers and other users of Council facilities and services. Key policies and information are outlined in the Plan including but not limited to the Council's:

- system of valuation,
- use of differential rates
- use of municipal charge and service rates and charges
- arrangements for payment for rates and charges
- available concessions, and
- pricing policy and user fees.

Council undertook community engagement in the development of the Plan. The community engagement process and outcomes are outlined in this report.



**RELEVANT LAW**

Section 93 of the Act provides the Council must prepare a 4-year Plan which describes its rating structure and pricing policy. The adoption of the Plan must occur after a period of community engagement. The rates and charges provisions are compliant with Council's requirements under the *Local Government Act 1989*.

**RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS**

Council adopted its first Rating Strategy, and Rating Policy in 2019 as part of best practice methodology.

At the Council Meeting held on 12 May 2021, the Council endorsed the draft Plan and commenced community engagement in accordance with the Community Engagement policy.

**OPTIONS**

The Plan sets out decisions of the Council in relation to rating options available under the Act to ensure the fair and equitable distribution of rates burden across property owners. It also sets out principles used in decision making for other revenue sources such as fees and charges.

The Plan provides a person may pay a rate or charge in 4 instalments or in a lump sum. It further includes an adjustment to the tolerance threshold which would prompt a review of rating differentials across all categories where any burden for any category changes by +/- 5%.

The Council may initiate a review of the Plan during its term.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The development of the Plan has included considered good practice taxation principles, including but not restricted to:

- Equity;
- Simplicity;
- Capacity to pay; and
- Diversity.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The draft Plan was presented at the Council Meeting held on 12 May 2021 and Council subsequently commenced community engagement in accordance with its Community Engagement policy.

Submissions on the draft Plan closed 12 noon 9 June 2021 and Council received 1 submission. The submission requested the Council develop a model to relate and debate the level of service versus the ratepayer costs and suggested there needs to be more transparency and debate about assumptions which determine the rate quantum.

Details of the community engagement undertaken are included in the Plan.

**INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

Not applicable.

**COLLABORATION**

Not applicable.

**FINANCIAL VIABILITY**

The Plan outlines the assumptions, policy, and decisions of Council in relation to generating the required income to effectively support implementation of the Council Plan and budget for a 4-year period.

The Plan includes transparent consideration of the policy objectives and social, economic, and environmental benefit delivered through subsidies, waivers, and discounts. It will identify financial and revenue related risks and ensure these are mitigated and effectively managed.

### **REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES**

In 2019 the Victorian State Government conducted a Local Government Rating System Review. The Local Government Rating System Review Panel presented their final report and list of recommendations to the Victorian Government in March 2020. The Victorian Government subsequently published a response to the recommendations of the Panel's report. However, at the time of publication the recommended changes have not yet been implemented, and timelines to make these changes have not been announced.

### **COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES**

Financial policies and strategic plans, including the Plan, Financial Plan and Annual Budget, form part of the integrated strategic planning framework. These and other strategies and policies will be considered by the Council in the period leading to 30 June 2021.

Additional policies to be developed during the 2021/22 to support the application of the Plan financial year have been referenced in the Plan.

### **TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS**

The Plan enables the community to understand how, and on what basis, rates and charges are levied. The development of the Plan included receipt of submissions at a Council Meeting, with the opportunity for persons to speak to their submission.

### **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020* provide that for the purposes of section 129(g) of the *Local Government Act 2020* a matter related to preparing or adopting a Revenue and Rating Plan Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is prescribed to be exempt.

### 3.1.5 ADOPTION OF FINANCIAL PLAN 2021 - 2022 THROUGH TO 2030 - 2031

**Author's Title:** Director Corporate Services

**Department:** Corporate Services

**File No:** FM/05/02

**Relevance to Council Plan 2017 - 2021**

**Strategic Objective:** Deliver our service in a financially viable way

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the Financial Plan for 2021/22 to 2030/31 to the Council for adoption.

#### SUMMARY

The requirement of a Financial Plan (Plan) is established under the *Local Government Act 2020* (Act). The Plan is a key document which enables improved monitoring of Council's financial viability and enables better reporting and analysis of decisions and assumptions over a 10-year period. A period of community engagement has been undertaken in as part of the development of the Plan.

#### MOTION:

That the Council, having complied with its obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020* adopts the Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31 including to the following amendments from draft:

1. Confirmation of the Financial Assistance Grant (FAG) 2021-22 and estimate of advanced payment 2022-23;
2. Additional expenditure relating to increase the FAG;
3. Corrections and updates to capital works projects since the draft; and
4. Additional allocations to community groups following Council's adoption of the Annual Budget 2021/22

**MOVED:** CR ALAN GETLEY

**SECONDED:** CR DAVID POLLARD

**CARRIED.**

**(R985/21)**

**Attachments:** 1 Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31

#### DISCUSSION

The Act requires that councils must develop, adopt and keep in force a Plan for a period of at least 10 years.

