



Murrindindi
Shire Council

AGENDA
of the
ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL
to be held on
WEDNESDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2017
in the
ALEXANDRA COUNCIL CHAMBER
commencing at
6.00 pm

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1. PLEDGE, OATH AND RECONCILIATION STATEMENT**2. APOLOGIES AND REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

REF: SF/306

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25 January 2017.

Officer Recommendation:**That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25 January 2017 be confirmed.****4. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

REF: SF/783

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME

5.1 QUESTIONS OF COUNCIL

5.2 OPEN FORUM

REF: SF/130

5.3 PETITIONERS SPEAKING TO PETITIONS

REF: SF/132

6. OFFICER REPORTS

6.1 QUARTERLY COUNCIL PLAN 2013-2017 REPORT - 31 DECEMBER 2016

REF: SF/291 (17/9884)

Attachment: Council Plan Report Year Four – December 2016 (refer *Attachment 6.1* - TRIM: 17/7275)***Purpose:***

This report provides an update on the progress on year four activities listed in the Council Plan 2013-2017 for the second quarter ending on 31 December 2016.

Officer Recommendation:**That the report for the second quarter of the Council Plan 2013-2017 on the status of Year Four Council Plan activities be received.**

Background:

The Council Plan for the period 2013-2017 was adopted by Council at its Ordinary Meeting of 26 June 2013 in accordance with Section 125 of the *Local Government Act 1989*. The annual review was conducted and the Council Plan 2013-2017 Year 4 was adopted by Council at its Special Meeting of 3 August 2016.

Council Plan/Strategies:

The Council Plan is the key planning document which translates Council's obligations under the *Local Government Act 1989* into strategies and actions. Specifically the plan:

- Guides Council's strategic direction
- Identifies Council priorities and strategic indicators
- Contributes to the development of the annual budget for the next four years

The Council Plan is a key document for local community groups, residents, investors, and other levels of government who play a vital role in helping the Council deliver on its commitments. It sets out what we expect to achieve over a four year period and guides the allocation of finances through the Strategic Resource Plan.

Legal/Policy Issues:

Council is obliged under the *Local Government Act 1989* to review its Council Plan on an annual basis.

Financial/Resources/Risk:

The Council Plan, in particular the Strategic Resource Plan, includes Council's long term financial plan and its implementation is supported by the Annual Budget.

Discussion:

The second quarter progress report on year four actions of the Council Plan 2013-2017 is contained in Attachment 6.1.

At the end of the second quarter 5% of activities for the year were complete and 80% of actions were progressing without delays. 2% of actions were not yet scheduled to commence, with 10% of activities being reported as experiencing delays and 14% had been withdrawn.

In addition to its strategic activities, 3% of Council's determined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been achieved by the end of the second quarter. A further 69% of KPIs have been classified as likely to be achieved in the 2016-2017 year, 3% are unlikely to be achieved and an additional 25% of KPIs either unable to be measured yet or assessment would be premature after only two quarters of the financial year.

The highlights for the second quarter include the following:

- Council elections were held during the quarter and significant officer time was directed towards supporting an intensive Council induction program
- Council advocated to the State Government in support of a funding application for the Lake Eildon Houseboat Industry Association's need for road-related infrastructure improvements
- A community engagement process was undertaken concerning Council's mobile library service to elicit community views about the service in an endeavour to establish a more equitable service delivery program across the Shire
- Projections indicate that Council will achieve its supplementary rate income targets for 2016-17 financial year, indicating positive growth in the rate base

- Community representatives were appointed to the Municipal Emergency Planning Committee for the first time during the quarter to contribute to local area emergency planning
- Council's rolling annual electricity consumption for the September quarter has reduced by 9% compared to 2016 and 23% compared to the average for the last five years
- Implementation of Council's Integrated Asset Management System commenced during the quarter which will greatly improve Council's asset management practices, resource allocation and decision making
- Funding from the Central Ranges Local Learning and Employment Network for the Doing Business Better Stage 1 project was secured during the quarter which will support the delivery of the 2017 Murrindindi Business Awards
- Works commenced on the enhancement of the Yea Saleyards, including construction of yarding, roofing and a scale house

Consultation:

Community consultation is undertaken in relation to individual projects and activities identified in the Council Plan. This report provides the opportunity for Council to promote its achievements for the second quarter of the 2016-2017 financial year in relation to the implementation of the strategies from the Council Plan.

Conclusion:

The 31 December 2016 report for the Council Plan 2013-2017 reflects the outcomes of the second quarter for year four of this Council Plan. The majority of activities are on schedule, ongoing or target likely to be achieved reflecting a strong commitment by Council to meet the requirements set by the Council Plan.

6.2 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT TO 31 DECEMBER 2016

REF: FY1-04 (17/7420)

Attachments: 2nd Qtr Finance Report – Attachments (refer *Attachment 6.2* – TRIM 17/10444)

Purpose:

The report provides the Quarterly Financial Report for the period ending 31 December 2016.

Officer Recommendation:

That Council receives the Quarterly Financial Report to 31 December 2016.

Background:

Financial governance is important for a Council's good governance because the consequences of failure can be very significant for a Council.

Councillors, sitting as Council, have an overall accountability for the Council's finances. This comes in two ways. Firstly, the Council is required to prepare and periodically review its long term financial plan. This is called the Strategic Resource Plan and forms part of the Council Plan.

Secondly a Council must prepare and adopt the Annual Budget. The Council must also receive regular financial reporting. As a minimum a Council must receive a Quarterly Financial Report which compares actual and budget revenues and expenses.

The format of the Budget is prepared generally in accordance with both the financial regulations affecting Local Government and the best practice guide for reporting Local Government budgets.

At the end of the financial year, the draft Annual Financial Statements, comprising of the Financial Report, Standard Statements and Performance Statement, are considered by the Audit Advisory Committee and presented to Council prior to them being submitted to the Auditor General.

It is important that the Annual Budget is framed within the parameters of the Strategic Resource Plan and contributes to achieving the strategic objectives specified in the Council Plan.

To enable progress to be monitored throughout the year, Council receives quarterly reports on the Annual Budget, the Council Plan activities, and the Capital Works Program.

Council Plan/Strategies:

This report, in relation to the Annual Budget and quarterly financial reporting, is consistent with the Council Plan 2013-17 Our Council theme which has a strategic objective of delivering visible leadership and advocacy for the community backed by a financially strong organisation. A key strategy objective is to administer sound financial management practices.

Legal/Policy Issues:

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

The *Act* also sets out in section 127 that the Council must prepare a Budget for each financial year.

Then, in section 138, the *Act* requires that Quarterly Financial Reports must be presented to Council.

