AGENDA

Wodonga Council

Meeting of the council for June 19, 2023.

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the council will be held in the Council Chamber – 104 Hovell St, Wodonga, or by electronic means if required, on June 19, 2023, commencing at 6:00 pm.

The meeting will be livestreamed through the council website.

Matthew Hyde
Chief Executive Officer



104 Hovell St, Wodonga, VIC 3690
PO Box 923, Wodonga VIC 3689
Phone: (02) 6022 9300
info@wodonga.vic.gov.au
wodonga.vic.gov.au

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1 Welcome and acknowledgment of country

Wodonga Council acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first inhabitants of the Country and as traditional custodians of the land. We respect their Ancestors, Elders and young people and recognise their continuous connections to lands, waters, and communities across the Country.

2 Apologies, leave of absence, and attendance by electronic means

3 Declaration of conflict of interest

Councillors
Councillors must disclose any conflicts of interest they have in matters being considered at council meetings.

If you have a conflict of interest at a council meeting, you must:

- disclose the conflict of interest immediately before the matter is considered;
- notify the chairperson you are leaving the meeting; and
- leave the room and any area where you can see or hear the meeting until the matter has been concluded.

When making your disclosure, you must state the class of interest as well as describing the nature of the interest. However, if this would mean disclosing information that is confidential or private, particularly if it is about another person, you can make a full disclosure to the CEO in writing before the meeting and then just disclose the class of interest in the meeting.

Staff
Staff in attendance at the meeting, and who have not otherwise disclosed a conflict of interest through the written officer report, may also make a declaration at this point in the agenda, for the purposes of transparency.

4 Confirmation of minutes from previous meeting

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes for the Ordinary Council meeting held on May 15 and May 22, 2023, as attached, be received and confirmed as an accurate record.

MINUTES

Wodonga Council minutes for the meeting of the council held in the Council Chamber at 104 Hovell St, Wodonga on May 15 and 22, 2023.

Present

Cr R Mildren, Mayor

Cr L Hall, Deputy Mayor

Cr D Chamberlain – attended by electronic means on the 15th May

Cr D Lowe

Cr K Poulton

Cr O Quilty

Cr G Simpfendorfer - attended by electronic means on the 22nd May

In attendance

Mr M Hyde	Chief Executive Officer
Ms D Mudra	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Ms D Vlekkert	Director Corporate Services
Mr L Schultz	Director Planning, Development and Infrastructure

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info@wodonga.vic.gov.au
wodonga.vic.gov.au

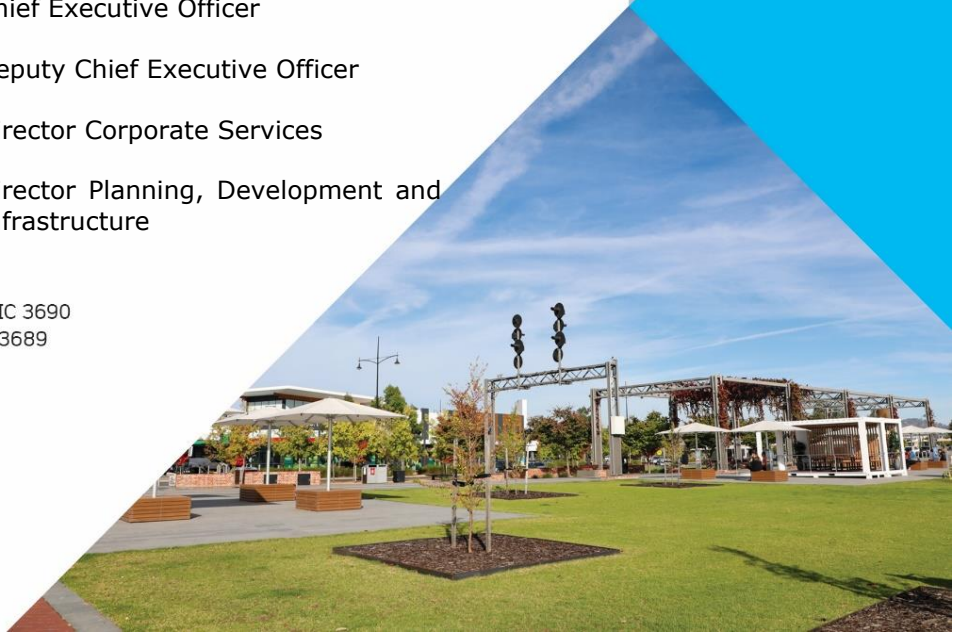


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1 Welcome and acknowledgment of country

The meeting was called to order at 6pm by the Mayor, Cr Mildren.

The Mayor read the acknowledgment of country.

2 Apologies, leave of absence, and attendance by electronic means

There were no apologies.

MOTION

Cr Olga Quilty / Cr Kev Poulton

That Cr Lowe be granted leave of absence for the next council meeting on 19 June 2023.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

MOTION

Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer / Cr Olga Quilty

That the request from Cr Chamberlain to attend by electronic means be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

3 Declaration of conflict of interest

There were no conflict of interest disclosures.

4 Confirmation of minutes from previous meeting

MOTION

Cr Libby Hall / Cr Kev Poulton

That the minutes for the Ordinary Council meeting held on Monday, April 17, 2023, as attached, be received and confirmed as an accurate record.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

MOTION

Cr Kev Poulton / Cr Olga Quilty

That the minutes for the Special Council meeting held on Monday, May 1, 2023, as attached, be received and confirmed as an accurate record.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

5 Question time

Question time at council meetings is conducted in accordance with Rule 62 of the Meeting Procedure Chapter of the *Governance Rules.*

Four questions were received and covered a range of topics:

- Contribution to rate income from different ratepayer categories
- Support for businesses
- Cost of living and the budget
- Sustainable income streams

The questions, along with the responses, are included with the minutes on the council web page.

6 Delegates reports

Nil

7 Reports for determination

7.1 Council Plan and budget items where councillors have a conflict of interest

There were no conflict of interest declarations.

7.2 Draft Council Plan - adjusted 2023

MOTION

Cr Kev Poulton / Cr Libby Hall

That the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, as adjusted 2023, be made available for public comment, with a report on the community engagement to be submitted to the council meeting scheduled for June 26, 2023.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

7.3 Draft Budget 2023-2024 and Draft Financial Plan 2023-2033

MOTION

Cr Kev Poulton / Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer

That:

1. The Draft Budget 2023-2024, as tabled and initialled by the Chairperson for identification, be the Budget prepared by Council for the purposes of Section 94(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* ("the Act") and be endorsed for a 21-day public exhibition period;

2. The Fees and Charges Schedule be included as part of the Draft Budget 2023-2024;

3. The Draft Financial Plan 2023-2033 and Draft Operating Budget by Business Unit 2023-2024 be endorsed for a 21-day public exhibition period; and

4. A report on the feedback from the public exhibition period be submitted to the council meeting scheduled for June 26, 2023.

LOST 3 / 4

For:	Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Kev Poulton and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Ron Mildren and Cr Olga Quilty

MOTION

Cr Libby Hall / Cr Olga Quilty

1. Approve the Draft Budget 2023-2024, Draft Financial Plan 2023-2034 and Draft Operating Budget by Business Unit, with the following amendments:

- A rate rise of 2%; and
- A reduction in overall sterilised cat and dog registration income of $157,370;
- The removal of 3 pathway traineeship positions with a reduced expenditure of $229,113;
- A further reduction of CEO consultancy expenditure of $45,000; and
- Deferral of $750,000 capital expenditure for the Racecourse Grandstand from 23/24 to 24/25.

be tabled and initialed by the Chairperson for identification, be the Budget prepared by Council for the purposes of Section 94(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 ("the Act") and be endorsed for a 21-day public exhibition period;

2. The Fees and Charges Schedule be included as part of the Draft Budget 2023-2024 reflective of sterilised cat and dog registration fee reduction of $54.00 to $30.00 and pensioner sterilised cat and dog from $27.00 to $20.00 ;

3. The Draft Financial Plan 2023-2024 to 2023-2034 and Draft Operating Budget by Business Unit 2023-2024 be endorsed for a 21-day public exhibition period; and
4. A report on the feedback from the public exhibition period be submitted to the council meeting scheduled for June 26, 2023.

CARRIED 4 / 3

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Ron Mildren and Cr Olga Quilty
Against:	Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Kev Poulton and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer

7.4 March 2023 - Quarterly Finance Report

MOTION

Cr Olga Quilty / Cr Libby Hall

That:

1. The budget variations in the March 2023 Quarterly Finance Report be approved.

2. The Finance report be noted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For: Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer

Against: Nil

7.5 Draft Wodonga Revenue and Rating Plan

MOTION

Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer / Cr Danny Lowe

That Council:

1. Receive the Revenue and Rating Plan Reference Group report as attached;

2. Community feedback be sought on the Draft Revenue and Rating Plan, as attached, with the consultation to extend for a period of 28 days; and

3. A further report be submitted to Council following the completion of the public consultation process for the purpose of adopting the 2023 Revenue and Rating Plan.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For: Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer

Against: Nil

7.6 Community Grants Program Review

MOTION

Cr Olga Quilty / Cr Libby Hall

That:

1. Council consolidates all community grant funding and Memorandum of Understandings into the one annual process that is aligned with the budget submission process effective January 2024; and
2. Current Memorandum of Understandings and Community Partnership agreements continue until the end of each agreement.
3. A further report be presented to the Council that sets out a governance framework for the granting of community funds through the annual budget process.

CARRIED 4 / 3

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Ron Mildren and Cr Olga Quilty
Against:	Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Kev Poulton and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer

During discussion of this item, the mover and the seconder agreed to a suggestion from Cr Chamberlain, for the inclusion of part three addressing a governance framework.

7.7 Community Impact Grants February 2023

MOTION

Cr Kev Poulton / Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer

That the panel recommendations for the Community Impact Grants program, as follows, be approved:

a. Centre Against Violence, Tackling Consent project, $3,280

b. Albury Wodonga Volunteer Resource Bureau, Multicultural Exercise Program, $2,680

c. Albury Wodonga Ultimate Frisbee Inc., Border Hat 2023 event, $2,000

d. Wodonga Primary School, Moving Together (Silent Disco), $2,900

e. Murray River Fine Music Association Inc., Murray River Fine Music presents the Flinders Quartet in 'Musical Portraits', $4,000

f. Kiewa Catchment Landcare Groups, Building Cultural Connection via traditional crafts with Aunty Valda Murray, $2,800.

CARRIED 6 / 1

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Cr Olga Quilty

7.8 Community Infrastructure & Equipment Grants Program, February 2023

MOTION

Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer / Cr Danny Lowe

That the panel recommendations for the Community Infrastructure and Equipment Grants program, as follows, be approved:

a) Albury Wodonga Mountain Bikers Inc., Maintenance Container Hub, $6,980

b) Wodonga Cemetery Trust, Utility Cart, $5,000

c) Wodonga Raiders Junior Football Club, Raiders Next Generation, $3,000

d) Our Native Garden Nursery Inc., Nursery Tables, $8,944

e) Trudewind Road Neighbourhood House Inc., Seats 4 Bottoms, $8,255

f) Wodonga Men's Shed, Workplace Dust Extractor, $2,600

g) Albury-Wodonga Yacht Club, Improved Disability Access, $7,655

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Cr Olga Quilty / Cr Danny Lowe

That there be a five minute adjournment, the time being 8.03pm.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

7.9 Flying Fruit Fly Circus MOU

The meeting reconvened at 8.08pm.

MOTION

Cr Olga Quilty / Cr Libby Hall

1. That Council enter into an agreement and make a $20,000 contribution to Flying Fruit Fly Circus towards the Borderville Festival in Wodonga in 2023; and,
2. That future contributions be subject to the annual Budget deliberations.

CARRIED 6 / 1

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Cr Kev Poulton

7.10 Public Toilet Strategy 2023-2033

MOTION

Cr Kev Poulton / Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer

That:

1. The Council approves the draft Public Toilet Strategy 2023-2033 for public exhibition to obtain community feedback;

2. The Council receives a further report that includes consultation feedback with the final version of the Strategy to be considered for adoption at a future Council meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

7.11 Committees Policy

MOTION

Cr Olga Quilty / Cr Libby Hall

That:

1. The draft Committees Policy, as attached, be placed on public exhibition for 28 days; and

2. A further report on the Committees Policy, incorporating community feedback, be submitted to a future council meeting.

POINT OF ORDER
A point of order was called by Cr Simpfendorfer, stating that as the resolution sought community feedback on a draft policy, the comments by Cr Hall about how other Victorian councils used committees were not relevant to the debate. The point of order was **upheld**.

MOTION

Cr Olga Quilty / Cr Libby Hall

That:

1. The draft Committees Policy, as attached, be placed on public exhibition for 28 days; and

2. A further report on the Committees Policy, incorporating community feedback, be submitted to a future council meeting.

CARRIED 5 / 2

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren and Cr Olga Quilty
Against:	Cr Kev Poulton and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer

7.12 Finance and Budget Delegated Committee

MOTION

Cr Olga Quilty / Cr Libby Hall

In exercise of the powers conferred by section 63 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Council resolves that:

1. From the date of this resolution, there be established as a Delegated Committee, the Finance and Budget Delegated Committee.

2. The purpose of the Delegated Committee is to exercise Council's functions and powers and to perform Council's duties in relation to finance and budget matters.

3. The members of the Delegated Committee are all councillors.

4. The Chairperson of the Committee is the Mayor, or another councillor appointed by the Mayor, or in the absence of the Mayor, another councillor as provided for in the Governance Rules.

5. A quorum for the Committee is a whole number that is an absolute majority, which is the number of members that is greater than half the total number of members of the Delegated Committee.

6. All members of the Delegated Committee have voting rights on the Delegated Committee.

7. There be delegated to the members of the Delegated Committee the powers, duties and functions set out in the attached Instrument of Delegation (**the Instrument**).

8. The Instrument:

    8.1 comes into force immediately the common seal of Council is affixed to the Instrument; and

    8.2 remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.

9. The powers, duties and functions conferred on the members of the Delegated Committee by the Instrument must be exercised in accordance with any guidelines or policies Council may from time to time adopt.

10. The Instrument be sealed.

POINT OF ORDER

A point of order was called by Cr Simpfendorfer under rule 61 of the Meeting Procedure Rules in relation to the motion and the Chair's duty under rule 25. Cr Simpfendorfer stated that the motion conflicted with the previous resolution under item 7.11 where it was decided to seek community feedback on the draft Committees Policy. The point of order was **not accepted**.

MOTION

Cr Olga Quilty / Cr Libby Hall

In exercise of the powers conferred by section 63 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Council resolves that:

1. From the date of this resolution, there be established as a Delegated Committee, the Finance and Budget Delegated Committee.

2. The purpose of the Delegated Committee is to exercise Council's functions and powers and to perform Council's duties in relation to finance and budget matters.

3. The members of the Delegated Committee are all councillors.

4. The Chairperson of the Committee is the Mayor, or another councillor appointed by the Mayor, or in the absence of the Mayor, another councillor as provided for in the Governance Rules.

5. A quorum for the Committee is a whole number that is an absolute majority, which is the number of members that is greater than half the total number of members of the Delegated Committee.

6. All members of the Delegated Committee have voting rights on the Delegated Committee.

7. There be delegated to the members of the Delegated Committee the powers, duties and functions set out in the attached Instrument of Delegation (**the Instrument**).

8. The Instrument:

    8.1 comes into force immediately the common seal of Council is affixed to the Instrument; and

    8.2 remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.

9. The powers, duties and functions conferred on the members of the Delegated Committee by the Instrument must be exercised in accordance with any guidelines or policies Council may from time to time adopt.

10. The Instrument be sealed.

CARRIED 4 / 3

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Ron Mildren and Cr Olga Quilty
Against:	Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Kev Poulton and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer

7.13 Racecourse Grandstand - update and further information

MOTION

Cr Olga Quilty / Cr Danny Lowe

1. That Council not fund any future expenditure on the Wodonga Racecourse Grandstand (other than to make safe and demolition costs if demolition is approved).
2. That Council seek consent of the Grandstand Asset Owner, the Victorian State Government Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action to make a determination on whether to demolish or not the grandstand structure and report back to Council once the final response is received to advise of the next steps.

CARRIED 5 / 2

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren and Cr Olga Quilty
Against:	Cr Kev Poulton and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer

7.14 Intention to enter into lease - Telstra (James Eames Frontage)

MOTION TO EXTEND THE MEETING

Cr Olga Quilty / Cr Danny Lowe

That in accordance with rule 16 of the Meeting Procedure Rules, the meeting be extended by a further 30 minutes, the time being 9.12pm.

CARRIED 6 / 1

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton and Cr Olga Quilty
Against:	Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer

MOTION

Cr Danny Lowe / Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer

That:

1. In accordance with Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* ("the Act") the Council grants a lease to Amplitel Pty Ltd for the purpose of a telecommunication facility, for part of the land being Reserve 2 PS064130 contained in Certificate of Title Volume 09943 Folio 605 on the following terms:

   a. A 20-year lease, made up of four options of five years; and

   b. A rental charge of $8000 per annum for the first year, with the rent payable indexed year-on-year by 2.5 per cent.

2. The lease is subject to the Lessee obtaining planning approval for the construction of a telecommunication facility, the Section 115 process in no way pre-determining the outcome of a planning permit application.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

7.15 Meridian Rise: Proposed Road Deviation - Public Consultation Feedback and Final Recommendation

MOTION

Cr Kev Poulton / Cr Danny Lowe

That:

1. Council approves the proposed road deviation and exchange of the unmade government road as shown at attachment 4;

2. Council advises the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) of its decision;

3. Council advises the developer of its decision; and

4. The submitters be advised of the Council decision.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

7.16 Authorisation to Proceed to a Planning Scheme Amendment for the Open Space Strategy

MOTION

Cr Kev Poulton / Cr Danny Lowe

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft Wodonga Open Space Strategy and appended documents (Attachments 4 and 5) for public exhibition as a part of a planning scheme amendment;

2. Requests authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare and exhibit the draft Wodonga Open Space Strategy and related proposed amendment documents (attachments 6 to 9) to the Wodonga Planning Scheme under section 8A(2) and (3) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*;

3. Authorise the Director Planning, Development and Infrastructure to make minor editorial changes to the amendment documentation and to fulfil any conditions of authorisation prior to public exhibition if required; and

4. If authorised by the Minister for Planning, officers exhibit the amendment to the Wodonga Planning Scheme in accordance with notice requirements under section 19 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

CARRIED 4 / 3

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Kev Poulton and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Cr Libby Hall, Cr Ron Mildren and Cr Olga Quilty

7.17 Proposed Road Names in the Baranduda Fields Sporting Precinct

MOTION

Cr Libby Hall / Cr Kev Poulton

That:

1. Public notice be given of Council's intention to name the main access road into the Baranduda Fields sporting precinct as *Athlete Avenue* and the secondary access road as *Champion Crescent*;

2. That public notice be undertaken in accordance with council's Community Engagement Policy and it stipulates that persons may make a submission on the proposed names, and those written submissions must be received on a date that is no later than 28 days after the publication of the notice;

3. That if submissions are received, they be referred to the Wodonga Place Names Advisory Committee for consideration and a report back to the Council; and

4. If no submissions are received, the proposed recommendations be adopted without further resolution of the Council, and advice be forwarded to the Registrar of Geographic Names to undertake the gazettal procedure.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

7.18 Wodonga Sports and Leisure Centre and Waves Facility Review

MOTION

Cr Olga Quilty / Cr Libby Hall

That the council:

1. Undertakes the required renewal works included in the existing 2022-23 building renewal budget, including repair works to Wodonga Sports and Leisure Centre (WSLC) aquatics HVAC system at an anticipated cost of $700,000;
2. Undertakes works to upgrade the WSLC Aquatics changerooms, including the implementation of adult disability change facilities, at an estimated cost of $500,000;
3. Considers planning and design works associated with a second body of water at Wodonga Aquatics Venue and Event Space (WAVES), for the purpose of additional community programming space; and
4. Investigate future development options for the WSLC, including the future opportunities of the expansion of WAVES.

AMENDMENT

Cr Danny Lowe / Cr Kev Poulton

That the council:

1. Undertakes the required renewal works included in the existing 2022-23 building renewal budget, including repair works to Wodonga Sports and Leisure Centre (WSLC) aquatics HVAC system at an anticipated cost of $700,000;
2. Undertakes works to upgrade the WSLC Aquatics changerooms, including the implementation of adult disability change facilities, at an estimated cost of $500,000;
3. Considers planning and design works associated with a second body of water at Wodonga Aquatics Venue and Event Space (WAVES), for the purpose of additional community programming space; and
4. Investigate future development options for the WSLC, including the future opportunities of the expansion of WAVES and future staged works at Baranduda Fields.

CARRIED 5 / 2

For:	Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Cr Danny Chamberlain and Cr Libby Hall

The **AMENDMENT** became the **MOTION**.

MOTION

Cr Danny Lowe / Cr Kev Poulton

That the council:

1. Undertakes the required renewal works included in the existing 2022-23 building renewal budget, including repair works to Wodonga Sports and Leisure Centre (WSLC) aquatics HVAC system at an anticipated cost of $700,000;
2. Undertakes works to upgrade the WSLC Aquatics changerooms, including the implementation of adult disability change facilities, at an estimated cost of $500,000;
3. Considers planning and design works associated with a second body of water at Wodonga Aquatics Venue and Event Space (WAVES), for the purpose of additional community programming space; and
4. Investigate future development options for the WSLC, including the future opportunities of the expansion of WAVES and future staged works at Baranduda Fields.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING
Under rule 15 of the Meeting Procedure Rules, the meeting was adjourned at 9.43pm, to reconvene at 6pm on Monday, May 22, 2023.

Welcome and acknowledgment of country – 22 May 2023

The meeting was called to order at 6pm, 22 May 2023, by the Mayor, Cr Mildren.

The Mayor read the acknowledgment of country.

Apologies, leave of absence, and attendance by electronic means – 22 May 2023

There were no apologies.

MOTION

Cr Danny Lowe / Cr Danny Chamberlain

That the request from Cr Simpfendorfer to attend by electronic means be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

Declaration of conflict of interest – 22 May 2023

There were no conflict of interest disclosures.

7.19 Recreation Facility Development and Maintenance Policy

MOTION

Cr Danny Lowe / Cr Libby Hall

That

1. The Recreation Facility Development and Maintenance Policy, made on 21 March 2016, be revoked; and

2. The Recreation Facility Development and Maintenance Policy, approved by the CEO on 7 February 2022, be noted

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

7.20 Review of the Instruments of Delegation

MOTION

Cr Danny Chamberlain / Cr Olga Quilty

1. In the exercise of the power conferred by s 11(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), council resolves:
   - 1.1 There be delegated to the person holding the position, or acting in or performing the duties, of Chief Executive Officer the powers, duties and functions set out in the attached *S5 Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer*, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument.
   - 1.2 The instrument comes into force immediately upon this resolution being made and is signed by the council's Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor.
   - 1.3 On the coming into force of the instrument all previous delegations to the Chief Executive Officer are revoked.
   - 1.4 The duties and functions set out in the instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of council that it may from time to time adopt.
2. In the exercise of the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in the attached *S6 Instrument of Delegation by the Council to members of Council staff (other than the CEO)*, council resolves that:
   - 2.1 There be delegated to the members of council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in the *S6 Instrument of Delegation by the Council to members of Council staff*, the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument.
   - 2.2 The instrument comes into force immediately upon this resolution being made and is signed by the council's Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor.
   - 2.3 On the coming into force of the instrument all previous delegations to members of council staff (other than the Chief Executive Officer) are revoked.
   - 2.4 The duties and functions set out in the instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of council that it may from time to time adopt.
3. That the *S7 Instrument of Sub-Delegation by the CEO to other staff*, as attached, be received and noted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For: Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer, Cr Libby Hall

Against: Nil

8 Reports for noting

Nil

9 Reports for information

9.1 Council Plan progress report

FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

9.2 Record of councillor meetings

FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

9.3 Decisions register

FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

10 Notices of motion

There were no Notices of Motion submitted.

11 Petitions

There were no Petitions submitted.

12 General business

Cr Chamberlain spoke about the Volunteer awards evening being a great success

Cr Mildren acknowledged community member Jim Costello and Councillors passed on their condolences.

13 Urgent business

There was no urgent business.

14 Confidential business

MOTION

Cr Danny Chamberlain / Cr Libby Hall

That the meeting be closed to members of the public in order to consider matters pursuant to section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020,* and that the meeting be adjourned for two minutes to allow the public to leave the Chamber.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

14.1 Confirmation of minutes from previous confidential meeting

Consideration of this item will be closed to members of the public as it contains matters listed under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

(h) Confidential meeting information, being the records of meetings closed to the public under section 66(2)(a).

14.2 Albury Wodonga Aquatics Facilities Management Contract

Consideration of this item will be closed to members of the public as it contains matters listed under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

(g) Private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—

(i) relates to trade secrets; or

(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

An explanation of why this report is being considered in confidential.

This report contains confidential business information about Aligned Leisure that, if publicly disclosed, would unreasonably expose the business to disadvantage.

14.3 Development of CBD West - Consideration of Proposed Amendments to the Section 173 Agreement

Consideration of this item will be closed to members of the public as it contains matters listed under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020:

(a) Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.

An explanation of why this report is being considered in confidential.

This report deals with proposed negotiations around the Section 173 Agreements relative to two development land parcels and if released may impact on future negotiations around similar agreements with other proponents.

15 Confidential urgent business

There was no confidential urgent business.

16 Close of meeting

16.1 Return to open council

MOTION

Cr Danny Chamberlain / Cr Libby Hall

That the ordinary meeting of the Council be resumed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

16.2 Adopt the in-camera recommendations

MOTION

Cr Kev Poulton / Cr Libby Hall

That the recommendations of the closed meeting of the Council be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

For:	Cr Danny Chamberlain, Cr Libby Hall, Cr Danny Lowe, Cr Ron Mildren, Cr Kev Poulton, Cr Olga Quilty and Cr Graeme Simpfendorfer
Against:	Nil

The CEO read out the public components of the motions adopted in Confidential Session.

Albury Wodonga Aquatics Facilities Management Contract

PUBLIC RESOLUTION
Subject to AlburyCity endorsing the continuation of a joint management approach, Council commence the preparation of the procurement and tender processes for a five-year contract as a joint management approach with AlburyCity for the delivery of aquatics management services at Wodonga Sports and Leisure Centre, Wodonga Aquatics Venue and Exercise Space (WAVES), Albury Swim Centre and Lavington Swim Centre.

Development of CBD West - Consideration of Proposed Amendments to the Section 173 Agreement

PUBLIC RESOLUTION
Council supports and agrees to the proposed amendments to the Section 173 Agreements relating to 41 – 43 Elgin Boulevard and 26 Stanley Street, Wodonga.

16.3 Chairperson to close the meeting

Next scheduled meeting of council: 6pm on Monday, June 19, 2023.

Minutes confirmed this ..... day of ..... 2023.

.....

Chairperson

5 Question time

Question time at council meetings is conducted in accordance with Rule 62 of the Meeting Procedure Chapter of the *Governance Rules.*

6 Delegates reports

Nil

7 Reports for determination

7.1 Investment Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the Investment Policy that is due for review.

SUMMARY

The Investment Policy outlines the objectives and approach Council will adopt in the treasury management process to enable the council to optimise the return on funds invested, subject to an acceptable level of risk and allowing for appropriate levels of ethical, environmentally friendly and/or socially responsible investments.

RECOMMENDATION

That the *Investment Policy*, as attached, be adopted.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Investment policy [**7.1.1** - 3 pages]

DISCUSSION

Council aims to undertake regular reviews of key corporate policies and other documentation to ensure they remain current. The attached *Investment Policy* is an existing policy that has a review cycle of every four years.

In July 2019, council adopted amendments to incorporate the ability to preference investments without exposure to fossil fuel, tobacco, alcohol and gaming exposed investments, even where the rate of return was marginally lower than alternate investments exposed to those activities. At the time of adoption, a mandatory percentage of funds invested in responsible investments was not specified.

The *Investment Policy* has guided Council when making decisions on which institution to invest funds, to ensure Council achieves a balance between the return on investment and socially responsible practices.

In financial terms, the *Investment Policy* has continued to achieve its objectives with the average percentage of 'responsible' investments from July 2019 to April 2023 being 76% of total funds invested.

The latest version has been amended to incorporate the relevant legislation being the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Persons whose rights will be directly affected by this decision

Not applicable.

RELEVANT LAW

The Investment Policy ensures compliance with *Local Government Act 2020* section 103 – Investments, with regards to its powers to invest monies, and the restrictions attached thereto.

The Act states that a Council may invest any money:

a. in Government securities of the Commonwealth; and
b. in securities guaranteed by the Government of Victoria; and
c. with an authorised deposit-taking institution (ADI); and
d. with any financial institution guaranteed by the Government of Victoria; and
e. on deposit with an eligible money market dealer within the meaning of the Corporations Act; and
f. in any other manner approved by the Minister, either generally or specifically, to be an authorised manner of investment for the purposes of this section.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The *Investment Policy* was previously reviewed and adopted at the Council meeting held on July 15, 2019.

OPTIONS

1. Do nothing – **Not recommended** a current policy exists, however under governance rules the policy is required to be reviewed.

2. Endorse the *Investment Policy* to support current investment practices. **Recommended.**

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Investing in financial products that are of an environmental, social, governance and/or ethical obligations friendly nature, and are free of exposure to fossil fuels, tobacco, alcohol and gaming activities will have positive environmental implication, not just for the local Wodonga region, but for the global environment.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONSULTATION

As part of the review process Council's Audit and Risk Committee have been provided with an opportunity to review the policy and have supported the objectives and approaches outlined in the policy.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not Applicable.

COLLABORATION

Not Applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Effective investment practices will assist councils' financial viability.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not Applicable.

COUNCIL PLAN AND POLICIES

Strategic objective
Provide transparent governance and strong leadership, demonstrating excellence in the way we do business by being innovative and responsive.

Strategy
Ensure good contemporary governance through accountable and transparent practices, appropriate risk management and continuous improvement.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There have been no conflict of interest declarations by the following officers involved with the preparation of this report:

Manager Finance - Natasha Donohue
Director Corporate Services - Dena Vlekkert

Investment policy

CITY OF WODONGA VIC

Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy Statement is to outline the objectives and approach that Wodonga Council (the council) will adopt in the treasury management process to enable the council to optimise the return on funds invested, subject to an acceptable level of risk and allowing for appropriate levels of ethical, environmentally friendly and/or socially responsible investments.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- undertake the conservative investment of working capital, long service leave and other available funds, with respect to the time horizon required for use of these funds;
- to optimise, as opposed to maximise, the return on these funds within the risk profile of council;
- ensure that responsible investment principles, incorporating environmental, social, governance and ethical considerations, have been used by ensuring a proportion of funds are held in investments considered to be free from exposure to fossil fuel, tobacco, alcohol and/or gambling activities;
- ensure Council's continued ability to meet its financial obligations in an orderly manner as and when they fall due, in both the short and long term, and through active liquidity and working capital management; and,
- support local financial institutions.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all investment activities undertaken by council.

POLICY

Risk Tolerance

In order to protect the principal amount of council investments, funds will only be invested with institutions/products, and with a minimum Standard and Poors' rating of AA for long term investments and A-2 for short term investments (or Moodys Investor Services equivalents), thus ensuring a very strong capacity of the institution to meets its obligations.

Investments made under the '*Local Investment'* section of this document will be exempt from the minimum ratings detailed above.

Funds are not permitted to be invested with 100 per cent foreign owned entities.

Return Objectives

Council will aim to optimise the return on funds invested subject to an acceptable level of risk and allowing for appropriate levels of ethical, environmentally friendly and/or socially responsible investments. The return objectives are to ensure investment returns are to be equivalent to at least the cash rate – average daily cash rate for the year.

Diversification

Council investments must be denominated in Australian dollars. Authorised investments must be in accordance with s103 of the Local Government Act 2020, and will include but not necessarily be limited to:

- Interest bearing deposits/securities issued by a licensed bank, building society but not credit unions, with the exception of investments made under the '*Local Investment*' section of this document.
- Local, State or Commonwealth Government Bonds, Debentures or Securities.
- Deposits in prescribed securities that either have a minimum long term credit rating of AA or short term rating of A-2 from Standard & Poors' or Moodys Investor Services equivalents, with the exception of investments made under the '*Local Investment*' section of this document.

Direct investments in companies that do not meet environmental, social, governance and / or ethical standards, including (but not limited to) fossil fuel, tobacco, alcohol and gaming companies, are not permitted.

Council should where practical, diversify investments into a number of types or with a number of institutions, where equivalent returns can be achieved.

Derivative instruments are not to be entered into without the specific transactional based approval of Council.

Local Investments

Council may invest up to $2 million (in total) in the Hume Bank Limited and/or the WAW Credit Union Co-operative Limited, to support local investment and business. These are both Authorised Deposit-Taking Institutions under the supervision of the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority.

Reporting to Council

Investments and investment performance is to be reported to council at its monthly financial briefing, quarterly at each Audit Committee meeting and annually to a public council meeting as part of the end of financial year report.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

RELATED POLICIES

Nil

RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2020 Section 103

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every four years.

Title:	Investment policy
Reference No:	D18.55349[v3]
Business Unit:	City of Wodonga
Category:	Quality Manager - Strategic and Governance Policy
Approved By:	Council at its meeting 15 July 2019
Next Review:	15 July 2023

7.2 Public consultation feedback on proposed new park - Butko Park

PURPOSE

To advise the Council of the feedback received with respect to the public notice of the proposal to allocate the name **Butko Park** to a reserve at the Riverside Estate and the recommendations of the Place Names Advisory Committee (PNC) regarding this matter.

SUMMARY

A public notice was placed on the *MakeWodongaYours* Website and on council's social media on 23rd November 2022, inviting the public to make submissions on the proposal to allocate the park name – Butko Park – to a public reserve at the Riverside Estate. Submissions closed on 21 December 2022.

The purpose of the consultation as recommended by Geographic Names Victoria (GNV), and described in the naming rules for Victoria, is to gauge the community views on naming of public places. The process further stipulates that if submissions are received, that these be referred to the PNC for consideration and that a report back to a Council meeting be submitted for consideration and a final decision on the matter.

The Place Names Advisory Committee met on 31 May 2023 to consider the matter and resolved to recommend to the Council that the name Butko Park be used to name the reserve in the Riverside Estate.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the name Butko Park be allocated to the reserve located at Riverside Estate; and

2. Advice be forwarded to the Registrar of Geographic Names Victoria to undertake the gazettal procedure.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Butko Park

DISCUSSION

The PNC places the following submissions before the Council for consideration.

Submitter One
The submitter believes that naming a park in Riverside Estate to honour the Butko family is not ideal. Submitter would prefer the park named as Riverside Park reflecting to its location.

PNC Response
Butko Park is named to acknowledge Olexa and Helene Butko whose life story is symbolic and similar to many other migrants after the WWII. Olexa and Helene had to start afresh and overcome many hardships to build a new life in Australia. Olexa and Helene's story will be demonstrated on the plaque.

