



MINUTES
of the
SCHEDULED MEETING OF COUNCIL

Wednesday 28 July 2021

at

Murrindindi Shire Council
Zoom
Virtual Meeting
Videoconference

6:00 PM

This Scheduled Meeting of Council was conducted virtually
(as per *COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020*,
passed by Victorian Parliament on 23 April 2020)

Audio recordings of all Council meetings are taken by Council's Governance Officers
and published on Council's website (Resolution of Council 23 January 2019)

1 PLEDGE AND RECONCILIATION STATEMENT.....	2
2 APOLOGIES AND REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE	2
3 COMMUNITY RECOGNITION.....	2
4 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST	2
5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES	2
6 PETITIONS	2
7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.....	3
7.1 Open Forum.....	3
7.2 Questions of Council.....	3
8 OUR PLACE.....	3
8.1 Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 - Public Exhibition	3
9 OUR PEOPLE.....	7
9.1 Murrindindi Shire 10 Year Community Vision	7
10 OUR PROSPERITY	10
11 OUR PROMISE.....	10
11.1 Completion of Councillor Induction Program	10
12 NOTICES OF MOTIONS	12
13 MATTERS DEFERRED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING	12
14 URGENT BUSINESS.....	12
15 COUNCILLOR REPORTS.....	12
15.1 Cr Karine Haslam	12
15.2 Cr Ilona Gerencser	12
15.3 Cr Eric Lording	13
15.4 Cr John Walsh.....	14
15.5 Cr Damien Gallagher.....	14
15.6 Cr Sue Carpenter	15
15.7 Cr Sandice McAulay - Mayoral Report	15
16 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT	16
17 ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS	17
18 SEALING REGISTER.....	20

1 PLEDGE AND RECONCILIATION STATEMENT

The meeting was opened with the Mayor declaring the following Pledge on behalf of all Councillors:

"As the Councillors democratically elected to represent our community as the Murrindindi Shire Council, we are committed to working together in the best interests of the people who live in our municipality, who conduct business here and those who visit. We would like to acknowledge the Taungurung Traditional Owners and their ancestors as the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting virtually and pay our respect to their Elders past and present."

2 APOLOGIES AND REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

There were no apologies or requests for leave of absence tendered.

Present:

Councillors S McAulay (Chair), S Carpenter, K Haslam, Ilona Gerencser, E Lording, J Walsh, D Gallagher

In attendance:

Chief Executive Officer: Livia Bonazzi
Director Corporate and Shared Services: Michael Chesworth
Director Community Engagement: Shivaun Brown
Director Assets and Development: Vito Albicini
Manager Governance and Risk: Tara Carter

3 COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

Nil.

4 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil.

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of the Scheduled Meeting of Council held on 23 June 2021.

Officer Recommendation

That Council confirm the minutes of the 23 June 2021 Scheduled Meeting of Council.

RESOLUTION

Cr I Gerencser / Cr J Walsh

That Council confirm the minutes of the 23 June 2021 Scheduled Meeting of Council.

CARRIED

6 PETITIONS

7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

7.1 Open Forum

7.2 Questions of Council

One question was received from Mrs D.

Question 1 "Under Victorian law, is it legal for Local Government Councils to provide sex based/targeted services and facilities separately to gender identity based/targeted services and facilities? If not, why not?

For example, can we legally put signs on a set of public toilets declaring that one is for biological males (including males with an intersex condition), one is for biological females (including biological females with an intersex condition) and one is for people with transgender identities (of any biological sex)? If not, why not?"

The Chief Executive Officer responded to Question 1:

The Building Code Australia (BCA) contains requirements for Braille and Tactile signage in commercial class buildings, which is what public toilets are classed as.

Currently, the BCA only considers and regulates Male, Female and Unisex sanitary facilities. Separate sanitary facilities are required by the BCA for males and females, a unisex facility may be provided instead of separate facilities for each sex in some instances.

8 OUR PLACE

8.1 Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 - Public Exhibition

Attachment(s):

1. Draft DAMP 2021-2025 [8.1.1 - 28 pages]
2. DAMP 2021-2025 Community Survey Report [8.1.2 - 19 pages]
3. DAMP 2017-2021 [8.1.3 - 53 pages]

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) to be put on public exhibition from 15 August to 5 September 2021.

Officer Recommendation

That Council endorse the Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 for the purposes of public exhibition.

Background

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* requires Councils to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) every 4 years. Council's current Domestic Animal Management Plan expires in December 2021.

The DAMP provides the strategic framework within which Council identify and address issues relating to the management and wellbeing of animals over a period of four years. The new DAMP will build on the achievements and work from previous plans and establish a framework to guide future service programs and actions, within allocated resources.

The DAMP ensures that Council will meet its obligations under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and continue to use a mix of educational and regulatory approaches to promote responsible pet ownership.