Financial/Resources/Risk:

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

Discussion:

Annual Council Budget

The Council Budget essentially comprises four components. Firstly it provides a description of the activities and initiatives to be funded in the Annual Budget and how these will contribute to achieving the strategic objectives that are specified in the Council Plan.

Secondly, it describes the various influences which have impacted upon Council's financial situation, including such things as Federal and State funding programs, such as Road to Recovery Allocations or costs such as the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) levies.

Thirdly, it includes detailed analysis including the sources of revenue such as rates, user fees and grants as well as key expenditure categories.

Finally it includes an analysis of the cash flow and Capital Works Statements along with the four Budgeted Standard Statements of:

- Budgeted Comprehensive Income Statement
- Budgeted Balance Sheet (incorporating Changes in Equity)
- Budgeted Statement of Cash Flow
- Budgeted Statement of Capital Works

These four Standard Statements are replicated in the Quarterly Financial Report that is presented to Council (refer *Attachment 6.2 - Statements A – D*).

It is important to note that these Standard Statements are based upon public sector financial reporting, the key principle of which is that Council is required to account for the revenue in the year that it is received rather than when it is expended. As capital works projects and grant funded programs often extend over one financial year, then another principle of public sector reporting is that carry forward adjustments need to be made.

Council, as a part of its Quarterly Financial Report, also undertakes a Budget revision process that allows Budget adjustments to be made in order to better reflect Council's expected financial standing at the end of the financial year. This can mean making revisions to recognise more income received to fund service delivery or capital programs or better reflecting to value of expenses that Council is currently spending.

These four Statements for the quarter to 31 December 2016 are included in *Attachment 6.2*.

Quarterly Financial Report to 31 December 2016

The table below is a reconciliation between Council's Adopted Budget and the Revised Budget figures within the enclosed Statements which include the carry forward of unexpended projects from 2015-16.

Table 1 – Reconciliation of Budget Adjustments:

Reconciliation of Budget Adjustments - December 2016 Quarterly Review	
	Operating Result Surplus / (Deficit)
Adopted Budget 2016/17	946
Carry forward adjustments	(1,285,859)
Other adjustments - as per September 2016 report	393,879
September Revised Budget 2016/17	(891,034)
Rates & Charges	12,012
Fees & Charges	10,976
Grants - Recurrent	(1,033,717)
Grants - Non-Recurrent	210,957
Contributions - Cash	12,175
Reimbursements	44,559
Other revenue - interest	112,500
Employee Benefits	622,941
Materials and Services	96,857
Depreciation and amortisation	(401,195)
Finance Costs (Interest)	76,037
Other expenses	(5,476)
December Revised Budget 2016/17	(1,132,408)

The original Budget operating deficit had been impacted by carry forward adjustments as detailed as part of the September 2016 Budget Review projecting a (\$0.89 million) operating deficit for 2016-17. With revised grant funding together with revision of all operating and Capital Budgets for

the expected year end 30 June 2017 results, Council's Revised Budget for 2016-17 is now forecasting an operating deficit of (\$1.13 million).

It should be noted that the 2016-17 revised Budget has been significantly impacted by the \$0.8 million reduction in capital grant funding that was initially budgeted to be received in 2016-17 under the Roads to Recovery program.

Summary of Budget Adjustments

Rates and waste charges increased by \$12,000 with additional supplementary valuations processed.

User fees have been reduced in Aged Care (\$41,000) driven by service level demand, which are offset by increases of revenue earned in the Building, Planning Services and Local Laws areas.

Reimbursements increased by \$45,000 due to the extension of the municipal building surveying service arrangements with the Mansfield Shire.

Other Revenue increase of \$112,000 relates primarily to increased interest earning on investments through Council's strong cash position.

The decrease in Employee Benefits of (\$623,000) is mainly related to reduced demand for services in the community services area, revised maintenance programs and a number of vacancies that emerged across the organisation due to retirements, resignations and maternity leave.

The favourable budget revision in Materials and Services is detailed in the table below.

Table 2 – Materials & Services Summary:

Total Materials and Services	
Utilities	27,072
Contractors	(168,367)
Legal Expenses	(24,296)
Insurance	48,811
Materials	133,359
Contributions	152,278
Consultants	(72,000)
	96,857

As highlighted previously in Table 1, Council has a projection of \$623,000 savings in Employee Benefits due in part to staff vacancies. To ensure continuity in the delivery of capital works programs and existing service levels in light of these staff vacancies, it was necessary to increase contractor and consultant expenses above Budget expectations (\$168,000 and \$72,000 respectively), though this allocation remains short of the overall underspend on Employee Benefits.

Savings continue to be made across Council in the areas of utilities, insurance and purchase of materials through more strategic procurement activities, and use of more efficient equipment, technology and business processes.

Depreciation has been adjusted by \$401,000 due to revised accounting treatment for amortisation of Landfill Airspace in accordance with audit requirements.

The Annual Revised Budget for 30 June 2017 incorporates all adjustments detailed above.

Balance Sheet (Statement B)

The Balance Sheet – Statement B as at 31 December 2016 shows Cash & Cash Equivalents \$975,000 above the 31 December revised budget figure. This is related to the improved year to date operating result as presented within the Income Statement as well as better than forecast results in managing Council's accounts receivables.

The overall Revised Budget position maintains a higher level of cash as at 30 June 2017 of \$22.8 million which is \$0.37 million above the September 2016 Revised Budget of \$22.5 million. The bulk of this relates to the carry forward of nominated capital projects of \$0.28 million.

Cash Flow Statement (Statement C)

This statement provides a more holistic picture and reports the important information on Council's cash inflows and outflows. The *Net cash flow from operating activities* line in the Cash Flow Statement (a cash view of the operating statement) shows from the Revised Budget an increase of \$45,000 when compared to the first quarter review. The bulk of this adjustment is in grants and reduced payments to suppliers as detailed in summary of Budget adjustments. *Net cash used in investing activities* (Capital Works) shows an overall decrease of (\$0.28 million) due to some projects that are highlighted to be carried forward into 2017-18 and *Net cash used in financing activities* (mainly Trust & Deposits) remains consistent with the September 2016 review.

Non Discretionary Cash and Council Reserves (Statement E)

Included as part of this report is an additional reconciliation flowing from the Cash Flow Statement of Council's Non Discretionary Cash Flow requirements. This reconciliation lists all Council reserves together with funds held as Deposits or Trust which are required to be refunded, and an allowance for provision of employee entitlements – being a nominal amount of 25% of Council Annual Leave Liability and 25% of the current Long Service Leave Liability by 30 June 2017. This is then offset against the level of projected cash at year end.

Operating – Year to Date Review

Overall the Income Statement reflects minimal variances in operating revenue, however showing substantial year to date savings on operating expenditure, with several projects behind anticipated expenditure Budgets.

The Year to Date Summary of the Income Statement for the period ending 31 December 2016 is provided in Table 3 as follows.