Submitter Two
The submitter resides in Riverside Estate. Submitter expresses discontent to see name "Butko" at the entrance of the Estate.

PNC Response
PNC believes that this is not a valid objection, as no reason was presented.

Submitter Three
The submitter provided a number of alternate names/suggestions. Suggestion one is to name the park as Olexa and Helene Butko Park. Second suggestion is to name the current park as Olexa Butko Park and select another park to name as Helene Butko Park.

PNC Response
PNC believes that the length of name will be too long in suggestion one. Meanwhile, naming two parks both containing "Butko" within close proximity will be considered as duplication based on the current naming guidelines, and is not supported.

Submitter Four
The submitter believes that the naming of Butko Park within the Riverside Estate will not be supported by the community in the estate. The submitter proposed "Riverside Community Park". This submitter would also like to see some park facilities installed.

PNC Response
Same response to the submitter one. The PNC believes that this park is to pay tribute to Olexa and Helene not to Butko as a family. Olexa and Helene are one of many migrants after the war, their story being representative of many who landed at Bonegilla.

Persons whose rights will be directly affected by this decision

Not applicable.

RELEVANT LAW

The *Naming Rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and locations* (2022) document is the result of extensive stakeholder consultation and emphasises the important role naming rules have under the *Geographic Places Names Act 1998.*

The rules advise naming authorities that the immediate and extended community should be consulted when naming features.

The PNC's advice is to conform with the above rules when consultation takes place and advertise via local media allowing for the full 28 days consultation period.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable.

OPTIONS

The Council has two Options to consider.

Option 1 – Accept the recommendations of the Place Names Advisory Committee and name the reserve in Riverside Estate as Butko Park.

This is the preferred Option and the option supported by the PNC.

Option 2 – Do not accept recommendations of the Place Names Advisory Committee to name the reserve in Riverside Estate as Butko Park and return the matter to the PNC for review and a new name proposal

This Option will see the PNC consider some alternate names for this park and return the matter to a future Council meeting and public notice of any new proposed name.

This is not supported as the PNC have considered the original request to name the reserve, considered the submissions and resolved that the proposed name represents a good outcome and meets the requirements of Geographic Names Victoria.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Family members of the listed nominee have been consulted, and are supportive of the proposal.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable.

COLLABORATION

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The current cost of installing a sign is estimated at approximately $1400 per sign exclusive GST. Some parks may require two signs (dependent on size and number of access points).

If vandalism, graffiti cleaning and general maintenance is required, an additional approximately $60 per sign for cleaning or $ 1350 per new panel would be required.

	2022-2023 Budget $	This Proposal $	Previous Approved Budget $	Balance to Approved Budget $
Revenue	-	-	-	-
Expense	25,000	1400	5600	18,000
Net result	(25,000)	(1400)	(5600)	18,000

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLAN AND POLICIES

Strategic objective
Create a welcoming and inclusive city for people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities that is well-connected, which supports people to meet, participate and move safely and access services and opportunities they need.

Strategy
Build a connected and inclusive community that has access to information and the opportunity to engage.
Advocate and role model diversity, equality and inclusion throughout the community.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There have been no conflict of interest declarations by the following officers involved with the preparation of this report:

GIS Property Officer - Zoe Jin
Director Planning, Development and Infrastructure - Leon Schultz

Proposed Park – Proposed by Jenny Stern from JM developments

Park Name: Butko Park

Location: Corner of Riverside Boulevard and Klim Street



Olexa and Helene Butko were refugees from Ukraine in WWII. They were in labor camps in German occupied Poland in 1942. After escaped and fled on foot to Austria, then Switzerland and Italy with 2 children, onto ship “Wooster Victoria” bound for Australia. In 1949, Family stayed in Bonegilla for a month, then women and children were sent to Uranquinty. Later, they built a house in Killara from waste timber and handmade mud bricks. They planted trees needed to bear fruit, breed animals needed to provide food. They have 3 children together, lived the remainder of their lives in Albury Wodonga.

PNC would like to see wording touch on Olexa and Helene’s experience during and after war hence the focus on their escaping, voyage to Australia and life in Killara.

7.3 Intention to enter into lease - Wodonga Hockey Club

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek a resolution regarding a proposed lease with Wodonga Hockey Club Inc. for the premises contained in Certificate of Title Volume 10362 Folio 364 known as the 'Wodonga Hockey Pavilion', following conclusion of the consultation process in accordance with s.115 of the local Government Act 2020.

SUMMARY

At the March 20, 2023 Council meeting, the Council resolved to give public notice of the Council's intent to enter into a long-term lease with Wodonga Hockey Club Incorporated (WHC) for the new Wodonga Hockey Pavilion located at Silva Drive, Wodonga, following a written submission of request from the club.

A public notice was published in the Border Mail from Saturday, March 25 with the submission period closing on Sunday, April 16, 2023. Additionally 3692 emails were sent to the council's EDM subscriber lists for City Life and Community Conversations, and it was advertised on council's social media channels and the council website.

Following this, 60 submissions were received. Fifty-eight of these were supportive of the proposed lease and two were opposed. This report discusses the submissions put forward and seeks a final determination of the council in relation to this matter.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. Following the consultation period and in accordance with Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* ("the Act") the Council grants a lease to Wodonga Hockey Club Incorporated for the premises contained in Certificate of Title Volume 10362 Folio 364 known as the 'Wodonga Hockey Pavilion' on the following terms:

    a. A 20-year lease, made up of an initial 10 years with 2 further options of 5 years each;

    b. A rent-free period for the initial 10-year term (equating to a total fee reduction of $1,680.51); and,

    c. A rental charge of $150 plus GST per annum in the first year of the first 5-year option, with a fixed increase of 2.5% per annum on each commencement date during the term and any further term.

2. The Chief Executive Officer is authorised to undertake the administrative procedures necessary to enable council to carry out its functions under Section 115 of the Act in relation to this matter.

3. The submitters be advised of the Council decision.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Wodonga Hockey - Lease Plan [**7.3.1** - 1 page]
2. Wodonga Hockey Club lease term request letter [**7.3.2** - 1 page]
3. Public Notice Notice of Intention to Lease (1) [**7.3.3** - 2 pages]
4. Proposed Lease WHC Engagement Snapshot [**7.3.4** - 6 pages]

DISCUSSION

Background

Wodonga Hockey Facility, (on part of the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 10362 Folio 364) is owned by Wodonga Council and located at Silva Drive within the Birallee Park sporting precinct.

At the ordinary council meeting on August 20, 2018, council resolved to enter into a new lease for a term of 20 years term made up of an initial ten-year term followed by two further five-year extension options.

The 20-year lease between council and Hockey Albury Wodonga (HAW) for the Wodonga Hockey Facility was signed in October 2018. The lease area consisted of the new synthetic hockey field, a shared canteen building and the surrounding grounds.

The association's justification for this request was to align the lease with the total expected life of the new surface, which is 20 years, and as recognition of their $230,000 contribution to the project.

HAW operates the local hockey competition at both the Albury and Wodonga hockey facilities. Wodonga Hockey Club (WHC), home field is the Wodonga facility, and under the current arrangements are a subtenant of Hockey Albury Wodonga Incorporated at the Silva Drive facility.

In 2019 WHC successfully secured $500,000 in federal funding to go towards a new hockey pavilion at the Wodonga Hockey Facility. The project includes a new clubroom, canteen, and improved facilities for the club. The club committed $200,000 of their own funds to the project and were successful in their budget submission presented to Wodonga Council in 2019-20 for a further $300,000 committed to the project.

In June 2021 Wodonga Council received an additional $1,650,000 towards the Birallee Precinct Masterplan project via the Victorian Government's Community Sports Infrastructure Stimulus Program to enable both the construction of the new hockey pavilion and the renewal and upgrade of the adjacent change room facilities to occur simultaneously.

At its December 2021 meeting, Council agreed to contribute a further $500,000 to enable the project to proceed with minimal reductions in scope following significant increases in construction costs incurred since the original funding was secured.

Initial construction works commenced in February 2022 with the project completion date set now set for May 2023.

The operational management at the conclusion of the project will see the HAW lease area reduced, with WHC to enter into a lease agreement with Wodonga Council for the newly constructed Wodonga Hockey Pavilion and immediate surrounds (refer to blue area highlighted in Attachment 1 - Wodonga Hockey – Lease Plan). This proposed lease does not include the redeveloped change room pavilion.

As part of the lease negotiations with WHC for the new pavilion they have submitted a written request (Attachment 2 - Wodonga Hockey Club lease term request letter) for a lease term greater than 10 years. They were advised that any term over ten years would trigger section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and would need council approval.

This proposed arrangement is supported and agreed to by existing lease holders HAW, and Council has amended the HAW lease to reduce their lease area to reflect this change.

Community Engagement Update

A public notice was published in the Border Mail from Saturday, March 25 with the submission period closing on Sunday, April 16, 2023 (Attachment 3 – Public Notice, Notice of Intention to Lease). Additionally, 3692 emails were sent to the council's EDM subscriber lists for City Life and Community Conversations, and it was advertised on council's social media channels and the council website.

Following this, 60 submissions were received. 58 of these were supportive of the proposed lease and two were opposed. A summary of these submissions can be referred to in Attachment 4 – Proposed Lease WHC Engagement Snapshot'. This snapshot includes the full submissions and name of those that selected the option to make their submission formal.

Key themes from Engagement

Participation, Growth and Community Use

- *The pavilion has materialised after 35 years of lobbying, fundraising & working with Federal, State & Local governments by WHC. The outcome is a wonderful facility for the Wodonga (and broader) hockey community that will encourage greater participation from the Wodonga community and result in improved social and health benefits.*
- *The new pavilion will greatly assist with player retention, spectator/parent comfort, and player attraction.*
- *WHC continue to grow their sport by community engagement such as school visits, clinics and social events.*
- *The granting of the lease to WHC will allow the club to manage the facility, and further raise funds to continue the hockey programs with the local community and schools.*

- *We believe these facilities will help grow the sport, and even one day may led to the creation of a second club in Wodonga which we fully support.*
- *The pavilion design includes separate rooms and a kitchenette to encourage other nonprofit organisations to utilize the facility.*
- *WHC has showed interest in cooperating and collaborating with other organisations, including co-sharing facilities with the BMX club, supporting local primary and secondary schools in their hockey/sports programs, contributing to Council run events.*
- *The formation of a new club in Wodonga has become more of an imperative with the Beechworth club giving notice to wind up their club immediately. The issue is whether a lease to the club exclusively for 20 years effect the ability of the sport to grow in Wodonga via innovation and pathways including the formation of potentially new club(s).*
- *Will the greater community be able to access this facility?*

Response:

- The recently completed Albury Wodonga Sports and Recreation Strategy analysed the impacts of participation trends for the sport of hockey across the two cities as "*Participation rates in the sport are not growing and are not expected to do so in the future. Minor improvements that allow improved operations at the existing centres should cater for the sport into the future.*"
- *The proposed lease agreement includes; Community Use clauses and a requirement for HAW and WHC to enter an MOU to demonstrate how the parties will work together to support the day-to-day operations and future development of Hockey in Wodonga.*
- The proposed lease agreement is for the management of the new main pavilion only, not the existing redeveloped change room pavilion which will be governed under a shared license agreement between HAW, WHC and Border BMX club.
- The HAW committee has indicted they are in support of the proposed lease and licence agreements.

Governance / Asset Management

- *The Wodonga Hockey Club has contributed $250,000 of its own money and deserves to have this lease in their name.*
- *We've been supporters of the club for years and have seen first-hand the hard work that has gone into the fund raising and grant applications the committee has been doing over the years and I believe this hard work should be rewarded by giving the lease to Wodonga Hockey Club who are more than capable of keeping the facilities to a high standard of upkeep.*
- *Past and present committee and members have worked so very hard for years and years to raise funds to be able call Wodonga Hockey club pavilion our very own. I have been a very proud hard working Life Member for many years. This club house should remain under Wodonga Hockey club control forever and ever. We are Wodonga.*
- *The Wodonga Hockey Club has been around for decades and has proven its longevity. They really should have a 20-year lease, to honour its recognised standing as a family club, its significant contribution in making the pavilion project a reality and its commitment to promote hockey for years to come in Wodonga.*
- *Long term lease with WHC will ensure the facility is well maintained.*
- *I believe consideration should be given to the lease being with HAW and not the WHC. If it does proceed with WHC as lessee, the lease should be of*

standard duration for a community facility, with minimal rent payable, to allow for growth of hockey in Wodonga in the future.
- *Management of the site under one entity is likely to achieve operational efficiencies for the site with the field, pavilion and change room facilities viewed as a single destination.*

Response
- This lease is for the management of the new hockey pavilion only, not the upgraded change room pavilion or the field. The operational shared use arrangements of these premises will be documented in an MOU between HAW and WHC.
- The proposed lease agreement clearly outlines the maintenance requirements of which WHC would be responsible for.
- All other sport field and pavilion lease agreements in Wodonga sit with the participating Wodonga club, not the league Association.
- Since the field redevelopment completed in 2018, minimal investment has been made by HAW for the maintenance and renewal of the facility.
- HAW did not contribute financially to this project.

Persons whose rights will be directly affected by this decision

Wodonga Hockey Club Incorporated, the community and other direct user groups of the precinct will be affected by this decision.

RELEVANT LAW

In accordance with Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* council must include any proposal to lease land in a financial year in the budget where the lease is for 10 years or more. If Council proposes to lease land and it was not included in the budget, the council must undertake a community engagement process in accordance with the council's community engagement policy.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not Applicable.

OPTIONS

Option 1. Do not grant a lease.

Do not grant the lease to Wodonga Hockey Club Incorporated. This option is not recommended, as the premises has been built for the purpose of being a hockey pavilion and requires a management agreement to ensure the premises is operated and maintained appropriately.

Option 2. Grant a lease to Wodonga Hockey Club Incorporated in accordance with Attachment 4 'public notice'.

Following the consultation period and in accordance with Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* ("the Act") the Council grants a lease to Wodonga Hockey

Club Incorporated for the premises contained in Certificate of Title Volume 10362 Folio 364 known as the 'Wodonga Hockey Pavilion' on the following terms:

a. A 20-year lease, made up of an initial 10 years with 2 further options of 5 years each;

b. A rent-free period for the initial 10-year term (equating to a total fee reduction of $1,680.51); and,

c. A rental charge of $150 plus GST per annum in the first year of the first 5-year option, with a fixed increase of 2.5% per annum on each commencement date during the term and any further term.

This is the recommended option as it:
- Acknowledges the extensive work and volunteer hours the club has contributed to the project from its inception through to the design and construction;
- Recognises the significant financial contribution of $200,000 the club has committed to the project to date, and the further $40,000 they are raising to fit out the facility. Plus, the $500,000 the club secured from the Federal Government;
- Is in line with the length of term given to HAW for the lease of the field following a similar financial contribution.

Option 3. Grant a lease to Wodonga Hockey Club Incorporated for a standard lease term, which would read:

Following the consultation period and in accordance with Section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020 ("the Act") the Council grants a lease to Wodonga Hockey Club Incorporated for the premises contained in Certificate of Title Volume 10362 Folio 364 known as the 'Wodonga Hockey Pavilion' on the following terms:

a. A nine year lease, made up of an initial five year term, with two further options of two years each;

b. No rent-free period; and

c. A rental charge of $150 plus GST per annum in the first year of the nine year lease, with a fixed increase of 2.5% per annum on each commencement date during the term and any further term.

This option is not recommended as it does not adequately recognise the contribution Wodonga Hockey Club have made to the project, both financially and in volunteer hours assisting in the planning and delivery of the project.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council has undertaken and concluded its legislative obligations in accordance with Section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020, including council's Community

Engagement Policy. 96.7% of respondent submissions through this process were in support of the proposed lease.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not Applicable

COLLABORATION

Sporting facilities are places where people can engage in, conduct a range of community, recreational, social or health related activities that enhance community wellbeing. Wodonga Hockey facility is the only hockey field located in Wodonga and services junior and senior competition for HAW as well as training needs for both Wodonga Hockey Club, other regional clubs, and local schools.

- Hockey Albury Wodonga has nine clubs with 13 competition divisions and a variety of sports participation programs which operate out of the Albury and Wodonga hockey facilities;

- Wodonga Hockey Club has 13 teams (seven senior and six junior) based at the Wodonga hockey facility.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

WHC have requested a rent-free period of 10 years, refer to Attachment 2 'Letter – Wodonga Hockey Club'.

Following this, the rent would be $150 plus GST per annum in the first year of the first 5-year option, with a fixed increase of 2.5% per annum on each commencement date during the term and any further term.

Wodonga Hockey Club Financial Contributions to project	
Initial Club Contributions to the project	**Amount**
Secured Federal Government Contribution to project	$500,000
Committed significant contribution to project construction	$200,000
Committed further contribution to 'fit out' building	$40,000
Total initial club contribution	**$740,000**

Along with the financial contribution outlined above the WHC will be responsible for all costs associated with the premises including but not limited to cleaning, waste, and utilities, excluding structural and capital expenditure of which would be the responsibility of council.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not Applicable.

COUNCIL PLAN AND POLICIES

Strategic objective
Provide transparent governance and strong leadership, demonstrating excellence in the way we do business by being innovative and responsive.
Strategy
Ensure good contemporary governance through accountable and transparent practices, appropriate risk management and continuous improvement.

Strategic objective
Planning for growth, demonstrating stewardship through protecting, enhancing and managing our unique natural and built environments.
Strategy
Ensure assets are well-managed through long-term renewal strategies.
Undertake detailed planning and design for key community assets and recreational precincts.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There have been no conflict of interest declarations by the following officers involved with the preparation of this report:

Team Leader Sport & Recreation - Ryan McNamara
Deputy CEO - Debra Mudra

Manager Sport and Recreation - Liona Edwards


2 x Pedestrian access gates
Carpark - shared in common
Lease area
Pedestrian access gates
This map contains Vicmap information The State of Victoria, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2020.
Disclaimer: This material may be of assistance to you but the state of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purpose and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or consequences which may arise from your relying on any information contained in this material. Using or copying parts of this document is prohibited without councils written authority.
Date:1/02/2023
Scale:1:900

To: Wodonga City Council
Sport and Recreational Officers

FROM: Kyle Brereton
President
Wodonga Hockey Club

DATE: 18th January, 2023

RE: Lease Terms - Wodonga Hockey Facility, Silva Drive, West Wodonga.

The Wodonga Hockey Club (WHC) respectfully requests a Wodonga City Council review into the proposed Lease Term Agreement for the new Wodonga Hockey Facility, Silva Drive, West Wodonga. Specifically, sections relating to fixed terms, duration, and lease costs. Sections 6, 8 and 18.

The Wodonga Hockey Club understands 'standard' terms for sporting organisations are generally made up of an initial 5-year first team (item 8) and then two further terms of two (2) years. Lease costs (Item 6) are $150 plus GST per annum with a fixed per annum increase of 2.5%

Due to the Clubs 'significant' contribution to this project, the Club is seeking an alternative initial term of 10 years followed by two 5-year terms and the waiving of any associated lease costs for the duration of the 10 year term. Reasons for making this request are as follows.

i. The vision for the new facilities was a WHC initiative.
ii. The proposed alterative Lease Terms align with the existing terms in place with Hockey Albury Wodonga (reflective of their investment on their site in respect to a recent surface update).
iii. The WHC was directly responsible for sourcing the Federal Community Grants funding - $500K.
iv. The WHC successfully applied for Wodonga City Council support initial support funding - $350K.
v. The WHC worked diligently with the Wodonga City Council Recreational Officers is sourcing both State and additional Wodonga City Council funding (which we are ever grateful for).
vi. The WHC Committee provided direct input into the facilities design to ensure it meets both current and future requirements of both the WHC, as well as the Border BMX Club.
vii. The Club is contributing $200K of its own hard raised funds to the actual physical build, and
viii. The WHC will be contributing a further $40K to the facilities fit out.

The Wodonga Hockey Club has made a real and tangible contribution to planning, funding, construction, and fit out of these new facilities, and believe extended terms above the standard are warranted in this instance.

Thank you for your consideration

Kyle Brereton
President
Wodonga Hockey Club
[redacted]

DocuSigned by:
Kyle Brereton
DFC35315A7FB4B5...

1/17/2023

USA Date Format

Notice of Intention to Lease

At its meeting of March 20, 2023, Wodonga City Council (Council) resolved to give public notice under Section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020 (Act) that it intends to enter into a lease with Wodonga Hockey Club Incorporated for the premises contained in Certificate of Title Volume 10362 Folio 364 known as the 'Wodonga Hockey Pavilion' (Proposal).



The key terms of the lease are:

- A 20-year lease, made up of an initial 10 years with 2 further options of 5 years each;
- A rent-free period for the initial 10-year term; and,
- A rental charge of $150 plus GST per annum in the first year of the first 5-year option, with a fixed increase of 2.5% per annum on each commencement date during the term and any further term.

A person may make a submission on the Proposal. Any person proposing to make a submission under Section 115 of the Act must do so by 5pm on Sunday April 16, 2023.

All submissions will be considered in accordance with Section 115 of the Act.

In line with our Community Engagement Policy, any person may make a formal or informal submission on this matter.

A formal submission must include your name, address and contact details. You can use the online form or Formal Submission Template document available on our website.

Formal submissions are published in full in the council report, excluding personal details.

Submissions can be made online, by email, by post or hand-delivered to the council's offices at 104 Hovell St Wodonga.

Written submissions must be clearly marked as "Proposed Lease – Wodonga Hockey Club".

Online: makewodongayours.com.au
Email: makewodongayours@wodonga.vic.gov.au
Post: PO Box 923, Wodonga, VIC 3689

Further information regarding the proposal may be obtained from Council's Team Leader Sport and Recreation, Ryan McNamara on (02) 6022 9300

Matthew Hyde
Chief Executive Officer
Wodonga Council



Proposed Lease - Wodonga Hockey Club

ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

Proposed Lease - Wodonga Hockey Club

WHEN: Saturday, March 25 to Sunday, April 16, 2023

ENGAGEMENT METHODS: To encourage residents to get involved, we promoted the opportunity for people to have their say through our communication channels, including public notices, emails, social media and a have your say page on makewodongayours.com.au.

RESPONSES

58 submissions through Make Wodonga Yours

2 submissions via email

COMMUNICATIONS

3692 emails

46.7% average open rate

12 click-throughs

3 Facebook posts

6252 reach

5 likes and reactions

3 Instagram posts

881 reach

12 likes and reactions

1 LinedIn posts

508 impressions

14 reactions and clicks

139 website visits

124 unique pageviews

1 public notices

CITY OF WODONGA VIC



Proposed Lease - Wodonga Hockey Club

ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

FEEDBACK - SUMMARY

60
submissions were received regarding the proposed lease with the Wodonga Hockey Club (WHC).

58
submissions were supportive of the proposed lease,

2
submissions opposed the lease

100%
of submissions acknowledged the significant financial contribution of Wodonga Hockey Club.

Many submissions commended the achievement of the funding and construction of the Wodonga Hockey Pavilion and spoke to the quality of the facility.

CITY OF WODONGA VIC



Proposed Lease - Wodonga Hockey Club

ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

FEEDBACK - KEY POINTS

Submissions in support of the lease

- The pavilion has materialised after 35 years of lobbying, fundraising & working with Federal, State & Local governments.
- The outcome is a wonderful facility for the Wodonga (and broader) hockey community that will encourage greater participation from the Wodonga community and result in improved social and health benefits.
- The WHC members have formed strong social connections often transcending through generations.
- Great future for Wodonga Hockey going forward as this provides a secure long-term facility for current and future players.
- The new Club Pavilion will greatly assist with player retention, spectator/parent comfort, and player attraction.
- *"We believe these facilities will help grow the sport, and even one day may led to the creation of a second Club in Wodonga which we fully support."*
- It helps to have good & dedicated facilities to build a case for the region to hold Interstate or national competitions. It makes hockey as a sport look attractive and professional in Wodonga
- WHC continue to grow their sport by community engagement such as school visits, clinics and social events,
- The granting of the lease to WHC will allow the club to manage the facility, and further raise funds to continue the hockey programs within the local community and schools.
- The club ethos will ensue this facility will not only benefit the members of WHC but the wider community
- The WHC pavilion design includes separate rooms and a kitchenette as we wish to encourage other nonprofit organisations to utilize the facility.
- WHC have long showed interest in cooperating and collaborating with other organisations, including co-sharing facilities with the BMX Club, supporting local primary and secondary schools in their hockey/sports programs, contributing to Council run events.
- Long term lease with WHC will ensure the facility is well maintained.
- Concerns that rent would be expensive if the WHC do not hold the lease directly with council and are forced to sublease the pavilion from another leasee
- *"If the lease is given over it may spell the end for the club as I believe the committee and players will walk away."*

Submissions opposed to the lease

- *The formation of a new club in Wodonga has become more of an imperative with the Beechworth club giving notice to wind up their club immediately.*
  The issue is whether a lease to the club exclusively for 20 years effect the ability of the sport to grow in Wodonga via innovation and pathways including the formation of potentially new club(s).
- *This venue has a municipal wide catchment and venue suitable for multi club site capable of hosting State and Regional events.*
  The impact of a 20-year lease in my opinion has significant implications for growth of the sport in Wodonga and the role of the Wodonga Hockey centre as a regional centre which should be considered.
- *I believe consideration should be given to the lease being with Hockey Albury Wodonga and not the Wodonga Hockey Club. If it does proceed with Wodonga Hockey Club as lessee, the lease should be of standard duration for a community facility, with minimal rent payable, to allow for growth of hockey in Wodonga in the future.*
- Management of the site under one entity is likely to achieve operational efficiencies for the site with the field, pavilion and change room facilities viewed as a single destination.

CITY OF WODONGA VIC



Proposed Lease - Wodonga Hockey Club

ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

FORMAL SUBMISSIONS IN FULL

- **Dawn George**
  As a ratepayer and resident of Wodonga for over 50 years, and as a member & Life Member of Wodonga Hockey Club Inc. I hereby support the 20 Year Lease, 10 initial plus 2 x 5 years as recommended and accepted at the March Council Meeting.
  Wodonga has a 95 year continual history of this sport, and in 1987 became incorporated with the amalgamation of Mens, Womens & Junior teams. Committees since have worked towards a goal to have a Clubhouse. This has now materialised after 35 years of lobbying, fundraising & working with Federal, State & Local governments.
  The Wodonga Hockey Club also contributed $250,000 of its own money and deserves to have this lease in their name, which was agreed in principle by parties involved.
  Thank you for the opportunity to have a say in support of the lease proposal.
  I also thank Council for their dedicated & passionate partnership to build our hockey home called the 'Pavilion' in Silva Dr Wodonga.
- **Vanessa Flanagan**
  This is an amazing project for the hockey community of Wodonga - The club has worked so hard over a long period to achieve this and see it through.... This structure will increase participation and give the women a space to shower etc in a clean and safe environment.
  I would like to congratulate the Wodonga Hockey Club for this amazing achievement and council for the co-effort and getting this up and going.
  Fantastic addition to Wodonga and one that would not have come about without the Wodonga Hockey Club.
- **Nicole Luftensteiner**
  I support the Wodonga Hockey Club in entering into a lease for the next 20 years because they put in a massive effort and significant contribution to the project ($250k monetary contribution). The WHC supports our community and is family-focused with their focus on the principles of FAMILY.FUN.FAIR. The WHC, the wider hockey community, and the local Birallee neighborhood will benefit if the lease is solely in WHC's name and under the proposed terms.
- **Liz Quinn**
  What a great opportunity for Wodonga hockey club to develop their strength within the Wodonga local area and surrounds. This will be such a positive achievement for the club to have the lease of this amazing new building.
- **Kerry Devereaux**
  Wodonga Hockey is a family oriented club with its focus of involving family and the community in our sport of hockey. Having the newly built pavilion will be good for the community and will benefit the local Birrallee neighbourhood and hopefully encourage the wider community to join us and become a part of our Family, Fun and Fair club.
- **Ute Sonter**
  This is in support of the Wodonga Hockey Club re:Lease of new Pavilion
  My children and grandchildren play for the Wodonga club and we've been supporters of the club for years and have seen first hand the hard work that has gone into the fund raising and grant applications the committee has been doing over the years and I believe this hard work should be rewarded by giving the lease to Wodonga Hockey Club who are more than capable of keeping the facilities to a high standard of upkeep.
- **Elaine Behrens**
  Past and present committee and members have worked so very hard for years and years to raise funds to be able call Wodonga Hockey club pavilion our very own.
  I have been a very proud hard working Life Member for many years. This club house should remain under Wodonga Hockey club control forever and ever. We are Wodonga.

CITY OF WODONGA VIC



Proposed Lease - Wodonga Hockey Club

ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

FORMAL SUBMISSIONS IN FULL

- **Beth Simpson (President Norths Hockey Club Inc.)**
  I am the President on one of the Albury based hockey clubs in the Hockey Albury Wodonga Association. I wish to bring to your attention some concerns I have about the proposed lease of the Wodonga Hockey pavilion to the Wodonga Hockey Club, as advertised in the Border Mail on 25 March 2023 pursuant to Section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020.
  My concerns are twofold:
  1. Has consideration been given to the correct lessee entity ie Wodonga Hockey Club Inc or alternatively Hockey Albury Wodonga?
  2. The length of the proposed lease, effectively 20 years of exclusive possession to the Wodonga Hockey Club.
  Wodonga Hockey Club is to be complimented on vigorously pursuing this dream which will no doubt benefit the whole hockey community. I acknowledge the many hours of volunteer work put into every stage on the development as well as the direct financial contribution of $200,000 plus $40,000 towards fit out. Of the total funding of $3,190,000, that figure represents 7.5%.
  Wodonga Hockey Club is one of 8 clubs in the Association (unfortunately Beechworth HC indicated its intention to wind up and has no teams in the current competition). Of these, only Wodonga and Wangaratta are Victorian clubs, with United (Corowa/Rutherglen) being cross border. The draft HAW Strategic Plan allows for growth of the sport and particularly another Victorian based club. While this is still hypothetical and unlikely to eventuate within the next three years, it is a real possibility within 20 years.
  Under the proposed lease, any new club based in Wodonga would have no rights to use the non-public areas of the new Wodonga pavilion unless authorised by Wodonga Hockey Club, in the same way as all other clubs will have restricted access. When I asked this question at a recent Association meeting, I was told that a small storage area would be made available.
  In my opinion, if the lease is to be with Wodonga Hockey Club, a shorter term lease such as the standard 5 years with 4 year option would be preferable, to enable negotiations to be entered into with another club in the future. This length of time still acknowledges Wodonga Hockey Club's contributions. Twenty years is a long time in the life of a community based incorporated association with a committee that can change every year, and seems too long for this proposal.
  I also believe that rent should be charged for the duration of the lease, albeit at peppercorn rates. I note that WHC will be responsible for all outgoings including insurance and maintenance costs, but for a large club that has been capable of raising significant funds to put towards this venture, a small rental charge would not be prohibitive.
  In relation to the lessee, it appears that the Hockey Albury Wodonga Board has not pursued any attempt to be named as the lease holder, and is content for the parcel of land upon which the new pavilion sits to be excised from the existing lease over the field which has been recently upgraded and is the subject of a lease between Wodonga City Council and HAW for a period of 20 years from 2018 (I understand this has already been done). In my opinion, consideration needs to be given to whether it would be better for all hockey users within HAW's domain for the lease over the pavilion to be aligned with the lease over the field, both with regard to the lessee and the duration. This would enable management of the whole site by one entity.
  HAW is in the early stages of planning for a new two story clubroom at the Albury fields. Plans have been drawn up and grants are being sought. My understanding is that when this facility is built on land owned by Albury City Council, a lease will be granted to HAW, not any of the 5 Albury based clubs whose members have already had significant input into the design plans. Whilst this is still several years away, it seems reasonable to have all facilities on both sides of the border that are used by all HAW players and hockey community, to be under the direct control of HAW.
  To sum up, I believe consideration should be given to the lease being with Hockey Albury Wodonga and not the Wodonga Hockey Club. If it does proceed with Wodonga Hockey Club as lessee, the lease should be of standard duration for a community facility, with minimal rent payable, to allow for growth of hockey in Wodonga in the future.

CITY OF WODONGA VIC



Proposed Lease - Wodonga Hockey Club

ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

FORMAL SUBMISSIONS IN FULL

- **Elizabeth M'Crystal**
  I am writing in support of the 20 year lease arrangement between Council and the Wodonga Hockey Club. As a resident of Yack, you may wonder at the support from an out of Towner but I urge and implore you to support the Wodonga hockey club.
  I have four boys and 5 years ago, my sons and I were active members of the Beechworth Hockey Club which had, at its peak, around 115 members. It did not have the Council support for a clubhouse that community sport needs at its heart.
  Guess what happened? First one team lost numbers then another.
  Sadly, for my boys, their Beechworth team lost so many numbers that the team folded. Luckily Wodonga Hockey Club welcomed us and they have been amazing in their encouragement of my boys.
  Hockey doesn't enjoy the same popularity of AFL, soccer, basketball in our region but those who do play absolutely love it. The Wodonga Hockey Club have worked extraordinary hard to keep teams playing across all ages and genders, juniors to seniors, despite Covid and ruddy screens drawing children and teenagers away from sport. I can barely keep one son in particular engaged at school but he is still keen on hockey.
  Hockey has a long playing life. The Wodonga hockey club has been around for decades and has proven its longevity. They really should have a 20 year lease, to honour its recognised standing as a family club, its significant contribution in making the pavilion project a reality and its commitment to promote hockey for years to come in Wodonga.
  I really hope that Council recognise and commit to keeping the well deserved long term lease arrangement with the Wodonga Hockey Club.
- **Katrina Bevan**
  The newly constructed hockey pavilion located at the Wodonga Hockey field is an testament to the commitment and hard work of the Wodonga Hockey club. With government and local council funding and support the volunteers and committee of Wodonga hockey club have been able to realise the long term dream of providing modern facilities to the players and families of the club and wider hockey community in the area.
  My son is a playing member of the club and we travel from Wangaratta up to 4 times a week for him to access the Wodonga facilities and to part of the amazing Wodonga Hockey club community. We have not been able to access the support or basic facilities closer to home that suited his needs and but were welcomed with open arms by the club 5 years ago. His development in the sport is a credit to the volunteer coaches, players and committee that support him to reach his potential and continue to grow. The Wodonga Hockey club lives by it's motto of fun, family, fair and they demonstrate this every week. The club and new facilities allow for families to access toilets, change rooms and canteen facilities or just be out of the elements during the winter months of hockey. The pavilion is user friendly with disability access encouraging players from all walks of life to come and try hockey. As a parent who works with people with a disability everyday, I can see and have experienced the inclusion that the Wodonga Hockey club provide for those with additional needs.
  With modern facilities and development of the location, potential competitions outside of the local games could now be a possibility. Hosting capital league games or junior state titles could be realised attracting visitors and players from across NSW and the ACT.
  I fully support the long term lease for Wodonga Hockey club so they can continue to provide support and development of junior and senior players and provide a family friendly club and atmosphere for a growing and much loved sport in the region.