Council's current DAMP has seen a number of positive outcomes for Council and the community over its four-year lifespan. These include:

- 12% increase in animal registrations
- 13% reduction in barking dog reports
- 10% reduction of euthanasia rates
- Two reduced rate microchipping and registration days
- Introduction of pro rata animal registration fees.

Over the last two years the total registered dogs and cats is shown by the table below:

	2018/19	2019/20
Number of registered dogs	2,513	2,865
Number of registered cats	609	689

With respect to animal management issues, Council received a total of 919 animal management requests in 2020/21, this included impounding a total of 149 cats, 90 dogs and 37 livestock.

Discussion

Council provides animal management services through the Community Safety Unit consisting of four authorised officers who are responsible for implementing various legislation relevant to animal management.

The Community Safety Team is responsible for the following functions:

- Active patrols and pickups to reunite dogs with their owners and to discourage wandering at large
- Managing unwanted animals
- Impounding of livestock found or reported wandering
- Trespassing cats
- Animal registration and identification process
- Providing advice to pet owners and the community
- Providing an after-hours emergency service.

An important component in the development of the DAMP was the opportunity given to the community and stakeholders to provide feedback and express their views on matters relating to animal management. This information was used to guide the development of the DAMP and how Council should provide animal management services to the community.

A community survey was undertaken from 15 March to 15 April 2021, with 109 participants. These findings, together with Council's data have provided an understanding of current animal management issues and trends identified by the community. This information formed the foundation for the draft DAMP.

Key findings from the survey

Out of the 109 responses,

- 79% of respondents were dog owners and 42% were cat owners
- 93% of respondents believe it is 'most important' to de-sex animals
- 83% of respondents were supportive of a cat curfew
- 60% of people thought dogs should be always 'on-lead' unless in a designated 'off-leash' area
- 83% of people knew how to Contact council if they had lost or found a pet. 82% of these people would prefer to contact Council via phone than any other method.

A full report of the survey findings is attached.

Based on this information and review of the existing DAMP, the draft DAMP 2021-2025 has been prepared and attached to this report.

The draft DAMP 2021-2025 key focus areas and strategies are listed below:

- Animals and Amenity (Nuisances)
Strategy: Minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance.
- Animal identification, registration, overpopulation and euthanasia
Strategy: Increase registration and reduce overpopulation.
- Community Engagement
Strategy: Ensure the community are kept well informed of Council services.
- Dog Attacks
Strategy: Reduce impact of dog attacks on community and business.
- Compliance
Strategy: Improve voluntary compliance.
- Training of Authorised Officers
Strategy: Ensure that all staff involved in animal management obtain and maintain the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their work efficiently, effectively and safely.
- Animal Health and Welfare
Strategy: Promote animal health, welfare and emergency planning.
- Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs
Strategy: Effective management of Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs.

The process and timelines for developing the draft DAMP, including consultation is shown in the table below:

Stage	Details	Timelines	Status
Community engagement phase	Online survey opens to obtain feedback regarding communities' views on animal management 'points of interest'	15 March – 15 April 2021	Completed
Analyse data	Prepare report of survey data	30 April 2021	Completed
Draft DAMP	Presentation of Draft DAMP to Council	21 July 2021- Council Briefing 28 July 2021 - Council Meeting	In progress
Community consultation	Seek feedback submission on draft plan from the community	15 August – 5 September 2021	
Review of submissions	Present findings and hear submissions of community consultation	6 October - Council Briefing 27 October - Council Meeting	

Adoption of DAMP	Present DAMP to Council for adoption	24 November - Council Meeting	
Submit finalised DAMP	Submit 2021-2025 Adopted DAMP to Secretary as per S68A(1) Domestic Animals Act 1994	4 December 2021	

In summary, the draft DAMP 2021 – 2025 has been developed through consultation with the community and is presented to Council for endorsement to be placed on public exhibition seeking community feedback. Once Council has received and considered the feedback, the DAMP will be presented to Council for formal adoption.

Council Plan/Strategies/Policies

This report supports the *Council Plan 2017-2021 Our Place* strategy to “enhance community safety, resilience and liveability through improved planning, community engagement, and a fair and transparent approach to compliance”.

The development of this draft DAMP must consider Council’s recently adopted Community Engagement Policy and apply the principals of deliberative engagement.

Relevant Legislation

Domestic Animals Act 1994.

Financial Implications and Risk

Some of the actions of the Draft DAMP 2021-2025 will have future financial implications and will be considered in future budget processes.

Some minor costs will be incurred to promote and undertake public consultation sessions. These costs have been considered in the 2021-22 budget.

Conflict of Interest

There are no declared conflicts of interest by Council officers in relation to this report.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

Community and key stakeholder consultation was undertaken through an online survey from 15 March to 15 April to get an understanding of the issues that were important to the community. These findings have formed the foundation for the development of the Draft DAMP 2021-2025. A summary report of the survey findings is attached.