Table 3 – Summary of Income Statement:

	YTD Budget	YTD Actual	Variance
	\$k	\$k	\$k
Revenue	24,983	24,977	(6)
Expenses	11,558	11,004	554
Surplus	13,425	13,973	548

The Year To Date (YTD) operating result at 31 December 2016 shows income slightly behind by (\$6,000) and expenditure down \$554,000 generating a larger than expected YTD surplus of \$548,000 or 4% better than the year to date budgeted surplus.

The key components comprising both revenue and expenses variances are summarised by category in Tables 4 and 5 as follows.

Table 4 – Key Revenue Component Variance:

Variance		
\$k		
(6k)	Unfavourable to Budget	
Key Components	Type	Particulars
20	Statutory Fees & Fines	Favourable variance on Building Fees \$8,000, Planning Fees \$4,000 and Local Laws \$5,000.
(41)	User Fees	Unfavourable variances in the Home Care Area driven by service level demand – Home Care (\$25,000), Property Maintenance (\$8,000) and Respite Care (\$7,000).
13	Reimbursements	Favourable variance year to date Home Care Veterans Affairs \$10,000.

Table 5 – Key Expense Component Variance:

Variance		
\$k		
554	Favourable to Budget	
Key Components:	Type	Particulars
479	Employee Benefits	<p>Year to date saving across organisation due to vacant positions or in the Community Services area driven by service level demand. Favourable variance relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged & Disability \$43,000 • Business Services (workcover savings) \$40,000 • Children’s Services \$14,000 • Environmental Programs \$11,000 • Information Technology \$14,000 • Planning Service \$36,000 • Waste Management \$14,000 • Youth Services \$12,000 • Recreation Services – Pools \$18,000 • Infrastructure Operations \$188,000 <p>Plus numerous minor variations spread across programs.</p>
76	Materials & Services	<p>Favourable variance mainly relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged and Disability Services \$39,000 • Administration \$66,000 • Customer Service \$28,000 • Library Operations \$15,000 • Planning Services \$11,000 • Waste Management \$40,000 • Facilities Maintenance \$33,000

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure Maintenance (\$148,000) offset by wages • Numerous minor variance spread across programs <p>It should be noted these are year to date variances to Budget. Adjustments have been made to Revised Budget to reflect forecast position for 30 June 2017.</p>
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Capital - Year to Date Review

As at 31 December 2016, Capital Works is \$2,000 above the year to date Budget of \$3,160,000.

Table 6 – Summary of Capital Works completed (Financial):

	YTD Budget	Actuals	Variance
	31/12/16	31/12/16	31/12/16
Asset Category	\$	\$	\$
Land	-	10	(10)
Buildings	1,399,204	1,407,117	(7,913)
Plant , Machinery & Equipment	243,829	246,968	(3,139)
Roads & Paths	645,755	642,403	3,352
Bridges	515,990	510,035	5,955
Footpaths and Cycleways	188,184	190,270	(2,086)
Stormwater Network	71,700	71,200	500
Furniture, Office Equipment and Software	50,608	48,124	2,484
Library Materials	45,132	45,957	(825)
Total Capital Works	3,160,402	3,162,084	(1,682)

With minimal Year to Date variance, the Capital Works Program overall appears to be running along well as at 31 December 2016. The overall Budget had increased from \$7.15 million to \$12.37 million due to unexpended capital work projects that had been previously forecast to be completed by 30 June 2016 (reported to Council in August 2016) and the inclusion of several new grant funded capital works projects – which were detailed separately as a part of the September Quarterly Review.

As part of the December Review for 2016-17, Budgets have again been revised with the inclusion of additional grant funded projects, and any identified savings that are forecast to be achieved by 30 June 2017 position. In addition, projects that will be required to be carried forward for completion in the 2017-18 financial year (\$285,000) and will be reflected in next year's Budget have been identified and adjusted accordingly. These adjustments are detailed in Table 7 on the next page.

Table 7 – Capital Works Program Revised Budget:

Revision of 2016-17 Capital Works Program	Capital Works Budget
Adopted Budget 2016/17	7,153,893
Projects carried forward - as per September 2016 report	4,383,137
New grant funded projects - as per September 2016 report	837,735
September Revised Budget 2016/17	12,374,765
<i>Projects identified to be carried forward into 2017/18</i>	
Timber Tramway Museum renewal	30,098
Marysville Tourism & Art Centre grant funded project	50,000
Eildon Boat Ramp repairs	28,000
Murchison Street Carpark	30,000
Flood levee Buxton	46,800
Corporate IT systems upgrade	100,000
Project savings	177,659
December Revised Budget 2016/17	11,912,208

Further details by category can be found in Statement D and in the separate report detailing progress on the Capital Works Program for 2016/17 on this evening's agenda.

Consultation:

The *Local Government Act 1989* (the *Act*) requires that Councils give public notice of their annual review of the Council Plan (which includes the Strategic Resource Plan) and also its Annual Budget. All submissions received by Council must be considered, in accordance with section 223 of the *Act*.

Conclusion:

Awareness by Councillors of general budgeting and reporting requirements will facilitate the preparation of the Annual Budget and Strategic Resource Plan. Operating performance for the December 2016 quarter has been largely in line with the total Budget. Council remains in a favourable cash position despite the challenges that it faces.

6.3 DECEMBER 2016 QUARTERLY REPORT – CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM 2016-2017

REF: 17/9680

Attachments: Infrastructure Capital Works Progress Report (refer *Attachment 6.3 – TRIM 17/9681*)

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the December quarterly update on Council's 2016-2017 Capital Works Program. The report ensures that Council is advised of the progress of the Capital Works Program.

Officer Recommendation:

That Council notes the December 2016 Quarterly Report – Capital Works Program 2016-2017.

Background:

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 23 July 2012 Council resolved that a quarterly report on the progress and financial status of the Capital Works Program be incorporated in Council's regular reporting cycle.

This report represents the second quarter report of the 2016-2017 Capital Works Program. The period of reporting is from 1 October 2016 to 31 December, 2016.

The 2016-2017 Capital Works Program is comprised of those projects endorsed by Council as part of the 2016-2017 Capital Works budget as well as those projects identified for carry forward from the 2015-2016 program.

Council Plan/Strategies:

This report is consistent with the Council Plan 2013-2017 strategic objectives:

- 'We will advocate for the provision of infrastructure and services that support business growth'
- 'We will use resources more efficiently and effectively'
- 'We will apply a whole of life approach to the management and maintenance of Council's assets'

Legal/Policy Issues:

Council is obliged to prepare a budget annually. The preparations of a detailed Capital Works Program informs and significantly impacts on the budget.