Council considers the development of its Plan to be more than a matter of compliance under the Act. The Plan is an integral part of the Council's overall planning process and provides a longer-term perspective of the ongoing financial sustainability of the Council and the impact of financial decisions into the longer term.

The Plan, having established the framework for the achievement of the Community Vision, will assist the Council to achieve the following objectives:

- Maintaining the existing range and level of service provision and improve the quality and understanding of the range and levels of service provided
- Maintaining a viable cash position, ensuring Council remains financially sustainable in the long-term
- Rationalisation of unused assets to allow capacity to continue investing in asset renewal for road infrastructure
- Continue to pursue recurrent grant funding for strategic capital funds from the state and federal government.

The above objectives will present ongoing challenges for Council, including continuing to meet changing service demands and the forecast asset management challenges over the next 10 years.

Council undertook community engagement in the development of the Plan. The community engagement process and outcomes are outlined in this report.

### **RELEVANT LAW**

The Plan has been prepared in accordance with section 91 of the Act. The adoption of the Plan must occur after a period of community engagement.

### **RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS**

Council adopted its first 10-year Plan in 2019 as part of best practice methodology.

At the Council Meeting held on 12 May 2021, the Council endorsed the draft Plan and commenced community engagement in accordance with the Community Engagement policy.

### **OPTIONS**

Council's underlying assumptions and estimates are outlined in the Plan.

The Plan will provide quantitative data to support the Council's assessment and determination of the most appropriate and sustainable service levels, asset strategies and revenue targets.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The Plan incorporates key actions and initiatives under the Climate Change Mitigation Strategy, Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy and other key strategic documents which give effect to Council's obligation to ensure the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipality is planned for and promoted.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The draft Plan was presented at the Council Meeting held on 12 May 2021 and Council subsequently commenced community engagement in accordance with its Community Engagement policy.

Submissions on the draft Plan closed 12 noon 9 June 2021. Although no submissions were received in relation to the Plan, submissions were received in relation to other plans within the Council's Integrated Strategic Planning framework which have application to the Plan, which has been amended accordingly.

### **INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

The annual review of the Plan will enable Council to respond to external factors which may impact, transform or require re-invention of existing services and activities. The Plan provides a basis from which Council can blend data from different sources, make decisions about effective use of resources, and evaluate its strategic planning framework.

**COLLABORATION**

The Act provides collaboration with other councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought. The Plan will enable effective measurement and evaluation of collaboration, particularly in shared services initiatives, in a consistent manner over the life of the Plan.

**FINANCIAL VIABILITY**

In addition to planning for the delivery of the Community Vision, resource planning is important for ensuring that a Council remains sustainable in the long term and takes account of long-lived assets such as road and drainage infrastructure. Buloke Shire Council has prepared a 10-year long term financial plan to enable a longer-term perspective of the ongoing financial sustainability of the Council and the impact of financial decisions into the longer term.

**REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES**

The Plan can be adjusted each year to respond to relevant regional, state and national plans and policies. It is a key tool in protecting against future cost shift by state and federal government.

**COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES**

The Plan considers, where possible, all other plans and strategies regarding services and initiatives which commit financial and non-financial resources over the 10-year period.

**TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS**

The Plan sets out the quantitative information derived from Council's strategic planning framework. It provides information to the community to assist its understanding of the Council's financial performance and viability.

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020* provide that for the purposes of section 129(g) of the *Local Government Act 2020* a matter related to preparing or adopting a Financial Plan Part 4 of the Act is prescribed to be exempt.

**4. BUSINESS****4.1 MATTERS WHICH MAY EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC****MOTION:**

That pursuant to section 66(1) and (2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the meeting be closed to the public to consider the following reports that are considered to contain confidential information on the grounds provided in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as indicated:

- 4.1.1 CONTRACT NO 93 2020-2021 - PROVISION OF MUNICIPAL (d) contractual matters  
BUILDING SURVEYOR AND BUILDING INSPECTOR SERVICES

**MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD**

**SECONDED: CR ALAN GETLEY**

**CARRIED.  
(R986/21)**

**MOTION:**

That Council reopens the meeting to the public pursuant to section 66(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*

**MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD**

**SECONDED: CR GRAEME MILNE**

**CARRIED.  
(R987/21)**