It is planned to have the Draft DAMP 2021-2025 available for public exhibition from 15 August – 5 September 2021. During this time the Council will actively promote the Draft DAMP in accordance with the Community Engagement Policy. Officers will continue to work with key stakeholders and industry to seek input and advice to support the delivery of the Plan.

RESOLUTION

Cr S Carpenter / Cr I Gerencser

That Council endorse the Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 for the purposes of public exhibition.

CARRIED

9 OUR PEOPLE

9.1 Murrindindi Shire 10 Year Community Vision

Attachment(s): Nil

Purpose

This report provides Council with the Murrindindi Shire 10 Year Community Vision for adoption.

Officer Recommendation

That Council adopt the Murrindindi Shire 10 Year Community Vision.

Through our combined efforts, our community is vibrant and resilient. We:

- are inclusive, embrace diversity and encourage the participation of all
- welcome new residents and visitors to enjoy and contribute to our shire
- respect and celebrate the cultural heritage of our First Nations People and those who have come before us
- actively support the current and future needs and aspirations of people of all ages and abilities
- enjoy, participate in and promote culture and the arts, sport and recreation
- are leaders in waste reduction and combating climate change
- protect our natural environment and biodiversity, and preserve our rural landscapes
- grow through managed land development, business entrepreneurship and enhanced learning opportunities.

Background

The *Local Government Act 2020* provides Council with clear requirements to develop a Community Vision, through engagement with the community. The Community Vision needs to be at least 10 years in scope and describe the social, economic, cultural, and environmental aspirations for the future of the municipality. It establishes higher-order aspirations for the community and ambitious goals for Council and the community to work towards collaboratively. Further, it informs Council's strategic planning and broader partnerships with civil society, government and community organisations.

Discussion

The draft Community Vision was available for feedback via the following methods:

- the Loop (Council's online community engagement platform)
- displayed on posters at our Library and Customer Service Centres
- email submissions invited
- advertised in traditional and social media, and
- emailed to previous participants of Shaping Our Future.

Councillors have received all submissions as part of their earlier briefing.

Twenty-six responses were received – with twenty-four coming via the Loop, one handwritten response returned via Library and Customer Service Centres and one submission via email.

Some minor changes have been made to the Community Vision in line with the feedback which was largely positive and is summarised in the following tables:

Summarised feedback	Officer comments
Vision is actually very good but is not applied in reality	Actions will come in Council Plan
Just jargon – could be any place	No change required
Lacks detailed action regarding environment	Actions will come in Council Plan
Wrong focus – need to focus on basic services	No change required
Philosophical opposition to concepts included in the draft	No change required
Aligns with Cittaslow	No change required
Detailed submission from Rotary Club of Alexandra re redevelopment of Council offices precinct	Submission will be referred to the Council Plan consultation
Kinglake to be preserved	No change required
Streamlined processes needed and more arts focus	No change – any actions would come in Council Plan
Change word <i>preserve</i> our natural environment to <i>protect</i>	Environment bullet point has been reworded
Change word <i>preserve</i> our natural environment to <i>regenerate</i> our natural environment	Environment bullet point has been reworded
Needs reference to older people and roads	Change made to reflect all people of all ages and abilities. Roads will be actioned in the Council Plan
Needs reference to older people and small business	Change made to reflect all people of all ages and abilities. Small business is covered under business entrepreneurship
Use words to generate a sense of shared responsibility/ownership Healthy lifestyles Even stronger on business & tourism	Change made to reinforce shared ownership: “Through our combined efforts, our community is vibrant and resilient.” No change re healthy lifestyles – any actions would come in Council Plan Business is covered under business entrepreneurship
Put environment higher up the list and change word <i>preserve</i> our natural environment to <i>protect and actively promote appreciation and enjoyment</i> of our natural environment	Environment bullet point has been reworded
Change order for First Nations People point reference to be first on list Strengthen point about children	Does not align with broad feedback – first bullet point encompasses inclusivity of all Change made to reflect all people of all ages and abilities based on other feedback.

Change word <i>preserve</i> our natural environment to <i>care for</i> or <i>value</i> our natural environment Add health and wellbeing	Environment bullet point has been reworded Health and wellbeing – actions would come in Council Plan
Needs reference to older people	Change made to reflect all people of all ages and abilities based on other feedback
Wants to see examples of actions to help visualise	Actions will come in Council Plan
Needs to be stronger on new business support, examples provided	Business is covered under business entrepreneurship
Wants consultation with disability group on facilities	Actions will come in Council Plan
Strengthen First Nations reference Strengthen focus on children – details provided Change word <i>preserve</i> our natural environment to <i>enhance, improve, protect biodiversity</i>	Does not align with broad feedback – first bullet point encompasses inclusivity of all Change made to reflect all people of all ages and abilities based on other feedback Environment bullet point has been reworded

Based on these responses a revised Murrindindi Shire 10 Year Community Vision has been provided in the Officer recommendation above for Council's consideration.