Financial/Resources/Risk:

There is a risk that Council may not invest enough in the replacement of infrastructure to maintain services reasonably required by the community. The preparation of a Ten Year Capital Improvement Plan seeks to mitigate this risk by informing Council of the financial impacts of investment in capital replacement.

The consequence of an insufficient capital investment in replacement is a widening infrastructure gap. The adoption of a Ten Year Capital Improvement Plan provides Council with the ability to manage the infrastructure renewal gap.

Timely reporting of financial issues assists in early identification of the need to reallocate budget where required. Reporting of project progress also provides Council and the community with an understanding of when projects will commence and any delays if they occur.

Discussion:

Works undertaken during the second quarter of the 2016-2017 Capital Works Program generally consists of the scoping, planning design and procurement phases of the 2016-2017 capital works projects.

This report provides commentary on the following features of the program:

1. Major areas of expenditure for the quarter.
2. Details of projects where physical works are anticipated to commence during the next reporting period.
3. Details of the projects that are delayed or other significant issues that have arisen which affect the budget for the project. This reporting gives Council the opportunity to vary the scope of a project if required.

4. Projects completed in the December quarter.
5. Additional project information.
1. Major areas of expenditure for the quarter

The major areas of expenditure for the December quarter include:

- Landfill - \$104,000
 - Eildon Town Centre - \$230,000
 - Yea Civic Centre Precinct Project - \$70,000
 - Bridge/Component Renewal - \$142,000
 - Roads - \$114,000
 - Alexandra Library – Refurbishment and Roof Renewal - \$63,000
 - Settlers Reserve, Marysville, Toilet Block - \$15,000
 - Alexandra Offices – Toilet Renewal - \$28,000
 - Kinglake Art History Walk - \$20,500
 - Yea Regional Saleyards – Stage 2 Construction - \$214,000
 - Marysville Community Centre Car Park Lighting - \$9,000
2. Details of projects where physical works are anticipated to commence during the next reporting period of 1 January 2017 to 31 March 2017

Physical works which are anticipated to commence in the next reporting period includes:

- Leckie Park Pavilion Upgrade
 - Sealed Roads Rehabilitation Program
 - Gravel Road Re-sheeting Program
 - Path Program
 - Bus Shelter Program
3. Details of the projects that are delayed or other significant issues that have arisen which affect the budget for the project. This reporting, if done in a timely manner, gives Council the opportunity to vary the scope of a project if required.
 - Nil
 4. Projects completed in the December quarter:
 - Cultural Heritage Plan for Alexandra to Eildon Rail Trail
 - Marysville Community Centre - Lighting
 - Racecourse Road/Yea High School Carpark
 - Maintongoon Road Culvert Replacement
 - Revitalisation – Eildon Town Square
 - High Street and Main Street, Eildon Access Improvements
 - Alexandra Library – Refurbishment and roof replacement
 - Settlers Reserve Toilet Block – Refurbishment

- Alexandra Shire Office – Toilet refurbishment
- Kinglake Art History Walk
- Alexandra Landfill - Upgrade

5. Additional Project Information

Additional Grant Funded Projects – Council has received \$288,433 of Black Spot grant funding for Eildon Jamieson Road, Eildon.

Consultation:

No community consultation was required in the development of this report.

Conclusion:

The reporting on the capital works program at the second quarter of the year for 2016-2017 informs Council of the progress and any major variances for each project.

6.4 DEVELOPMENT SERVICES QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT – DECEMBER 2016

REF: FY64-04 (17/9374)

Purpose:

To provide Councillors with the December Quarterly Activity Report in relation to Development Services.

Officer Recommendation:

That Council note the Quarterly Activity Report for the Development Services Department for the December 2016 Quarter of the 2016-17 Financial Year.

Background:

The Development Services Department reports quarterly to provide information about the services provided by the Department, including activity levels, key measures aligned to the needs and expectations of the of the development industry, and indicators relevant to activity in selected industry sectors. The provision of Quarterly Activity Reports will continue to inform Council and the public of the work being carried out by the Development Services Department, and importantly, encourage customer feedback to inform improved performance.

Council Plan/Strategies:

This report is consistent with the Council Plan 2013-2017 strategic objective to deliver quality customer outcomes through continuous improvement.

Legal/Policy Issues:

There are no legal issues associated with the quarterly activity report.

Financial/Resources/Risk:

There are no financial costs relating to the preparation of this report.

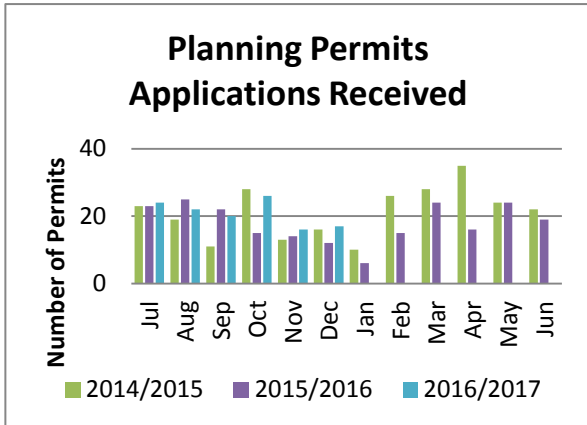
Discussion:

1. Permit Activity (Building and Planning)

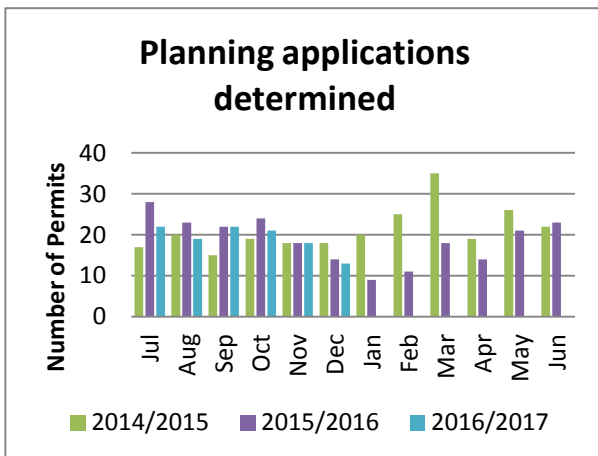
The following information indicates activity levels and performance against industry benchmarks and previous years' performance. The statistics indicate continued good performance against these performance benchmarks.

In addition, the statistics can provide an indication of the local economy. The number of Planning Permit applications received is tracking well compared to last year. While the number of Building Permits issued is continuing to lag behind the same period last year, the value of building works for which building permits were issued in the December quarter is similar to last year.