CITY OF WODONGA VIC

7.4 Appointment of authorised officers

PURPOSE

This report is for the purpose of appointing an authorised officer under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act).

SUMMARY

It is important that council officers are able to act as authorised officers to ensure good governance and effective enforcement under the respective Acts.

This report proposes the appointment of a statutory planning officer as an authorised officer to enable enforcement matters under the Act.

RECOMMENDATION

In the exercise of the powers conferred by s.147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, Council resolves that –

1. Belinda Jenkins be appointed and authorised as set out in the attached instrument.
2. The instrument comes into force immediately it is signed by Council's Chief Executive Officer and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it and is taken to be revoked upon the officer ceasing employment at Council.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Authorised officer appointment - Belinda Jenkin [**7.4.1** - 2 pages]

DISCUSSION

Section 224(1) of the *Local Government Act* 1989 provides that "a council may appoint any person other than a councillor to be an authorised officer for the purposes of the administration and enforcement of any Act, regulations or local laws which relate to the functions and powers of the council".

There is a basic distinction between a delegation and an appointment. A delegate acts on behalf of the council, exercising the council's powers. A person who is appointed to a position has the powers of that position.

Planning and compliance officers are required to act as authorised officers under a number of Acts and Regulations. The Chief Executive Officer has the delegated authority to make these appointments for all Acts and Regulations, with the exception of the *Planning and Environment Act* (the Act). The legal position is that s.188(2)(c) of the Act provides that councils cannot delegate the power to authorise

officers for the purpose of enforcing the Act, and that limitation does not apply to any other Act.

It is important that statutory planners are able to act as authorised officers under the Act to ensure good governance and effective enforcement of the Act.

RELEVANT LAW

The relevant law is the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the Local Government Act 1989 and the Local Government Act 2020

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council last appointed authorised officers under the Act at its meeting of April 17, 2023.

OPTIONS

1. Do nothing. This is not recommended as council would be non-compliant in terms of its legislative responsibilities under the Act.

2. Appoint the officer as recommended.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable.

COLLABORATION

The work of authorised officers will apply to the Wodonga municipal district and does not involve collaboration with others LGAs.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The work of authorised officers is a component of their employment with council and there are no additional financial implications associated with the appointment.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable

COUNCIL PLAN AND POLICIES

Strategic objective
Provide transparent governance and strong leadership, demonstrating excellence in the way we do business by being innovative and responsive.
Strategy
Ensure good contemporary governance through accountable and transparent practices, appropriate risk management and continuous improvement.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There have been no conflict-of-interest declarations by the following officers involved with the preparation of this report:

Governance Officer - Kevin Scully
Deputy CEO - Debra Mudra

Instrument of appointment and authorisation by Council

June 19, 2023

Belinda Jenkin

Instrument of appointment and authorisation

In this instrument "officer" means -

Belinda Jenkin

By this instrument of appointment and authorisation Wodonga City Council -

1. under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* - appoints the officer to be an authorised officer for the purposes of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the regulations made under that Act; and

2. under section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* authorises the officer generally or in a particular case to institute proceedings for offences against the Acts and regulations described in this instrument.

It is declared that this instrument -

(a) comes into force immediately upon its execution;
(b) remains in force until varied or revoked, and is taken to be revoked upon the officer ceasing employment at Wodonga City Council.

This instrument is authorised by a resolution of the Wodonga City Council on June 19, 2023.

.....
Matthew Hyde
Chief Executive Officer

7.5 Hospital advocacy

PURPOSE

To provide the status of the advocacy priority of a new purpose-built hospital for Albury-Wodonga.

SUMMARY

A new, purpose-built hospital was a key health and wellbeing priority in the council's Advocacy Plan adopted at the August 2022 council meeting.

The Premiers of NSW and Victoria made a joint announcement on the border of $558 million for a redevelopment of the Albury site.

However, without the masterplan, data or a business case that provides the rationale to proceed on a brownfield site, questions remain on whether this is the best result for the Albury Wodonga region.

To date, there has been no response from the Victorian Office of the Premier or the Victorian Minister for Health, the Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas, MP to correspondence sent from Wodonga Council in November 2022 and again in February 2023. Council staff have repeatedly followed up requesting a response or further advice to no avail.

There continues to be an expectation from the council, clinicians, and community that there would be a high degree of transparency from the state governments in providing the information and rationale behind the decision that support this investment in the hospital.

NSW Health Infrastructure (Hinfra) have been appointed to manage the project.

RECOMMENDATION

That the council:

1. Continue to advocate for a new purpose-built single campus hospital;

2. Endorse the advocacy guiding principles as outlined in this report;

3. Makes another formal request to the Victorian Minister for Health, for a meeting to seek clarification on key outstanding issues as identified in the correspondence previously sent to the Minister;

4. Have two representatives of the community leaders who attended the advocacy workshop accompany the Mayor and CEO if a meeting can be secured with the Minister of Health;

5. Continues to progress FOI requests to access relevant documents relating to the redevelopment of the Albury hospital if they are not forthcoming

through proactive release of information in the State's commitment to transparency;

6. Partner with interested groups to commission a report to evaluate current and future health and hospital needs for the Albury Wodonga region and broader catchment region should access to documents under FOI be refused, which in turn can act as evidence for the position of a new single site hospital; and,

7. Develop an advocacy plan brand and positioning. This campaign to be part of a broader community engagement program relating to delivery of an appropriate hospital and health service for our Albury Wodonga Community.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Civic Partnership - Executive Summary [**7.5.1** - 3 pages]
2. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Civic Partnership - Final Report [**7.5.2** - 15 pages]

DISCUSSION

Background

On October 27, 2022, the Premiers of Victoria and NSW made a joint announcement on the border of $558 million for a redevelopment of the Albury site which would include a new clinical service building and consolidate all services on Albury campus.

Since the announcement, NSW Health Infrastructure (Hinfra) has been appointed to deliver the project in partnership with Albury Wodonga Health, NSW Ministry of Health, and the Victorian Health Building Authority. While the project refers to a 'new' hospital it is important to note that the project is a redevelopment of the current site with an additional 'new' funding of $450 million (see financial implications in this report for a breakdown of the contributions).

NSW Health Infrastructure will develop a project advisory group to provide a community perspective on the design of the redeveloped hospital and has undertaken a series of information sessions with the community. This form of community consultation is not deliberative, as a decision has already been made, rather, it is information sharing only.

Advocacy approach

Wodonga council's advocacy approach is based on the need for a new purpose-built hospital on a greenfield site and the need for information and transparency by the

State government regarding the business case and data that supports the current position of a redevelopment.

There continues to be an expectation from the council, clinicians, and community that there would be a high degree of transparency from the state governments regarding the provision of information and the rationale behind the decision that supports the one stage redevelopment investment decision.

Without the masterplan or a business case that provides the rationale to proceed with a redevelopment on a brownfield site, questions remain on whether this is the best result for the 300,000-population catchment of the Albury-Wodonga region.

Additionally, Council also seeks information on how the government proposes to deal with the consequential cross-border impacts of the decision and the components of investment needed beyond the hospital site to make the service accessible especially during emergencies.

As a result of Council's advocacy position, it has undertaken the following actions:

Progress to date

- On *December 22, 2022*, a letter was written the Premier of Victoria, seeking information that addresses the range of consequential cross border impacts of the recent joint announcement from the Victorian and New South Wales governments. The letter was also cc'd to the Premier of NSW and a range of relevant Ministers, Federal and State members and regional Mayors and CEO's.

- At the *February 20, 2023*, Council meeting a report was presented it was resolved that the council:

    - *Continue to advocate for a single campus hospital on a greenfield site*
    - *Request a meeting with the Victorian Minister for Health, to seek clarification on key outstanding issues, as outlined in the report;*
    - *Call on the Victorian Government to consider this significant investment being redirected to a greenfield site;*
    - *Call on the Victorian Government to demonstrate transparency and reassure the community that any plans to upgrade the health service will not adversely affect the health and wellbeing of the community;*
    - *Further advocates to the Australian Government to leverage the opportunity of this funding commitment from the States to provide a full health precinct that best services the growing Albury Wodonga region and its specialist industries.*
    - *Call on Albury City Council to advocate for a single campus hospital on a greenfield site, and to lobby the NSW Government and the Australian Government for more adequate funding.*

- On *February 21, 2023* Wodonga Council wrote to AlburyCity with a request to consider a joint advocacy approach for a purpose-built hospital on a green field site.

- On *February 25, 2023,* Wodonga Council asked five questions calling on greater transparency and accountability relating to the announcement to

redevelop the existing hospital site at the Albury Wodonga Health Annual General Meeting.

- On *February 27, 2023*, Albury Council considered Wodonga Council's request for joint advocacy, however declined the request for joint advocacy around a greenfield site.

- On *April 26, 2023*, following an expression of interest process, Wodonga Council held a workshop with community leaders, including neighbouring councils, to explore the future health and hospital needs of the Albury-Wodonga region and the evidence required to develop a business case, including further consultation with community and health stakeholders.

- Wodonga Mayor has undertaken a range of media opportunities to advocate Council's position.

- Council has received a draft report from the consultants that independently ran the Community Leaders Forum.

Guiding Principles

Following the strategic workshop with consultants and community leaders Wodonga Council has established the following guiding principles that sets out the shared vision and values of the advocacy approach.

Excel at essentials: Major teaching hospitals across Australia tend to be built around four core components: operating theatres, emergency departments, intensive care units and radiology. Beyond these essentials, hospitals respond to population-specific needs such as cardiac, cancer or geriatric care.

Prioritise people: Making a single site hospital practical for all people who receive care at, visit, service, supply or most importantly work at the hospital should guide the entire project. Ensuring staff can easily and equitably move to, from and around the hospital, access places and spaces to rest and refresh and the specialist support services leading hospitals provide is vital to attracting and retaining high quality staff.

Future-focused: With the hospital catchment area and the local community set to grow by 36,000 people or by 13 per cent by 2036, the hospital's capacity must be able to manage the demands of a growing regional community. It should also be able to incorporate Medi-Tech, AI, and other advanced health-giving technologies.

Accessible and inclusive: With a broad catchment up of urban and rural areas, the need to easily access hospital services – whether by car, bike, public transport, or medivac – necessitates it being located on a site that is central and accessible. Its design and development should consider First Nations access and cultural appropriateness.

Complement, do not compete: Too often regional projects compete for state or federal funding. Rather than compete with other much-needed capital projects, for example those funded by the Department of Defence, consideration should be given to how capital investments can be leveraged to complement each other and deliver better outcomes.

Master planning

According to NSW Health Infrastructure (www.hinfra.health.nsw.gov.au, accessed 29/5/23) the hospital is currently at the master planning stage: 'the master planning stage is the important first step to developing a campus plan that outlines the vision for the site, to deliver a world-class health care hub and improved patient experience for border communities'.

Based on the information provided by Hinfra, there is yet to be a business case developed for the project. As a result, it would be reasonable to assume that it is too early to determine what is needed, how it will be prioritised, how much it will cost and if there are any future stages that will need further funding.

Throughout the Albury Wodonga Regional Deal (now regional projects), the Victorian Government stated that they would not fund any project that did not go through a rigorous planning process and have a solid business case to evidence its feasibility and investment readiness. However, without the masterplan or a business case that provides the rationale to proceed on a brownfield site, questions remain on whether this is the best result for the Albury Wodonga and the broader region.

However, confusingly on both Infra site and Albury Wodonga Health website (www.awh.org.au/about-us/our-future/albury-wodongas-single-site-hospital, *accessed 26/5/23*) it states, "Early planning confirmed that a single-site hospital, to the size and scale needed to meet our forecast health needs, could be constructed on the existing Albury Hospital, but could not be constructed on the Wodonga Hospital due to site restrictions.' 'Redeveloping on the existing Albury Hospital will allow us to get underway sooner, is more sustainable and delivers better value for money.'

To evidence sustainability and value for money, there is an assumption that an appraisal and evaluation technique, such as a cost benefit analysis and economic health modelling was undertaken to determine the expected costs, which option has the highest net benefit and/or benefit cost ratio and the distribution of costs and benefits across stakeholders. It is this data and evidence that has not been made public and demonstrates a lack of transparency with the community and intimates that a greenfield site was never evaluated.

If this work has not been done, and therefore lacks strategic justification for the redevelopment, could the Albury campus remain as a cancer hospital and include the services that could be delivered at the current Wodonga hospital site and a new hospital on a greenfield site be constructed in Wodonga.

Cross border impacts

Council also seeks information on how the government/s proposes to deal with the consequential cross-border impacts of the decision, such as listed below. Based on discussions with government agencies it is not evident to council that consideration has been given to the following:

- Congestion at the Borella Road Interchange (and to some degree East Street Interchange) coming off the Hume Freeway within Albury – with additional

volumes to be predominantly traffic from Victoria accessing the Albury hospital site. These intersections already suffer extreme congestion, and any traffic-induced delays could have detrimental impacts on patients receiving timely or emergency treatment;

- Public Transport – the Albury and Wodonga bus networks already have limited interconnection. Public transport is needed between Wodonga and Albury 7 days a week for extended hours to suit Victorians' demand for travel to and from the hospital and this being suitable for all abilities and people with medical needs – without having to change buses or tickets, or indeed having to walk extended distances to bus stops;

- Rideshare and taxi regulations – the ability to attract taxis and/or rideshare to operate effectively across the border to take Victorians to and from the hospital;

- Police, corrections, and child protection – the legal implications of having to take persons in custody out of Victoria's jurisdiction for healthcare;

- Future pandemic or other border restrictions (including road closures/failures and floods) where only one facility is available on one side of the border;

- How health workforce training and education opportunities will operate across borders.

Site Consideration

The current hospital site was only built 30 years ago yet has failed to meet the demand of a growing regional community. This short-sighted process appears to being repeated.

Albury Wodonga continues to grow steadily and needs a hospital that will meet the increasing demand for health services, driven by population growth and the high proportion of young families and the aging population. A redevelopment of the current site could be seen as demonstrating the short-term nature of decision making that does not consider that the region needs a hospital that will meet its needs for at least the next 40 years.

The question remains regarding a potential greenfield site, on either side of the border that can meet the requirements of a single site hospital that is able to ensure that all patients are on one site, with an increase in bed numbers in a regional state-of-the-art health facility (including a helipad; AI and virtual reality; and, a research and development partnership) in a regional health precinct. In addition, any site would need to provide for population growth, adequate road and public transport links that are safe, convenient, and affordable for staff, day and inpatients, visitors, and suppliers.

A desktop analysis across Wodonga identified several large tracts of land that could be a potential greenfield site for a single-site hospital, one State owned and the other private land both with direct access onto Bandiana Link on the Hume Highway. There may also be similar greenfield sites in Albury that could be investigated. However, a detailed site analysis and modelling of any potential site

would need to be undertaken to determine suitability to improve the effectiveness of a hospital's functionality in terms of service provision, delivery, and optimisation.

Prior to a site analysis being undertaken, demand mapping by health economists should be undertaken to evaluate the present and, importantly, the future health and hospital needs of Albury-Wodonga and the region. This analysis should consider services demand modelling; attraction and retention of health care workers and specialists; and deliberation of futureproofing of any investment to manage growth in population but also facilitate modern technologies and treatments.

There has not been any evidence that this kind of work has been undertaken by the States as part of any initial planning works that may have been done due to the unwillingness of the State government/s to share this information with the public.

Economic impact of hospitals

There have been studies (Regional Australia Institute, 2019, *Regional economic impacts of Public Hospitals Investment*) that indicate that the value of hospitals to communities extends far beyond healthcare to the economic and employment impacts of capital investments as well as operational costs.

Albury Wodonga Health is one of the largest local employers and makes significant contributions to the local economy, not only in employment but in local spending and procuring of services. The current hospital in Albury acts as an anchor institution for employment, direct economic spend in the city and as a business and precinct activator. Access to a diverse range of health services in a health precinct is also an attractor for people to migrate to the region as it improves the liveability and convenience of a city.

Investment in public health infrastructure can also lead to growth in jobs in hospitals, in research and development, tertiary partnerships and associated allied health services both in the public and private sectors and improves the ability to attract and maintain medical and clinical staff, as well as employment across all skill and wage levels.

The planning for the redevelopment of the Albury hospital is pivotal to guide the East Albury precinct planning that looks at five key areas, including urban design guidance, transport analysis, a social wellbeing strategy, economic analysis, and housing renewal. Being in Albury, the hospital plays a significant role for the city beyond healthcare.

Financial implications

On *October 27, 2022*, the Premiers of Victoria and NSW made a joint announcement on the Border of $558 million for a redevelopment of the Albury site to include a new clinical service building and consolidate all services on a single campus. However, it is important to note that only **$450 million** is 'new' funding as $108 million was previously committed funding.

According to Albury Wodonga Health website (www.awh.org.au/about-us/our-future/albury-wodongas-single-site-hospital, *accessed 26/5/23*) the new **$558 million** project will include:

- A new helipad with access to the Intensive Care Unit and the Emergency Department;
- Maternity, neonatal care and paediatric services;
- More medical and surgical beds;
- New operating theatres catering for more surgery;
- A new 32-bed mental health unit to replace the Nolan House Mental Health Unit;
- More car parking; and,
- Expansion of outpatient and specialist spaces for treatments such as dialysis.

On the NSW Health Infrastructure site (www.hinfra.health.nsw.gov.au/projects/project-search/albury-campus-redevelopment, *accessed 26/5/23* and responsible for the delivery of the project) it states that the 'NSW and Victorian governments have each committed ***$225 million*** towards the redevelopment of the Albury Hospital campus, in addition to the ***$108 million*** already committed by the NSW and Australian governments, bringing the total investment commitment to **$558 million**'.

This pre committed **$108 million** is made up of allocations for a range of projects such as works to the emergency department (currently in progress), $20 million from the Albury Wodonga Regional Deal (projects), the mental health unit to replace Nolan House and others.

The Albury Campus Redevelopment scope is expected to include:

- More medical and surgical beds;
- New Intensive Care Unit;
- Relocation of maternity and newborn services;
- New children's ward;
- New operating theatres;
- Contemporary new adult acute mental health inpatient unit;
- Expansion of outpatient and specialist treatment spaces; and,
- More car parking.

Albury Wodonga Health have indicated that the scope of the project will be value managed to be within the budget and there will need to be future stages.

Persons whose rights will be directly affected by this decision

Albury Wodonga Health and the Border's health services cater for a catchment of approximately 297,000 people with 99,350 in the primary catchment, another 47,650 in the regional catchment and 150,000 in a specialist catchment.

The council has a role to advocate and lobby for its community and the wider region in ensuring that the planning and investment in health services is appropriate for the needs of our growing and ageing population.

RELEVANT LAW

The Victorian *Local Government Act* (2020) sets out council's legislative obligations to its community in Part 2 of the Act.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

At the *February 20, 2023*, Council meeting a report was presented it was resolved that the council:

- *Continue to advocate for a single campus hospital on a greenfield site*
- *Request a meeting with the Victorian Minister for Health, to seek clarification on key outstanding issues, as outlined in the report;*
- *Call on the Victorian Government to consider this significant investment being redirected to a greenfield site;*
- *Call on the Victorian Government to demonstrate transparency and reassure the community that any plans to upgrade the health service will not adversely affect the health and wellbeing of the community;*
- *Further advocates to the Australian Government to leverage the opportunity of this funding commitment from the States to provide a full health precinct that best services the growing Albury Wodonga region and its specialist industries.*
- *Call on Albury City Council to advocate for a single campus hospital on a greenfield site, and to lobby the NSW Government and the Australian Government for more adequate funding.*

Council meeting *November 14, 2022* - Conflict of interest disclosures by three councillors resulted in a lack of quorum and consideration of the item could not proceed.

Council meeting *August 15, 2022* – council resolved to adopt the updated Advocacy Plan as tabled.

Council meeting *March 21, 2022* – council resolved to adopt the Advocacy Plan as tabled.

Council meeting *June 28, 2020* - Council adoption of the 2021 – 2025 Council Plan that sets out strategic priorities.

OPTIONS

To date, there has been no response from the Victorian Office of the Premier or the Victorian Minister for Health, the Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas, MP to correspondence sent from Wodonga Council in November 2022 and again in February 2023. Council staff have repeatedly followed up requesting a response or further advice to no avail.

Options:

a. Continue to advocate for a new purpose-built single campus hospital;

b. Makes another formal request to the Victorian Minister for Health, for a meeting to seek clarification on key outstanding issues as identified in the correspondence previously sent to the Minister;

c. Have two representatives of the community leaders who attended the advocacy workshop accompany the Mayor and CEO if a meeting can be secured with the Minister of Health;

d. Continues to progress FOI requests to access relevant documents relating to the redevelopment of the Albury hospital if they are not forthcoming through proactive release of information in the State's commitment to transparency;

e. Partner with interested groups to commission a report to evaluate current and future health and hospital needs for the Albury Wodonga region and broader catchment region should access to documents under FOI be refused, which in turn can act as evidence for the position of a new single site hospital; and

f. Develop an advocacy plan brand and positioning. This campaign to be part of a broader community engagement program relating to delivery of an appropriate hospital and health service for our Albury Wodonga Community.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Local government has limited legislative ability to create substantial or sustainable change in some areas on its own. Working in partnerships across the municipality and the region is fundamental with advocacy and partnering with federal, state, regional and local sectors necessary to be able to meet the needs of the community.

In undertaking its role as a strategic planner of our city, the council has a responsibility to consider the needs of our community, now and into the future

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The council actively engages and works with the community to understand aspirations and needs and health services have been identified through engagement activities.

Communities expect their council, through advocacy, to represent their interests of the community to decision makers and funders in state and federal government.

On April 26th, 2023, Wodonga Council held a workshop with community leaders, including neighbouring council (Indigo Council), to explore the future health and hospital needs of the Albury-Wodonga region and the evidence required to develop a business case, including further consultation with community and health stakeholders.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The council will continue to build on its advocacy efforts through various methods and channels.

COLLABORATION

Solutions to challenges sometimes fall outside the direct responsibility of the council, which highlights the necessity of advocacy as a valuable tool for council to help support and improve the social, health and economic outcome for all residents and businesses.

The council will work with the community, all levels of government, neighbouring councils, Albury Wodonga Health, and the Border Medical Association to deliver appropriate health services to Albury-Wodonga and wider region.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

There are no direct financial implications relevant to this report on council.

Future advocacy stages may require a budget to source appropriate data and specialist professional advice outside the scope of existing Council staff.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

To advocate successfully, the council needs to ensure alignment with either or both federal and state government policy direction and frameworks.

The Albury Wodonga Regional Deal included health care to support a growing regional population.

COUNCIL PLAN AND POLICIES

Strategic objective
Provide transparent governance and strong leadership, demonstrating excellence in the way we do business by being innovative and responsive.
Strategy
Collaborate with regional and local partners and government departments on funding and advocacy opportunities.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There have been no conflict-of-interest declarations by the following officers involved with the preparation of this report:

Manager Communications, Marketing and Customer Focus - Kellie Davies
Deputy CEO - Debra Mudra

THE CIVIC PARTNERSHIP

City of Wodonga

Post-Workshop Executive Summary

9 June 2023

LEVEL 4
12–20 FLINDERS LANE
MELBOURNE VIC 3000
TEL +61 3 9620 9300
info@civicpartners.com.au
www.civicpartners.com.au
ABN: 71 652 574 171

Background

The Civic Partnership was appointed by the City of Wodonga to facilitate a workshop at which the future health service needs of the Albury Wodonga region could be explored. This memo details issues raised at the 26 April 2023 workshop and proposes the next steps for Council's consideration. The participant list is attached for reference.

Overview

The workshop provided participants with an opportunity to explore the future health and hospital service needs of the Albury-Wodonga region and the evidence required to develop a business case, including consultation with community and health stakeholders.

The workshop's discussion points covered three fundamental themes - the need, the site, and the politics.

Positioning

Research the demand and determine the health and hospital services required to meet the needs of the current and future population of the Albury-Wodonga region (and broader catchment area).

Only once the services needed have been quantified should focus turn to identifying the site on which the hospital should be built.

Process

Developing a local government-led advocacy program for significant investment in a major piece of infrastructure, such as a regional hospital, is a long-term proposition that often takes the following steps.



Information gaps

The workshop participants identified a number of significant information gaps that exist in both the current Albury Hospital redevelopment and the initiative to establish a single-site hospital or healthcare facility.

Some of the key information gaps identified included:

- The lack of identification of suitable single-site hospital sites
- Demand projections (including demographic) for hospital services within the Albury-Wodonga catchment area in the future
- Medical workforce considerations regarding barriers/enhancements for the refurbished Albury site versus any newbuild single-site development
- Other investments taking place in the region (by other state/federal government departments) that could support a single-site development or that should be considered for the Albury Hospital refurbishment
- First Nation access considerations, and any other cultural barriers for access to existing or potentially new healthcare facilities.

Recommendations

1. Develop guiding principles to inform the project's decision making, design and delivery.

2. Complete a feasibility study exploring potential sites in the Albury-Wodonga region on which a new multi-purpose hospital could be built.

3. Commission a report to evaluate current and future health and hospital needs of the Albury Wodonga region (and broader catchment region) which in turn can act as the evidence required to support a single site hospital.

4. To align all information and asks of stakeholders, and create an effective communications campaign, an advocacy campaign brand and positioning is required.

5. Formalising the role of the April 26 Workshop participants, that also includes representatives from other key groups and leaders.

7.6 Response to the Municipal Monitors report

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to:

- Present the recommendations in the Wodonga's Council Municipal Monitor's report;
- Report back to Minister Horne by 30 June 2023 as requested by Minister Horne

SUMMARY

The Municipal Monitor was appointed to Wodonga City Council on 22nd April 2022 until the 31st January 2023.

The following Terms of Reference was given to the Monitor by the Minister:

1. To monitor the governance processes and practices of the Council, with specific regard to the following matters
   a) the Council's Councillor Code of Conduct;
   b) the Council's meeting procedures and decision making, including Councillor attendance and conduct at Council briefings, the adequacy of the Council's Governance Rules and Councillor adherence to the Governance Rules;
   c) the Councillors' understanding and performance of their statutory roles and responsibilities, including the adequacy of the Council's councillor induction training program, and any ongoing professional development opportunities;
   d) the Council's policies and processes related to the appointment of an ongoing Chief Executive Officer;
   e) the Council's policies, processes and practices in relation to the health and safety of councillors and Council staff;
   f) the Council's policies and practices that manage the interactions between Councillors and Council staff and contractors, and compliance with those policies and practices;
   g) the Council's policies, processes and practices related to the management of confidential information; and
   h) any other Council governance policies, processes and practices.

2. To advise, and provide any relevant assistance and support, to the Council in relation to the improvement of the Council's governance processes and practices, with specific regard to the matters raised in clause 1.

3. To report to the Minister for Local Government, with respect to the matters in clause 1, on:
   a) any steps or actions taken by the Council to improve its governance and the effectiveness of those steps or actions; and
   b) any recommendations in relation to the exercise of any Ministerial power under the Act.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council respond to the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Melissa Horne as per the attached letter drafted by the Mayor following discussions at Councillor Briefings.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Wodonga Municipal Monitor final report [**7.6.1** - 5 pages]
2. Letter from Minister to Cr Mildren [**7.6.2** - 2 pages]
3. Email from Local Government Victoria [**7.6.3** - 1 page]
4. Draft letter to Minister [**7.6.4** - 8 pages]

DISCUSSION

The Monitor has four recommendations:

1. *Stronger authority within the Council Chamber for Mayors and CEOs through clear powers over behavioural and code of conduct issues.*
2. *Support for councils to understand and realise the benefits of the role of Monitor, including the ability for the Mayor and CEO to request comment from the Monitor within the Council Chamber on governance matters.*
3. *Ways to reinforce the role of a councillor to participate in decisions in the interests of the whole municipal community notwithstanding ward-based electoral structures.*
4. *Arrangements to support the health and safety of council CEOs, including the responsibility of councils to address any risks to the health and safety of a CEO*

The CEO has provided an operational response to the Monitor's recommendations and the Terms of Reference determined by the Minister.

The Minister requests the Councillors response to the questions asked in her letter, summarised as:

1. That Council consider the report;
2. That Council inform the Minister of the supports in place to safeguard the health and safety of the CEO and executive staff; and
3. That Council provide a response to the four recommendations as they will have sector wide implications and the Minister is considering options to implement these through Local Government Victoria's future work programs and legislative proposals.

Persons whose rights will be directly affected by this decision

N/A

RELEVANT LAW

Council's legal responsibilities, powers and functions are primarily drawn from the *Local Government Act 2020*, however have obligations under a range of other laws.

Section 139 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires a council to develop a Councillor Code of Conduct. The purpose of the Councillor Code of Conduct is to include the standards of conduct expected to be observed by councillors in the course of performing their duties and functions as councillors, including prohibiting discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment) and vilification.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council resolved at the November 2022 meeting:

That the Council write to the Minister for Local Government to acknowledge:

1. *The important role the Municipal Monitor has played with addressing governance issues and providing oversight with the recruitment of Council's Chief Executive Officer; and*
2. *That following the filling of the extraordinary vacancy, there is an important role for the Municipal Monitor to assist with integration of the new councillor into the elected member team, prior to the scheduled completion of her appointment at the end of January 2023.*

Correspondence sent to the Minister on 28 November.

OPTIONS

Option 1 – As per recommendation that the letter to Minister Horne be sent as drafted.

Option 2 – Councillors consider an alternative response to Minister Horne.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The nature of the report did not involve community consultation.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Monitors report provided the opportunity for self-assessment and review of some of the key areas identified in the report it the Council as well as for the services we provide to the community.

COLLABORATION

In drafting the letter the Mayor has consulted with Councillors, specifically at the briefing held on 5 June 2023.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The total cost of the Monitor to the City of Wodonga was $31,699.88.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

N/A

COUNCIL PLAN AND POLICIES

Strategic objective
Provide transparent governance and strong leadership, demonstrating excellence in the way we do business by being innovative and responsive.
Strategy
Ensure good contemporary governance through accountable and transparent practices, appropriate risk management and continuous improvement.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There have been no conflict of interest declarations by the following officers involved with the preparation of this report:

CEO - Matt Hyde - report
Mayor – Cr Ron Mildren – draft letter

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Municipal Monitor appointed to Wodonga City Council

Report to the Minister for Local Government

1. Background

1.1 Appointment

My appointment by then Minister Leane commenced on 22 April 2022 until 31 January 2023 under the following terms of reference.

1. To monitor the governance processes and practices of the Council, with specific regard to the following matters –

   a. the Council's Councillor Code of Conduct;
   b. the Council's meeting procedures and decision making, including Councillor attendance and conduct at Council briefings, the adequacy of the Council's Governance Rules and Councillor adherence to the Governance Rules;
   c. the Councillors' understanding and performance of their statutory roles and responsibilities, including the adequacy of the Council's councillor induction training program, and any ongoing professional development opportunities;
   d. the Council's policies and processes related to the appointment of an ongoing Chief Executive Officer;
   e. the Council's policies, processes and practices in relation to the health and safety of councillors and Council staff;
   f. the Council's policies and practices that manage the interactions between Councillors and Council staff and contractors, and compliance with those policies and practices;
   g. the Council's policies, processes and practices related to the management of confidential information; and
   h. any other Council governance policies, processes and practices.

2. To advise, and provide any relevant assistance and support, to the Council in relation to the improvement of the Council's governance processes and practices, with specific regard to the matters raised in clause 1.

3. To report to the Minister for Local Government, with respect to the matters in clause 1, on:
   a. any steps or actions taken by the Council to improve its governance and the effectiveness of those steps or actions; and
   b. any recommendations in relation to the exercise of any Ministerial power under the Act.

1.2 Context for the City of Wodonga

The Council elected in 2020 comprised a mix of four re-elected Councillors and three new Councillors, one of whom subsequently resigned citing inappropriate behaviour in the Council Chamber, and one re-elected Councillor retired due to ill health. One of the new Councillors Cr Kevin Poulton, was elected as Mayor. Cr Poulton had extensive experience in community and not for profit Boards but was new to local government and therefore undertook a rapid learning period to assume the role of Mayor.

In my view this presented an opportunity for an experienced Councillor, who had also had a professional career as an urban planner in many Councils, including some years ago at Wodonga Council, to offer advice based on his experience much like an officer would. This inevitably became a source of irritation to both new Councillors and senior officers resulting in a culture of wariness and mistrust about both individuals and governance processes. It was compounded by conflict-of-interest concerns referred to below.

Several complaints had earlier been lodged with the Acting CEO and Governance Officer about potential conflicts of interest by one Councillor and a formal complaint lodged with the Chief Municipal Inspector earlier in 2022.

1.3 Monitoring activities

The previous CEO Mark Dixon resigned in November 2021.

At the time of my appointment, the Council had commenced the recruitment process for the vacant CEO position and the first meeting I attended as the Monitor was with all Councillors, the recruitment specialist, and an independent member all of whom constituted the executive recruitment advisory committee.

Discussion was moderated by the Mayor and the recruitment consultant with helpful contributions from the independent member. The shortlisting proceeded interactively and respectfully to produce an agreed shortlist of six candidates. Interviews were arranged as promptly as practical and conducted consistently and professionally.

Council and committee meetings were attended by me predominantly in person, but virtual meeting attendance also occurred. Meetings were held regularly with the Monitor and Acting CEO and at times with the full executive team.

In August 2022, a workshop of all Councillors was facilitated by an independent consultant. The workshop achieved an agreed-upon set of priorities based on the Council Plan, clarified the Council term aims, and reiterated the necessity of working together with the incoming CEO to ensure mutual success.

At this point, the Council had shown no signs of the previously alleged inappropriate behaviour, although there are examples available on Council's website of streamed Council meetings in the previous two years. My counsel to the Councillors as a group was based on the need for compliance with the *Local Government Act 2020 (*the Act) and governance policies including the Code of Conduct and Governance Rules.

Individual meetings were held with Councillors as necessary and regular meetings were conducted with the Mayor and Acting CEO.

Following discussions with the Local Government Inspectorate to explain my role as Monitor and my terms of reference, the report on the formal complaint mentioned above was finalised. The Councillor involved shared the results with me and no further action was necessary.

In my view it is helpful to canvass the items of relevance around this issue due to its prominence across all discussions with the Monitor and the importance of culture within the local government sector as contained in the Local Government Culture Project Insights Report. It is fair to say that allegations of conflicts of interest and bias pervaded the Council group and the senior executives all of which had a negative impact on working relationships.

During my time as Monitor, there were declarations made about family links, political party memberships and other matters requiring Council decisions in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and Council's Governance Rules.

Apprehension of bias was also raised with me as a matter of concern. This was associated with ongoing advocacy by a Councillor of the same view as expressed in the former professional capacity of that Councillor. In such a situation a Councillor should ensure they express views that are both representative of the community and in the interests of the whole municipality.

In many of my discussions with both Councillors and staff, there were inferences or allegations that there were ongoing undeclared conflicts or bias, but no new or relevant evidence to substantiate these allegations was provided to me.