It is noted that a late submission was received from the Taungurung Land and Waters Council after the agenda had been finalised. It is the officer's view that the content and sentiment of the submission related to future required actions of Council and as such would best be considered in the finalisation of the Council Plan.

Council Plan/Strategies/Policies

This report supports the *Council Plan 2017-2021 Our People* strategy to "work with our community and groups to connect, collaborate and plan for our future".

This report also demonstrates the application of Council's Community Engagement Policy, adopted in February 2021.

Relevant Legislation

Local Government Act 2020.

Financial Implications and Risk

The Community Vision will influence the Council Plan and the Financial and Asset Plans, as well as future Priority Action Plans. Potential impacts on current service delivery and budgeting will need to be considered within this planning.

Conflict of Interest

There are no declared conflicts of interest by Council officers in relation to this report.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

The draft Community Vision has been developed through extensive community engagement through 'Shaping Our Future'.

RESOLUTION**Cr D Gallagher / Cr I Gerencser****That Council adopt the Murrindindi Shire 10 Year Community Vision.****Through our combined efforts, our community is vibrant and resilient. We:**

- are inclusive, embrace diversity and encourage the participation of all
- welcome new residents and visitors to enjoy and contribute to our shire
- respect and celebrate the cultural heritage of our First Nations People and those who have come before us
- actively support the current and future needs and aspirations of people of all ages and abilities
- enjoy, participate in and promote culture and the arts, sport and recreation
- are leaders in waste reduction and combating climate change
- protect our natural environment and biodiversity, and preserve our rural landscapes
- grow through managed land development, business entrepreneurship and enhanced learning opportunities.

CARRIED**10 OUR PROSPERITY****11 OUR PROMISE****11.1 Completion of Councillor Induction Program**

Attachment(s): Nil

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Council that all Councillors completed the required Councillor Induction Program in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Officer Recommendation

That Council notes the Chief Executive Officer's advice that the Councillor Induction Program was completed by all Councillors in accordance with section 32 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Background

Section 22 of the *Local Government Act 2020* states "A Councillor must complete Councillor induction training within 6 months after the day the Councillor takes the oath or affirmation of office". The Local Government (Governance & Integrity) Regulations 2020 set the requirements that the Induction Program must meet. Council implemented a comprehensive Induction Program for the Councillors which began upon the oath of office being taken by all Councillors on 16 November 2020.

Discussion

The Local Government Regulations required the Councillor Induction Program to cover the following:

- (a) the role of a Councillor, a Mayor and a Deputy Mayor;
- (b) the role of a Chief Executive Officer;
- (c) any practices, protocols or policies in relation to the interaction between members of Council staff and Councillors;
- (d) the overarching governance principles and the supporting principles;
- (e) the standards of conduct;

- (f) misconduct, serious misconduct and gross misconduct;
- (g) the internal arbitration process and the Councillor Conduct Panel process under Divisions 5 and 7 of Part 6 of the Act;
- (h) engagement and reconciliation with the traditional owners of land in the municipal district of the Council;
- (i) giving effect to gender equality, diversity and inclusiveness;
- (j) any other matters relating to governance and integrity which the Chief Executive Officer has determined should be addressed.

Council implemented a comprehensive 6-month Councillor Induction Program which addressed all of the above and included:

- Overview of each of the service areas of Council
- Legislative requirements – including the *Local Government Act 2020*, Planning and Environment Act 1987 and other key pieces of legislation
- Governance Rules and Council Meeting practices
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Introduction to Council's key strategic documents
- Media training
- Sessions organised by the Municipal Association of Victoria, Victorian Local Government Association and Local Government Victoria
- Workshops presented on various community interests
- Tour of the Shire.

The compulsory induction sessions were identified on the Induction Program and if a Councillor was unable to attend, the session was recorded for review when convenient. The Councillor then was required to confirm in writing that the session had been reviewed.

An Assembly of Councillors record was taken at each session, which noted the topics covered and the Councillors present. Each month at the Council Meeting the Assembly record was confirmed as being accurate by Council. The Acting Chief Executive Officer at the end of the 6-month period reviewed the audit of attendance to confirm that all Councillors had undertaken the required training,

Each of the Councillors have signed a declaration that they participated in all of the required compulsory sessions and these have been signed by Council's Chief Executive Officer.

Council Plan/Strategies/Policies

This report supports the *Council Plan 2017-2021 Our Promise* strategic objective to "we will all work in collaboration with our communities to deliver the best possible outcomes in all that we do".

Relevant Legislation

Section 32 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Local Government (Governance & Integrity) Regulations require Councillors to undertake an Induction Program set by the Chief Executive Officer in the first 6 months following the oath of office being taken.