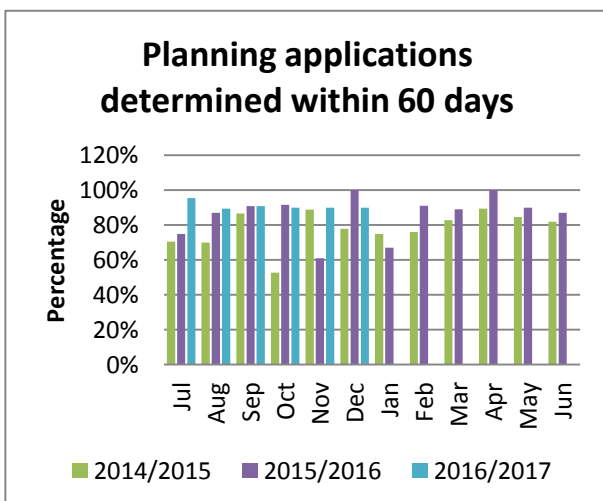
Planning Unit



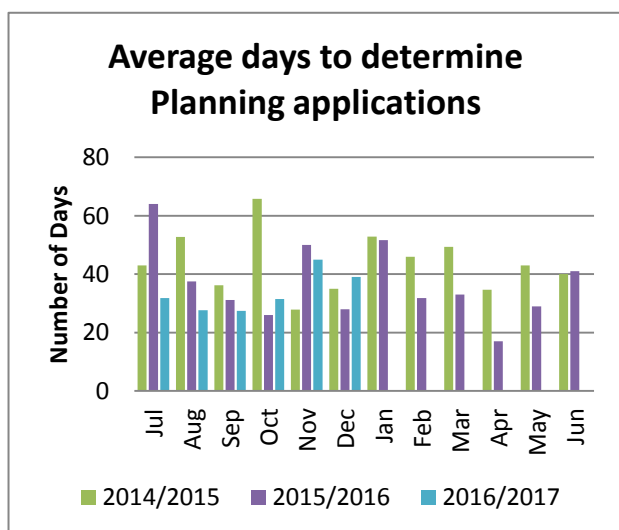
This chart details the number of applications received by month, compared with the previous financial year. The number of applications received includes new planning applications, requests to amend existing planning permits and planning consents. For the 2014-2015 there was a total of 255 applications received, and for the 2015-2016, 217 applications were received. Year to date for 2016-2017, 125 applications have been received.



The number of applications determined by month, compared to previous financial years is demonstrated in this chart. The number of applications determined for 2014-2015 were 254 and for the 2015-2016 financial year there were 225 applications determined. Year to date for 2016-2017, 115 applications have been determined.



The following chart details the percentage of planning permits issued within 60 days. The statutory time frame to issue permits under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* is 60 days. In 2014-2015, 78% of permits were issued within the statutory time frame, with 86% of permits issued within the statutory time frame in 2015-2016. For the 2016-2017 financial year to date, 89% of permits were issued within the statutory time frame.



The final planning chart details the average number of days taken to determine planning permits, on a month by month basis. This includes officer delegated decisions and decisions of Council. The average number of days to determine planning permits in 2014-2015 was 44 days, with the average number of days for 2015-2016 being 37. For the 2016-2017 financial year to date, the average number of days to determine permits is 34 days.

Comparison with other municipalities – Planning Permits

Council is required to report planning permit activity on a monthly basis to the State Government, which is then compared against various regions and groups of municipalities within the whole of Victoria. The following table provides a brief outline of how Murrindindi is performing this financial year to date:

Benchmark	MSC	Peri Urban Region	Rural Municipalities	State Wide
Planning permits determined within 60 days (YTD)	92%	72%	75%	62%
Average days to determination (YTD)	43	80	62	77

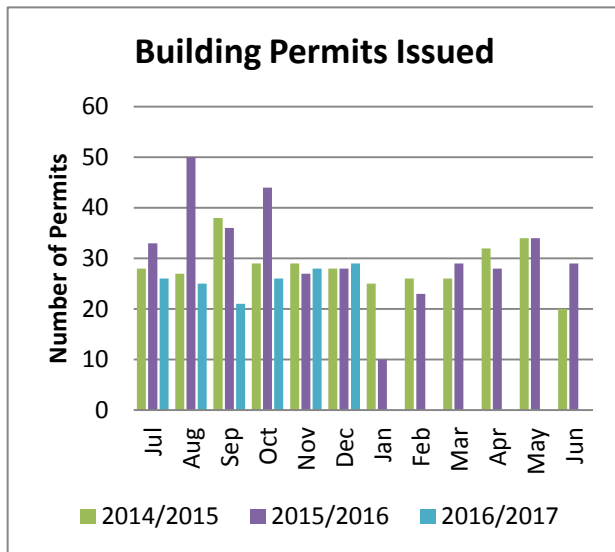
Note: There is a small discrepancy in what is registered on the State Government website compared to figures held by Council. This is due to a software issue with Authority, and Council officers have been working with Civica to resolve this issue. The figures in the table reflect the information that is publicly available.

Planning decision integrity for the 2015-2016 financial year

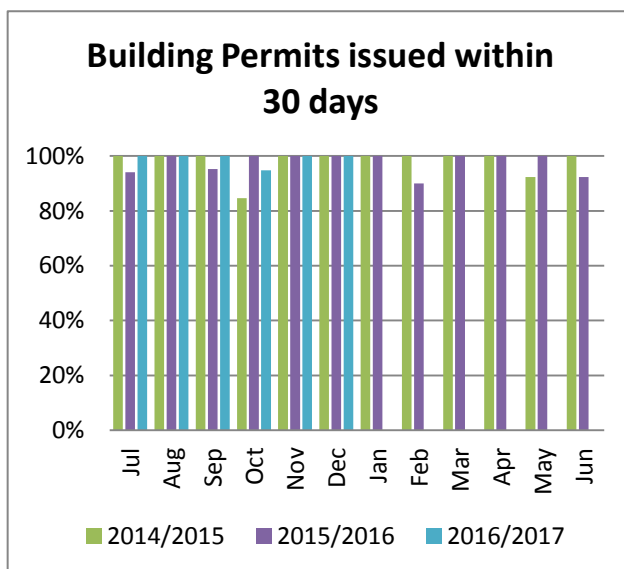
Decision	Quantity	Issued By
Permit or consent	193	Delegated officer
Withdrawal	6	Applicant
Permit of consent	10	Council
Refusal	3	Council

Outcomes of VCAT Hearings		
Ghin Ghin Road, Ghin Ghin	Refusal	Against the recommendation of officers and resolution of Council.
1556 Goulburn Valley Highway, Thornton	Issued Permit	In accordance with both officer recommendation and resolution of Council.