However, the Mayor during the period November to December 2022, expressed discomfort with political party memberships of some Councillors in a letter to the Minister for Local Government, and copied to me. The letter in part stated:

> My concern however (as shared with the community) is that at the very least the 'perception' is that these four (4) Councillors have a direct and declarable link to the Liberal Party / Liberal National Parties which raises the perception of conflict, influence, and 'reach' into local government.

This followed a stalemate over the Mayoral election in a drawn 3-all vote before the seventh Councillor had been sworn in.

Membership of a political party is not prohibited by the Act but the distinction between running as an endorsed candidate on a political platform and declaring an interest as an elected Councillor due to a party membership is important. None of the Wodonga Councillors had run on a political platform and each one had declared their membership in Declaration of Interest returns.

2. Governance at the Council

This section includes my observations and findings in relation to matters contained in my terms of reference.

2.1 Observations and findings

The main causes of the difficulties within the Council group were ultimately due to mistrust and differences in personalities, styles, and ego which are all common in any community. All these factors can easily distract from the business of governance in the absence of strong leadership. I was advised by email from the previous CEO that he had resigned because, in part, he felt his leadership was not accepted or respected by a minority of Councillors. He was aggrieved about the circumstances which impelled (in his view) him to resign and sought a "remedy" from Council and the then Minister for Local Government. Neither the Council nor the then Minister provided the remedy sought but the Minister requested that the former CEO's concerns be considered in my report as Monitor.

Looking at these events in context it may be that the relative inexperience of the Mayor and CEO combined provided the opportunity for an experienced councillor with a professional background in local government to proffer advice with strong opinions that intruded on the role of the CEO. The matters referred to in the Councillor's resignation include allegations of inappropriate behavioural interactions which are observable in the video recordings of Council meetings available on the Council's website, although there were also other factors contributing to the Councillor's decision.

These circumstances are a challenge for any professional person elected to Council because the role is clearly representative, not professional. Councillors are duty bound by the Act to represent the whole community when participating in Council decision making.

As the resignation of the CEO occurred before my appointment as Monitor, I will not make any comment except to note that no formal complaint was made prior to the resignation. There is, however, an identifiable gap in the employment conditions of a CEO in the Act which in my view deserves consideration of change.

Whilst the Act in s46(3)(c) gives authority and responsibility to the CEO for managing interactions between Council staff and Councillors it is often a delicate balance due to the contractual arrangements which enable dismissal without reason. The position of CEO is not covered by Occupational Health and Safety legislation and, as the only employee appointed by Council, should be protected through clear accountabilities of the Mayor and Councillors.

Clarification and strengthening of the role definitions for Mayor, Council and CEO are desirable, in my opinion, to ensure Councillor behaviour can be moderated or challenged "in the moment" and to protect the CEO and senior executives. The Act established strategic principles for governance which are intended to ensure Councillors are more strategic in their focus and ensure the management of operations is left to the CEO. However, this is especially challenging when, in a ward-based system, Councillors may focus on matters relevant to their ward.

Through the CEO, staff are the principal source of advice to Council. Tensions emerged between the staff and some Councillors because of councillors challenging the advice of staff during Council meetings, which then required expenditure on independent legal advice to settle an interpretation of legislation or policy. When undue pressure is applied to staff to change their advice by frequent questioning, the assertion of allegations based on opinions rather than fact, and derisory commentary during debate, in my view these actions have the potential to create an unsafe workplace for staff.

Under the acting CEO and since the commencement of the new CEO, the conduct of Councillors and senior officers has been constructive and respectful which augurs well for the future governance of Wodonga.

It is still true however, that under the Act the position of CEO, as the only employee of a Council, is vulnerable to dismissal for no reason and, to uncontrolled offensive behaviour from within the governing body. This is a generalised observation but pervasive within the sector in my experience.

2.2 Councillor behaviour

Authority within the Chamber

It is evident from my experience in many Councils that Mayors on occasions need assistance to manage and control behaviour of individual Councillors within public meetings. This could be achieved by expansion of one or all the Mayor, CEO and Monitor roles.

2.3 Governance

CEO and improvements

The new CEO is working with the Council in a participatory style and has implemented improvements to meeting schedules and officer reports.

2.4 Capacity

Commitment to change

After nearly twelve months of disruption including the loss and replacement of two Councillors, the resignation of the CEO, the recruitment and induction of the new CEO, a changeover of Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and the appointment of a Monitor, the Council and administration have an opportunity to move forward in a positive way, however, it is imperative that respect for each other and an understanding of the clear role of separation as defined in the Act is practised.

3. Recommendations for the Minister for Local Government

That the Minister consider the following:

3.1 Stronger authority within the Council Chamber for Mayors and CEOs through clear powers over behavioural and code of conduct issues.

3.2 Support for councils to understand and realise the benefits of the role of Monitor, including the ability for the Mayor and CEO to request comment from the Monitor within the Council Chamber on governance matters.

3.3 Ways to reinforce the role of a councillor to participate in decisions in the interests of the whole municipal community notwithstanding ward-based electoral structures.

3.4 Arrangements to support the health and safety of council CEOs, including the responsibility of councils to address any risks to the health and safety of a CEO.

Janet Dore

Municipal Monitor

10/02/2023

Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Roads and Road Safety

1 Spring Street
Melbourne, Victoria 3000 Australia
Telephone: +61 3 8392 8020

Ref: CMIN-2-23-18557

Cr Ron Mildren
Mayor
Wodonga City Council
rmildren@wodonga.vic.gov.au

Dear Cr Mildren

The municipal monitor appointed to Wodonga City Council, Ms Janet Dore, has provided me with her final report, which is enclosed. The report will also be made available shortly on the Local Government Victoria's website.

I am pleased to note that the council has made improvements to foster good governance during the monitor's term of appointment.

The monitor notes that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mr Matthew Hyde, has developed a strong working relationship with the Council which creates an opportunity to go forward in a constructive manner.

The report includes four recommendations related to ongoing issues faced by the Council which have sector-wide implications. I am considering options to implement these through Local Government Victoria's future work programs and legislative proposals.

The Council has had the benefit of an expert municipal monitor for nine months at a cost to its ratepayers. It is my expectation that all councillors perform their duties and conduct themselves respectfully and in accordance with the Act. As such, it is important to ensure councillors maintain a positive working relationship with the administration and that any allegations of inappropriate behaviour by councillors are managed appropriately.

Further, with respect to recommendation 3.4 in the report, it is my expectation that Council will take all the necessary steps to ensure a safe working environment for the CEO and the executive staff. I request that Council consider the report and inform me of the supports in place to safeguard the health and safety of the CEO and executive staff.

I request that the Council please provide me with a response to the actions mentioned above by no later than Thursday 13 June 2023.

Ms Dore's period of appointment concluded on 31 January 2023. I can advise that no further monitor appointment has been made to the Council at this time.

Your details will be dealt with in accordance with the *Public Records Act 1973* and the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*. Should you have any queries or wish to gain access to your personal information held by this department please contact our Privacy Officer at the above address.

If you require further information, please contact Mike Gooey, Executive Director, Local Government Victoria on telephone 0407 841 159 or email at mike.gooey@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

I look forward to receiving the Council's advice.

Yours sincerely



The Hon. Melissa Horne MP
Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Date: 24/4/2023

Enc. Wodonga City Council Monitor Report
cc. Mr Matthew Hyde, CEO, Wodonga City Council

From: [redacted] **On Behalf Of** Mike N Gooey (DGS)
Sent: Tuesday, 9 May 2023 1:18 PM
To: Matthew Hyde <mhyde@wodonga.vic.gov.au>
Cc: Mike N Gooey (DGS) <[redacted]>; [redacted]
Subject: (EXTERNAL):OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE: Wodonga Monitor Report - Embargoed Minister's Statement

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Good afternoon Matt

I am writing on behalf of Mike to provide you with the attached embargoed Minister's Statement which will be published at 2pm t on the LGV website at the same time.

We can also confirm that the Minister is happy to receive the report back from Council by 30 June 2023.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact.

Kind regards

[redacted]
Senior Adviser to the ED, Local Government Victoria
Level 8, 1 Spring Street Melbourne
T: [redacted]
E: [redacted]

The Hon. Melissa Horne MP
Minister for Local Government
1 Spring Street,
Melbourne
Vic 3000

Dear Minister,
Re: Response to your letter of 24 April 2023 regarding the Monitor Report

Thank you for your letter of 24 April 2023 requesting that Council consider the Monitor report and to inform you of the supports in place to safeguard the health and safety of the CEO and executive staff and to respond to the actions referred to in the Monitor report.

Also thank you for the appointment of Ms. Janet Dore as the Monitor and please pass our thanks to Ms. Dore for the valued assistance, support and advice during her time as Monitor.

As noted in your letter and the Monitor report, the new CEO Mr. Matthew Hyde has developed a strong working relationship with the Council and has progressed positive changes on a number of fronts which is appropriately advancing the opportunities to go forward in a constructive manner.

In considering the Monitor report the below observations and acknowledgements have been drawn.

It is acknowledged that it is an enormous task for any person and particularly in a role as a Monitor, to come into an organisation such as a Council and to learn and understand the historical events that have contributed to the formation and character of the Council. It is particularly difficult to learn the local, community and organisational politics that have contributed to any current situation, circumstances and environment. Most of all it is very difficult to do so in a local political environment and within the relatively short appointment and reporting timeframe.

The Monitor has generally captured the essence of the elected Council and for the most part reflected the situation reasonably accurately, appropriately leaving broader conclusions based on that reflection and the facts to the reader.

The Monitor findings have indicated that Wodonga Council is generally within the normal range of behaviour within a democratic environment for a local government with a diversity of opinion, experience, knowledge, character and egos.

The Monitor acknowledged the diversity of Councillors in terms of knowledge, experience and character on the elected Council and in the former CEO. This diversity saw a wide range of opinion and appropriately made for some vigorous debate. Vigorous debate can sometimes be challenging and where philosophical differences arise may occasionally be experienced as confronting for some people. The Monitor acknowledges that this may be exacerbated when there is a divide in the range of experience of the Councillors.

The Monitor noted that an experienced Councillor also had experience in Local Government employment, including a time many years ago at Wodonga City. In fairness it is also noted that the monitor does not acknowledge the many years of service in the employment of Wodonga Council of one of the immediately former Councillors and does not specifically recognise the experience and long standing years of service

as an elected Councillor by another former Councillor who resigned due to ill health during the Monitor's term of appointment and the valued contributions made by both Councillors to the Council.

The Monitor acknowledges that "*Under the acting CEO and since the commencement of the new CEO, the conduct of Councillors and senior officers has been constructive and respectful which augurs well for the future governance of Wodonga."*

The Monitor also noted that *"..the Council had shown no signs of the previously alleged inappropriate behaviour, although there are examples available on Council's website of streamed Council meetings in the previous two years."* In discussion at briefing comment was made that the Monitor should have identified the Councillor(s) and specific incidents referred to within the previous streamed meetings. It was noted however that the Monitor must remain within legal parameters and that the Monitor terms of reference related to the period of appointment which did not include the referenced previous streamed meetings.

The Monitor acknowledges that the differences in experience, knowledge and individual character and differences in opinion and understanding of governance and procedures contributed to trust issues and allegations of bias and conflicts of interest.

The Monitor referred to allegations of bias and conflicts of interest and stated that no substantiation or evidence was presented to support allegations of bias or conflicts of interest. The Monitor stated that:
"In many of my discussions with both Councillors and staff, there were inferences or allegations that there were ongoing undeclared conflicts or bias, but no new or relevant evidence to substantiate these allegations was provided to me. However, the Mayor during the period November to December 2022, expressed discomfort with political party memberships of some Councillors in a letter to the Minister for Local Government, and copied to me. The letter in part stated: My concern however (as shared with the community) is that at the very least the 'perception' is that these four (4) Councillors have a direct and declarable link to the Liberal Party / Liberal National Parties which raises the perception of conflict, influence, and 'reach' into local government. This followed a stalemate over the Mayoral election in a drawn 3-all vote before the seventh Councillor had been sworn in. Membership of a political party is not prohibited by the Act but the distinction between running as an endorsed candidate on a political platform and declaring an interest as an elected Councillor due to a party membership is important. None of the Wodonga Councillors had run on a political platform and each one had declared their membership in Declaration of Interest returns."

The Monitor refers to a formal investigation of a conflict of interest by the Local Government Inspectorate where it was found that no conflict occurred in any of the allegations. The Monitor notes having been shown a copy of the Inspectorate decision.

The Monitor has addressed the issues raised in the terms of reference. The Monitor has very effectively acknowledged that there is a diversity of character, experience, knowledge and backgrounds in the elected Council and a differing range of opinions that from time to time will result in vigorous debate.

The Monitor has referenced that allegiance to a Political party or Political movement is not prohibited but should be declared. The Monitor acknowledges that four Councillors have openly declared their political allegiances.

The Monitor states that *"The main causes of the difficulties within the Council group were ultimately due to mistrust and differences in personalities, styles, and ego which are all common in any community. All these factors can easily distract from the business of governance in the absence of strong leadership."*

The Monitor has acknowledged that "*In August 2022 a workshop of all Councillors was facilitated by an independent consultant. The workshop achieved an agreed-upon set of priorities based on the Council Plan, clarified the Council term aims, and reiterated the necessity of working together with the* (then) *incoming CEO to ensure mutual success".* A second workshop facilitated by an independent consultant was undertaken in May 2023 which reaffirmed the outcomes of the earlier workshop.

It is acknowledged that individual Councillors may retain divergent views to the majority position about the Monitor report and that individual comment may be forwarded to the Minister outside of the Council resolution. Council's Code of Conduct recognises that "*there may be times when individual councillors disagree with a majority decision of council. Individual councillors are entitled to express their own independent views, however, this should not be done in a way that reflects negatively on other individual councillors or the council as a whole."*

The Monitor report has identified, reflected and commented upon the matters referenced in the terms of reference and has concluded that no recommendations to the Minister in respect to specific actions for or by Wodonga Council is warranted. The Monitor report does however make four (4) general Local Government sector wide recommendations for consideration of the Minister and the Minister has requested that Council provide a response in regard to the Monitor recommendations. Whilst it is acknowledged that there are some divergent views and interpretations of aspects of the Monitor report and recommendations, below is the Council's considered response to the recommendations.

Recommendation 1.
That the Minister consider *"Stronger authority within the Council Chamber for Mayors and CEOs through clear powers over behavioural and code of conduct issues."*

Whilst at present, for the most part, the authority and powers of the Mayor within the Council Chamber is enabled through each Council's Governance Rules as applied under the Local Government Act 2020, those Rules may only be as effective as reflected by the knowledge and experience of the mayor of the day and the advising CEO of the day.

The Monitor stated that "*It is evident from my experience in many Councils that Mayors on occasions need assistance to manage and control behaviour of individual Councillors within public meetings. This could be achieved by expansion of one or all the Mayor, CEO and Monitor roles".*

In the first instance, the rules should be structured and presented to best place the mayor, with the technical and administrative advice of the CEO, to control meetings such that the need for appointment of a Monitor on this basis can be avoided.

The tools to control individual councillor behaviour are largely in the Governance Rules. Whilst the Monitor acknowledges that occasionally Mayors need assistance to manage and control behaviour, it is the role of the Mayor with CEO technical and administrative procedure support. The Mayor and CEO need to be practically conversant with the tools available under the Governance Rules to manage and control behaviour in the chamber. It is the mayor's role to seek to keep Councillors debate focused on the relevant issues.

The Monitor suggests that introducing additional powers for CEOs in respect to management and control of councillor behaviour may be a solution. Except for professional, technical and administrative support and advice to the Mayor, Council believes that generally CEOs should not be empowered to intervene in political matters and the course of political debate within the Chamber. It is considered inappropriate for a change in the long held conventions that CEOs and staff remain separate from the politics of Council debate and decision making in order to retain a professional impartiality.

There has been some broader industry professional discussion about CEO's ability to undertake their role in workplace safety and wellbeing when they do not have authority over Councillors and debate in the council chamber. This is a vexed issue on many levels.

Provision of powers for a CEO to intervene in debate in the chamber where the CEO considers the content of the debate to be bad behaviour opens the door to a range of interventions based upon differences of opinion.

Additionally some professionals are seeking access to a formal complaints process for staff in respect to councillor behaviour and indeed councillor opinion whilst others see the chamber as a place for questioning and open debate reflecting the diversity of perspectives, character and opinion within the community. If provisions were to be changed to provide an avenue for formal complaint by staff about councillor behaviour, it would need to be structured so it could not be weaponised or indeed vexatious or based on difference of opinion. Should it be thought appropriate or desirable, a formal staff complaint protocol may be added into the Council Code of Conduct. It is also noted that Councillors do not have the benefit of parliamentary privilege and can be subject to civil proceedings and should therefore exercise a duty of care as to what and how things may be said in the chamber or elsewhere.

Whilst it may be reasonable for some to expect council CEOs to continually seek expansion of their role and stronger mechanisms to control the functioning and output of Councils, unless the democratic and political processes are to be reduced or removed and replaced with technical and professional management, then management and control of councillor behaviour should be retained within the political domain of the Mayor and Councillors with professional advice and support by the CEO as generally applies currently under the Act and long held conventions.

Although the Monitor has not included it in the recommendation, in the body of the report under '**Councillor Behaviour – Authority in the Chamber**' heading, the Monitor refers to possible expansion of the Monitor role. Whilst the Monitor has been very valuable in guiding and advising Council in respect to a range of governance issues, this guidance has been provided in a supportive and collaborative manner. This approach proved to be very appropriate. Monitors have an enormous task to come into an organisation such as a Council and to learn and understand the politics and historical events that have contributed to the relationships and character of the Council. It is particularly difficult to learn the local, community and organisational politics that have contributed to any current situation and circumstances. Therefore to give a Monitor a greater level of authority and intervention role may be counterproductive and result in inadvertent loss of impartiality and a potential deterioration of relationships.

Recommendation 2.
That the Minister consider "*Support for councils to understand and realise the benefits of the role of Monitor, including the ability for the Mayor and CEO to request comment from the Monitor within the Council Chamber on governance matters.*"

The experience with the Monitor has been very beneficial to Wodonga Council in a range of complex ways that very effectively worked to smooth across the character, experience, knowledge and ego divides and to build a shared understanding of the benefits and legitimacy of differences of opinion both within Council and reflective of the community. It may have been that Councillors were not fully across the role of Monitor and actually did ask advice that may have been beyond the envisaged role, however this was positively influential in bettering the understanding of governance matters. Having said that, the terms of reference seem to have enabled the Monitor to offer Governance advice upon request already, although a case may be supported for a more explicit reference.

The role of Monitor under current provisions may be expanded or contracted within the expressed criteria under the LG Act 2020 by the Minister through the terms of reference. This is a good situation that enables Ministerial decisions based on the merits and circumstances of each situation. There is no apparent need for legislative change in this regard however some greater clarity and more specific reference may be appropriate based on the merits of each situation within the ministerial terms of reference.

Recommendation 3.
That the Minister consider *"Ways to reinforce the role of a councillor to participate in decisions in the interests of the whole municipal community notwithstanding ward-based electoral structures."*

This may prove to be one of the most significant observations and recommendations of relevance across the Local Government sector.

Explicitly the current legislative provisions envisage Councillors being collectively engaged in representing the interests of the whole municipality. In general terms, for a Local Government area like Wodonga City, an unsubdivided Council single electorate encourages that outcome. The Monitor has expressed a very valid point in referring to ward based electoral structures in Councils as not supporting whole of municipality outcomes and breeding localised ward parochialism and partisanship.

The City of Wodonga is presently for the most part one community. A rigid approach to electoral methodologies and delineations through legislated or ministerial direction uniformly across a category of municipalities is considered not to be the most appropriate way to achieve decision making in the overall best interests of the whole municipality. Each Council area should be viewed in the context of the local circumstances. Arbitrary delineation of ward boundaries within a uniform or homogenous socio-economic, cultural and geographic municipality will likely be counterproductive and generate unnecessary and unwarranted division and parochialism.

Therefore Council is supportive of this recommendation and believes that Ward based electoral structures are not a solution in circumstances like Wodonga where the land area is relatively small and the community generally homogenous. It is very easy to see how the Monitor has reached this recommendation in light of experience with the Wodonga community and Council.

Recommendation 4.
That the Minister consider "*Arrangements to support the health and safety of council CEOs, including the responsibility of councils to address any risks to the health and safety of a CEO"*

It is appropriate, if it doesn't presently apply, that normal Health and Safety provisions be applied to CEOs in a context and manner befitting the role, noting that the role is within a political environment.

The Council has learnt much during the term of the Monitor, not least of which is the complexity of issues faced and diversity of local government knowledge and experience needed by Council CEOs and the relationship variables between the elected Council and the CEO. We have put in place a number of check points and advice and support mechanisms to seek to monitor the Health and wellbeing of the CEO, including fortnightly Mayor, Deputy Mayor and CEO meetings, an advice and Counselling support service accessible to the CEO, staff and councillors and an open and frank dialogue between the CEO and mayor with regard to daily and cumulative stresses and events exercising the mind. Further the CEO is encouraged to undertake professional networking with other CEOs in both local government and beyond.

Council recognises that the role of CEO in recent years has become increasingly complex and having a number of very wide grey areas. CEOs have by various means been assigned or assumed significantly greater authority over the entire range of Local Government activities and the separation between the roles of elected Councillors and CEOs has become substantively indistinct. The original notion of CEOs being responsible for operational matters essentially associated with the overall delivery of Council programs, policy and strategy and that the elected Council is responsible for budget, governance, policy and strategy formulation, matters of community interest and general oversight has become far more imprecise and considerable uncertainty exists with differing interpretations and practices in different councils.

Where CEOs or delegated council staff unilaterally make decisions in respect to, for example, matters of high community interest, then a stress loaded situation may result. Therefore it is important for clear delineations of functional authority and the establishment of strong oversight and communications methodologies and processes. The shortcomings that can occur in this regard are likely to lead to unnecessary stress loadings on both Councillors and CEOs with potential medium and longer term working relationship decline and adverse mental health outcomes.

Additionally the way the system presently functions with the breadth of delegated authority at many Councils, there is considerable scope for CEOs and staff to legitimately make effectively unilateral decisions that might not be supported by the Council or some Councillors. Additionally CEOs may make recommendations to Council that are not supported by the Council or some Councillors. To an extent that is somewhat the nature of the job and the need for a high level of resilience should be anticipated. However being challenged by Councillors with a differing opinion or by publicly having recommendations overturned may unintentionally impact on an individual's health and wellbeing.

The changing local government culture increasingly seems to reflect a position that questioning advice is an attack on the person providing the advice and is therefore a threat to the health and wellbeing of the individual. Councillors need to be cognizant of this in dealing with questions and comments relevant to advice and reports.

However a functioning democracy relies on issues and actions being questioned. Council has learnt that questioning advice should be undertaken in a respectful manner that focusses on the subject content in a way that is not and cannot be seen to be an attack on the person, although this can be difficult and is somewhat reliant on the mindset of the individual.

It is important to build resilience and respect into Council culture and the new CEO is working in that direction both with Councillors and staff and Council has generally agreed with the CEO's plan and approach.

More broadly the Mayor and Councillors should continuously be monitoring and addressing risks to the health and wellbeing of the CEO and staff and indeed other councillors, but this should not be weaponised or used to intimidate or garner greater influence or control to support a particular opinion or that may weaken the democratic processes or the role of Councillors.

Whilst there are differences of opinion and understanding of the issues and implications, the occasionally raised notion that Councillors should be subject to civil penalties similar to private sector Work Health and Safety legislation is, in a politically charged environment, considered inappropriate. It is understood not to apply to State and Commonwealth political environments. In a political environment individual Councillors do not have the same control over Health and Wellbeing matters that employers have in the private sector and in that context councillors should therefore not be individually responsible.

It is acknowledged that relevant Health and Wellbeing protection of the CEO as the sole employee of the elected Council is warranted however this should be in the context of the political environment and indeed with consideration of the many constraints and legitimate influences upon Councils and Councillors.

The belief that CEOs may be dismissed entirely without reason is not singularly correct in that many complexities of contract law and particularly employment contract law exist to influence the actions of both the employer and employee. Additionally there are influencing effects of the specific merits and relationships of each case. Perhaps there may be scope for change to the employment contracts and perhaps inclusive of legislative provisions to support such contract change but all in context of the role and the potential change through electoral cycle events.

Conclusion

Thank you Minister for the appointment of Ms. Janet Dore as Monitor and for the opportunity to review, understand and respond to the Monitor report and specifically to the four (4) recommendations. Overall the experience of having a Monitor was very beneficial and supportive of a newly elected Council and provided strong guidance that augurs well for the future. Under the guidance of the Monitor and as subsequently re-affirmed in May this year, Council undertook facilitated workshops that achieved an agreed-upon set of priorities based on the Council Plan, clarified the Council term aims, and reiterated the necessity of working together with the CEO to ensure mutual success.

Whilst not specifically referenced by the Monitor, consideration of the Monitor report led to some discussion about professional development for Councillors and with specific reference to the Australian Institute of Directors training.

Local Government is not a Board of Directors as some in the public service may assert. Further many Council's ratepayers would not be prepared to pay the considerable cost of all Councillors doing the Institute of Company Directors course and to have it as a prerequisite to stand for election would be very limiting on the field and diversity of candidates. Furthermore not all elected Councillors may have the academic background for success in such a course.

Local Government elected Councillors must navigate a political environment (within an already prescriptive legislative framework) with a diversity of community understandings, objectives and purposes. There is a substantial difference in the expectation of the diversity of community as to the role,

accountabilities and outputs of an elected Councillor group to those of a Board of Company Directors whose principal objective is the pursuit of profit.

Thank you for considering this submission and we trust that it adequately responds to the matters associated with and as requested to be addressed in your letter of 24 April 2024.

This letter has been drafted by the Mayor following a briefing meeting discussion, subject to debate through the Council meeting and adopted by resolution of Council.

Yours faithfully

Matt Hyde

Chief Executive Officer.

DRAFT

7.7 Wodonga Hills Strategy - Re-prioritisation of actions

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present to the Council a re-prioritised list of actions identified for implementation through the adopted Wodonga Hills Strategy and supporting documentation, as well as an Implementation Plan for consideration and adoption.

This report does not revisit the current (2017) Wodonga Hills Strategy or any of the supporting documentation, nor does it review any of the outcomes of these documents.

SUMMARY

The Wodonga Hills Strategy was adopted by the Council at its meeting held on 16 October 2017, with the *Priority Action Table* adopted at its meeting held on 24 June 2019.

At the meeting held on 19 August 2019 the Council resolved to re-prioritise two actions and expedite their implementation. While some works were able to be carried out, the COVID pandemic as well as lead contamination issues at Felltimber Creek Road site hampered progress, resulting in a significant delay in progressing the works.

Delays in having the cultural assessments done also impeded the progress of the project.

Several follow-up reports were presented to the Council between August 2019 and its meeting on 22 February 2021 which resolved as follows:

'That:

1. *Council defers the establishment of a new Wodonga Hills Advisory Committee for a period of at least two years for the reasons set out within this report; and*

2. *A report proposing the establishment of a new Wodonga Hills Advisory Committee be placed before the Council for consideration by no later than 31 December 2022.'*

At its meeting held on 21 November 2022, the Wodonga Council resolved as follows:

'That the Chief Executive Officer be tasked to review the current Wodonga Hills Priority Action Table and provide a report not later that the June 2023 Council Meeting.'

This report directly addresses the above resolution above without revisiting the Wodonga Hills Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. Council adopts the re-prioritised actions as presented in attachment 1, being:
   - 54 actions relating to proposed capital works;
   - 26 actions relating to operational projects;
   - 44 actions relating to ongoing hills'-management; and
   - 6 actions relating to planning and governance matters.

2. Council considers the funding requirements of the actions during future budget cycles.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Wodonga Hills Strategy Re-prioritised Actions [**7.7.1** - 19 pages]

DISCUSSION

An internal *Integrated Planning Group*, chaired by the Deputy CEO along with a *Wodonga Hills Working Group* have now undertaken a full review of the adopted Priority Action Table and prepared a set of worksheets as presented at **Attachment 1**.

These worksheets (Excel spreadsheets) are structured in a way that presents details under the following tabs:

- Capital (54 Actions)
- Operational (26 Actions)
- Overall Actions (44 Actions)
- Planning – Governance (6 Actions)
- Completed Actions (5 Actions)

Summary of the re-prioritisation process

Council officers, as part of the Wodonga Hills Working Group undertook a re-prioritisation of the Priority Action Table originally assembled by the Wodonga Hills Advisory Group (WHAG).

The re-prioritisation included internal consultation with staff from the following teams:
Strategic Planning (natural resources planning);
Sport & Recreation;
Communications & Marketing;
Project Design and Delivery; and
Outdoor Operations (natural resources and environmental lands maintenance and improvements)

The action list has been prioritised by level of importance, as opposed to sequence of works for each hill. The focus has been to develop the infrastructure such as access roads and carparks on the hills first, and then tackle the smaller actions such as walking trails.

The overall actions list was re-prioritised separately by senior staff from the sports and recreation teams, council's communication and marketing team and staff responsible for the maintenance, management and improvements of the hills and the amenities upon those hills.

The prioritised actions have been assessed based on safety, what is considered ongoing or operational works, and what is required to prevent negative impacts or outcomes and the logical flow of any remaining actions.

Categories are as follows:

1. Priority signage and wayfinding (related to users and community safety, and works currently underway);
2. Fire and track/trail management (related to users and community safety, and works currently underway);
3. Ongoing/operational bushland management works;
4. Ongoing planning and event management works; and
5. Future planning works (broken down into the following sub-categories
   a. Future resourcing;
   b. Non-priority signage (no safety aspect); and
   c. Investigative/future planning.

Persons whose rights will be directly affected by this decision

A decision regarding the re-prioritisation of the actions dropping out of the Wodonga Hills Strategy will not affect any persons' rights.

RELEVANT LAW

Works carried out on Wodonga's hills will be subject to planning and environmental considerations and may in some instances also require Aboriginal heritage considerations and works-on-waterway permits from the North East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA).

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Several decisions related to this matter have been made by the Council. These are set out below.

1. 16 October 2017 – Council adopts the Wodonga Hills Strategy;
2. 19 February 2018 – Council authorises the advertisement of members to the Wodonga Hills Advisory Group;
3. 25 June 2018 – Council appoints the members of the Wodonga Hills Advisory Group;
4. 15 April 2019 – Council resolves to receive the Interim Report from the Wodonga Hills Advisory Group;
5. 24 June 2019 – Council adopts the Interim Report issued by the Wodonga Hills

Advisory Group and the Priority Table attached to that report;

6. 19 August 2019 – Council reallocates some funding and re-prioritises the construction of the Klings Hill Climb Track;
7. 20 April 2020 – Council defers the review of the Wodonga Hills Strategy by a new committee to March 2021 – November 2021, recognises that the Group have discharged their duties, and acknowledges the contribution of the Wodonga Hills Advisory Group;
8. 22 February 2021 - Council resolves to defers the establishment of a new Committee for at least two years and seeks a report back to consider a new Committee by 31 December 2022;
9. 21 November 2022 – Councils resolves that the CEO review the current Wodonga Hills Priority Action table and reports to the Council by no later than the June 2023 meeting.

OPTIONS

The Council effectively has three options to consider.

Option 1 – Do Nothing
This Option sees the Council effectively confirm the priorities as established by the previous Wodonga Hills Advisory Group as set out in the attachment to their Interim Report dated May 2019.

This Option is **not supported** as in a report to the 21 November 2022 Council meeting, it was noted that council's Integrated Planning Committee (IPG) should be used to re-prioritise the Group's Action List based on the following:

- Members of the IPG has good insights and understanding of council processes, procedures, and priorities;
- The IPG could provide improved sequencing or interplay between projects; and
- The IPG has skilled and professional staff to provide project expertise and advice.

Option 2 – Adopt the Re-prioritised Action List as Presented
This Option sees the Council adopt the re-prioritised Action List as attached to this report.

This Option is **preferred** as the IPG, utilising the skills and experience of council officers have assembled a list of projects which is based more on level of importance, as opposed to sequence of works for each hill.

Also, the re-prioritised Action List is presented to separate capital and operational projects for each hill, prioritises projects which are common to all hills, and projects which are specifically governance or planning related. Further, these projects are costed to assist the Council is considering and allocating capital and operating budgets in the future.

Option 3 – Modify the Re-prioritised Action List and Adopt
This Option sees the Council consider but modify the IPG-re-prioritised Acton List to take other factors, not apparent to the council officers, into account.

While this Option is **not preferred**, for the reasons provided at Option 2, it would

be supported if so resolved.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

All works undertaken as part of the Wodonga Hills Strategy will be required to consider environmental sustainability matters, potentially ranging from stormwater management and accommodation to erosion control, from vegetation removal, weed eradication to tree plantings.

Further, as these hills are under council's maintenance responsibilities, financial sustainability will also have to be considered as ongoing maintenance and renewals will be required of all the facilities provide.

These indicative costs are included within the attachment and will be included in future capital and/or operating budgets.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The development of the Wodonga Hills Strategy included a significant community engagement process, culminating in the adoption of the Strategy in 2017.

It is not proposed that community engagement be undertaken in respect to the Strategy itself but will be undertaken where projects or works directly interface with the community.

Examples of this would include where road upgrades or improvements are being proposed, when the new Wattle Park entry node is being planned, or where tracks and trails are being provided with seating, shade and picnic areas which may border on residential properties.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable to this report.

COLLABORATION

There has been considerable collaboration within the council, with a range of teams and offices working together to present the re-prioritisation of the Action associated with the Wodonga Hills Strategy

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The re-prioritised Actions have been costed but have not influenced the re-prioritisation of these Actions.

As is the case at each budget cycle, projects will be placed before the Council for consideration and a funding allocation, which may or may not be successful in any given year.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable to this report.

COUNCIL PLAN AND POLICIES

Strategic objective

Planning for growth, demonstrating stewardship through protecting, enhancing, and managing our unique natural and built environments.

Strategy
Ensure assets are well-managed through long-term renewal strategies. Undertake detailed planning and design for key community assets and recreational precincts.

Explore opportunities to convert underutilised open space to usable natural environments.

Strategic objective
Improve the health and social outcomes for all people in Wodonga to create a healthy, safe, equitable and inclusive community.
Strategy
Optimise the liveability in our key neighbourhood precincts.

Strategic objective
Create a welcoming and inclusive city for people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities that is well-connected, which supports people to meet, participate and move safely and access services and opportunities they need.

Strategy
Foster a sense of belonging and civic pride in our city.

Strategic objective
Advance our position as a leading regional city, fostering opportunities for innovation, development, and jobs, and building a destination that offers a variety of experiences, recognising our rich and diverse history and culture.

Strategy
Seek to grow and build the visitor economy.