Financial Implications and Risk

Council undertook the Induction Program within the allocated budget. Sessions were primarily conducted by Council Officers and external providers were utilised for priority areas.

A comprehensive induction program assists Councillors in exercising their decision-making powers with confidence and knowledge, this is critical in mitigating risk.

Conflict of Interest

There are no declared conflicts of interest by Council officers in relation to this report.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

Various external providers and community contacts were utilised to assist with ensuring that the Councillor Induction Program was a comprehensive introduction to Local Government and the role of a Councillor.

RESOLUTION

Cr J Walsh / Cr E Lording

That Council notes the Chief Executive Officer's advice that the Councillor Induction Program was completed by all Councillors in accordance with section 32 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

CARRIED

12 NOTICES OF MOTIONS**13 MATTERS DEFERRED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

Nil.

14 URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

15 COUNCILLOR REPORTS**15.1 Cr Karine Haslam**

Nil to report.

15.2 Cr Ilona Gerencser

Firstly I would like to again mention Jamie and crew and their fantastic coordination of the Kinglake Streetscape. Two weeks ago we had our meeting with the contractors and traders about moving forward and proper planning.

As a result, the footpaths are currently being worked on in stages so to minimise disruption to shop owners and community members. I'm pleased to see this is working really well and even with the weather we've been experiencing, the project is moving forward in leaps and bounds.

Thank you sincerely to absolutely everyone, shop owners and customers/visitors for your understanding during this time. Hopefully, weather permitting, we will see the project meet its completion date for the end of September 2021.

Heidelberg - Kinglake Road

For many years this road has been neglected and in light of the recent tragedy I requested a report through our CEO Ms Bonazzi, to investigate the many incidents on this dangerous stretch of road.

I have also been liaising with Nillumbik Shire in relation to this matter and have received positive feedback and information. We have also been lucky enough to have Cindy McLeish bring this before Parliament recently after several discussion.

The information in the report was quite detailed and was dated from 2006 until 2021. It re-iterated the necessity for council (Murrindindi and Nillumbik) to work towards reducing the amount of trauma on this road.

It is clear to all of us, as councillors and executives, that the road requires a major overhaul by Regional and Vic Roads, not only for our safety, but for the safety of visitors, also current and future residents.

With the councillors and CEO support I would like for us to advocate to Parliament for an urgent assessment of this road, with forward planning to have the whole of Heidelberg-Kinglake Road upgraded and made safe for everyone.

15.3 Cr Eric Lording

Storms

- After a recent large storm cleanup, we have had yet another. Overall damage is not as heavy thankfully, but crews are still out checking our roads to ensure they are passable and are removing tree debris. There are few reports of power loss.

Assets

- The road condition assessment has been completed (with video footage of all road segments)
- The Road Management Plan (RMP) Compliance reporting for our asset management tool 'Assetic' is showing High Compliance with RMP timeframes
- The all important Asset Management Strategy development is well underway.

Capital Delivery

- LRCI round 1 works are well underway, Round 2 to start and Round 3 projects currently still being identified
- Capital works from last year's actual expenditure is \$ 12,301,985 with a carry forward of \$ 5,305,532. All carry forward works have started but there are delays due to weather, plant and vehicle availability
- Kinglake Streetscape works are continuing with work across the shopfronts due to start. There was a very positive PCG meeting with Foodworks and Cappa Rossi personnel both in attendance
- The Alexandra Youth Skate park and play precinct design is underway
- Eildon Splash Play design works are continuing.

Operations

- We are receiving lots of requests for potholes on unsealed roads, due to the wet weather. It should be remembered that driving that little bit slower helps stop pothole and corrugation growth in all weathers.
- Storm clean ups are well underway, now with another week to go. We have large logs and stumps we need to dispose of, so please do not despair that fuel is building on roadsides. We will remove them in time for the fire season.
- Our parks teams are still noticing an increase in visitation during and after COVID-19 shutdowns.

15.4 Cr John Walsh

Nil to report.

15.5 Cr Damien Gallagher

I'd like to first acknowledge, with appreciation, the community response to the recently imposed restrictions. We've all had our difficulties, but with so many businesses and families experiencing truly disruptive changes to their personal and financial circumstances this time around, we have, encouragingly, been rather considerate.

Despite the imposed restrictions it has been a very busy period for Council.

Alongside Mayor, Cr. McAulay and Chief Executive Officer, Ms Bonazzi, I had the privilege of expressing the community's appreciation to the Alexandra Showgrounds and Recreation Reserve Committee of Management member groups, including the Alexandra Football Netball Club, on the completion of their multi-purpose building. So many people contributed to the outcome with AFNC leaders, Ray Steyger and Kylie Cairns' respective teams driving some of the most creative grassroots fundraising successes.