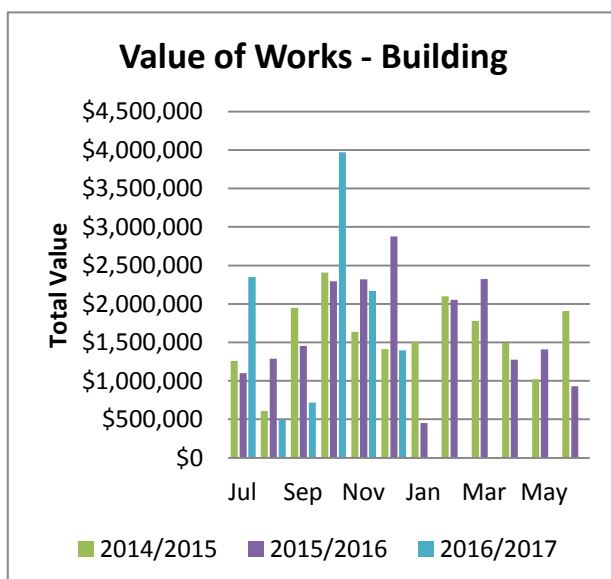
Building Unit



This chart details the number of building permits issued within Murrindindi Shire, including both municipal and private building surveyor permits. The total for 2014-2015 is 321. For the 2015-2016 year, 371 permits were issued. For the 2016-2017 financial year to date, 155 permits have been issued. Permits issued are therefore tracking around 20% lower than the previous year. Anecdotal evidence from the construction industry does not support this statistic with all contacts reporting growth in sales.



This chart details the percentage of building permits issued by the municipal building surveyor within the unit's 30 day Key Performance Indicator (KPI) timeframe. The overall percentage of permits issued within 30 days for the 2014-2015 financial year was 98%. For the 2015-2016 year, 98% of permits were issued within 30 days. For the 2016-2017 financial year to date, 100% of permits have been issued within 30 days.



The value of works for which permits were issued by Murrindindi Shire Council in the December quarter was \$7.54 million which is on par with the same period last year (\$7.49 million).

2. Strategic Studies and Projects

The current studies and amendments are listed below:

- C57 proposes to rezone land at 1274 Whittlesea-Yea Road, Kinglake West from Rural Living Zone to Township Zone and concurrently approve a planning permit application for a service station, convenience shop, postal agency, food and drink premises and associated car parking and signs. This amendment has been referred to a planning panel and a hearing is expected at the end of February 2017.
- C59 proposes to rezone part of 265 Whittlesea-Kinglake Road, Kinglake from Public Use Zone 7 (PUZ7) – Other, to Public Use Zone 5 (PUZ5) – Cemetery and Crematorium, and to remove the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 (ESO1) – High Quality Agricultural Land, from the subject site. This amendment has been on exhibition and is awaiting further information from the proponents.

3. Promotional Activities, Participation at Forums and Community Meetings

The following activities have occurred during the quarter:

Media releases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Planning and Subdivision fees • Development Services Quarterly Activity Report
Community consultation/information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers and Councillors hosted/facilitated an information session for submitters to the proposed Kinglake West Service Station and Retail development.

4. Customer Satisfaction and Feedback

Customer satisfaction response in the December quarter of the 2016-17 financial year:

Question	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
The Professionalism of the team was:	3			
The responsiveness of the planning team was:	2	1		
The planning team’s overall attention to detail was:	3			
From lodgement to determination of your planning application, the planning team's performance in keeping you informed was:	3			

The applicants of all planning applications determined in the quarter were invited to comment on the service they received and three responses were received. All respondents reported that they had a pre-application meeting; one was completed over the phone and two at a meeting.

Example comment received *“Having a responsive and informative Planning Unit is beneficial to all who become involved with the Unit.”*

Officers continue to look at survey results to assess feedback themes and identify areas for improvement. Of note, a key theme is the value of personalised assistance when customers either find they don’t understand the information they need to supply, or need some assistance in understanding any component of the process. Another highlighted theme is the frustration customers experience when asked for additional information. They express annoyance that it extends the amount of time that it takes to have applications assessed. A review of the checklists that are made available to customers is underway, and the feedback can be used to refine the initial information provided.

Consultation:

There was no requirement for community consultation in the development of this report.

Conclusion:

The provision of Quarterly Activity Reports will continue to inform Council and the public of the work being carried out by the Development Services Department, and importantly, encourage customer feedback to inform improved performance.

6.5 STREET AND PUBLIC LIGHTING INSTALLATION POLICY – 2017 REVIEW

REF: 17/8076

Attachments: Street Lighting Policy – 2017 Revision (refer *Attachment 6.5* – TRIM 17/8090)

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's adoption of the revised Street and Public Lighting Installation Policy (Policy).

Officer Recommendation:

That Council adopt the revised Street and Public Lighting Installation Policy as contained in Attachment 6.5.

Background:

Council receives a number of requests for lighting in new developments and for additional street lighting in established areas. Council had no formal Policy to deal with the request and disputes arising regarding a Council decision. A Policy was adopted by Council at its Ordinary Meeting 26 February 2014 to assist in providing information to proponents and or objectors regarding the criteria used in assessing requests. This Policy has now reached the review date.

Council Plan/Strategies:

The Street and Public Lighting Policy is consistent with the Council Plan 2013-2017 objectives:

- 'We will administer sound financial and management practices'
- 'We will use resources more efficiently and effectively'
- 'We will apply a whole of life approach to the management and maintenance of Council's assets'

Legal/Policy Issues:

Under the *Road Management Act*, Schedule 7A, Section 2 – Power to install street lighting the following applies:

'A responsible road authority may, at its discretion, cause to be installed street lighting on roads or parts of roads for which it is the coordinating road authority or the responsible road authority to the extent and in a manner which it considers appropriate having regard to its road management functions.'

In relation to the Australian Standard AS/NZS 1158 1.1.2005 – Lighting for roads and public spaces Section 1.2 Application - the following applies:

'Subject to the requirements of the applicable laws, the choice of whether to install a road lighting scheme in compliance with this Standard and, if so, which subcategory of lighting is appropriate, rests with the client (usually the applicable road controlling authority). This decision is typically based on factors such as night time traffic flows and other patterns of use.'

In the most cases, Council is the responsible road authority and therefore maintains the discretion for the decision to install street lighting.

Financial/Resources/Risk:

This policy is resourced within existing officer duties. An allocation for installation can be funded annually through Council's budget process for Road Safety items.

Discussion:

Council officers have implemented the Policy since adoption. The Policy successfully provides a framework for assessing the need for new street lighting installations and provides an equitable and consistent approach to responding to requests for new street lighting or public lighting installations received by Council from members of the community.

When reviewing the policy, officers have determined that no changes are required other than minor changes updating the relevant department name. The Policy has been well accepted by the community and no negative feedback has been received.

Consultation:

There was no requirement for community consultation in the review of this Policy.

Conclusion:

This Policy outlines the process for assessing the need for new street and public lighting installations and includes the procedure for the community and developers to make requests for such lighting installations to Council.