Attract and grow major events to the city.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There have been no conflict-of-interest declarations by the following officers involved with the preparation of this report:

Director Planning, Development and Infrastructure - Leon Schultz
Chief Executive Officer - Matthew Hyde

Hill Strategy - Actions (*CAPITAL WORKS*)
By Priority

Location	Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority by Hill	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Strategy Action Category	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Estimate
Huon Hill	**Action 8**	**5**	**1**	**Operational**	**Entry Road**	Progressive Upgrading/Sealing of Entry Road	Improvements and upgrading of the entry road, focused on problem locations chiefly on the unsealed section - such as poor visibility/blind corners, heavy corrugations, problem maintenance sections, or widening narrow sections/shoulders (especially to more safely accommodate cyclists). Progressively extend sealed sections of the entry road as required as traffic volumes increase (such as with development of the adjacent residential estates). Undertake additional roadside plantings, to screen the more visible/intrusive sections of the entry road or for amenity reasons (such as to highlight or frame views). (Collaborative action, services both council land and Crown land.)	Projects & Design Natural Resources	$ 1,610,000
Huon Hill	**Action 10**	**2**	**2**	**Operational**	**Summit Car Park / Picnic Area**	Formalise Summit Parking Area	Define and upgrade the existing informal summit parking area - initially as a compacted gravel carpark (possibly sealed as usage and maintenance requires). Define separate entry and exit points to the access road and ensure suitability for all-abilities access. Establish a trailhead to the realigned Bundy Walking Track - with platform tables or seating and orientation - under existing mature trees to the north-east. Improve shade and amenity plantings around the car park perimeter but ensuring retention of a sufficient fuel-free area.	Projects & Design Natural Resources Parks & Gardens Comms & Marketing	$ 250,000
Huon Hill	**Action 09**	**7**	**3**	**Operational**	**Summit Car Park / Picnic Area**	Upgrade Summit Picnic Area and Access Road	Seal the access road to and through the existing picnic area to the existing summit car park. Upgrade the summit picnic area with: • A sealed, all-abilities standard, path to the existing accessible toilets; • Additional picnic tables (sheltered and open design) and furniture as demand dictates (but with sufficient separation to avoid any user perception of crowding), including some all-abilities accessible furniture; • Working barbecues, preferably gas (to deter fireplace establishment); • Additional shade and amenity plantings (but ensuring retention of a sufficient fuel-free area of open and mown grass); and, • Trailhead shelter and orientation facilities for track and trails, both for adjacent routes and those elsewhere across the hill.	Projects & Design Natural Resources Parks & Gardens	$ 75,000
Huon Hill	**Action 02**	**Not prioritised**	**4**	**Operational**	**Eastern Lookouts**	New Road Accessing Eastern Lookouts	To improve access to the existing eastern lookouts and enhance visitor safety, close and rehabilitate the existing informal parking area on the inside of the curve/crest on the main access road. Reconfigure to provide safe, entry-only, access to a new sealed one-way (east to west) single-lane road - rejoining the main access road north-east of the existing picnic area. Where possible, align the new sealed one-way single-lane road along the existing management track. Provide layby or parallel parking bays to enable direct or easy access the eastern lookout viewing platforms, including all-abilities accessible parking bays. Undertake screening plantings as required. (Collaborative action, connects the council land and Crown land.)	Projects & Design Natural Resources	$ 90,000
Huon Hill	**Action 04**	**2**	**5**	**Operational**	**Eastern Lookouts**	New All-abilities Loop Path to Eastern Lookouts	Provide a short sealed path - to all-abilities standard - from the parking bays (and all-abilities accessible parking bays) on the proposed one-way access road (action 2), linking to the existing lookout platforms. Preferably as a loop path. Upgrade the existing lookout platforms to allow for all-abilities access as required (and to increase capacity and accommodate interpretation if warranted). Concurrent with provision of one-way access road and all-abilities parking. (Collaborative action, located on Crown land.)	Projects & Design Natural Resources	$ 25,000
Huon Hill	**Action 03**	**19**	**6**	**Operational**	**Eastern Lookouts**	New Footpath Link Between Existing Summit Picnic Area and Eastern Lookouts	Provide a sealed footpath connecting the picnic area and the eastern lookouts, with bollard separation if and where adjacent to the proposed single lane one-way road. Undertake screening plantings as required. (Collaborative action, connects council land and PAW managed land.)	Projects & Design Natural Resources	$ 45,000

Hill Strategy - Actions (*CAPITAL WORKS*)
By Priority

Location	Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority by Hill	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Strategy Action Category	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Estimate
Huon Hill	**Action 13**	**11**	**7**	**Operational**	**Western Lookout**	New Western Lookout - All-abilities Access, Sealed Road and Small Car park	Expand and diversify accessible vistas on the hill's summit by sealing the existing access road's far western end, to extend public vehicle access upslope of the existing summit parking area. Provide a small terminal car park, including all-abilities parking bays. Establish a short, sealed, all-abilities standard path from the parking area west to a hilltop vantage point offering views over the Wodonga urban area and other hills, and provide shade shelter and seating. Carefully locate facilities to avoid intrusions on views from the surrounding urban areas and other parts of the hill, with screen plantings as necessary. Increased surveillance at this site may be warranted, initially, to monitor for any security or anti-social behaviour issues with any necessary management responses. (However, this risk would be minimised by the proposed after-hours closure regime for the main access road, see action 11.)	Projects & Design Natural Resources	$ 45,000
Huon Hill	**Action 15**	**16**	**8**	**Operational**	**Watsons Lookout**	Upgraded Low-key Lookout and Picnic/Rest Site - "Watsons Lookout"	Reinstate the existing derelict picnic/ and rest stop at the outstanding vantage point known as "Watsons Lookout" - walker and mountain bike access only. Provide platform tables and/or seating, and orientation and interpretive information (with low-key shade if required) at this vantage point offering superb views - to the Hunchback Hill Complex and parts of the Wodonga CBD and urban area, the Murray River and Albury, and Lake Hume. Carefully locate facilities to avoid adverse impacts on landscape/scenic values (due to this site's very prominent and visible location). Additional screen and amenity and shelter plantings may be necessary.	Projects & Design Natural Resources	$ 20,000
Huon Hill	**Action 18**	**7**	**9**	**Operational**	**Secondary Activity Node**	Hidden Valley Secondary Activity Node, Trailhead and Car park	To facilitate increased use of the hill's wider trail network and to avoid concentrating all activity at the summit, expand and formalise the existing informal parking area on the access road east of Hidden Valley. Initially formalise as a small compacted gravel car park, and define safe entry and exit points to the main access road. Provide supporting facilities - such as platform tables, seating, shelter and orientation and information - to establish this site as a secondary and supporting activity or usage node and key track junction and trailhead. Provide shade and amenity plantings around the car park and trailhead facilities. Liaise with orienteering club in design to support their use of Hidden Valley as a course. Sealing the car park and a toilet facility may be warranted as usage and maintenance demands require. This node must be located outside the vegetation offset area.	Projects & Design Natural Resources	$ 65,000
Huon Hill	**Action 20**	**8**	**10**	**Operational**	**Picnic / Rest Areas**	New Low-key Picnic/Rest Site - Top of Summit Track	Provide limited low-key picnic and rest facilities (platform tables and/or seating and orientation information) among a scenic copse of trees on the high point at the top of the Summit Track, with filtered views in all directions. Locate facilities to take advantage of existing large shady trees. Walker and mountain bike access only.	Natural Resources	$ 10,000
Huon Hill	**Action 14**	**18**	**11**	**Operational**	**Picnic / Rest Areas**	New Low-key Picnic/Rest Site - Top of Butt Butt Track	Provide limited low-key picnic and rest facilities (platform tables or seating) among an attractive copse of trees on a knoll offering filtered views to the north-east, beside the Butt Butt Track north of the telecommunications inholding.	Natural Resources	$ 6,000
Huon Hill	**Action 24**	**19**	**12**	**Operational**	**Picnic / Rest Areas**	New Low-key Picnic/Rest Site – North-west Timberline Track	Provide limited low-key picnic and rest facilities (platform tables and/or seating and orientation information) at a scenic rocky knoll and vantage point, north of a small saddle on the Timberline Track. Walker and mountain bike access only. This lower elevation lookout offers very good views of the Murray River (and is the closet vantage point to the river in all five Wodonga hills) and the northern areas of Wodonga and Albury. Facilities should be sited to take advantage of existing large shady trees, and carefully positioned to avoid adverse impacts on landscape and scenic values (recognising this site's very visible location). Additional screen and amenity/shelter plantings may be necessary.	Natural Resources	$ 15,000
Huon Hill	**Action 21**	**12**	**13**	**Operational**	**Track Hub**	Central Track Junction	Upgrade the existing track junction on the saddle at the head of Hidden Valley as a key track hub. Provide orientation and wayfinding information, for the existing (and possible future) tracks and trails radiating through this hub as well as for the hill as a whole. Provide low-key seating (possibly as large placed rocks) suited to this site's natural setting. (Collaborative action, located on Crown land.)	Natural Resources	$ 16,000
Huon Hill	**Action 12**	**12**	**14**	**Planning**	**Shared Paths**	New Shared Path Link to Kiewa Wetlands	Negotiate the continuation of a shared path link from Riverside Estate, along the margin of the Kiewa Wetlands, to the vehicle entrance to Huon Hill and start of the Stringybark Walking Track. (Collaborative action with adjacent developer.)	Strategic Planning Natural Resources	$ 10,000

Hill Strategy - Actions (*CAPITAL WORKS*)
By Priority

Location	Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority by Hill	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Strategy Action Category	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Estimate
Huon Hill	**Action 17**	**13**	**15**	**Operational**	**Shared Paths**	New/Upgraded Shared Path - Hidden Valley to Existing Vehicle Entry Point	Provide a new shared path (initially unsealed) for walkers and cyclists from the eastern side of Hidden Valley (at the proposed secondary activity node - see action 21), running across slope largely “along contour” to join the Stringybark Walking Track. Upgrade the lower (eastern) end of the Stringybark Walking Track to a shared path standard (initially unsealed) - requiring the realignment of some steeper/switchback sections of the existing walking track (to be easily and safely passable for cyclists, with adequate safety for walkers) as well as drainage works and surface hardening in places. Undertake screen plantings. Upgrading to a sealed surface (overall or in sections) may be required if usage levels or maintenance needs demand. New parts of track must be aligned to avoid impacts on the offset site in this location.	Projects & Design Natural Resources	$ 40,000
Huon Hill	**Action 6**	**6**	**16**	**Operational**	**Walking Tracks**	Update Mistletoe Loop Walk	Upgrade the Mistletoe Walk (loop track) - to offer better definition and legibility, track surface improvements, upgraded wayfinding and signposting, and provision of interpretation. Provide a new link at the north-eastern end to resolve route confusion at the creek crossing (upstream of an attractive small rocky gorge) and lack of a return connection to the trailhead off the main access road. Realign and clarify the alignment around the small dam and west and north-west in Hidden Valley - to provide a clearly defined route for walkers and separate walking and management tracks. Signpost connections to the wider track and trail network (see action 21).	Natural Resources	$ 15,000
Huon Hill	**Action 7**	**7**	**17**	**Operational**	**Walking Tracks**	Upgrade Sheoak Walking Track	Upgrade the Sheoak Walking Track, with better track definition and signposting and provide seating midway with views north-east over Hidden Valley and east to Lake Hume. Establish a connection south to the Stringybark Walking Track, with a safe crossing point on the main access road. Extend existing revegetation plantings to assist in screening, or “breaking up”, the track as viewed from the main access road and Hidden Valley. (Collaborative action, connects the council land and Crown land.)	Natural Resources	$ 15,000
Huon Hill	**Action 23**	**11**	**18**	**Operational**	**Walking Tracks**	New Walking Track Connection to Kiewa River Shared Trail	Upgrade the indistinct and discontinuous track through the revegetation area along the lower reaches of “Bundy Creek” (out to Huon Hill’s north-eastern boundary) to be a clearly established, defined and signposted new walking track. Beyond the hill’s boundary this track (signposted as the “Bundy Track”) already connects to the existing Kiewa River shared trail. Ensure this trail connection is maintained during development of Riverside Estate. These works are within an offset and priority vegetation management area (see action 28) and as such the track alignment will be selected to avoid impacting existing vegetation, and upgrading works should incorporate revegetation measures.	Natural Resources	$ 20,000
Huon Hill	**Action 05**	**20**	**19**	**Operational**	**Walking Tracks**	Realign and Upgrade Southern End of Bundy Walking Track	In order to improve walker safety and centralise the summit’s trailheads, close and rehabilitate southernmost section of the Bundy Track (now a walking track only) downslope from the existing informal parking area on the main access road. Realign this section of the Bundy Track to provide a new walking track link heading west/south-west across slope to a new trailhead at the existing summit car park (see action 10). Upgrade - as a walking track only - the poorly defined section of the Bundy Track north to the Sheoak Walking Track and beyond (see action 21). (Collaborative action, connects council land and Crown land.)	Natural Resources	$ 10,000
Klings Hill	**Action 15**	**12**	**1**	**Operational**	**Picnic / Rest Areas**	Rest Stop and Picnic Area	Provide low-key picnic and rest facilities on the flat area west of the Central Management Track at the southern entrance to Klings Hill reserve.	Natural Resources	$ 6,000
Klings Hill	**Action 13**	**9**	**2**	**Operational**	**Lookouts**	Low-Key Lookout - Klings Hill Summit	Reinforce the north-western summit of Klings Hill - now the site of an existing ad hoc tin-roofed shelter and fireplace - as a low-key but spectacular vantage point. Accessible to walkers and riders but not users’ vehicles. Provide seating, shelter and orientation and interpretive information, remove fireplace and ad-hoc and informal structures and locate built elements to avoid intrusions on the skyline.	Natural Resources	$ 30,000

Hill Strategy - Actions (*CAPITAL WORKS*)
By Priority

Location	Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority by Hill	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Strategy Action Category	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Estimate
Klings Hill	**Action 4**	**1**	**3**	**Operational**	**Felltimber Creek Rd**	Intersection Safety Improvements - Felltimber Creek and the Central Management Track	Relocate/rationalise and upgrade the junction of Felltimber Creek Rd and the Central Management Track. Formalise an intersection to provide for safer access for vehicles turning off or on to Felltimber Creek Rd - both for users of Klings Hill (and the wider Hunchback Hill Complex) and access for management or emergency vehicles. Although mostly within council-managed road reserves, formalising and improving this vehicle access is likely to require co-operation with Parklands Albury Wodonga and DELWP regarding possible use of adjacent Crown land areas. Reconfiguring this intersection would also offer the opportunity to improve the provision of parking at this site. A cleared and grassed flatter area here could also provide a space for temporary event staging, on a permit/approval basis with appropriate conditions.	Projects & Design Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	$ 35,000
Klings Hill	**Action 16**	**12**	**4**	**Operational**	**Picnic / Rest Areas**	New low-key rest and picnic site - Central/Coyles Track Junction	Provide limited low-key rest/picnic facilities (platform tables or seating, and orientation information if required) near the management track junction on the saddle between Mcfarlanes Hill and Klings Hill. At the top of a very steep climb this site should incorporate existing mature trees and additional screen and shelter plantings.	Natural Resources	$ 80,000
Klings Hill	**Action 5**	**2**	**5**	**Operational**	**Shared Paths**	Safer Route (Shared Path) from Wodonga Western Outskirts	Provide a safer shared path route from the western outskirts of Wodonga towards Klings Hill (and the wider Hunchback Hill Complex) to avoid parts of Felltimber Creek Road. Establish a shared path (compacted gravel or concrete) from the existing southside Felltimber Creek Road shared path (east of the Felltimber Creek bridge) along the drainage reserve to the end of Lambourn Drive, then along Lambourn Drive (as a low-traffic and low-speed route) to Felltimber Creek Road. A shared path may be required at the western end of Lambourn Drive (and a short bridge, possible high cost item) approaching the intersection with Felltimber Creek Road. (See action 6 below for a possible westward continuation of this route).	Strategic Planning Recreation Projects & Design?	$ 40,000
Klings Hill	**Action 6**	**2**	**6**	**Operational**	**Shared Paths**	Shared Path Along Felltimber Creek Road	To provide safe access for walkers and cyclists to the western-most entrance to the site, establish a shared path connection between Lambourn Drive and the Central Management Track entry point. Due to the constraints of the narrow road reserve and the adjoining creek this link may be along the southern shoulder of Felltimber Creek Rd and could include the upgrading of parts of an existing track or sections of new path within the Crown lands along the road's northside, or a combination of both. This path should be separated from the Felltimber Creek Rd carriageway and provide direct and easy access to the site from the urban area. Pedestrian and cyclist warning signs would be required at any Felltimber Creek Rd crossing point. (See action 5 for a possible eastward continuation of this route.)	Strategic Planning Recreation Projects & Design?	$ 30,000
Klings Hill	**Action 7**	**6**	**7**	**Operational**	**Shared Paths**	Shared Path Link to Ridge Walking Track (Eastern Trailhead)	To improve access to the Hunchback Hill Complex generally, including to Klings Hill, from West Wodonga extend the existing shared path on the southside of Felltimber Creek Rd along the road's southern side to a crossing point opposite the start of the Ridge Walking Track. Pedestrian and cyclist warning signs would be required on Felltimber Creek Rd on the approaches to this crossing.	Strategic Planning Recreation Projects & Design	$ 20,000
Klings Hill	**Action 17**	**13**	**8**	**Operational**	**Entry Nodes**	Upgraded Low-Key Entry Node - Ridge Walking Track (Eastern Trailhead)	Collaborate with DELWP and Parklands Albury Wodonga to provide an identifiable and easily accessed entry point to the Hunchback Hill Complex generally, including to Klings Hill, from the urban edge. Provide a small roadside parking area on the northside of Felltimber Creek Rd (within the road reserve) at the start of the Ridge Walking Track. Provide orientation information for the Hunchback Hill Complex generally, including Klings Hill. Liaise with Parklands Albury Wodonga to investigate whether the adjacent Crown land area, under their management, will provide a superior design for this low-key entry node (including the possible provision of a shade shelter and additional seating or improved orientation information). Implementation of this action is contingent on Parklands Albury Wodonga upgrading and managing the Ridge Walking Track as a safe, well-maintained and clearly marked route free from encounters or conflicts with mountain bikers.	Projects & Design Natural Resources	$ 60,000

Hill Strategy - Actions (*CAPITAL WORKS*)
By Priority

Location	Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority by Hill	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Strategy Action Category	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Estimate
Klings Hill	**Action 20**	**8**	**9**	**Operational**	**Entry Nodes**	Small Low-Key Entry Node - Coyles Road North End	Improve existing small low-key entry node with a better defined and contained parking area and orientation information within the existing road reserve and current informal entrance at the northern entry to Klings Hill (just beyond the reserve's margins, at the current "road closed" point at the south end of Coyles Rd). This low-key entrance would offer pedestrian and bicycle access only. Retain unobstructed management and emergency vehicle access to the reserve, with a lockable gate to prevent unauthorised access.	Projects & Design Natural Resources	$ 40,000
Federation Hill	**Action 1**	**11**	**1**	**Wayfinding**	**Directional Signage**	Improved Directional Signage	Improve directional signage to Federation Hill - especially to the major entry points - from the surrounding open space and pathway network along the hill's northern and eastern edge.	Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	$ 11,000
Federation Hill	**Action 2**	**12**	**2**	**Wayfinding**	**Directional Signage**	Signpost minor access/entry points	Signpost minor access and entry points to the northern and eastern edge of Federation Hill within the surrounding residential street network - especially those that may be mistaken for (or presented as) private land.	Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	$ 25,000
Federation Hill	**Action 3**	**6**	**3**	**Operational**	**Shared Paths**	North side Urban Pathway Connections	Extend and complete the urban pathway network (as shared paths, for use by both walkers and cyclists) through two existing drainage reserves - at the east end of Barton St (in the east) and between Bambric and Kirner courts (in the west) - to connect to the northern Perimeter Fire Trail.	Natural Resources	$ 25,000
Federation Hill	**Action 6**	**16**	**4**	**Operational**	**Shared Paths**	Shared Path, Wattle Park to Sundew Track	Provide a shared path (for both walkers and cyclists), through the proposed Wattle Park Activity and Entry Node (action 5) - initially as a sealed path, and then linking to the Sundew Track (and the tracks/trails beyond) as an unsealed path.	Natural Resources	$ 40,000
Federation Hill	**Action 5**	**2**	**5**	**Operational**	**Wattle Park Activity Node**	Wattle Park Activity and Entry Node	Provide a formal entrance point and activity node in the eastern end of Wattle Park off McCulloch Crescent. This location would provide a leisure and recreation space on the hill's margin and the main access point to and from the hill and its wider track and trail network and attractions. Provide shelters, picnic tables, barbecues, seating, water, and toilets (set among screening trees) including all-abilities facilities. Provide a trailhead(s) and orientation information and detailed information for those tracks/trails radiating from this location. Enhance amenity and shade, and soften views onto proposed facilities through landscaping and plantings. Expand the existing parking along the south side of McCulloch Crescent to offer additional capacity, up to 20 vehicles depending on demand analysis. The potential of this site to be occasionally used (by approval) for events will be limited in type, size and frequency in recognition of its residential setting.	Projects & Design Natural Resources Parks & Gardens Recreation Comms & Marketing	$ 275,000
Federation Hill	**Action 14**	**8**	**6**	**Operational**	**Bush Setting Activity Area**	Bush Setting Activity Area	A potential location for a "bush setting activity area" on a gentler lower slope with scattered trees, adjoining Wattle Park. Activities here would have an emphasis on those requiring or benefiting from a bushland or natural setting - such as a nature-based adventure playground or bush fitness course. Such an area could function in conjunction with the nearby Wattle Park site, making use of the facilities provided there. To be sited outside existing offset area.	Projects & Design Natural Resources Parks & Gardens Recreation Comms & Marketing	$ 50,000
Federation Hill	**Action 9**	**10**	**7**	**Operational**	**Entry Nodes**	Small Low-Key Entry Node - Western End of Perimeter Fire Trail	To disperse the concentration of users and provide access to the hill's western trails, improve the existing entry with seating and orientation - at the western end of the Perimeter Fire Trail, just inside the junction of McGaffin and Drewett roads.	Projects & Design Natural Resources	$ 20,000
Federation Hill	**Action 16**	**21**	**8**	**Operational**	**Entry Nodes**	Low-Key Entry Node - Wilsons Rd	To provide a point of access to the hill from the south, the existing management access should be formalised for public use. Measures to limit impacts on management and residential access should be implemented along with amenity and screening plantings. This access should not be promoted beyond the immediate local residential catchment.	Projects & Design Natural Resources	$ 15,000
Federation Hill	**Action 10**	**14**	**9**	**Operational**	**Lookouts**	Upgrade Existing Low-Key Lookouts - Carex Track	Minor upgrading of the existing informal lookouts - just east of the junction of the Carex and Tussock Tracks and north east of Bluebell and Carex Tracks junction - with additional seating and possibly a low-key shade shelter, with orientation and interpretation information. Retain the low-key character of these locations, with facilities sited to avoid detracting from the	Natural Resources	$ 25,000
Federation Hill	**Action 7**	**15**	**10**	**Operational**	**Lookouts**	New Low-key Picnic Site - Carex Track (EAST)	Provide limited low-key rest/picnic facilities (platform tables or seating) at the top of the Carex Track's eastern descent, to take advantage of the attractive low-level views over the Wodonga urban area. Pedestrian and cyclists access only. Include screening tree and shrub plantings - selected and sited and designed to limit fire hazard - flanking the Carex Track (descending from the ridgeline to Ballara Drive).	Natural Resources	$ 5,000

Hill Strategy - Actions (*CAPITAL WORKS*)
By Priority

Location	Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority by Hill	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Strategy Action Category	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Estimate
Federation Hill	**Action 15**	**10**	**11**	**Operational**	**Walking Tracks**	Lily Valley Walking Track	A new longer walking track possibly running along the southern slope of the Lily Valley - from the Carex Track in the north-west, to link into existing perimeter fire tail and the WREN lands or anticipated residential development adjoining the hill's south-east. Such a route could, ultimately, form an entry point to Federation Hill - for walkers only - for residents of future subdivisions along the hill's south-east margin (Cambourne Park and Huon Creek Rd).	Natural Resources	$ 40,000
Federation Hill	**Action 4**	**18**	**12**	**Operational**	**Walking Tracks**	Northern-Eastern "Mid-Slope" Walking Track	Establish a "mid-slope" walking track along the better timbered north-east and eastern face of Federation Hill - from the Kangaroo Track to the end of the Perimeter Fire Trail. The alignment between the Kangaroo and Tussock tracks must be carefully chosen to avoid impacts on vegetation in accordance with the relevant offset management plan.	Natural Resources	$ 40,000
Bears Hill	**Action 1**	**18**	**1**	**Wayfinding**	**Directional Signage**	Signpost Minor Access and Entry Points	Signpost minor access and entry points around the western end of Bears Hill (and the future WREN lands, when council owned) within the residential street, pathway and open space network - especially those that may be mistaken for (or presented as) private land.	Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	$ 5,000
Bears Hill	**Action 9**	**Not prioritised**	**2**	**Operational**	**Entry Nodes**	New Small Low-Key Entry Node, from Donnington Drive	Establish a small low-key entry node on the low rounded spur east of the existing Donnington Drive entry, accessed off the existing management track from where local users can radiate out into other parts of Bears Hill. Provide seating, shelter and orientation information. This site is not obvious from wider residential areas but screen plantings (to residences to the north) would be warranted and amenity and shelter plantings required, using endangered Grassy Woodland community species. Realign fencing and entry gates as necessary.	Natural Resources	$ 20,000
Bears Hill	**Action 7**	**Not prioritised**	**3**	**Operational**	**Lookouts**	New Low-key Lookout and Rest Stop, North	Provide limited low-key lookout and rest facilities (platform table(s) and/or seating) and wayfinding and orientation information at an easily accessed lookout point at the north-west corner of Bears Hill - providing attractive low–elevation views north over the White Box Rise Estate and Wodonga urban area to the Murray River and Albury. Locate to avoid intruding on the skyline and retain existing mature trees as well as undertaking supplementary amenity plantings if required. Walker access only.	Natural Resources	$ 10,000
Bears Hill	**Action 5**	**Not prioritised**	**4**	**Operational**	**Lookouts**	New Low-key Lookout and Rest Stop, West	Formalise the existing informal vantage point near the Defence lands entrance, directly accessed from the existing management track past the water tanks (walker and cyclist access only). Provide platform table(s) and/or seating and wayfinding and orientation information (with low-key shade if required) at this low-elevation vantage point offering attractive views westwards over West Wodonga to Federation Hill and the Hunchback Hill Complex. Design around existing trees and locate to avoid adverse impacts on landscape/scenic values.	Natural Resources	$ 40,000
Bears Hill	**Action 10**	**Not prioritised**	**5**	**Operational**	**Shared Paths**	Short Shared Path Entry, from Peregrine Place	Establish a short section of unsealed shared path, for both walkers and cyclists, from the end of Peregrine Place (eastern cul-de-sac) to access the track and trail and management track network as well as the proposed low-key entry node (see action 9). This formalised access is for local users only and should not provide or encourage car parking.	Natural Resources	$ 5,000
Bears Hill	**Action 12**	**Not prioritised**	**6**	**Operational**	**Shared Paths**	New Shared Path and Loop Route, South-western Slope	Establish a new shared path (unsealed) for both walkers and cyclists - from the proposed low-key entry node (see action 9) and existing management track, passing downslope of the water tanks, then contouring up and across the hill's south-western slope to rejoin the management track at the proposed low-key vantage point and rest stop (see action 5). Combined with the existing management track, this new path would offer a small shared use (walkers and cyclists) loop route in the hill's south-west. Align to avoid impacts to existing vegetation, with screening plantings at places across the more exposed hillslope below the water tanks. (Dependent on council ownership of WREN lands at the western end of Bears Hill.)	Natural Resources	$ 20,000
Bears Hill	**Action 4**	**Not prioritised**	**7**	**Operational**	**Walking Tracks**	New Short Walking Track Along Western Crest	Establish a new short walking track along the western crest of Bears Hill - connecting the existing informal and undeveloped vantage point viewing westward (see action 5) and a potential lookout offering low elevation views northwards (see action 7). Care will be required to route this walking track without impacting existing native vegetation in accordance with the offset management plan, and supplementary plantings may be warranted.	Natural Resources	$ 8,000

Hill Strategy - Actions (*CAPITAL WORKS*)
By Priority

Location	Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority by Hill	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Strategy Action Category	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Estimate
Bears Hill	**Action 8**	**Not prioritised**	**8**	**Operational**	**Walking Tracks**	New Walking Track and Trailhead, North-west Slope and White Box Rise Estate	Establish a walking track on the hill's north-west slope - contouring up/ down and across a gently, moderately sloped spur with scattered trees, to link a new trailhead from the White Box Rise Estate to the proposed western crest walking track (see action 4) and low-elevation northern vantage point (see action 7). Clumped tree and vegetation plantings - using endangered Grassy Woodland community species - are warranted to supplement existing tree and vegetation cover and assist in screening possibly more exposed sections of this route. Ensure convenient connection into open space and urban pathway network of the White Box Rise Estate.	Natural Resources	$ 6,000
Bears Hill	**Action 13**	**Not prioritised**	**9**	**Operational**	**Walking Tracks**	New Walking Track and Stock Route Connection, Northern Slope	Establish mid-slope walking track along the northern to north-western face of Bears Hill. From the proposed low-elevation northern vantage point (see action 7), and connecting to the proposed western crest and White Box Rise Estate link tracks (see actions 4, 8), running eastwards and gradually descending the slope, to connect with stock route midway along northern toe of Bears Hill (see opportunity A). Clumped plantings will be required to screen sections across more exposed slopes using endangered Grassy Woodland community species. (Final link would preferably be across Parks Victoria block which would require this agency's agreement.)	Natural Resources	$ 15,000
Mahers Hill	**Action 10**	**Not prioritised**	**1**	**Operational**	**Entry Nodes**	Small Entry Node and Facility Site - Lees Lane (When use and demand warrants)	When usage levels and/or demand warrants, establish a small entry node and facility site - with a defined and contained parking area, shelter, seating and orientation information - just inside the hill's north-western boundary off the end of Lees Lane, to serve as the hill's main vehicle access point for users and a hub from where people can radiate out across Mahers Hill. Provide screening and amenity plantings, and realign fencing and entry gates as necessary. Locate to allow sufficient room for possible future expansion, if and when warranted.	Projects & Design Natural Resources	TBD
Mahers Hill	**Action 6**	**Not prioritised**	**2**	**Operational**	**Lookouts**	Low-key Lookout and Picnic/Rest Site – Mahers Hill Summit	Provide limited low-key picnic and rest facilities (platform tables or seating and interpretive signage) at the summit of Mahers Hill, in the attractive copse of trees with western views located on the small bench just below (west of) the summit. Provide a clear and stable walking route to, and at, the summit and trig lookout point (now situated on a knoll of loose rocks and tall grass).	Natural Resources	$ 10,000
Mahers Hill	**Action 11**	**Not prioritised**	**3**	**Operational**	**Walking Tracks**	New Walking Track to Mahers Hill Summit (When use/demand warrants)	Investigate a possible route for a walking track to the Mahers Hill summit from the proposed Lees Lane entry node and facility site (see action 10). Leading off the existing management track (east from the proposed Lees Lane entry node and facility site) upslope of the large dam, then heading south-east up a gentle to moderately sloped spur with open timber (through the Grassy Woodland community regeneration zone - see action 3) to rejoin the management track network just north of the summit and lookout point. This track would provide an alternative, walkers only, route most of the way to and from the summit and lookout. Establishment of this track, with signposting and supplementary amenity and screening plantings, would only progress when usage levels and/or demand warrants (and preferably in conjunction with, or following, provision of the proposed Lees Lane entry node and facility site).	Natural Resources	$ 25,000
Mahers Hill	**Action 5**	**37**	**4**	**Operational**	**Walking Tracks**	Loop Route, High Country Rail Trail and Mahers Hill Summit	Establish and signpost a loop walking route from the High Country Rail Trail to and from the Mahers Hill summit. This route would access the hill at the north-east and south-east corners, and use former vehicle tracks to ascend and descend at each end of the central ridge. Small sections of new track may be warranted at each ascent/ and descent to make these routes more direct. This route would then use the management track(s) along the narrow steep-sided central ridge to and from the summit and main vantage point. An access corridor between the Murray Valley Highway (and High Country Rail Trail along the highway's eastern side) and the base of the hill already exists in the south-east corner. However, the north-eastern access point would need to be established, using an unmade road reserve (at present "fenced-in" by the adjacent landholder). Warning signs would be required on the Murray Valley Highway on the approaches to both crossing points. Investigate the suitability of this loop also being available for use by horse riders - if gradients, track surface and other safety or impact considerations allow. Due to probable speeds on downhill sections and the potential for conflict with walkers (and horse riders), the ascent and descent sections of this track will not be open for mountain biking.	Projects & Design Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	$ 35,000

Hill Strategy - Actions (*CAPITAL WORKS*) By Priority									
Location	**Action No.**	**WHAG Priority**	**Revised Priority by Hill**	**Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding**	**Strategy Action Category**	**Action Name**	**Description**	**Council Stakeholders**	**Estimate**
Mahers Hill	**Action 4**	**Not prioritised**	**5**	**Operational**	**Borrow Pit/Quarry Rehabilitation**	Borrow Pit or Quarry Rehabilitation	Liaise with the neighbouring landholder to undertake rehabilitation of a large borrow pit (or quarry) excavated on/inside the north-eastern boundary of Mahers Hill - mostly within council land.	Natural Resources ?	TBD