I've also had the pleasure of introducing MSC CEO, Ms. Bonazzi to the Red Gate ward. We met a selection of representatives of services clubs, sporting and social clubs, local businesses, social enterprise leadership, support service providers and tourism operators. We ventured down many sealed and unsealed roads, side-streets, and highways to see our schools, businesses, government tenancies, and public reserves. We discussed the clear and present land use planning challenges. Above all, I'm certain that I successfully demonstrated that the people of Red Gate are our greatest asset.

The Alexandra District Traders and Tourism Association AGM was conducted this month. Congratulations to Ian Davis, Gordon Simpson, Dan Crane, and Caolan O'Connor who will form the new executive. One of the most heartening gestures of the evening came from a 25+ year member of the ADTTA Committee: To stand down in favour of encouraging the next generation business and tourism operators to come forward with new, enthusiastic advocacy voices for commerce and industry in our part of the world.

Alexandra Community Shed and the Eildon & District Woodworkers Guild have every reason to celebrate, having secured Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR) funding for a new forklift, and for improved all-ability accessibility to their facilities. Congratulations to the group, to then Acting CEO, Michael Chesworth for helping to articulate Murrindindi Shire Council's support for the application, and to Mrs Maureen May whose tenacity is unrivalled.

To portfolio matters

July brought us NAIDOC week, and a comprehensive schedule of events hosted by the Yea Y-Water Discovery Centre. During the week, we were treated to a packed program events carefully curated by Angela ten Buuren and her team of helpers. Right across the week there was great attendance at the kids' events as well as the sessions on Healing Country and Talking Treaty. My personal highlight was being welcomed to Country by Uncle Shane Monk on a cold and foggy Monday morning in Alexandra ahead of Taungurung Land & Waters Council Executive Manager, Sherryn Antonopoulos leading all Taungurung people present in the first raising of the Taungurung sovereign flag. The ceremony concluded with raising of the Australian flag. Eildon & District Woodworkers Guild and so many community members and representatives of Forest Fire Management Victoria, DELWP, and Parks Victoria in attendance.

I had the privilege of describing to Matt Dowling and his ABC Murray Goulburn audience the nature of the Murrindindi Shire Council's Dindi Link Team initiative, "Connecting the Pieces". It was an opportunity to describe the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on all segments of the community: That is, to acknowledge the disconnection anxiety experienced by so many, but to celebrate those random acts of kindness that are defining the Murrindindi COVID-19 experience.

On 21 July, 2021 I represented Council at the Rubicon Outdoor School – School Council meeting. It was equal parts inspiring and confronting to hear the team describe the profound effect the school has in the life of visiting students. From those who thrive in a less academic environment to those deeply affected by the foreign experience of a familiar bed for three days and three meals each day.

After more than fifteen months, Customer Services returned to the Perkins St. office on 15 July before promptly closing due to restrictions on July. From today Shire Council Customer Services in Alexandra were available again, but community members are still able to access council services on phone: 5772 0333.

The Eildon Splash Park Master Plan is currently being socialised with Taungurung representatives and preparations are underway to share the plan details for community consultation.

Finally

Tonight we witnessed the milestone of adopting of the Murrindindi Shire 10 Year Community Vision. The next vital piece of work ahead is Council's Plan for the period 2021-2025 which is deep into development. That document outlines the collective strategy of this Council and Councillors are acutely aware of our responsibility to reflect community ambitions to guide Council operations.

15.6 Cr Sue Carpenter

Nil to report.

15.7 Cr Sandice McAulay - Mayoral Report

I have had the privilege of attending a number of our local Lions and Rotary Group Changeover dinners – luckily before this most recent COVID-19 lockdown. It is amazing how many people there are in our community who are prepared to stand as office bearers and active members of our diverse community organisations. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those organisations for continuing to be a guiding and supporting light in our communities. You are an important part of the glue that keeps our communities so resilient and able to resume activities so seamlessly after each COVID-19 lockdown.

This last month I have also attended a number of events that are an acknowledgment and celebration of long term projects.

Firstly it was thrilling to attend the final inspection of the Lake Eildon Floating Cities Project. The upgrade of the road to the Lake Eildon Marina, off Sugarloaf Road will make access for the new Super Houseboats much easier and safer. We look forward to seeing the impact of the overall project to the houseboat industry.

I was also delighted to attend the "Thank You" event for the Alexandra Football and Netball Clubrooms. It never ceases to amaze me what energetic, visionary community members can achieve when they work together. Congratulations to all involved.

Councillors have also been working actively with the officers developing our new Draft Council Plan that will guide our activities over the next four years and will contribute significantly to the Ten Year Community Vision aspirations as articulated by the community and adopted by Council tonight.

Thank you and keep safe.