6.6 MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS ALLOWANCES

REF: SF/ 286

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with a recommendation to adopt the Mayoral and Councillors Allowances as published in the *Victoria Government Gazette* on 24 November 2016.

Officer Recommendation:

That Council adopt the Mayoral Allowance of \$59,257 plus 9.5% superannuation and the Councillor Allowance of \$19,833 plus 9.5% superannuation.

Background:

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 23 November 2016, the revised Mayor and Councillor Allowances were endorsed for public consultation in accordance with Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the *Act*).

Submissions were sought from the public and the submission period was advertised in local newspapers and on Council's website.

Council Plan/Strategies:

This report is consistent with the Council Plan 2013-2017 Our Council to ensure that Council is exercising good governance principles.

Legal/Policy Issues:

Within six months after each general election, Council is required to review and determine the annual allowances that will be paid to the Mayor and Councillors. Allowances are to be within the allowance range set by the Government for Category 1 Councils.

The Councillor Reimbursement Policy supports the implementation of the *Act* and its various regulations, including the Councillor Code of Conduct.

Financial/Resources/Risk:

The Minister for Local Government reviews the limits and ranges of the Mayoral and Councillor allowances and determined the current levels under Section 73B of the *Act* as per the Government Gazette of 24 November 2016.

Discussion:

Public submissions in relation to Council's initial allowance determination were invited under section 223 of the *Act*. Section 223 requires Council to allow for a 28 day period in which submissions can be received, this period ended on Friday 13 January 2017.

No submissions were received by Council.

Consultation:

The proposed Mayoral and Councillor allowances were advertised for public consultation and submissions sought on Council's website and in the following publications:

Newspaper / Other	Publishing Date(s)
<u>Newspaper:</u>	
Alexandra Standard	14/12/2016
Marysville Triangle	16/12/2016
North Central Review	13/12/2016
Yea Chronicle	14/12/2016

Conclusion:

It is good governance for Council to update and adopt allowances for the Mayor and Councillors in accordance with provisions of the *Act* and also allow the community the opportunity to place submissions.

6.7 REVIEW OF COUNCILLOR REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

REF: 17/10018

Attachments: Councillor Reimbursement Policy (refer *Attachment 6.7* – TRIM 17/10012)

Purpose:

This report is provided to enable Council to adopt a revised Councillor Reimbursement Policy (Policy).

Officer Recommendation:

That Council adopts the revised Councillor Reimbursement Policy as contained in Attachment 6.7.

Background:

Councils are required under the *Local Government Act 1989* (the *Act*) to have a Councillor Reimbursement Policy. The current Policy was adopted in January 2014 with a review date of February 2017.

The review of such policies is part of the suite of responsibilities for a new Council following their election.

Council Plan/Strategies:

Review of the Policy supports the Council Plan 2013-2017 Strategic Objective under the Our Council Goal to use sound financial management practices.

Legal/Policy Issues:

Section 75B of the *Act* requires that a Council must adopt and maintain a policy in relation to the reimbursement of expenses for Councillors. The Policy must be available for inspection at the office of Council.

Financial/Resources/Risk:

The review of the Policy seeks to manage the cost to Council and Councillors in fulfilling their duties

Discussion:

The current Councillor Reimbursement Policy provides for a review in February 2017. In conducting this review it is timely to not only identify where circumstances have changed but also to look at a range of other Council's policies to identify some areas that should be addressed.

In particular, it is appropriate that this Policy be reconsidered in light of the review of the Councillor Code of Conduct.

Areas of change to the current Policy that are proposed by this review include:

- A need to update the list of communications equipment provided to Councillors
- Documentation of insurance cover for Councillors
- Acknowledgement of partner attendance at civic functions with the cost of this attendance being met by the Councillor, unless otherwise approved by the Mayor and/or Chief Executive Officer
- Reporting on the payment of Mayoral and Councillor Allowances and reimbursement of costs as part of the quarterly financial report to Council

Consultation:

There was no community consultation required in the review of this Policy.

Conclusion:

It is good governance for Council to regularly review its policies and to recognise the costs involved in Councillors undertaking their duties.

6.8 AUDIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

REF: 17/10459

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to recommend the appointment of an external independent member to Council's Audit Advisory Committee.

Officer Recommendation:

That Council appoints Michele Sheward to the Audit Advisory Committee as an external independent member in accordance with provisions of the Audit Advisory Committee Charter.

Background:

The primary objective of the Council's Audit Advisory Committee is to assist Council in the effective conduct of its responsibilities for financial reporting, management of risk, maintaining a reliable system of internal controls and facilitating the organisation's ethical development.

The Audit Advisory Committee is established to assist the co-ordination of relevant activities of management, the internal audit function and the external auditor to facilitate achieving overall organisational objectives in an efficient and effective manner.

The Charter of the Audit Advisory Committee is the primary instrument outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Audit Advisory Committee and Audit Advisory Committee members.

Following the conclusion of Michele Sheward's three year term on the Committee, one vacancy exists for an independent external Committee member.

Council Plan/Strategies:

This report is consistent with the Council Plan 2013-2017 Our Council Goal and Strategic Objective to administer sound financial management practices.

Legal/Policy Issues:

Appointment of a member to the Audit Advisory Committee is consistent with the Audit Advisory Committee Charter Clause 2(b) which allows membership of three external independent persons. The term is two years with the option for a further one year.

Financial/Resources/Risk:

An honorarium of \$2,000 per annum is budgeted to be paid to external independent members of the Audit Advisory Committee.

Discussion:

Council officers have sought expressions of interest from the community to fill the vacant position on the committee. One expression of interest was received from Michele Sheward.

Michele Sheward has served as a Committee member for the last three years, and is seeking to continue in her role as a Committee member. She was appointed Chair of the Committee for the 2016/17 financial year. She is a qualified accountant and CPA and has had over 30 years experience in financial assessments, management and control. She also holds positions on the Goulburn Strathbogie Olive Growers Association (Treasurer) and is member of the Yarck Cemetery Trust.

Michele's expression of interest demonstrates an understanding of the requirements and function of the Audit Advisory Committee as well a desire to be able to apply her skills and experiences towards serving the important role that this Committee plays as a part of Council's governance framework.

The Committee Charter requires an evaluation of applicants be undertaken by the Mayor, a Council Committee Member (in this case the Corporate Services Portfolio Councillor) and the Chief Executive Officer. All three have indicated a willingness to recommend to Council the appoint of Michele Sheward to the Committee.

Consultation:

The Expression of Interest was advertised on Council's website and through the statutory newspapers (refer below) in January 2017 calling for submissions:

Newspaper / Other	Publishing Date(s)
<u>Newspaper:</u>	
Alexandra and Eildon Standard	18/01/17, 25/01/17
Yea Chronicle	18/01/17, 25/01/17
Marysville Triangle	20/01/17, 27/01/17
North Central Review	17/01/17, 24/01/17
<u>Website</u>	16/01/17 – 10/02/17

Conclusion:

The filing of the vacancy for the external independent member to the Audit Advisory Committee will provide continuity and stability of representation in successive years.