Hill Strategy - Master Plans - Actions (*OPERATIONAL PROJECTS*)								
By Priority								
Location	**Action No.**	**WHAG Priority**	**Revised Priority by Hill**	**Strategy Action Category**	**Action Name**	**Description**	**Council Stakeholders**	**Comments**
Huon Hill	**Action 16**	**7**	**1**	**Vegetation Management**	Revegetate Unstable Section of Southern Slope	Revegetation of the western end of the steeper south slope of Huon Hill, including a large section of unstable slope with existing land slips and slumps. Species selected to extend coverage of the depleted Dry Forest community on the upper slopes and the endangered Grassy Woodland community on the lower slopes.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Huon Hill	**Action 22**	**11**	**2**	**Vegetation Management**	Targeted Revegetation Areas - Mid-west Scenic Valley	Targeted revegetation of areas within the large scenic valley located approximately centrally on Huon Hill's western slopes, and especially along the valley's more open southern hillslope. Endangered Grassy Woodland community species should dominate these revegetation efforts. Support revegetation with measures for the control of blackberry and other noxious or environmental weeds, as required.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Huon Hill	**Action 26**	**11**	**3**	**Vegetation Management**	Revegetation and Erosion Remediation/Control Measures - Eroded South-eastern Creek	Revegetation plantings, and erosion remediation and control works where required, along the deeply eroded creekline running towards the Kiewa River on Huon Hill's south-eastern side, in addition and accordance with offset management requirements.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Huon Hill	**Action 28**	**13**	**4**	**Vegetation Management**	Additional Revegetation Along Bundy Creek	Reinforce and extend the existing revegetation plantings along "Bundy Creek" - including infilling the central gap between past revegetation plots (linking to the Kiewa River Wetlands) and extending revegetated areas southwards to better connect to Hidden Valley. Revegetate and stabilise an eroded section of the lower creekline.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Huon Hill	**Action 29**	**14**	**5**	**Vegetation Management**	Revegetation Measures - Northern Creek	Revegetation plantings along a north-flowing creekline on Huon Hill's northern face (towards the Murray River corridor), including the stabilisation and revegetation of an eroded upper section of creekline and tributaries at the base of this slope.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Huon Hill	**Action 27**	**17**	**6**	**Vegetation Management**	Targeted Revegetation Areas - North-west of Butt Butt Track	Targeted revegetation areas on the north-facing slope and spur, downslope of the lower section of Butt Butt Track, linking to an existing better timbered area to the north-east. Endangered Grassy Woodland community species that complement and boost existing habitat should dominate these revegetation efforts. Ensure appropriate setbacks from the management track, particularly downslope, to maintain safety of firefighting access, in addition and accordance with offset management requirements.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Klings Hill	**Action 2**	**8**	**7**	**General**	Threatened Species Habitat Enhancement	Develop and implement a program of conservation works specifically designed to identify, protect and enhance habitat for threatened species known, or likely, to occur within the Hunchback Hill area. Provide for involvement of the local community in conservation surveys, monitoring and works.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Klings Hill	**Action 11**	**3**	**8**	**Management Tracks**	Restrict Public Access Along Northern McMartins Track	Discourage visitor access along the northern sections of McMartins Track, due to proximity of the adjacent Wodonga Rifle Range.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Klings Hill	**Action 19**	**5**	**9**	**Management Tracks**	Special-event Public Vehicle Access	Provide for occasional temporary public vehicle access - in association with sporting, community, environmental or other organised events - from the Felltimber Creek Rd intersection, (when improved see action 4), to the saddle between Mcfarlanes Hill and Klings Hill. Public vehicle access, and special-event use, would be by permit only and with appropriate conditions. Parking would be on the existing cleared and grassed sites only. Developed parking areas or visitor facilities would not be warranted due to the likely irregular and flexible use of this site. Undertake minor improvements as required to enable safe (occasional) public vehicle access along the Central Management Track - and support this track's use as a walking and cycling route only at other times (with improved signposting and promotion). Care must be taken to ensure any minor improvements or maintenance do not disturb the high quality vegetation occurring adjacent to parts of the track and permanent protective fencing may be warranted. Install lockable gates at the saddle to prevent public vehicle access (but permit management access) downhill to the north.	Natural Resources	Central Management track is currently unsuitable for public vehicles. Prefeneence to use old roads fill site on Felltimber Road. Or ultise the Coyles Road entry.
Klings Hill	**Action 12**	**22**	**10**	**Management Tracks**	Shared Access to Summit Lookout via Coyles Track	Promote, signpost and manage the Coyles Track (to the north-western summit and vantage point on Klings Hill) as a shared route available to both walkers and mountain bikers. For walker safety this track will be managed as an "up" route only for mountain bikers (forming an anti-clockwise circuit for riders in conjunction with the completed section of downhill single track between Vearings Track and the Central Management Track). Should a separate "up" route for mountain bikes be established along this spur (see action 14) this track will be restricted to walkers only and signposted and managed accordingly.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets

Hill Strategy - Master Plans - Actions (*OPERATIONAL PROJECTS*)

By Priority

Location	Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority by Hill	Strategy Action Category	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Comments
Klings Hill	**Action 14**	**5**	**11**	**Mountain Bike Tracks**	Complete Mountain Bike Track Loop	Establish a new section of single mountain bike track, from the upper saddle on the Central Management Track to the Klings Hill summit, to complete a loop with the downhill single track. This will be an ascent only route, separating riders and walkers currently sharing the Coyles Track (see action 12). The proposed alignment is via an area supporting little native vegetation or habitat, allowing the final alignment selection to avoid impacts on biodiversity values. The route will also be chosen to minimise visual impacts. Provision of this track should be accompanied by targeted plantings to assist in slope stabilisation and to partially screen the track from other parts of the hill. Safety signage and active implementation of a code of conduct will be required to avoid conflict between users.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Klings Hill	**Action 9**	**5**	**12**	**Vegetation Management**	Landscape Protection Zone	Regeneration of endangered Grassy Woodland community (through grazing management, weed control, fire regime, etc.) across the northern face of Mcfarlanes Hill, on council-managed land east of the Central Management Track. Regeneration efforts should be focused on the western end of Mcfarlanes Hill, and seek to improve habitat to complement adjoining Crown land. This must be undertaken with consideration to limiting bushfire risk to adjoining rural residential areas along the hill's northern margin, and avoiding revegetation of ridgelines and crests to decrease the potential to become an ember source. This will occur in consultation with the Country Fire Authority and must be consistent with relevant fire management plans. Recreation activities will not be promoted in this area and the creation of new unauthorised tracks and trails will be monitored.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Klings Hill	**Action 18**	**6**	**13**	**Vegetation Management**	Erosion Remediation and Revegetation - North-west Klings Hill	Fencing and revegetation of an eroded section of creekline, and surrounding major gully erosion and minor land slumps (including erosion of a section of the McMartins Track), in the perched valley in the north-west of Klings Hill. Revegetate using endangered Grassy Woodland community species. Revegetation will be undertaken in consultation with the Country Fire Authority and consistent with relevant fire management plans.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Klings Hill	**Action 10**	**10**	**14**	**Vegetation Management**	Revegetation and Creekline Stabilisation - Upper Felltimber Creek	Continue fencing and revegetation of the eroded sections of creekline and extensive land slip and slump areas (mainly on the southern slope) along the western drainage line and valley (a northern tributary of Felltimber Creek). Undertake weed control along the creek corridor, targeting willows and woody weeds. Revegetation will be undertaken in consultation with the Country Fire Authority and consistent with relevant fire management plans.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Klings Hill	**Action 8**	**10**	**15**	**Vegetation Management**	Priority Conversation Zone - North-East Klings Hill	Prioritise conservation management and protection of the existing remnant vegetation on the more rugged north-eastern slopes of Klings Hill, an area of high biodiversity and scenic value. Prioritise continued control measures for blackberry and other noxious or environmental weeds on the margins of this area, especially in locations accessed by visitors or vehicles. Close and rehabilitate existing unauthorised or informal tracks and trails within this bushland zone, and monitor for the creation of new unauthorised tracks and trails. Preventing fragmentation of this zone is a high priority.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Federation Hill	**Action 12**	**9**	**16**	**Vegetation Management**	Revegetation and Creekline Stabilisation - North-western Creek	Revegetation to stabilise an eroded and erodible section of a minor north-west flowing creekline line and build on earlier revegetation measures. Altered grazing management may also be warranted. These works are in addition and complementary to existing offset management requirements and are to occur in consultation with the Country Fire Authority and in accordance with relevant fire management plans.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Federation Hill	**Action 8**	**10**	**17**	**Vegetation Management**	Additional Revegetation Measures - Lily Valley	Expansion and re-establishment of the endangered Grassy Woodland community and other native vegetation along the Lily Valley - via promoting regeneration (through grazing management, weed control, fire regime, etc.) supported by revegetation targeted to increase diversity, boost wildlife habitat, and reinforce existing revegetation. Connect to the Wodonga Retained Environment Network (WREN) lands and protected private bushland towards Huon Creek Rd. To occur in consultation with the Country Fire Authority and in accordance with relevant fire management plans.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Federation Hill	**Action 13**	**14**	**18**	**Vegetation Management**	Revegetation and Creekline Stabilisation - Southern Creek	Revegetation to stabilise an eroded and erodible section of a minor south flowing drainage line on the southern face of Federation Hill. Altered grazing management may also be warranted. To occur in consultation with the Country Fire Authority and in accordance with relevant fire management plans.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets

Hill Strategy - Master Plans - Actions (*OPERATIONAL PROJECTS*)

By Priority

Location	Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority by Hill	Strategy Action Category	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Comments
Federation Hill	**Action 11**	**17**	**19**	**Vegetation Management**	Revegetation and Erosion Remediation/Control Measures - South-west	Expansion and re-establishment of endangered native vegetation communities via promoting regeneration (through grazing management, weed control, fire regime, etc.) and supported by targeted revegetation to increase diversity and boost wildlife habitat. Revegetation priority to eroded creeklines and the existing fenced-out revegetation and remnant patch. These works are in addition and complementary to existing offset management requirements and are to occur in consultation with the Country Fire Authority and in accordance with relevant fire management plans.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Bears Hill	**Action 6**	**21**	**20**	**Vegetation Management**	Additional Revegetation Measures, Lower Western Slopes	Reinforce and extend the existing revegetation plantings downslope (west and north-west) of the water tanks, predominantly using endangered Grassy Woodland community species. To occur in consultation with the Country Fire Authority and in accordance with relevant fire management and vegetation offset management plans.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Bears Hill	**Action 11**	**22**	**21**	**Vegetation Management**	Targeted Revegetation of North-western Crest and Slopes	Targeted revegetation (patch, infill or connectivity plantings) across the more open vegetated areas on the north-western crest and slopes of Bears Hill - using endangered Grassy Woodland community species. To occur in consultation with the Country Fire Authority and in accordance with relevant fire management and vegetation offset management plans.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Mahers Hill	**Action 1**	**5**	**22**	**Vegetation Management**	Blackberry and other weed/pest control program	Continue targeted control efforts for pest plants and animals, particularly blackberry, across Mahers Hill.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Mahers Hill	**Action 8**	**17**	**23**	**Vegetation Management**	Revegetation and Creekline Stabilisation – Eroded Central Western Creek	Stabilise and revegetate an eroded section of drainage line (and eroded crossing by the north-south management track) in centre of the hill's flatter western boundary. Revegetate using Grassy Woodland community species.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Mahers Hill	**Action 3**	**17**	**24**	**Vegetation Management**	Regeneration/Revegetation of Endangered Grassy Woodland, North-west Slopes	Increase the extent, continuity and condition of the endangered Grassy Woodland community along the higher sections of the northern half of the hill's west facing slopes - via promoting regeneration (through grazing management, weed control, fire regime, etc.) supported by targeted revegetation and habitat restoration. Revegetation priority to steeper slopes. Additional fencing will be required across this areas to exclude stock and manage controlled grazing as and when required.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Mahers Hill	**Action 7**	**22**	**25**	**Vegetation Management**	Revegetation and Creekline Stabilisation - Eroded North-western Creek	Stabilise and revegetate an eroded section of drainage line downstream of the large dams on the hill's flatter north-western boundary. Revegetate using Grassy Woodland and Valley Grassy Forest community species.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Mahers Hill	**Action 9**	**22**	**26**	**Vegetation Management**	Revegetation and Creekline Stabilisation - Eroded South-western Creek	Stabilise and revegetate a long section of eroded drainage line on the hill's flatter south-western boundary. Revegetate using Grassy Woodland community species.	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets

Hill Strategy - Overall Actions								
Overall Strategy Actions								
Action No.	**WHAG Priority**	**Revised Priority**	**Strategy Action Category**	**Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding**	**Action Name**	**Description**	**Council Stakeholders**	**Comments**
Action 0.24	1	1	Access, Information and Orientation	Wayfinding	Track and Trail Wayfinding	Ensure all tracks and trails are adequately signposted with distance and direction and other wayfinding information en-route (in addition to trailhead signage). For walking tracks this will be at all junctions, as a minimum, as well as reassurance wayfinding en-route and at major activity nodes or attractions. Mountain bike routes could be more selectively signposted, however, difficulty ratings will be important information to provide. Wayfinding should predominantly be internalised to each hill as a contained track and trail experience (and not reference remote and off-hill sites).	Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	Wayfinding and signage rollout is underway. Klings, McFarlands and Felltimber is complete, Mahers being mapped. Huon Hill is scheduled next for rollout.
Action 0.29	1	1	Track and Trail Planning and Management	Operational	Walking Track Clearance Standards	All walking tracks, and especially those in high tourist use locations, must be cleared of grass and other obscuring vegetation and offer a safe, visible and well-defined stable walking surface.	Natural Resources	Designated walking trails are slashed annually. Shared use trails are graded and or slashed as required.
Action 0.31	1	1	Track and Trail Planning and Management	Operational	Resourcing Track and Trail Management	Dedicate adequate resources and on-ground effort to track and trial management to ensure intended track standards are maintained, the identified user experiences and safety standards are achieved, and emerging usage and environmental issues (such as track braiding or short-cutting, erosion, the creation of unauthorised tracks, weed spread, etc.) are quickly addressed.	Natural Resources	MOU with AWMTB for Klings. All other Hills are monitored through operational.
Action 0.33	1	1	Track and Trail Planning and Management	Operational	All-abilities access	Undertake an investigation of suitable locations to provide all abilities access beyond the margins of the hills. This will need to consider barriers to access (such as kissing gates), access to and from sites (either via urban paths or vehicles) and trail standards (such as maximum gradients and surface materials).	Natural Resources Recreation	Operational/Administrative - requires additional resources to deliver. Accessible suitble kissing gates are now being used as standard.
Action 0.39	1	1	Managing for Users	Operational	User Code of Conduct	Promote a code of conduct for all users of the hills regarding the use of management tracks and shared paths, as well as environmentally responsible and safe activity within the hills. Include the code of conduct in any on-site information shelters at major activity areas or entry points.	Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	This has been developed as part signage strategy and rollout has commeneced.
Action 0.22	3	1	Access, Information and Orientation	Wayfinding	Access and Entry Point Identification and Orientation Signage	Identification and orientation signage should be provided inside all hill access and entry points to provide essential site identification, location and safety information for users. A hierarchy of identification and orientation sign types is warranted, matched to the type or standard of entry point. As a minimum this will provide the hill name, management agency, access and entry name or location, and track and trail name or orientation to the nearest major feature (such as a facility site, major track, attraction, etc.).	Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	Ongoing refer to comments in action 0.24
Action 0.23	4	1	Access, Information and Orientation	Wayfinding	Trailhead Orientation Signage and Information	Trailhead signage (and previsit track and trail information) will include key information for intending users such as track name and type (single purpose, shared, management track, etc.), distances and suggested times, loop or one-way route, track junctions, grades and steepness (including steps), facilities en-route, highlights, etc. Information should be sufficient to encourage safe use by people unfamiliar with the hills. Track identification and orientation information will principally be internalised to each hill (addressing each hill as a contained track/trail experience and not referencing remote and off-hill sites).	Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	Ongoing refer to comments in action 0.24
Action 0.17	7	1	Fire Hazard Management and User Safety	Wayfinding	Hazard and Emergency Management Warning and Advisory Signage	Improve hazard and emergency management warning and advisory signage - especially fire hazard warnings signs (as consistent with the requirements of Fire Management Plans) - across the hills. Prioritise hazard and emergency management signage at the major entry points to each hill and at strategic locations along perimeter fire trails (where these are in place or as developed) in order to capture users who may have entered via minor access points.	Natural Resources Emergency Management	Warning and advisory signage has been installed at all existing entry points (minor and major) for all sites. Warning signs state that all sites are bushfire prone and advise not to enter on days of high fire danger.
Action 0.37	8	1	Managing for Users	Wayfinding	Advise Users regarding Potential Hazards	Previsit and entry and orientation information for users will include advice regarding potential hazards that may be encountered across the hills such as the presence of stock, shared tracks, snakes, bushfire risks, heat, limb fall in high winds, and so on as well as advising toilet locations (on the hills and/or in the surrounding areas) and the need to carry water.	Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	Has been undertaken as part of the signage strategy. Rollout is continuing. Links to code of conduct, action 0.37
Action 0.30	Not Prioritised	1	Track and Trail Planning and Management		Managing Track and Trail Information and Promotion	Visitor information material (previsit and on-site, and across all media) will only include approved and managed tracks and trails which exist and can be readily followed on the ground. Do not show informal and unauthorised tracks, planned or proposed tracks, possible links, potential routes, tracks under construction, and permanently closed tracks. Current media should be vetted to remove such non-existent tracks.	Natural Resources	Will be completed after full rollout of the signage strategy across all hills.
Action 0.15	15	2	Fire Hazard Management and User Safety	Planning	Fire Management Plans	Develop and implement detailed fire management plans for all hills (or sites) identified as high priority in the Wodonga Environmental Lands Bushfire Management Strategy. All plans should be reviewed in response to changes in reserve/site usage and/or condition.	Natural Resources Emergency Management	Complete. Fire management plans have now been prepared for all sites indentified as high priority in the Wodonga Environmental Lands Bushfire Management Strategy.

Hill Strategy - Overall Actions

Overall Strategy Actions

Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority	Strategy Action Category	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Comments
Action 0.18	22	2	Fire Hazard Management and User Safety	Planning	Fire Danger and After-hours Closures	Close the hills to public access on total fire ban days or other periods of extreme fire danger (as consistent with the requirements of Fire Management Plans). Given the permeability of the hills' edges, physically preventing access will not be practical - other than where lockable vehicle gates can be installed on existing and proposed publicly accessible entry roads. An after hours gate locking regime will also be implemented on existing, and proposed, publicly accessible entry roads to reduce the risk of arson, vandalism and other anti-social behaviours.	Natural Resources	Council signage advise not to enter reserves on days of high fire danger or Total Fire Ban. Vehicle access closure on Total Fire Ban days has been implements at Huon Hill (action 3 from Huon Hill masterplan).
Action 0.19	23	2	Fire Hazard Management and User Safety	Planning	Restricting the Use of Fire	Users will not be permitted to have open fires anywhere on the hills except where specifically approved by the council (such as under an approved event, commercial activity or other permit) or potentially at larger facility nodes in more landscaped and managed open space setting on a hill's margin (where solid fuel barbecues may be permitted). Any barbecues provided within the hills will be gas (or electric) only.	Natural Resources Emergency Management	Ongoing action as required. Current signs for Huon Hill indicates fires are prohibited.
Action 0.8	27	3	Biodiversity and Bushland Management	Planning	Continue and Expand Current Land Management Program	Continue annual environmental works program, including targeted revegetation and restoration works, pest plant and animal control, and implementation of offset and WREN management plans. This should include proactive measures to limit the damage from emerging threats, such as goats, deer and cats. Community participation in this program should be encouraged. This program will need to adapt and expand as use of the hills changes, as adjoining residents increase in number and as additional biodiversity information becomes available.	Natural Resources	Ongoing implementation of Environmental Land works programs. Completion of consultancy for "Review of Resources for Management of the City of Wodonga Environmental Estate" project. This has benchmarked the funding allocated for environmental land management by Wodonga compared to other municipalities. The project is also looking at the long term management and resourcing requirements of Wodonga environmental land.
Action 0.28	16	4	Track and Trail Planning and Management	Planning	Management of Unauthorised Tracks and Trails	Regularly monitor for the creation of unauthorised tracks, short-cuts, "trample trails" and other unplanned tracks and trails. Close and rehabilitate these unauthorised tracks and trails as they are developed and found. Alignments persistently targeted by the creation of tracks may indicate a strong "desire line" and may warrant assessment (using the considerations set out in Action O.26 above).	Natural Resources	Ongoing and as required.
Action 0.12	29	5	Biodiversity and Bushland Management	Planning	Manage Residential-Bushland Interface Impacts	Monitor and manage the suite of typical residential-bushland interface impacts on the biodiversity and aesthetic values, fire hazard and management, and user safety within the hills. Priority will be given to managing these activities and incursions located in high conservation value locations. Some activities may be tolerated - especially those that foster children's appreciation of nature – where, outside priority conservation zones, do not cause unacceptable impacts to a location, or compromise user safety. Awareness raising and education should generally be favoured over regulatory or enforcement actions.	Natural Resources	Ongoing actions as required. Some discussion around potential for a systematic assessment of Reserve boundary issues, in part to address encroachment issues highlighted in Compliance and Enforcement Service Review.
Action 0.13	Not Prioritised	6	Biodiversity and Bushland Management		Responsible "Bush Neighbour" Program	Implement a responsible "bush neighbour" awareness and environmental education program in the residential (and rural residential) areas adjoining the hills. This program would be aimed at increasing neighbours' awareness of the value and role of a hill (or the hills overall), as well as providing information aimed at minimising adverse impacts and supporting management.	Natural Resources	Potential parnerships with PAW, WULN or friends of groups.
Action 0.10	23	7	Biodiversity and Bushland Management	Operational	Monitor and Manage Grazing Regimes	Regularly evaluate and, as necessary, revise the current grazing management regimes in force across the hills to better protect and enhance identified environmental values while adequately managing bushfire risks to users, neighbours, and infrastructure. Alternative measures to manage fire risks if grazing is removed or reduced will be developed in accordance with applicable Fire Management Plans and/or in consultation with the Country Fire Authority.	Natural Resources	All licences reviewed in 2019 and amended accordingly. Alterations to fencing in multiple sites to improve management outcomes ongoing. Ongoing review of licences and grazing management. Ongoing fencing maintenance/improvements. Assessed inconjunction with action 0.40
Action 0.40	5	8	Managing for Users	Operational	Adjust Fencing and Paddock Arrangements in High Use Zones	Progressively adjust the fencing and paddock arrangements across the Wodonga hills to enable stock to be excluded from larger facility sites and activity zones (as/when/where developed) as well as those tracks and trails subject to high levels of use (especially those regularly used by people from outside the Wodonga-Albury area). Prior to the implementation of such changes alternative measures to manage fire risks across these areas will be developed in accordance with applicable Fire Management Plans and/or in consultation with the Country Fire Authority.	Natural Resources	Ongoing action, continue to undertake works when required.

Hill Strategy - Overall Actions

Overall Strategy Actions

Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority	Strategy Action Category	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Comments
Action 0.26	6	9	Track and Trail Planning and Management	Wayfinding	Shared Use of Management Tracks	Unless otherwise indicated (such as for user safety, environmental impact or management reasons), all management tracks across the Wodonga hills will be managed and available as shared routes for both walkers and cyclists. Cyclists are to be restricted from routes intended, managed/maintained and signposted as walking tracks.	Natural Resources	Ongoing action, continue to undertake works when required. High use area on Klings and Federation Hill have been signed for shared use.
Action 0.7	26	10	Biodiversity and Bushland Management	Planning	Biodiversity Knowledge and Monitoring	Continue to build a more detailed understanding of the biodiversity values of the Wodonga hills overall, and of each hill or specific sites as required. Establish monitoring programs (which include specific targets or indicators) to track the progress of habitat restoration, revegetation, pest/weed control or other environmental management programs to inform management directions and decisions. This may include targeted survey to better understand the presence of abundance of key native or pest species.	Natural Resources	Continued implementation of Threatened Species Monitoring Program with Albury Conservation Company. Involvement in Steering Group for ACC project 'Applying Science to On-Ground Action for Conservation of Albury Wodonga's Threatened Wildlife'.
Action 0.14	23	11	Biodiversity and Bushland Management	Operational	Involving Community or Volunteer Organisations	The council will continue to work with the community to extend the existing very strong network of community or volunteer organisations and user groups that are actively involved in the management of public land across the hills. These community programs and volunteer involvement will be guided by the directions, actions and priorities as set out in this strategy to ensure project outcomes are consistent with the overall directions for the hill or area in question, and the Wodonga hills more widely.	Natural Resources	Ongoing cooperation with Wodonga Urban Landcare Network and Friends groups involved in NRM activities on council sites. MOU with AWMTB for maintenance of MTB trails at Klings. Stewardship program being developed for school groups in council reserves (Grace, St Francis) - partnership between WULN and Council.
Action 0.16	Not Prioritised	12	Fire Hazard Management and User Safety		Consultation with Country Fire Authority	The Council will consult with the Country Fire Authority regarding bushfire risk assessment, planning and mitigation or management measures across the hills as well as fire-fighting strategies, requirements and emergency response procedures.	Natural Resources Emergency Management	CFA and FRV consultated in preparation of the high priority bushfire management plans (action 0.15) Ongoing liaison as required.
Action 0.3	22	13	General	Governance	Liaison and Collaboration with other Land Managers	Establish a structured and scheduled process for regular liaison between the council, DELWP, Parklands Albury Wodonga and other public land managers, to discuss visitor use planning and management across the Wodonga hills. If appropriate, formalise the collaborative management of “dual-tenure” hills (especially Huon Hill and the Hunchback Hill Complex).	Executive Natural Resources	Ongoing.
Action 0.5	Not Prioritised	14	General		Liaison with relevant Aboriginal stakeholders such as traditional owners, registered Aboriginal parties and the Aboriginal community	To ensure adequate identification and protection of places of Aboriginal cultural significance and in recognition of the opportunities to promote and share the knowledge of local Aboriginal culture, an appropriate forum for ongoing consultation with traditional/registered parties and the local aboriginal community should be identified. It is crucial that Aboriginal communities are involved in cultural heritage management planning. The relevant Aboriginal people must be consulted about proposed activities early in the planning process and be given an opportunity for meaningful input.	Natural Resources Aboriginal CDC Comms & Marketing	Ongoing. Refer to Interp rollout. RAP?? Future potential storytelling or site tours ect
Action 0.44	4	15	Events and Tourism	Operational	Manage Community Events	Prepare and apply guidelines for the assessment, approval and management of community events within the hills such as community or fun runs, “challenge” hill climbing events, mountain bike endurance events or competitions, charity walks, triathlons or duathlons, tree-planting days, fundraising and promotions or similar - with a focus on those hills where a designated major event space has been identified as a venue or “hub” for larger community events. Identify other locations within the hills that may be suitable for community events, preferably for smaller events, on a more ad hoc or on application basis, as well as assessment criteria to employ in the evaluation of any applications.	Natural Resources	Basic enviromental guidelines that already apply users of the hills and reserves. These need to be further developed and investigated.
Action 0.45	4	16	Events and Tourism	Operational	Manage Community Arts and Culture Events	Cater for community arts and culture events at suitable locations within the hills. These more structured events could potentially range from landscape painting weekends with invited local (and other) artists, through to temporary sculpture installations or art, light and sound walks, to major performances (such as jazz on the hilltop). Only a few locations in the hills would be suited to these uses which would generally require vehicle access, facilities (or space for temporary facilities) and sufficient usable area.	Natural Resources	Not current demand. Requires further investigation when required.
Action 0.41	24	17	Managing for Users	Planning	Survey and Monitoring of Community Use	Undertake the ongoing survey and monitoring of leisure, recreation, tourism and other use of the hills collecting both quantitative data (such as user numbers, locations, timing and duration of use, etc.) as well as qualitative data (such as user origins and characteristics, experiences sought, motivations, degree of satisfaction, etc.). A range of survey and monitoring techniques will be required (traffic counters, track and trail monitoring, intercept surveys, etc.).	Natural Resources Recreation	Operational/Administrative - requires additional resources to deliver

Hill Strategy - Overall Actions

Overall Strategy Actions

Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority	Strategy Action Category	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Comments
Action 0.34	18	18	Track and Trail Planning and Management	Governance	Liaise with Developers regarding Open Space and Pathway Connections	Collaborate and negotiate with the developers of adjacent residential estates to connect major hill access and entry points (especially those with user facilities) with a future estate's open space and urban pathway network to provide "feeder" routes for walking or cycling access to a hill, as well as the potential for shared open spaces and facilities (including car parking, on and off street) on a hill's perimeter. Estate road layouts should allow for legible and reasonably direct routes to major hill vehicle access and entry points.	Natural Resources	Ongoing Strategic and Statutory Planning processes. Input to development of Albury Wodonga Integrated Transport Strategy with on walking and cycling path networks. Liaison with developers of Meridian Estate adjoining Huon Hill
Action 0.27	19	19	Track and Trail Planning and Management	Planning	New Track and Trail Planning and Assessment	All proposed new, or upgraded, recreational tracks and trails will undergo a thorough planning, assessment and approval process. This process should include consideration of all relevant factors including demand and justification, site and alignment assessments, identification and mitigation of potential impacts, application of accepted track and trail design standards, user safety issues, potential for conflicts with other users or impacts on neighbours, and management capabilities and resourcing. Current industry standards or "best practice" guidelines such as the Users' Guide to the Australian Walking Track Grading System (DSE) or the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) Australia Trail Difficulty Rating System should be referenced during track and trail assessment, planning, design and construction.	Natural Resources	Ongoing action, continue to undertake works when required.
Action 0.6	20	20	General	Planning	Assessment and Approval Process	Implement an assessment and approvals process for proposed projects within the hills that exceed a specified size or impact threshold (including visual impacts), or may significantly affect other users or neighbours, have emergency management implications or exceed other triggers. This would typically apply to actions involving construction or works to create significant new features (such as a new car park or lookout platform, or larger user facilities). It would generally not apply to routine management actions, the maintenance or minor upgrade of existing features, or the installation of minor new features (such as seating or a low-key picnic site). Where required, this process will include third party concurrence or approval from other agencies (such as the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning), consultation with neighbours, public exhibition of proposed designs, and other steps.	Strategic Planning Statutory Planning	Normal strategic and statutory planning processes?
Action 0.20	Not Prioritised	21	Fire Hazard Management and User Safety		Emergency Response Planning	Work with relevant agencies to prepare and regularly update an emergency response plan, including medical access and retrievals, to identify the range of likely user emergencies that may occur on the hills and effective emergency response procedures commensurate with the levels and nature of use.	Natural Resources Emergency Management	Emergency wayfinding signage and access routes prepared inconjunction with Ambulance Victoria local Wodonga branch. Signage rolled out accross Klings and Federation Hills.
Action 0.43	17	22	Events and Tourism	Planning	Proactively Manage Events and Tourism	Proactively manage commercial recreation and tourism use of the hills through the preparation of assessment criteria to employ in the evaluation of any applications for possible commercial activities, and by identifying potential locations across the hills and possible suitable commercial activities (as a guideline and/or prospectus for potential applicants). Commercial recreation and tourism activities that preclude access and use by other users, or impact neighbours will be strictly limited in both location and duration. Commercial use will only occur with the council's prior approval and a permit system, with appropriate fees and conditions, will be developed and applied (as and when required) in regulating commercial recreation and tourism use of the hills. Preference will be given to commercial uses that are founded on or relate to the hills' values and activities that degrade the hills' environment will not be permitted.	Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	No demand as yet. Will undertake when required. Assessment required.
Action 0.4	Not Prioritised	23	General		Liaison with Users and Stakeholders	Regularly liaise with all users of the hills to seek their views and inputs, assess satisfaction levels, identify unmet demands or desires, identify emerging leisure and recreation and other usage trends as well as to discuss management issues and responses (and to seek users' co-operation and assistance in managing the hills where feasible and appropriate). This engagement will extend beyond known recreational and special interest groups, to include measures to engage with independent and casual and informal leisure and recreation users, as well as liaison with the tourism sector.	Natural Resources Recreation Comms & Marketing	Ongoing. More detailed consultation undertaking on projects implementation.

Hill Strategy - Overall Actions

Overall Strategy Actions

Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority	Strategy Action Category	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Comments
Action 0.1	20	24	General	Governance	Field Services Support	Support the on-ground management of the hills with suitable co-ordination, planning, "field services" and administrative actions and resources. These support services would assist across a range of requirements or tasks as the overall Wodonga strategy is implemented. Priority tasks in the short term would include: • Determining a single set of official place names to apply to each hill, and to any key areas/locations or features within individual hills; • Establishing, and maintaining, an up-to-date data base (preferably GIS linked) of the hills' values and assets to support and inform management directions and decisions; • Ensuring all tracks and trails data and the associated infrastructure (such as signage, seats and shelters) is collected, collated, mapped and maintained in formats accessible to management staff as well as, potentially, to intending users and the public; and, • Applying accepted standards for the definition, description and difficulty classification of tracks and trails such as the Australian Walking Track Grading System or the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) Australia Trail Difficulty Rating System in both track provision and maintenance as well as in all promotional material and on-site information/ orientation.	Executive Natural Resources	Establishment of Gateway Island/The Hills Planning Sub-Committee. Analysis and preliminary scoping of Strategy actions with capital works by Projects & Design. Internal Working Group coordinating signage. Natural Resources Spatial Data review.
Action 0.42	23	25	Managing for Users	Operational	Resourcing Management for Community Use	Dedicate adequate resources and on-ground effort to the staged provision and ongoing maintenance of user infrastructure (in addition to track and trail maintenance, see Action O.30 above) as well as for supporting and managing users, monitoring, managing and remediating the impacts of use, and ensuring a regular on-site management presence (for user contact, patrols, closures, enforcement, etc.). The degree of management presence at a site can be a large determinant of users' experience/satisfaction, and so should be tailored to the role and character of each hill or location and the intended experiences.	Directors Natural Resources	Operational/Administrative - requires additional resources to deliver
Action 0.32	4	26	Track and Trail Planning and Management	Operational	Linking Urban Pathways to the Hills	Ensure the concrete or hardened pathways providing access to perimeter fire trials (for existing and proposed links and trails) are more completely and effectively linked with the perimeter fire trail's surface, allowing for a continuous and unimpeded connection.	Strategic Planning Natural Resources	Requires Engineering input and design.
Action 0.21	2	27	Access, Information and Orientation	Wayfinding	Access Signposting	Access routes and links to each hill will be signposted in the surrounding areas to assist intending users to locate and access designated entry points. The type and extent or coverage of this access signposting, beyond the boundary of each hill, will vary with the scale and nature of the access or entry points in question - from connections to the arterial road network and existing public vehicle access (such as Huon Hill), major links from the surrounding open space links, larger trailheads, low-key entry points off adjoining residential streets or shared driveway access.	Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	Action to follow full role out of on site orientation and wayfinding information, to ensure safety for users.
Action 0.38	1	28	Managing for Users	Operational	Implement Wodonga Hills Interpretation Plan	Implement the Wodonga Hills Interpretation Plan to improve the provision of information to users and the wider community about the hills' values, management and sustainable use. Regularly update this document as additional destinations, opportunities and activities become available across the hills.	Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	Not commenced.
Action 0.36	25	29	Managing for Users	Planning	Differentiate the Hills as Distinct Attractions	Promotional and previsit information for the Wodonga hills should differentiate the character, attractions, facilities and experiences offered by each hill to present each hill as a distinct or individual attraction and assist intending leisure, recreation or tourism visitors in selecting the destination and activity that best meets their needs.	Natural Resources Comms & Marketing	Will be completed after full rollout of the signage strategy across all hills.
Action 0.25	5	30	Access, Information and Orientation	Wayfinding	Aboriginal cultural heritage interpretive signage	Interpretive signage provides the opportunity to recognise, promote and share Aboriginal cultural heritage. Signs interpreting Aboriginal sites, artefacts, stories, historical events and/or special cultural features should be developed in consultation with the Aboriginal community. However, it is important that signage does not reveal locations of places, sites or artefacts that might be culturally sensitive.	Natural Resources Aboriginal CDC Comms & Marketing	Under investigation. RAP??
Action 0.11	Not Prioritised	31	Biodiversity and Bushland Management		Identify High Conservation Value Areas for Users	High conservation value areas within the hills may be signposted at points most likely to be encountered by users - such as at major entries, along perimeter fire trails or on more heavily used tracks and trails. This signage need not necessarily be complex (or regulatory) and may simply be a graphic or symbol that could be further explained as part of a hill's wider information or interpretation displays.	Natural Resources	Pending review of hilltops interpretation strategy.