16 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

Lockdown

Yesterday the latest lockdown was lifted across the state so there is no stay at home requirement and the 5km travel limit has been lifted. For our shire, we expect to see visitors returning from Melbourne this weekend and that's great news for our retail, hospitality and accommodation businesses. We should be very mindful that some businesses are doing it tough on a number of fronts at the moment, take the opportunity to give them encouragement. These short lockdowns are likely to happen again until most of our population is vaccinated, and I acknowledge the impact these have on people's mental health and personal lives, with the financial pressures on people unable to work, and for working parents having to juggle remote learning with work commitments. It is not easy.

We are not yet permitted to have visitors in the home and we must be careful of this – it's one of the common spaces where people are transmitting the virus. For businesses or offices a density cap applies of 1 person per 4 sqm, and no more than 25% of the office workforce can be present. Masks to be worn everywhere except at home. Consistent with the directions that if you can work from home, you should work from home.

The Department of Health has confirmed that council meetings are not able to be conducted in person and must be held as virtual meetings. This also applies to briefings and other parts of Council operations with meetings mostly online. These guidelines allow our libraries and customer service centres to again be open. Already mentioned by Cr Gallagher, customer service in Alexandra has moved out of the library and back into the Perkins St office and we look forward to welcoming people there.

We have had to postpone the Citizenship ceremony last week in Yea due to the lockdown, our next scheduled ceremony is in Alexandra on 17 August and it looks like this can proceed.

I won't go through all of the restrictions –this information is available online and Council's website has handy links to State Government information for individuals, communities and businesses.

VCAT Decision

There has been some local media coverage of a recent VCAT determination to set aside Council's decision to grant a permit for the Tanglewood Music Festival, proposed to be held at a property in Thornton annually over the next five years. In light of this outcome, our planning officers are reviewing the permit requirements to ensure future applicants are aware of their obligations when planning events.

You may be aware that a member of the public has made serious allegations to the media against current and former Murrindindi Shire Councillors and Council officers in relation to this planning permit process.

We have reviewed the claims and received legal advice on this matter. We unreservedly reject the claims made by the objector and we are satisfied that there has been no breach of law or

code of conduct by anyone at Council. Therefore we will take no further action in relation to these claims.

Local Government Act 2020

As of this month the new *Local Government Act 2020* has come into effect. Council continues to implement the new requirements and two of tonight's agenda items reflect steps in this implementation. The Councillor Induction Program was successfully completed by all Councillors which supports good governance and decision making and the adoption of the 10 Year Community Vision is a key step in guiding the strategic priorities for Council's current term.

Council is in the process of developing the Council Plan 2021-2025 and the 10 Year Financial Plan for adoption by end of October in accordance with the new requirements of the Act. These will reflect the directions of the Community Vision and will guide Council's priorities and decision making during its term.

Further there are a number of legislated requirements that are focused more on the organisation and its employees. The Act calls for a Workforce Development Plan which is being developed and a CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy which is also being drafted for Council's consideration. Finally several of our current policies are under review to ensure they reflect the directions of the new Act, including Procurement, Senior Officer Recruitment, and Complaints handling. The organisation is focused on completing these requirements by the due dates.

Mayoral, Deputy Mayoral and Councillor Allowances – Proposed Determination

A key reform under the new Act pertains to the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal being given responsibility for setting allowances for Victorian Mayors and Councillors. The Tribunal has produced a consultation paper and invites public submissions in relation to the proposed determination, which will come into effect in December this year. Written submissions are due on 16 August 2021. Details on this matter can be found on the Tribunal's website <https://www.vic.gov.au/allowances-mayors-deputy-mayors-and-councillors>.

And a reminder that Sustainability Victoria is offering grants of \$5,000 up to \$50,000 for community organisations to upgrade the energy efficiency of their facilities via the Community Climate Change and Energy Action Program. Applications are now open until 20 Aug Community organisations such as kindergartens, leisure and sporting centres and neighbourhood houses keen to deliver energy solutions including energy storage and renewable energy, to save on power bills and greenhouse gas emissions. Councils can co-benefit from these and we can apply for these grants on behalf of community groups. This funding is to assess the energy use of a facility, upgrade the energy efficiency, or invest in energy storage or renewable energy. To find out more click here <https://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/grants-funding-and-investment/grants-and-funding/community-climate-change-and-energy-action-program>.

17 ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS

Purpose

This report presents the records of assemblies of Councillors for 23 June to 21 July, 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 21 June to 23 July.

Background

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

Discussion

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.