7. SEALING REGISTER

REF: 13/6325

8. COUNCILLOR PORTFOLIO REPORTS**8.1 LAND USE PLANNING PORTFOLIO**

Cr M Rae:

8.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO

Cr J Ashe:

8.3 INFRASTRUCTURE AND WASTE PORTFOLIO

Cr E Lording:

8.4 CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Cr L Dunscombe:

8.5 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO

Cr R Bowles:

8.6 COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Cr S McAulay:

8.7 MAYOR AND DELEGATED COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cr C Bisset:

8.8 GENERAL BUSINESS**9. MATTERS DEFERRED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING****10. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN GIVEN****11. ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS**

REF: CY17/114

Purpose:

This report presents the records of assemblies of Councillors for 16 January 2017 to 10 February 2017, for Council to note in accordance with Section 80A of the *Local Government Act 1989 (the Act)*.

Officer Recommendation:

That Council receives and notes the record of assemblies of Councillors for 16 January 2017 to 10 February 2017.

Background:

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

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

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

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

Summary:

Meeting Name / Type	Councillor Briefing
Meeting Date	16 January 2017
Matters discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Application – Alexandra 2. Planning Application – Kinglake West 3. Planning Application – Yea 4. Review of Protected Disclosures Policy 5. Redevelopment of the Yea & District Children’s Centre
Attendees: Councillors – Cr Bisset, Cr McAulay, Cr Bowles, Cr Dunscombe, Cr Lording, Cr Rae	Staff – M Abbey (part), M Chesworth, J Canny, K Girvan (part), S Brown.
Conflict of Interest disclosures - Yes	

Matter No.	Officer making disclosure	Was a vote taken?	Did Councillor leave the room?	When? Before / after discussion / vote?
Item 5	Cr Bisset	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Before discussion

Meeting Name / Type	Councillor Briefing
Meeting Date	18 January 2017
Matters discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Councillor Code of Conduct 2. Council Plan Development 3. Annual Budget 4. Annual Capital Works Budget 5. Rural Differential Rate Application
Attendees: Councillors – Cr Bisset, Cr McAulay, Cr Ashe, Cr Bowles, Cr Dunscombe, Cr Lording, Cr Rae	Staff – M Abbey, M Chesworth, J Canny, A Bond, N McNamara
Conflict of Interest disclosures - Nil	

Meeting Name / Type	Councillor Strategic Planning Session
Meeting Date	24 January 2017
Matters discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council Plan Status and Priorities
Attendees: Councillors – Cr Bisset, Cr McAulay, Cr Ashe, Cr Bowles, Cr Dunscombe, Cr Lording, Cr Rae	Staff – M Abbey, M Chesworth, S McConnell, J Rabel, T Ackerman, M Leitinger, J Canny, L Peddie, N McNamara, A Bond, S Brown
Conflict of Interest disclosures – Nil	

Meeting Name / Type	Council Pre-Meeting
Meeting Date	25 January 2017
Matters discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Application – Yea 2. Redevelopment of the Yea & District Children’s Centre 3. General Valuation
Attendees: Councillors – Cr Bisset, Cr McAulay, Cr Bowles, Cr Dunscombe, Cr Lording, Cr Rae	Staff – M Abbey, M Chesworth, S McConnell, J Canny, K Girvan, S Brown, A Bond
Conflict of Interest disclosures – Yes	

Matter No.	Officer making disclosure	Was a vote taken?	Did Councillor leave the room?	When? Before / after discussion / vote?
Item 2, 3	Cr Bisset	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Before discussion

Meeting Name / Type	Councillor Briefing
Meeting Date	3 February 2017
Matters discussed	1. Visit to Council and Community Facilities
Attendees: Councillors – Cr Bisset, Cr McAulay, Cr Ashe, Cr Bowles, Cr Dunscombe, Cr Lording, Cr Rae	Staff – M Abbey, M Chesworth, S McConnell, J Canny
Conflict of Interest disclosures – Nil	

Meeting Name / Type	Councillor Briefing
Meeting Date	7 February 2017
Matters discussed	1. Role of Local Government Inspectorate
Attendees: Councillors – Cr Bisset, Cr McAulay, Cr Ashe, Cr Bowles, Cr Dunscombe, Cr Lording, Cr Rae	Staff – M Abbey, M Chesworth, S McConnell, A Bond, T Carter
Conflict of Interest disclosures – Nil	

Meeting Name / Type	Councillor Briefing
Meeting Date	8 February 2017
Matters discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Murray Darling Association 2. Alexandra Scouts Group 3. Councillor Code of Conduct 4. December Quarterly Report – Capital Works Program 5. Street and Public Lighting Installation 6. Special Charge Scheme – Saleyards, East and Smith Streets 7. Council Plan – Communications Plan 8. Community Engagement/Advertising 9. Councillor Reimbursement Policy 10. Alexandra Railway Precinct Land Lease
Attendees: Councillors – Cr Bisset, Cr McAulay, Cr Ashe, Cr Bowles, Cr Dunscombe, Cr Lording, Cr Rae	Staff – M Abbey, M Chesworth, S McConnell, J Canny, N McNamara, S Collier, J Rabel, A Bond
Conflict of Interest disclosures – Nil	

Meeting Name / Type	Councillor Briefing
Meeting Date	10 February 2017
Matters discussed	1. Councillor Tour of Facilities and Services
Attendees: Councillors – Cr Bisset, Cr McAulay, Cr Ashe, Cr Bowles, Cr Dunscombe, Cr Rae	Staff – M Abbey, M Chesworth, S McConnell, J Canny
Conflict of Interest disclosures – Nil	

12. URGENT BUSINESS

13. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

The Local Government Act 1989 section 89(2) allows Council to resolve to close a meeting to the public to consider confidential information relating to any of the following matters:

- (a) personnel matters;
- (b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer;
- (c) industrial matters;

- (d) contractual matters;
- (e) proposed developments;
- (f) legal advice;
- (g) matters affecting the security of Council property;
- (h) any other matter which the Council or special committee considers would prejudice the Council or any person;
- (i) a resolution to close the meeting to members of the public

Where possible Council will resolve to make public any decision it makes in a closed meeting where the resolution does not disclose confidential information. There may be occasions where Council cannot make its decision public.

The report on the Contract Award for Printers and Multi-Function Devices is being considered in the closed part of this meeting in accordance with S89(2)(d) as it refers to contractual matters.

Recommendation:

That Council, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* section 89(2)(d), resolve to close the meeting to the members of the public:

- **Contract Award – Printers and Multi-Function Devices**