Hill Strategy - Overall Actions

Overall Strategy Actions

Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority	Strategy Action Category	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Comments
Action 0.9	14	32	Biodiversity and Bushland Management	Planning	Native Vegetation Offset Scheme	The feasibility of reinstating the native vegetation offsetting scheme should be considered. Such a scheme, if carefully designed, could be a way of externally funding land management activities and securing local biodiversity outcomes. Should the scheme be reinstated, appropriate resources must be made available to identify suitable sites, establish a funding model that is cost-neutral and to meet the additional administrative requirements associated with offset management.	Natural Resources	19/20 - $9,000 of $25,000 Strategic Planning Consultancy budget allocation utilised on assessment of possible offset sites at Klings, Mahers and Federation hills. Potential site/s identified at Federation Hill, further on-ground works required to ensure offset eligibility. Analysis by staff of cost/benefit and potential generation of income is favourable. Report with recommendations to be prepared before EOFY. Memorandum prepared by Claire Coulson 04/12/2020 recommended against proceeding with local offset scheme due to expanded supply of offset sites in region. Based on current levels of offset demand, two new offset sites now provide up to 30 years supply of offset credits. 31/22 - Some potential for Council facilitation of First Party Offsets (on Council or private land). Some preliminary discussions with DELWP.
Action 0.35	4	33	Track and Trail Planning and Management	Operational	Linking Klings, Federation, Bears and Huon Hills	Undertake a feasibility study and route and corridor identification (including elements of the urban path network), and if supported by these investigations prepare a subsequent action plan, for possible establishment of an extended walking route linking Klings, Federation, Bears and Huon Hills (and possibly connecting to the Kiewa River shared path). (Refer to Section 3.3 for further discussion.)	Strategic Planning Recreation Natural Resources Parks & Gardens Projects & Design	2022/23 Funding Bid for Feasibility Study

Hill Strategy - Master Plans - Actions (*PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE*)

By Priority

Location	Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority by Hill	Strategy Action Category	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Action Name	Description	Council Stakeholders	Comments
Huon Hill	**Action 25**	**10**	**1**	**Entry Road**	**Planning**	Ensure Future Direct and Legible Vehicle Route to Huon Hill	Ensure planning for future development of the adjacent Riverside Estate includes a road hierarchy and layout that provides for a legible and direct route through this new suburb to Huon Hill's main eastern vehicle entry point.	Strategic Planning	Dependent on development proposals. To be implemented where possible and when required.
Klings Hill	**Action 1**	**1**	**2**	**General**	**Governance**	Collaborative Land Management	Work collaboratively with Parklands Albury Wodonga and the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP) to co-operatively plan for and collaboratively manage the Hunchback Hill Complex as an integrated whole, maximising biodiversity, user and fire management outcomes under a consistent and co-ordinated approach as well as to provide a high quality "tenure blind" experience for users.	Directors Strategic Planning Natural Resources	Need to establish better cooperative management arrangements.
Klings Hill	**Action 21**	**13**	**3**	**Mountain Bike Tracks**	**Operational**	Exploring future mountain biking opportunities	If there is demonstrable demand for mountain biking experiences that cannot be met elsewhere across the wider Hunchback Hill Complex, or if other council-managed mountain bike tracks reach safe capacity, there is potential to extend mountain bike tracks into the north-west sector of Klings Hill. It may be a location in which to offer further cross-country or downhill riding opportunities. This perched valley offers a diversity of terrain in close proximity, is mostly cleared or sparsely vegetated, is generally well-drained, and does not have an established usage profile. Providing mountain bike tracks in this area would be subject to the site assessment, planning, design and approval requirements set out in overall actions applicable to all the Wodonga hills.	Natural Resources Recreation Strategic Planning	Not required in short-term. Proposal by PAW for rationalisation of mountain bike tracks in McFarlanes Hill and Swainsona Reserves.
Bears Hill	**Action 3**	**12**	**4**	**General**	**Planning**	Plan for Suitable Recreation/Leisure Access	Ensure the planning of future adjacent residential estates and open space or pathway networks, provides for suitable pedestrian, cyclist and vehicle access to the hill's margins (at regular intervals or to suitable locations) and to potential trailheads.	Strategic Planning Natural Resources	Dependent on development proposals. To be implemented where possible and when required.
Bears Hill	**Action 2**	**17**	**5**	**General**	**Governance**	Periodic Liaison with Department of Defence	Periodically liaise with the Department of Defence regarding their policy on public access to the Defence lands on Bears Hill - for transit access only, or for access and on-site uses. Also pursue the possibility of the Department of Defence divesting these lands to the council.	Directors Strategic Planning Natural Resources	Need to initiate discussions and establish collaborative management.
Mahers Hill	**Action 2**	**20**	**6**	**Management Tracks**	**Wayfinding**	Horse riding and Mountain Biking on Management Tracks	Management tracks on Mahers Hill will be available for shared use – for horse riding and mountain biking (or cycling) as well as for visitors on foot (walkers, joggers, etc.). Equestrian and mountain bike use of the management track network will be periodically reviewed - in terms of safety issues, conflicts with other users, environmental impacts (especially weed spread), and impacts on track surfaces and maintenance requirements, incidence of off-track riding and informal track creation, and demands on the council's management resources. Management tracks may be identified as unsuitable, or not recommended, for mountain biking or horse-riding due to steep terrain, surface conditions, or other hazards. Provision for horse trailers will need to be made.	Natural Resources	

Hill Strategy - Master Plans - Actions (*COMPLETED ACTIONS*)

By Priority

Location	Action No.	WHAG Priority	Revised Priority by Hill	Strategy Action Category	Governance Planning Operational Wayfinding	Action Name	Description	Status	Council Stakeholders	Comments
Huon Hill	**Action 11**	**3**		**Vehicle Entrance**	Operational	Upgrade Reserve Entrance, Including New Vehicle Gate and Locking Regime	Reconfigure and improve the existing vehicle entrance to Huon Hill - to offer an attractive welcome with defined and safer vehicle parking/layby areas, orientation information, and trailhead node. Install a lockable entry gate, and implement an opening and closing regime to restrict vehicle access to daylight hours only (except for approved uses/events or times) - to deter vandalism and anti-social behaviours.	Completed & Ongoing	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Action 0.2	Not Prioritised	1	General	A Wodonga hills "brand"	Develop a brand identity for the Wodonga hills that will identify and promote the hills to the community and potential users as a unified set of nature-based attractions offering landscape settings and a range of leisure, recreation, tourism and educational experiences that are not generally available elsewhere in Wodonga's open space and reserves system.	NO	Short Term		Completed - The branding was required prior to commencing the rollout of the wayfinding signage.	The design work was undertaken by the communications and marking team, in conjunction with internal working group.
Klings Hill	**Action 3**	**1**		**Felltimber Creek Rd**	Planning	Reduce speed - Felltimber Creek Rd	Investigate reducing the speed limit or the introduction of traffic calming measures on Felltimber Creek Rd (to finish west of the junction with the Central Management Track) to improve the safety of access to the Hunchback Hill Complex as a whole for walkers and cyclists and users arriving at the site by car.	Completed	Roads?	Completed
Klings Hill	**Action 11**	**3**		**Management Tracks**	Operational	Restrict Public Access Along Northern McMartin's Track	Discourage visitor access along the northern sections of McMartin's Track, due to proximity of the adjacent Wodonga Rifle Range.	Completed & Ongoing	Natural Resources	Funded through current operational budgets
Huon Hill	**Action 19**			**Management Tracks**	Operational	New Bundy Management Track Connection and Shared Use Link	Establish a new management track (unsealed) on the hill's northern face, to fill in the missing section of the Bundy Track and improve connectivity of the hill's management track network (as well as to link to the proposed picnic/rest stop and lower vantage point - see action 24). This connection will be an important management link (and assist in fire management) as well as providing a shared route for both walkers and mountain bikers. Carefully select the alignment to allow safe use by walkers and cyclists (travelling downhill), for effective drainage and to avoid protected offset areas. The hill's northern face is sparsely vegetated, so clumped plantings are warranted to reduce any potential adverse visual impacts.	Completed	Projects & Design Natural Resources	

8 Reports for noting

Nil

9 Reports for information

9.1 Audit and Risk Committee Meetings Summary of Minutes - May 25, 2023

PURPOSE

To present the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Summary of Minutes – May 25, 2023.

SUMMARY

Pursuant to the requirements under the Local Government Act 2020 and the Wodonga Council Audit and Risk Committee Charter, the Audit and Risk Committee met on May 25, 2023.

FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Summary of Minutes May 2023 [**9.1.1** - 6 pages]

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There have been no conflict of interest declarations by the following officers involved with the preparation of this report:

Risk & Assurance Officer - Sheree Feuerherdt
Director Corporate Services - Dena Vlekkert

SUMMARY OF MINUTES

OF: Audit and Risk Committee **HELD ON: 25 May 2023**

Present: Cr Danny Chamberlain (Councillor) Matthew Hyde (CEO), Dena Vlekkert (Director Corporate Services), Natasha Donohue (Manager Finance), Sheree Feuerherdt (Risk and Assurance Officer), Jayde Gaffy (Executive Services Officer), David Worrall (Manager People & Safety), James Haggerty (Team Leader Manager People & Safety), Debra Mudra (Director Community Development/Deputy CEO) Via Microsoft Teams: Matthew Paull (ShineWing), David Pendleton (Chairperson), David Kortum (External Member), Robyn Gillis (External Member), Cr Olga Quilty (Councillor), Brad Bohun (Crowe Horwath)
Statement of acknowledgement The Chair, David Pendleton read the following: Wodonga Council acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Inhabitants of the Country. We respect their Ancestors, Elders and young and recognise their continuous connections to lands, waters and communities across the Country.
Minute taker: Jayde Gaffy
Apologies: Nil
Declaration of interest: No declarations
Request for in camera session with internal or external auditor: Committee declined

	AGREED ACTIONS FROM CURRENT MEETING
	Meeting items The CEO introduced Dena Vlekkert, new Director Corporate Services to the committee.

	AGREED ACTIONS FROM CURRENT MEETING
1	**Previous minutes** Minutes of the meeting held March 23, 2023 were confirmed. The report was received and noted.
2	**Previous meetings action items update** Presented by Risk and Assurance Officer, Sheree Feuerherdt. Chair ran through each action which were completed by the agreed date. The report was received and noted.
3	**Draft VAGO Interim Management Letter 2023** External Auditor Brad Bohun presented the report. 3 audit finding were identified and discussed. The report was received and noted.
4	**Scope and Objectives - Contract / Project Management Review** Internal Auditor, Matthew Paull from SW presented the report. No questions. The report was received and noted.
5	**Implementation of the Local Government Act Review** Internal Auditor, Matthew Paull from SW presented the report. No questions. The report was received and noted.
6	**Quarterly Finance and Treasury Report** Manager Finance, Natasha Donohue presented the report.

	AGREED ACTIONS FROM CURRENT MEETING
	Robyn Gillis raised a question regarding the variation in user charges, which Natasha Donohue answered. The report was received and noted.
7	**Draft Budget 2023-2024 and Draft Financial Plan 2023-2033** Manager Finance, Natasha Donohue presented the report. The Draft Budget with a recommended 3.5% rate increase was presented to the committee and considered in conjunction with the alternate motion draft budget recommending a 2% rate increase. The report was received and noted.
8	**Alternate Motion Draft Budget 2023 – 2024 and Draft Financial Plan** Manager Finance, Natasha Donohue presented the report. The alternate motion that was carried and endorsed for a 21-day exhibition period includes a rate rise of 2%, a reduction in animal registration fees, removal of 3 traineeship positions and some consultancy fees as well as the deferral of some capital expenditure to 24/25. The Committee discussed the alternate motion and the management and assurance of the financial sustainability of council in the medium to long term given the compound effect of the reduction in income and current inflation. Chair David Pendleton asked about the timing of the community consultation and adoption of the budget which Natasha answered. The report was received and noted.
9	**Excess Annual Leave Report** Manager People & Safety, David Worrall and Team Leader People & Safety, James Haggerty presented the report. No questions. The report was received and noted.

	AGREED ACTIONS FROM CURRENT MEETING
10	**Health Safety and Wellbeing Quarterly Report** Manager People & Safety, David Worrall and Team Leader People & Safety, James Haggerty presented the report. No questions. The report was received and noted.
11	**Risk Management Quarterly Report** Risk and Assurance Officer, Sheree Feuerherdt presented the report. Chair, David Pendleton asked about the Business Continuity Exercise which Sheree Feuerherdt answered. David Kortum asked if Council were required to provide more information in the insurance renewal declarations this year which Sheree responded to. The report was received and noted.
12	**Audit and Risk Committee mid-year Report 2022-2023** Risk and Assurance Officer, Sheree Feuerherdt presented the report. No questions. The report was received and noted.
13	**Forward Planner / Outstanding Audit Items Register** Risk and Assurance Officer, Sheree Feuerherdt presented the report Chair David Pendleton requested incorporating external recommendations into a Register to be presented at future meetings. Natasha Donohue will include those in the register. The report was received and noted.
14	**Response to Commission of Inquiry Report into Moira Shire Council**

	AGREED ACTIONS FROM CURRENT MEETING
	Director Community Development/Deputy CEO, Debra Mudra presented the report. Council completed an internal self-assessment against key learnings from the Commission of Inquiry into Moira Shire Council, the controls in place, the culture of the organization and opportunities for improvement. The Committee discussed mandatory reporting, the importance of culture and actions taken by Council in relation to governance. The report was received and noted.
15	**Director Overview – Community Development** Director Community Development/ Deputy CEO, Debra Mudra presented the report. Dave Kortum enquired about the safety of high risk workers working in isolation. Debra Mudra advised that Council have procedures in place that are followed to keep staff safe. Robyn Gillis asked if nurses have a scope of practice which they do and is followed.
	General Business Sheree Feuerherdt shared the JLT Public Sector Risk Report with all members in Docs on Tap to discuss in the next meeting if required. The Audit and Risk Committee Self-Assessment will also be shared with all members between meetings. The CEO provided an update that Council have received the Wodonga Council Monitor Final Report which has been shared with the Chair. Requested that this be shared with all external members.
Committee members to meet without staff present	
Meeting Closed 2:58pm. Cr Danny Chamberlain arrived at 1.04pm Brad Bohun left at 1.10pm.	

	AGREED ACTIONS FROM CURRENT MEETING
	Matthew Paull departed at 1.25pm. James Haggerty and David Worrall arrived at 1.49pm James Haggerty and David Worrall departed at 1.52pm Deb Mudra arrived at 2.04pm Debra Mudra departed at 2.54pm **Next Meeting Date** Is scheduled for Thursday 14th of September 2023, 1.00pm.

9.2 Audit and Risk Committee mid-year Report 2022-2023

PURPOSE

To present the Wodonga Council Audit and Risk Committee mid-year report for 2022-2023 to Council.

SUMMARY

Section 54 Clause 5 of the Local Government Act 2020 states the Audit and Risk Committee shall report twice per annum to the Council summarising the activities of the committee during the previous financial year. This is the report on activities of the Wodonga Council Audit and Risk Committee for the two meetings held in the period of November 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023.

FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

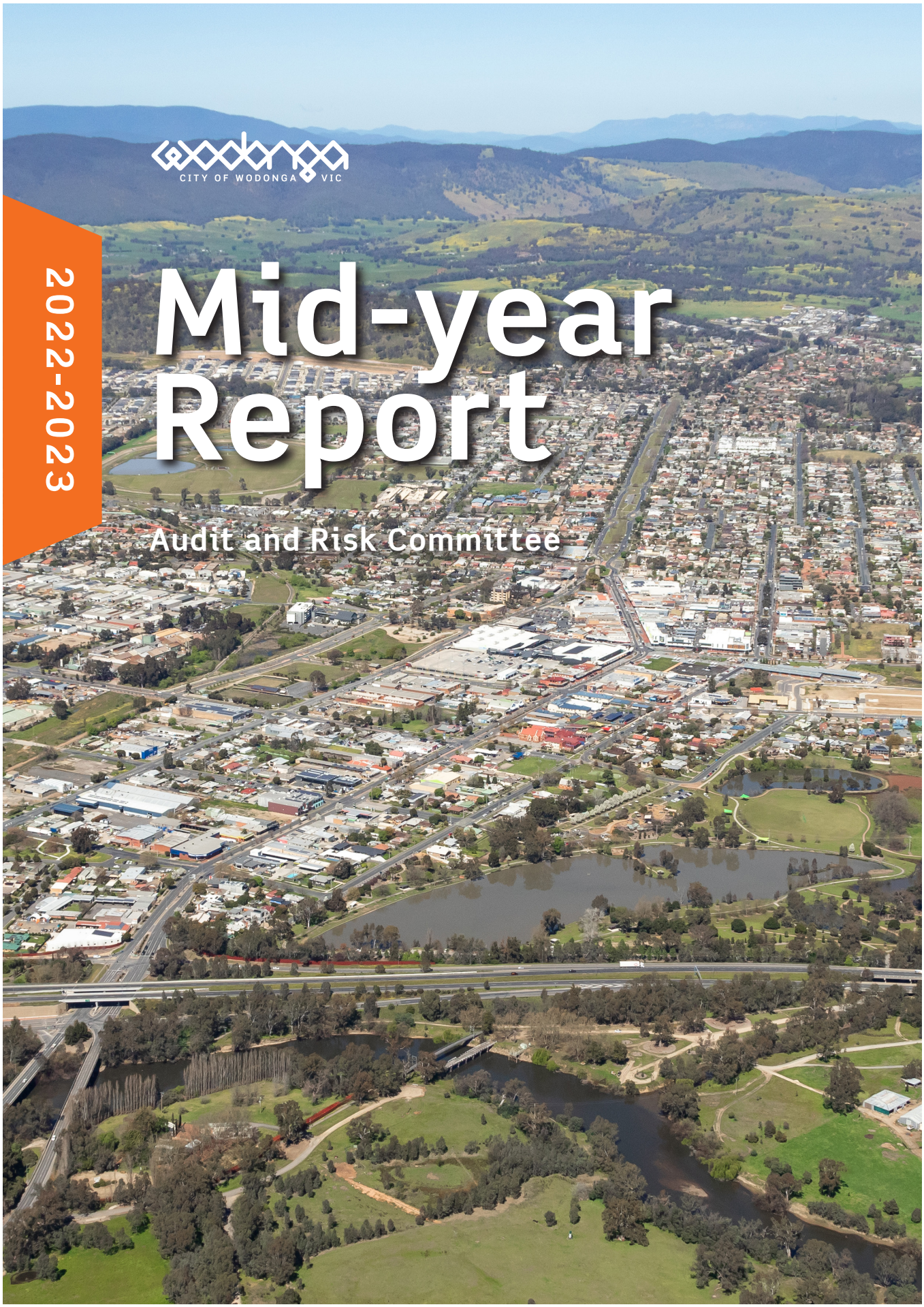
ATTACHMENTS

1. Audit and Risk Committee mid-year report 2022-2023 [**9.2.1** - 12 pages]

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There have been no conflict of interest declarations by the following officers involved with the preparation of this report:

Risk & Assurance Officer - Sheree Feuerherdt
Director Corporate Services - Dena Vlekkert


CITY OF WODONGA VIC
2022-2023
Mid-year Report
Audit and Risk Committee

Wodonga Council acknowledges the traditional owners of this land on which we stand and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future, for they hold the memories, the tradition and the culture of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

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Foreword

Audit and Risk Committees are critical in local government to help deliver trust and confidence in financial reporting, assurance over operations and compliance, risk management, and opportunities for business improvement.

The Wodonga Council Audit and Risk Committee's responsibilities are wider than just financial reporting oversight with a remit to oversee risk, emerging risk, compliance, improvement, fraud, ethics and culture considerations, all key factors that drive its effectiveness.

The committee's approach is governed by four key principles being transparency, good communication, diverse composition and efficient and effective ways of working.

To meet these principles, the committee undertakes the following.

- Meetings are minuted and a memorandum detailing the matters considered is presented to council after each meeting.
- We regularly have in attendance members of the management team to provide input and advice in our discussions and the committee is supported by the Chief Executive Officer who attends most meetings as an observer.
- Agendas and meeting papers are clearly presented by management and provide meaningful insight into council operations. As required, interactions continue in between meetings, keeping matters under review and ensuring continuous oversight.
- The Audit and Risk Committee has unrestricted access to the council's internal and external auditors as necessary and they have direct access to the committee if necessary.
- The committee is made up of a strong mix of skills from independent members and councillor representatives who all challenge management as necessary and contribute to the discussion of committee business during meetings.
- The committee has a clear mandate through an adopted charter, reviewed every two years.
- We look for efficiencies in the assurance work program at the council, minimising potential duplication of effort between assurance providers.
- Our meetings are well-structured, held at regular intervals and action items are tracked and reported back at each meeting.

I'm pleased to commend this mid-year report as a summary of the committee's activities and approach in the past six months.

DAVID PENDLETON
Chair of Audit and Risk Committee

Background

The Audit and Risk Committee mid-year report documents the operation and activities of the Audit and Risk Committee for Wodonga Council from November 1, 2022 to March 30, 2023. To meet the *Local Government Act 2020* requirements, the meeting to adopt financial statements is included as the last meeting in the annual report and the mid-year report includes the six months following that meeting.

The committee plays a pivotal role in the governance framework to provide the council with independent assurance and oversight of audit processes, including internal control activities.

Wodonga Council established a new Audit and Risk Committee in accordance with the requirements of Section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. This new committee was created by resolution of the council at the August 2020 meeting, where the new charter was adopted and the initial members and chairperson were appointed.

The committee consists of three independent external members and two councillor representative, supported by relevant council staff.

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter contains the committee's responsibilities.

Broadly, these include oversight of the council's risk management control framework, legislative compliance and internal audit.

The committee also reviews the external audit opinion and recommendations and other aspects of financial governance and reporting.

The committee has no power or direction over the external audit or the manner in which the external audit is planned or undertaken.

The committee has no executive powers.

It cannot make decisions on behalf of Wodonga Council or direct council officers in the performance of their duties.

Internal audit and the committee support the Chief Executive Officer to oversee the council's risk management and controls.



City of Wodonga

Wodonga is a vibrant and growing city with a population of more than 40,000 located between Melbourne and Sydney on the Hume Highway.

Wodonga is ideally situated on the Murray River with surrounding hills, rich agricultural valleys, adjacent wineries and historic towns.

Together with AlburyCity, it serves a population base of more than 90,000 people and is the 17th largest city in Australia. The two cities serve a regional catchment of more than 180,000.

Wodonga Council delivers a broad range of services ranging from family and children's services, traffic regulation, parks and gardens, youth facilities, waste management and community building; to business development, planning for appropriate development and ensuring accountability of the council's budget.

These services and community infrastructure support the wellbeing and prosperity of our community.

The council's vision, strategic objectives and strategies to further improve services and facilities are described in the Council Plan 2021-2025 and the Budget 2022-2023.

The delivery of services, facilities, support and advocacy to achieve the key strategic objectives is measured by a set of service performance indicators and measures.

The council also has a range of responsibilities under Victorian and Australian legislation.

Wodonga Council employs more than 400 staff across four directorates including full-time, part-time and casual staff.

The organisation's values of trust, learning, integrity and respect underpin everything we do as well as how we expect all our staff to engage with one another and the community.

Our mission is to strengthen the community in all that we do.

Audit and Risk Committee members



DAVID PENDLETON
SEPTEMBER 2019 - CURRENT

David is an independent director and consultant and is a member of a number of board and Audit and Risk Committees.

He has spent the past 20 years working at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation as its Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer with responsibility for all of its financial, technical and business support activities. David is a qualified Company Director (GAICD).



ROBYN GILLIS
SEPTEMBER 2020 - CURRENT

Robyn is an experienced director of operations with a demonstrated history of working in government, the private sector and the hospital and health care industry. Skilled in contract management, stakeholder engagement, business development, coaching, facilitation, and healthcare management. Robyn is a strong business development professional with extensive experience working with regional and rural communities.



DAVID KORTUM
JANUARY 2021 - CURRENT

David is a practical leader with significant industry and consulting experience in risk management, security, fraud and corruption, emergency management, crisis management and business continuity.

He has worked in risk and resilience with Telstra, Commonwealth Bank and Deloitte.

David is currently a Director of Triplex Acies Consulting, a boutique risk consulting firm based in Melbourne, and sits on several Audit and Risk Committees.



CR OLGA QUILTY
JANUARY 2021 - CURRENT

Olga Quilty is a chartered accountant with a number of years experience in private practice and the public sector.

Born in Russia, she migrated to Australia in 2004 and, with her family, moved to Wodonga in 2012.

With her husband (former Wodonga councillor Tim Quilty) Olga has two young sons. The family live, work and play in our border community.

Olga's goal as a councillor is to bring transparency and accountability to all of council's actions.

She is focussed on trying to ensure ratepayers get value for the money that council spends.

Olga believes her role on the audit and risk committee is to try to ensure the council is accountable and honest in its dealings.



CR RON MILDREN
SEPTEMBER 2022 - DECEMBER 2022

Ron Mildren was elected to Wodonga Council in 2016. He spent his youth growing up in Wodonga before completing a trade qualification followed by a Bachelor of Town and Regional Planning degree at the University of Melbourne.

Ron has been employed in the construction industry and spent 18 years to director level in local government, followed by operating a successful economic development and project planning consultancy from 2005 until recent retirement.



CR DANNY CHAMBERLAIN
MARCH 2023 - CURRENT

Born in Wodonga, with local family, Danny is a motor mechanic by trade with experience in TAFE teaching, both apprentices and post trade students. He has worked in a management role in a local dealership and two years with Ford Australia, Geelong in research and development at the engine laboratory. Most recently he has worked in a customer contact role for a small local automotive business.

Danny has also worked alongside members of the building trade on job sites as a pest control technician. His experience in business, — small, large and public — the application of risk management as well as the financial responsibility of department manager, gives him a practical perspective of the requirements of the Audit and Risk Committee.

Audit and Risk Committee attendance

In the period this mid-year report includes November 1, 2022 to March 30, 2023, the committee met two times.

The meetings were held at Wodonga Council offices with some members and report presenters attending virtually.

NAME	ROLE	ELIGIBLE	ATTENDED
David Pendleton	Chair	2	2
Robyn Gillis	External member	2	2
David Kortum	External member	2	2
Cr Olga Quilty	Councillor	2	2
Cr Ron Mildren	Councillor	1	1
Cr Danny Chamberlain	Councillor	1	1

Audit and Risk Committee report card

COMMITTEE CHARTER	COMPLIANCE
Committee meetings	A quorum was met at every meeting.
Composition	Three independent members and two councillors.
Broad range of skills and experience	The committee consists of a diverse range of extensive experience across risk management, finance, public sector management, internal audit, local government and commercial activities.
Functional separation	The committee has no executive powers.
Sufficient time allocated to tasks	The committee agenda facilitated adequate time to discuss all internal audit reviews, external audit reviews and update on the progress of the implementation of audit actions.
Probity	Members declared conflicts of interest if they arose.
Risk management	Risk management key activities are reported at each meeting of the committee. The committee maintains interest in the implementation status of Wodonga Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework and clarification of risk data to inform business planning and decision-making, including the internal audit plan.
Control framework	The committee effectively reviewed the controls, policies and procedures through audit reports and high-level briefings received.
Audit and Risk Committee Charter	The committee met the functions and responsibilities of the Audit and Risk Committee Charter in line with *Local Government Act 2020* requirements.
Internal audit	The Internal Audit Plan 2022-2025 was reviewed in March 2023. The scope and objectives of future reviews are presented at each meeting. The committee monitors the implementation of internal audit recommendations by management to full completion.
External audit	The committee has continued to review and monitor Wodonga Council's compliance with the external audit provided by the Victorian Auditor General's Office including the council's financial position and commitment towards achieving financial sustainability. The 2022-2023 Audit Strategy was presented to the March 2023 Audit and Risk Committee meeting.
External accountability	The committee acts as a forum for communication between the council, senior management, internal audit, external auditors and the Victorian Auditor General's Office.
Financial management	The committee receives and reviews the latest finance report and treasury report at each meeting.

Internal audit

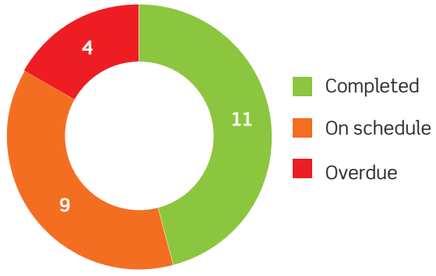
Wodonga Council outsources the internal audit function with SW Accountants & Advisors, the appointed contractor for this function for the 2022-2025 Internal Audit Plan. Outsourcing facilitates an agile internal audit program and ensures a high level of independence and autonomy from the council's management. It enables specialised knowledge and skills to be procured to conduct audits of those high-risk areas which could impact the achievements of the council's objectives.

The Audit and Risk Committee reviews audit reports and endorses recommendations as appropriate. Audit actions are tracked and the status of audit action items are reported to the Audit and Risk Committee at each meeting.

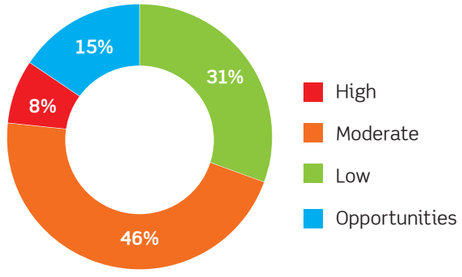
The internal audit plan is established as a four-year plan which is reviewed and amended as required by the Audit and Risk Committee annually.

Snapshot of internal audit progress

2022-2023 Audit action overview



2022-2023 Audit items by risk rating



All internal audits will be conducted remotely with the use of technology to meet with key stakeholders, share relevant documents and communicate effectively and in a timely manner.

The scope and objectives of the two upcoming audit reviews are presented to the Audit and Risk Committee to provide more time and flexibility for the internal auditor to complete each internal review with the ability to present at least one review at each meeting.

Overall, the council has 24 recommendations from five internal reviews with 11 of these completed and nine on schedule to meet the agreed completion date and four are overdue.

Four (31 per cent) of these recommendations had a low risk rating, six (46 per cent) a moderate risk rating and one (8 per cent) a high risk rating. There were two (15 per cent) opportunities for improvement also identified.

SUMMARY OF INTERNAL AUDITS		AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS					REMAINING ACTIONS					COMPLETION RATE				
Internal Audit Plan 2022-2025	**YEAR**	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	OPPORTUNITY	TOTAL	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	OPPORTUNITY	TOTAL	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	OPPORTUNITY	TOTAL
Developer Contributions Review (20.5.21)	2021	2	2			**4**	2	2			**4**	0%	0%			**0%**
Procurement Review (11.2.22)	2022		3	3		**6**		2			**2**		33%	100%		**66%**
Budget Process Review (8.11.22)	2022		1	2	1	**4**			1	1	**2**		100%	50%	0%	**50%**
Property & Rates Database Controls (17.2.23)	2023			1	1	**2**				1	**1**			100%	0%	**50%**
Contractor Management (8.3.23)	2023	1	3			**4**	1	3			**4**	0%	0%			**0%**
Total		**3**	**9**	**6**	**2**	**20**	**3**	**7**	**1**	**2**	**13**	**0%**	**23%**	**83%**	**0%**	**35%**

Risk management

Risk management is an integral part of Wodonga Council and provides assurance to our employees and to the community that we are operating effectively and efficiently.

Wodonga Council has a robust Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Framework that continues to mature with a focus on continuous improvement. Council's ERM is made up of systems, structures, policies, processes and people within the organisation that identify, measure, monitor, report and control or mitigate all internal and external sources of risk.

Risk Management Activity

Business Continuity Programme: A full internal review and update of the Business Continuity Framework was conducted in line with the Business Continuity Institutes Good Practices Guidelines. Council's Business Continuity Framework consists of a Business Continuity Policy, Business Continuity Management Framework and an action oriented Business Continuity Plan (BCP). The BCP was validated in an exercise with key personnel with responsibilities within the plan.

Risk Maturity: Wodonga Council continues to mature its risk management through a continuous improvement focus. Risks are actively being identified, monitored, reported and controlled effectively across the organisation.

Internal Audit Plan 2022-2025 review: To ensure the internal audit items are appropriate for the current and changing environment, the Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the Internal Audit Plan and prioritised high risks within the plan such as IT security and Fraud and Corruption.

Forward internal audit plan

Council's 2022-2025 Internal Audit Plan was developed by Council's executive team, key stakeholders, councillors and the Audit and Risk Committee members through analysis of previous audits, highest risks within council and external influences. The Plan is not seen as a fixed plan and is reviewed on an annual basis by the Audit and Risk Committee to suit the changing needs and circumstances of the council.

SW Accountants & Advisors are council's internal auditors who complete the reviews in the internal audit plan and present at least one review to the Audit and Risk Committee each meeting.

TYPE	TOPIC	TIMING	SCOPE
Operational	Risk Culture	2023	Gain an understanding and assess the adequacy of the processes through which the desired culture is articulated, embedded, monitored and reported. Review the first and second line assessments of risk culture.
Operational	Contract/Project Management	2023	Review and assess the processes in place for project management. Assess if practices are consistent with the project and contract management framework. Test if internal controls are operating effectively relating to the management of projects.
Financial	Credit Cards and Expense Reimbursements	2024	Review and assess the identified risks and the policies and procedure controlling credit cards issued to council staff and councillors and in respect to expense reimbursements. Test for evidence of compliance.
Operational	IT Security	2024	Gain an understanding of council's IT security controls and benchmark them against the Australian Standard. Test the operation of access controls.
Operational	Fraud and Corruption Management	2024	Gain an understanding and assess the adequacy of the processes through which fraud and corruption is managed, articulated, embedded, monitored and reported. Test for evidence of compliance.



CITY OF WODONGA VIC

wodonga.vic.gov.au

9.3 Place Names Advisory Committee - Minutes of 8 February 2023 and 31 May 2023

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the adopted minutes of the Place Names Advisory Committee meeting held on 8 February 2023 and the draft minutes of the meeting held on 31 May 2023.

SUMMARY

The Wodonga Place Names Advisory Committee is chaired by Cr Libby Hall and currently comprises 7 committee members and is assisted by 3 members of the Wodonga staff.

This committee operates under the Wodonga Place Names Advisory Committee Terms of Reference and meets on a quarterly basis to discuss and determine matters related to naming of public places (parks and reserves, roads and the like) within the municipal area.

The outcomes of the committee are guided by Geographic Place Names Victoria and in accordance with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria document as set out in the *Geographic Place Names Act, 1998*.

The actions and agreements of the February 2023 meeting were adopted at the meeting of the Place Names Advisory Committee held on 31 May 2023. The minutes of the meeting held on 31 May 2023 are in draft format only and will be adopted at the August 2023 meeting of the PNC.

FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

ATTACHMENTS

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - PNC Minutes February 8 2023 [**9.3.1** - 6 pages]
2. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - PNC Minutes 31 May 2023 [**9.3.2** - 6 pages]

DISCUSSION

Naming rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities – 2022 (naming rules) sets out step-by-step information on naming or changing the boundaries of roads, features and localities in Victoria.

These naming rules are the statutory guidelines provided for under section 5 of the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*; they are therefore mandatory for all naming authorities in Victoria – councils, government departments and other authorities, and include all government-owned or administered roads, features (natural or otherwise) and localities.

When a road or feature is not owned or maintained by the council, (such as some cultural centres, sporting centres, education facilities or aged care facilities) the private owners are strongly encouraged to adopt the principles, requirements and procedures detailed in these naming rules.

To ensure the Register of Geographic Names - VICNAMES (the state's authoritative place names register) accurately reflects the status of named roads and features in Victoria, the names of these privately owned roads and features are recorded and these names are also available in Vicmap - the state's authoritative spatial database.

Appropriate naming is essential to identify locations for managing emergencies and delivering goods and services in Wodonga. The naming rules are based on national standards and policies. They provide a strong basis for regulated and unambiguous naming procedures across the state.

They have been developed through detailed consultation with councils, government departments, Traditional Owner Groups, emergency agencies, public service providers and the wider community.

To assist developers in the city, the committee is compiling an inventory of names related to the local area including from the Aboriginal community, recognising native fauna and flora and local, prominent natural landscape features, and in commemorating local individuals or families.

Persons whose rights will be directly affected by this decision

No persons are directly impacted by this report.

RELEVANT LAW

Decisions taken at a Place Named Advisory Committee meeting are done in accordance with the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The Council, at its meeting held on 19 December 2022, Cr Hall was retained as the Council's representative of the Place Names Advisory Committee.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Naming rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities – 2022 sets out step-by-step information on naming or changing the boundaries of roads, features and localities in Victoria.

COUNCIL PLAN AND POLICIES

Strategic objective
Provide transparent governance and strong leadership, demonstrating excellence in the way we do business by being innovative and responsive.

Strategy

Ensure good contemporary governance through accountable and transparent practices, appropriate risk management and continuous improvement.

Strategic objective
Create a welcoming and inclusive city for people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities that is well-connected, which supports people to meet, participate and move safely and access services and opportunities they need.

Strategy
Partner with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to strengthen relationships and foster awareness of our Aboriginal history, heritage and culture.

Foster a sense of belonging and civic pride in our city.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There have been no conflict-of-interest declarations by the following officers involved with the preparation of this report:

Director Planning, Development and Infrastructure - Leon Schultz
Director Planning, Development and Infrastructure - Leon Schultz

9.4 Record of councillor meetings

PURPOSE
To provide a written record of meetings held under the auspices of council and as recognised under section 131(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

SUMMARY
Using council processes to assist decision making
Schedule one of the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020* includes the requirement that a councillor must, in performing the role of a councillor, do everything reasonably necessary to ensure that the councillor performs the role of a councillor effectively and responsibly.

Under this requirement councillors are to ensure that they diligently use council processes to become informed about matters which are subject to council decisions [schedule one, regulation 2(b)]. The list of meetings included in this report, including councillor briefings, are a council process that enables councillors to be informed about matters subject to council decisions.

Summary of the meeting
Under chapter six of the Governance Rules if there is a meeting of councillors that:
1. is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of *Council* or briefing councillors;
2. is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
3. is not a *Council meeting*, *Delegated Committee* meeting or *Community Asset Committee* meeting

the *Chief Executive Officer* must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are:
a. tabled at the next convenient *Council meeting*; and
b. recorded in the minutes of that *Council meeting*.

A summary of recent briefings follows.

FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

Councillor briefing of Monday, May 8, 2023 commencing at 9.30am and concluding at 1.10pm.		
Venue	Council Chamber, council offices, ground floor, 104 Hovell St, Wodonga.	
In attendance		
Ron Mildren	Mayor	All items
Libby Hall	Deputy Mayor	All items
Danny Chamberlain	Councillor	All items
Danny Lowe	Councillor	All items
Kev Poulton	Councillor	Apology
Olga Quilty	Councillor	Apology
Graeme Simpfendorfer	Councillor	All items
Matthew Hyde	CEO	All items
Debra Mudra	Deputy CEO & Director Community Development	All items
Dena Vlekkert	Director Corporate Services	All items
Leon Schultz	Director Planning, Development & Infrastructure	All items
Kevin Scully	Governance Officer	All items
Natasha Donohue	Manager Finance	Item 1
Kellie Davies	Mngr Communications, Marketing & Customer Focus	Item 4
Conflict of interest disclosures		
There were no disclosures		
Items discussed		
1. Draft Budget 2. Review council meeting agenda 3. Committee structures 4. Advocacy review 5. General business		

Councillor briefing of Monday, May 15, 2023 commencing at 9.30am and concluding at 12.15pm.		
Venue	Council Chamber, council offices, ground floor, 104 Hovell St, Wodonga.	
In attendance		
Ron Mildren	Mayor	All items
Libby Hall	Deputy Mayor	All items
Danny Chamberlain	Councillor – attendance by MS Teams. Left briefing at 12noon.	All items
Danny Lowe	Councillor	All items
Kev Poulton	Councillor – attendance by MS Teams. Left briefing at 11.05am	Items 1 & 2
Olga Quilty	Councillor	Apology
Graeme Simpfendorfer	Councillor	Apology
Matthew Hyde	CEO	All items
Debra Mudra	Deputy CEO & Director Community Development	All items
Dena Vlekkert	Director Corporate Services	Items 1, 3 & 4
Leon Schultz	Director Planning, Development & Infrastructure	All items
Kevin Scully	Governance Officer	All items
Jo Murdoch	Managing Director, North East Water (NEW)	Item 2
Dean Jones	Senior Project Manager, NEW	Item 2
John Day	GM, Environment Systems and Operations, NEW	Item 2
Guy Wilson-Brown	GM, Planning and Infrastructure, NEW	Item 2
Natasha Donohue	Manager Finance	Item 3
Conflict of interest disclosures		
There were no disclosures		
Items discussed		
1. Review of council meeting agenda 2. North East Water 3. Review of council meeting agenda continued 4. HotHouse Theatre		

Councillor briefing of Monday, May 29, 2023 commencing at 9.30am and concluding at 1pm.		
Venue	Council Chamber, council offices, ground floor, 104 Hovell St, Wodonga.	
In attendance		
Ron Mildren	Mayor	All items
Libby Hall	Deputy Mayor	All items
Danny Chamberlain	Councillor	All items
Danny Lowe	Councillor	All items
Kev Poulton	Councillor	Apology
Olga Quilty	Councillor	Apology
Graeme Simpfendorfer	Councillor	Apology
Matthew Hyde	CEO	All items
Debra Mudra	Deputy CEO & Director Community Development	All items
Dena Vlekkert	Director Corporate Services	All items
Leon Schultz	Director Planning, Development & Infrastructure	All items
Priya Galketiya	Head of Implementation, Active Energy Precinct	Item 1
Robyn Nicholas	Sustainability Coordinator	Item 1
Hannah Duncan Jones	Director Local Government & Regional Priorities	Item 2
Amy O'Keeffe	Homes Victoria, Senior Policy and Project Officer	Item 2
Simone Hogg	Manager Community Development and Wellbeing	Item 2
Simon Maughan	Manager Planning and Building	Item 2
Conflict of interest disclosures		
There were no disclosures		
Items discussed		
1. Active Energy Precinct 2. Vic Homes Presentation		

Councillor briefing of Monday, June 5, 2023 commencing at 9.30am and concluding at 12.50pm.		
Venue	Council Chamber, council offices, ground floor, 104 Hovell St, Wodonga.	
In attendance		
Ron Mildren	Mayor	All items
Libby Hall	Deputy Mayor	All items
Danny Chamberlain	Councillor	All items
Danny Lowe	Councillor	All items
Kev Poulton	Councillor	Apology
Olga Quilty	Councillor	All items
Graeme Simpfendorfer	Councillor	Apology
Matthew Hyde	CEO	All items
Debra Mudra	Deputy CEO & Director Community Development	Item 3
Dena Vlekkert	Director Corporate Services	Item 3
Leon Schultz	Director Planning, Development & Infrastructure	Item 3
Representatives from NSW Health Infrastructure & Albury Wodonga Health – by MS Teams		Item 3
Conflict of interest disclosures		
There were no disclosures		
Items discussed		
1. Strategic Priorities 2. Report and response to Minister regarding Monitor's report & recommendations 3. Albury Wodonga Health Albury campus redevelopment		

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There have been no conflict-of-interest declarations by the following officers involved with the preparation of this report:

Governance Officer - Kevin Scully
Deputy CEO - Debra Mudra

9.5 Decisions register

PURPOSE

This report provides an update on decisions from previous council meetings.

FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

ATTACHMENTS
Nil

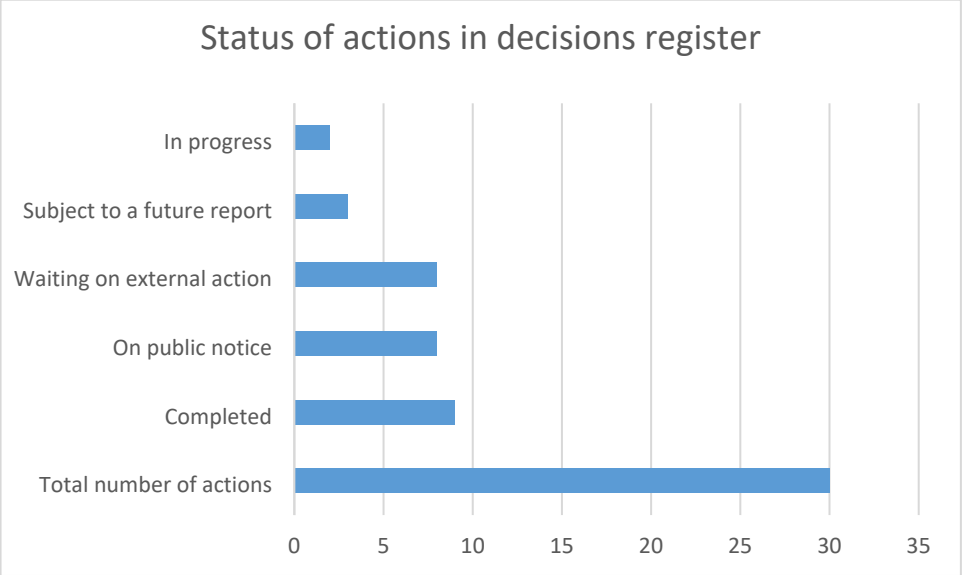
DISCUSSION

There are several Council activities that contribute to good council decision making and increased transparency. These include:

- Making sure council decisions are recorded at council meetings in the meeting minutes and made publicly available;
- Making public confidential report recommendations where it does not breach section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020;
- Delegating certain decision making to council staff or special committees of council;
- Gathering information to help support decisions through:
    - advisory committees
    - councillor briefings and workshops
    - community consultation
    - contact with the community
    - links with other authorities
    - memberships of other bodies.

    Any council decision taken as a result of these processes happens at a formal council meeting or is formally delegated. In this way council decision making remains transparent and accountable to the community.

Regarding decisions made at a formal council meeting, council staff report the progress with these decisions monthly through the decision register.



As indicated in the graph above of the 30 decision actions nine are completed, representing 30%.

Of these remaining 21 there are:

- Eight relating to public notice are progressing on time;
- Eight actions are waiting on external input or external processes such as Regional Roads, DEECA, DTP, and titles register; and
- Three actions are subject to future reports to go back to the council for determination or for information.
- Two actions are in progress.

KEY:
SUBJECT OF FUTURE REPORTS
EXTERNAL FACTORS
BUDGET PROCESS 23/24
PUBLIC EXHIBITION
IN PROGRESS
COMPLETED

Item	Jacob Group of Companies - Section 96A: Proposed Planning Scheme Amendment and Planning Permit Application (19/04/2021)
Resolution	1. That the Council refuse the request to prepare a combined planning scheme amendment and planning permit process in accordance with Section 96A of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* on the grounds that the proposal lacks strategic justification. 2. That council undertakes a detailed strategic planning evaluation of the issue broadly and the spatial land use and development conflict more specifically to identify suitable solutions and as may be appropriate prepare a strategy which either confirms the present zoning, use, and development delineations or provides the necessary strategic justification to support change consistent with the identified solution.
Status	The project has progressed and the draft report is scheduled to be presented to the councillors within the next weeks.

Item	On Road Cycling Safety Program - Department of Transport (13/12/2021)
Resolution	That: 1. Council endorse the implementation of the on-road cycling road safety improvements on Pearce Street and Elgin Boulevard. 2. The improvement works be monitored by RRV and Wodonga Council to ensure the desired outcomes are achieved.
Status	In progress – works to Pearce Street have been completed. Works to Elgin Boulevard are on hold pending an evaluation of the Pearce Street project. Waiting for advice from Regional Roads on the result of the assessment process to see if Elgin Boulevard will proceed.

Item	Coyles Road Deviation - McFarlane's Hill (19/04/2022)
Resolution	That: 1. In accordance with s*chedule 10, clause 2* and *section 223* of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act) Council give Public Notice of its intention to deviate a section of road, as shown in Attachment 2, and described as allotment 2010; 2. The public notice stipulate that persons may make a submission on the proposed deviation in accordance with s*ection 223* of the Act and that written submissions must be received within 28 days of publication of the notice; 3. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to undertake the administrative procedures necessary to enable council to carry out its functions under s*ection 223* of the Act in relation to this matter; 4. If submissions are received under s*ection 223* of the Act: i. a special meeting of council be convened on a date to be determined, to hear from any person or persons who request to be heard in support of a *section 223* written submission; and ii. a report on any *section 223* submissions received by council be

	provided to a future council meeting; and 5. If no submissions are received within 28 days of the notice the council resolve to deviate the road and to publish a notice of the deviation in the Victorian Government Gazette
Status	In progress – Awaiting private landowner's surveyor to finalise plans in conjunction with DEECA (previously DELWP).

Item	**Road discontinuation and sale (27/06/2022)**
Resolution	That: 1. Having considered the submissions and following all the required statutory procedures pursuant to Schedule 10, Clause 3 and Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989,* and Section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the council resolve to discontinue part of the road contained in certificate of title volume 10849 folio 306, known as Road 1/PS417801Q; 2. Following the discontinuation of the road, sell part of the road to the owners of 3 Turner Court for $44,000 and 4 Turner Court for $37,000 by private treaty subject to: a. The discontinued road being consolidated with the purchasers adjoining lot; and, b. The purchasers paying all costs associated with the road discontinuance, survey and land consolidation. 3. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to sign all documents that are required to be signed in connection with the road discontinuation and sale.
Status	In progress – survey plans are sitting with the titles office to be registered into individual lots. Once registered each lot can be transferred to each landowner.

Item	**Wodonga Hills Strategy - New Wodonga Hills Advisory Committee (21/11/2022)**
Resolution	That the Chief Executive Officer be tasked to review the current Wodonga Hills Priority Action Table and provide a report not later than the June 2023 Council Meeting.
Status	The internal working group has finalised work on this matter. A report is to be presented to the Council at its June 2023 meeting for consideration.

Item	**Proposed Park - Butko Park (21/11/2022)**
Resolution	That: 1. Public notice be given of Council's intention to name the open space at the intersection of the Murray Valley Highway, Riverside Boulevard and Klim Street, Butko Park as described in the report and as recommended by the Wodonga Place Names Advisory Committee; 2. The public notice stipulates that persons may make a submission on the proposed name, and those written submissions must be received on a date that is no later than 28 days after the publication of the notice; 3. That if submissions are received, they be referred to the Wodonga Place Names Advisory Committee for consideration and a report back to the Council; and 4. If no submissions are received, the proposed recommendations be adopted without further resolution of the Council, and advice be forwarded to the Registrar of Geographic Names to undertake the gazettal procedure.
Status	Submissions were received from the public. The PNC has reconsidered this matter with a final report scheduled for the June 2023 Council meeting.

Item	Authorisation to Proceed to a Planning Scheme Amendment for Lot 33 Castle Creek Road, Wodonga (20/02/2023)
Resolution	That Council: 1. Requests authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare and exhibit the draft Amendment C139 documents (Attachments 1, 2, 3 and 4) to the Wodonga Planning Scheme under section 8A(2) and (3) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; 2. Authorises the Director Planning, Development and Infrastructure to make minor editorial changes to the amendment documentation and to fulfil any conditions of authorisation prior to public exhibition if required; and 3. If authorised by the Minister for Planning, exhibit the amendment to the Wodonga Planning Scheme in accordance with notice requirements under section 19 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.Cr Libby Hall left the meeting at 7:22 pm.
Status	In progress – documentation with Department of Transport and Planning.

Item	La Trobe University student awards (20/03/2023)
Resolution	That the council provides funding of $9,000 over three years for the following: 1. Four La Trobe University student awards of $500 each, a total of $2,000 annually, for a period of three years, commencing March 2023; and 2. Contributes $1,000 annually to the Albury Wodonga Materials bursary for a total of three years, commencing March 2023.
Status	Completed

Item	Intention to enter into lease - Wodonga Hockey Club (20/03/2023)
Resolution	That: 1. In accordance with Section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020 ("the Act") public notice be given of the intention to grant a lease to Wodonga Hockey Club Incorporated for the premises contained in Certificate of Title Volume 10362 Folio 364 known as the 'Wodonga Hockey Pavilion' on the following terms: a) A 20-year lease, made up of an initial 10 years with 2 further options of 5 years each; b) A rent-free period for the initial 10-year term (equating to a total fee reduction of $1,680.51); and, c. A rental charge of $150 plus GST per annum in the first year of the first 5-year option, with a fixed increase of 2.5% per annum on each commencement date during the term and any further term. 2. The public notice shall stipulate that persons may make a submission on the proposed lease in accordance with Section 115 of the Act and councils Community Engagement Policy, and that all written submissions be received on a date that is at least 21 days after the publication of the notice; 3. The Chief Executive Officer is authorised to undertake the administrative procedures necessary to enable council to carry out its functions under Section 115 of the Act in relation to this matter; and, 4. A report on the Section 115 process, including any submissions received, be provided to a future meeting of Council for a final determination on this matter.
Status	Consultation/submission period has closed. Report for determination is scheduled for the June 2023 Council meeting.

Item	Hospital advocacy (20/03/2023)
Resolution	That Council: 1. Endorse the ongoing acts of the previous resolutions of Council at the February 20, 2023 council meeting in relation to hospital advocacy; 2. Call for expressions of interest from community members to address council; 3. Continue to advocate for a greenfield hospital for Albury Wodonga; and 4. Call special meetings of council as required.
Status	• Health Infrastructure meeting held with councillors June 6th 2023. • Mayor has held media conferences and responded to media requests over the past month. • Attendance at community consultations by NSW Health Infrastructure. • Community leaders attended meeting April 26th. Meeting with NSW • An EOI for community members to register their interest in supporting council's position and attending a workshop on April 26, 2023 was undertaken. • Letter sent to the NSW government regarding their commitment to review hospital redevelopment. • Letter sent February 21 to AlburyCity requesting their participation in advocating for a single site hospital on a greenfield site and lobbying to the NSW government and Federal Government for funding. • Questions sent on March 3 to the Hospital board AGM requesting more information. • A meeting between the two cities' Mayors and CEO occurred 7/3/23 to discuss each Council positions.

Item	Valley Views Estate Proposed Development Plan – Status Update and Proposed Way Forward (17/04/2023)
Resolution	That Council conduct the process in accordance with section 163 of the Local Government Act 2020 for the implementation of a special rates and special charges scheme over Valley Views Estate and present a report to council on the outcomes to be considered as a part of the 2024/2025 budget
Status	Officers have prepared a tender document which has been advertised and has closed. These submissions will be evaluated, and a report prepared for the July Council meeting proposing a way forward.

Item	Draft Council Plan - adjusted 2023 (15/05/2023)
Resolution	That the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, as adjusted 2023, be made available for public comment, with a report on the community engagement to be submitted to the council meeting scheduled for June 26, 2023.
Status	Consultation period completed. Report for determination to council meeting of 26 June.

Item	Draft Budget 2023-2024 and Draft Financial Plan 2023-2033 (15/05/2023)
Resolution	1. Approve the Draft Budget 2023-2024, Draft Financial Plan 2023-2034 and Draft Operating Budget by Business Unit, with the following amendments: • A rate rise of 2%; and • A reduction in overall sterilised cat and dog registration income of $157,370; • The removal of 3 pathway traineeship positions with a reduced expenditure of $229,113; • A further reduction of CEO consultancy expenditure of $45,000; and

	• Deferral of $750,000 capital expenditure for the Racecourse Grandstand from 23/24 to 24/25. be tabled and initialed by the Chairperson for identification, be the Budget prepared by Council for the purposes of Section 94(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 ("the Act") and be endorsed for a 21-day public exhibition period; 2. The Fees and Charges Schedule be included as part of the Draft Budget 2023-2024 reflective of sterilised cat and dog registration fee reduction of $54.00 to $30.00 and pensioner sterilised cat and dog from $27.00 to $20.00 ; 3. The Draft Financial Plan 2023-2024 to 2023-2034 and Draft Operating Budget by Business Unit 2023-2024 be endorsed for a 21-day public exhibition period; and 4. A report on the feedback from the public exhibition period be submitted to the council meeting scheduled for June 26, 2023.
Status	Consultation period completed. Report to be submitted to council meeting of 26 June.

Item	**March 2023 - Quarterly Finance Report (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	That: 1. The budget variations in the March 2023 Quarterly Finance Report be approved. 2. The Finance report be noted.
Status	Approved budget variations have been processed. **Completed.**

Item	**Draft Wodonga Revenue and Rating Plan (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	That Council: 1. Receive the Revenue and Rating Plan Reference Group report as attached; 2. Community feedback be sought on the Draft Revenue and Rating Plan, as attached, with the consultation to extend for a period of 28 days; and 3. A further report be submitted to Council following the completion of the public consultation process for the purpose of adopting the 2023 Revenue and Rating Plan.
Status	Consultation period completed. Report to be submitted to council meeting of 26 June.

Item	**Community Grants Program Review (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	That: 1. Council consolidates all community grant funding and Memorandum of Understandings into the one annual process that is aligned with the budget submission process effective January 2024; and 2. Current Memorandum of Understandings and Community Partnership agreements continue until the end of each agreement. 3. A further report be presented to the Council that sets out a governance framework for the granting of community funds through the annual budget process.
Status	Policy and Guideline review now in progress.

Item	**Community Impact Grants February 2023 (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	That the panel recommendations for the Community Impact Grants program, as follows, be approved: a. Centre Against Violence, Tackling Consent project, $3,280 b. Albury Wodonga Volunteer Resource Bureau, Multicultural Exercise

	Program, $2,680 c. Albury Wodonga Ultimate Frisbee Inc., Border Hat 2023 event, $2,000 d. Wodonga Primary School, Moving Together (Silent Disco), $2,900 e. Murray River Fine Music Association Inc., Murray River Fine Music presents the Flinders Quartet in 'Musical Portraits', $4,000 f. Kiewa Catchment Landcare Groups, Building Cultural Connection via traditional crafts with Aunty Valda Murray, $2,800.
Status	**Completed.**

Item	**Community Infrastructure & Equipment Grants Program, February 2023 (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	That the panel recommendations for the Community Infrastructure and Equipment Grants program, as follows, be approved: a) Albury Wodonga Mountain Bikers Inc., Maintenance Container Hub, $6,980 b) Wodonga Cemetery Trust, Utility Cart, $5,000 c) Wodonga Raiders Junior Football Club, Raiders Next Generation, $3,000 d) Our Native Garden Nursery Inc., Nursery Tables, $8,944 e) Trudewind Road Neighbourhood House Inc., Seats 4 Bottoms, $8,255 f) Wodonga Men's Shed, Workplace Dust Extractor, $2,600 g) Albury-Wodonga Yacht Club, Improved Disability Access, $7,655
Status	**Completed.**

Item	**Flying Fruit Fly Circus MOU (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	1. That Council enter into an agreement and make a $20,000 contribution to Flying Fruit Fly Circus towards the Borderville Festival in Wodonga in 2023; and, 2. That future contributions be subject to the annual Budget deliberations
Status	**Completed**

Item	**Public Toilet Strategy 2023-2033 (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	That: 1. The Council approves the draft Public Toilet Strategy 2023-2033 for public exhibition to obtain community feedback; 2. The Council receives a further report that includes consultation feedback with the final version of the Strategy to be considered for adoption at a future Council meeting
Status	On public exhibition – closes June 13. Report to future council meeting.

Item	**Committees Policy (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	That: 1. The draft Committees Policy, as attached, be placed on public exhibition for 28 days; and 2. A further report on the Committees Policy, incorporating community feedback, be submitted to a future council meeting
Status	On public exhibition – closes June 13. Report to future council meeting.

Item	**Finance and Budget Delegated Committee (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	In exercise of the powers conferred by section 63 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Council resolves that: 1. From the date of this resolution, there be established as a Delegated Committee, the Finance and Budget Delegated Committee. 2. The purpose of the Delegated Committee is to exercise Council's

	functions and powers and to perform Council's duties in relation to finance and budget matters. 3. The members of the Delegated Committee are all councillors. 4. The Chairperson of the Committee is the Mayor, or another councillor appointed by the Mayor, or in the absence of the Mayor, another councillor as provided for in the Governance Rules. 5. A quorum for the Committee is a whole number that is an absolute majority, which is the number of members that is greater than half the total number of members of the Delegated Committee. 6. All members of the Delegated Committee have voting rights on the Delegated Committee. 7. There be delegated to the members of the Delegated Committee the powers, duties and functions set out in the attached Instrument of Delegation (the Instrument). 8. The Instrument: 8.1 comes into force immediately the common seal of Council is affixed to the Instrument; and 8.2 remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it. 9. The powers, duties and functions conferred on the members of the Delegated Committee by the Instrument must be exercised in accordance with any guidelines or policies Council may from time to time adopt. 10. The Instrument be sealed.
Status	Instrument signed and sealed. **Completed**.

Item	**Racecourse Grandstand - update and further information (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	1. That Council not fund any future expenditure on the Wodonga Racecourse Grandstand (other than to make safe and demolition costs if demolition is approved). 2. That Council seek consent of the Grandstand Asset Owner, the Victorian State Government Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action to make a determination on whether to demolish or not the grandstand structure and report back to Council once the final response is received to advise of the next steps.
Status	Letter written to DEECA seeking confirmation as per the Council resolution – awaiting a formal response.

Item	**Intention to enter into lease - Telstra (James Eames Frontage) (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	That: 1. In accordance with Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* ("the Act") the Council grants a lease to Amplitel Pty Ltd for the purpose of a telecommunication facility, for part of the land being Reserve 2 PS064130 contained in Certificate of Title Volume 09943 Folio 605 on the following terms: a. A 20-year lease, made up of four options of five years; and b. A rental charge of $8000 per annum for the first year, with the rent payable indexed year-on-year by 2.5 per cent. c. The lease is subject to the Lessee obtaining planning approval for the construction of a telecommunication facility, the Section 115 process in no way pre-determining the outcome of a planning permit application.
Status	Heads of Agreement has been signed. Lease is conditional on Amplitel getting planning approval.

Item	**Meridian Rise: Proposed Road Deviation - Public Consultation Feedback and Final Recommendation (15/05/2023)**

Resolution	That: 1. Council approves the proposed road deviation and exchange of the unmade government road as shown at attachment 4; 2. Council advises the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) of its decision; 3. Council advises the developer of its decision; and 4. The submitters be advised of the Council decision.
Status	**Completed.**

Item	**Authorisation to Proceed to a Planning Scheme Amendment for the Open Space Strategy (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	That Council: 1. Endorses the draft Wodonga Open Space Strategy and appended documents (Attachments 4 and 5) for public exhibition as a part of a planning scheme amendment; 2. Requests authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare and exhibit the draft Wodonga Open Space Strategy and related proposed amendment documents (attachments 6 to 9) to the Wodonga Planning Scheme under section 8A(2) and (3) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; 3. Authorise the Director Planning, Development and Infrastructure to make minor editorial changes to the amendment documentation and to fulfil any conditions of authorisation prior to public exhibition if required; and 4. If authorised by the Minister for Planning, officers exhibit the amendment to the Wodonga Planning Scheme in accordance with notice requirements under section 19 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.
Status	In progress – documentation with Department of Transport and Planning.

Item	**Proposed Road Names in the Baranduda Fields Sporting Precinct (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	That: 1. Public notice be given of Council's intention to name the main access road into the Baranduda Fields sporting precinct as *Athlete Avenue* and the secondary access road as *Champion Crescent*; 2. That public notice be undertaken in accordance with council's Community Engagement Policy and it stipulates that persons may make a submission on the proposed names, and those written submissions must be received on a date that is no later than 28 days after the publication of the notice; 3. That if submissions are received, they be referred to the Wodonga Place Names Advisory Committee for consideration and a report back to the Council; and 4. If no submissions are received, the proposed recommendations be adopted without further resolution of the Council, and advice be forwarded to the Registrar of Geographic Names to undertake the gazettal procedure.
Status	On public exhibition – closes June 13.

Item	**Wodonga Sports and Leisure Centre and Waves Facility Review (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	That the council: 1. Undertakes the required renewal works included in the existing 2022-23 building renewal budget, including repair works to Wodonga Sports and Leisure Centre (WSLC) aquatics HVAC system at an anticipated cost of

	$700,000; 2. Undertakes works to upgrade the WSLC Aquatics changerooms, including the implementation of adult disability change facilities, at an estimated cost of $500,000; 3. Considers planning and design works associated with a second body of water at Wodonga Aquatics Venue and Event Space (WAVES), for the purpose of additional community programming space; and 4. Investigate future development options for the WSLC, including the future opportunities of the expansion of WAVES and future staged works at Baranduda Fields.
Status	Preliminary discussions underway to discuss scope of works.

Item	**Recreation Facility Development and Maintenance Policy (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	That 1. The Recreation Facility Development and Maintenance Policy, made on 21 March 2016, be revoked; and 2. The Recreation Facility Development and Maintenance Policy, approved by the CEO on 7 February 2022, be noted
Status	Policy revoked. **Completed.**

Item	**Review of the Instruments of Delegation (15/05/2023)**
Resolution	1. In the exercise of the power conferred by s 11(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), council resolves: 1.1There be delegated to the person holding the position, or acting in or performing the duties, of Chief Executive Officer the powers, duties and functions set out in the attached *S5 Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer*, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument. 1.2 The instrument comes into force immediately upon this resolution being made and is signed by the council's Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor. 1.3 On the coming into force of the instrument all previous delegations to the Chief Executive Officer are revoked. 1.4 The duties and functions set out in the instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of council that it may from time to time adopt. 2. In the exercise of the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in the attached *S6 Instrument of Delegation by the Council to members of Council staff (other than the CEO)*, council resolves that: 2.1 There be delegated to the members of council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in the *S6 Instrument of Delegation by the Council to members of Council staff*, the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument. 2.2 The instrument comes into force immediately upon this resolution being made and is signed by the council's Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor. 2.3 On the coming into force of the instrument all previous delegations to members of council staff (other than the Chief Executive Officer) are revoked. 2.4 The duties and functions set out in the instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of council that it may from time to time adopt.

	3. That the *S7 Instrument of Sub-Delegation by the CEO to other staff*, as attached, be received and noted.
Status	Instruments updated. **Completed.**

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There have been no conflict-of-interest declarations by the following officers involved with the preparation of this report:

Governance Officer - Kevin Scully
Deputy CEO - Debra Mudra

10 Notices of motion

There were no Notices of Motion submitted.

11 Petitions

There were no Petitions submitted.

12 General business

Rule 21 of the Meeting Procedure Chapter of the *Governance Rules* states:

21.1 The purpose of general business is to provide councillors with an opportunity to provide an update on their duties and meetings attended and to raise matters such as:

a) A note of thanks or congratulations
b) Advise of attendance at event / meeting
c) Recognition
d) Tributes

21.2 A General Business item is for information only. Matters requiring a council resolution should be raised under urgent business.

21.3 A councillor may speak for up to two minutes in general business.

13 Urgent business

Rule 22 of the Meeting Procedure Chapter of the *Governance Rules* states:

If the *agenda* for an *Council meeting* makes provision for urgent business, business cannot be admitted as urgent business other than by resolution of *Council* and only then if it:

22.1 relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda; and

22.2 cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next Council meeting; or

22.3 involves a matter of urgent community concern.

14 Confidential business

Closure of meeting to the public

Section 66(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* provides that a council may resolve that a meeting be closed to members of the public if the meeting is discussing any of the following:

(a) Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released;
(b) Security information, being information that if released is likely to endanger the security of Council property or the safety of any person;
(c) Land use planning information, being information that if prematurely released is likely to encourage speculation in land values;
(d) Law enforcement information, being information which if released would be reasonably likely to prejudice the investigation into an alleged breach of the law or the fair trial or hearing of any person;
(e) Legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies;
(f) Personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs;
(g) Private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
    (i) relates to trade secrets; or
    (ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage;
(h) Confidential meeting information, being the records of meetings closed to the public under section 66(2)(a);
(i) Internal arbitration information, being information specified in section 145;
(j) Councillor Conduct Panel confidential information, being information specified in section 169;
(k) Information prescribed by the regulations to be confidential information for the purposes of this definition;
(l) Information that was confidential information for the purposes of section 77 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

The item/s listed at item 14 were deemed by the Chief Executive Officer to be suitable for consideration in closed session in accordance with section 3 (1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. In accordance with that Act, the council may resolve to consider these issues in open or closed session.

RECOMMENDATION

That the meeting be closed to members of the public in order to consider matters pursuant to section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020,* and that the meeting be adjourned for two minutes to allow the public to leave the Chamber.

14.1 Confirmation of minutes from previous confidential meeting

Consideration of this item will be closed to members of the public as it contains matters listed under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

(h) Confidential meeting information, being the records of meetings closed to the public under section 66(2)(a).

14.2 Logic land sale

Consideration of this item will be closed to members of the public as it contains matters listed under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

(a) Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.
(g) Private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—

(i) relates to trade secrets; or

(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

An explanation of why this report is being considered in confidential.

This report will consider information relating to land sale prices and associated negotiations between Council and the business.

15 Confidential urgent business

Rule 22 of the Meeting Procedure Chapter of the *Governance Rules* states:

If the *agenda* for an *Council meeting* makes provision for urgent business, business cannot be admitted as urgent business other than by resolution of *Council* and only then if it:

22.4 relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda; and

22.5 cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next Council meeting; or

22.6 involves a matter of urgent community concern.

A confidential urgent business item also needs to stipulate the reason for the matter being considered as confidential in accordance with section 66(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020.*

16 Close of meeting

16.1 Return to open council

RECOMMENDATION

That the ordinary meeting of the council be resumed.

16.2 Adopt the in-camera recommendations

RECOMMENDATION

That the recommendations of the closed meeting of the council be adopted.

16.3 Chairperson to close the meeting

Next scheduled meeting of council: 6pm on Monday June 26, 2023.