The following summary details are for 23 June to 21 July:

Meeting Name/Type		Council Pre-Meet		
Meeting Date:		23 June 2021		
Matters Discussed:		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alexandra Landfill 2. 2021/22 Budget Adoption 3. Mayoral and Councillor Allowances 4. Instruments of Delegation, Appointments and Authorisations 5. Councillor Portfolio Policy 6. Asset Insurance Premium 7. Road Management Plan Review – Outcomes 8. CONT21/11 – Eildon Swimming Pool Vinyl Liner Installation – Tender Evaluation 9. CONT16/24 – Council Facilities Cleaning Services – Contract Variation 10. CONT17/5 – Street Sweeping Services – Contract Variation 11. CONT20/36 – Eildon Floating Cities – Contract Variation 		
Councillor Attendees:		Cr S Carpenter, Cr D Gallagher, Cr K Haslam, Cr I Gerencser, Cr E Lording, Cr S McAulay, Cr J Walsh		
Council Officer Attendees:		L Bonazzi, M Chesworth, V Albicini, S Brown, T Carter, B Byrne, G Haylock, S Russell		
Conflict of Interest Disclosures: Yes				
Matter No.	Councillor making disclosure	Was a vote taken?	Did the Councillor leave the room?	When? Before or after discussion?
1.	Cr D Gallagher	No	Yes	Before

Meeting Name/Type		Briefing Session		
Meeting Date:		7 July 2021		
Matters Discussed:		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guest Speaker - Dr. D. Paul Dalzell from Rev'd - Support for Refugees 2. Council Plan Design – Session 1 3. Community Events Calendar 4. Eildon Splash and Skate Park – Detailed Design Update 		
Councillor Attendees:		Cr S Carpenter, Cr D Gallagher, Cr I Gerencser, Cr K Haslam, Cr S McAulay, Cr J Walsh		
Council Officer Attendees:		L Bonazzi, M Chesworth, V Albicini, S Brown, D Echeverry, S Russell, J Carns, A Paix, S Collier		
Conflict of Interest Disclosures: Nil				

Meeting Name/Type		Briefing Session		
Meeting Date:		14 July 2021		
Matters Discussed:		1. Kinglake Village Developers presentation		

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Community Satisfaction Survey 3. Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 4. Financial Plan - principles
Councillor Attendees:	Cr S Carpenter, Cr D Gallagher, Cr I Gerencser, Cr K Haslam, Cr E Lording, Cr J Walsh
Council Officer Attendees:	L Bonazzi, M Chesworth, V Albicini, S Brown, S Coller, N Carter, J Barrie, G Haylock
Conflict of Interest Disclosures: Nil	

Meeting Name/Type	Workshop Session
Meeting Date:	21 July 2021
Matters Discussed:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capital Works Monthly Report 2. Waste Strategy – Community Engagement 3. Climate Change Discussion Paper 4. Community Planning – Eildon 5. Draft Community Vision – Community Feedback 6. Council Plan Design – Session 2 – Major Initiatives and Performance Indicators 7. Domestic Animal Management Plan 8. VicForests Timber Release Plan – Council Submission
Councillor Attendees:	Cr S Carpenter, Cr D Gallagher, Cr I Gerencser, Cr K Haslam, Cr E Lording, Cr S McAulay, Cr J Walsh
Council Officer Attendees:	L Bonazzi, M Chesworth, V Albicini, S Brown, S Russell, B Scott, B Byrne, J Kirkwood, S Coller, A Paix, D Echeverry, N Stewart, C Southurst
Conflict of Interest Disclosures: Nil	

Council Plan/Strategies/Policies

This matter is consistent with the *Council Plan 2017-2021 Our Promise* strategy to ‘expand our communication’.

Relevant Legislation

For full details of Council's requirement for assemblies of Councillors, refer to Section 80A of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Financial Implications and Risk

There are no financial or risk implications.

Conflict of Interest

Any conflicts of interest are noted in the assembly of Councillors tables listed above.

RESOLUTION

Cr J Walsh / Cr S Carpenter

That Council receives and notes the record of assemblies of Councillors for 21 June to 23 July.

CARRIED

18 SEALING REGISTER

File Reference	Date Seal Affixed	Description of Documents	Signatures of Persons Sealing
CONT21/10	19 July 2021	Formal Instrument of Agreement between Murrindindi Shire Council and Fineblade Pty Ltd for Anne and Mary Street Yea - Sealing Upgrade 2020/2021	Livia Bonazzi Cr Sandice McAulay
CONT20/34	19 July 2021	Formal Instrument of Agreement between Murrindindi Shire Council and JF Studio Pty Ltd for Eildon Reserves - Improvement Plan - Stage 2 - 2020-2021	Michael Chesworth Cr Sandice McAulay
CONT21/2	19 July 2021	Formal Instrument of Agreement between Murrindindi Shire Council and Bells Civil Excavations Pty Ltd for Kinglake Streetscape Redevelopment - 2021	Michael Chesworth Cr Sandice McAulay

Officer Recommendation

That the list of items to which the Council seal has been affixed be noted.

RESOLUTION

Cr I Gerencser / Cr K Haslam

That the list of items to which the Council seal has been affixed be noted.

CARRIED

The meeting was closed at 06:43 pm.

CONFIRMED THIS

CHAIRPERSON

Cr S McAulay